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and equity through its extensive investment in student financial aid, states have primary responsibility for policies that affect the educational attainment of their populations. Despite the centrality of state policy, however, we know relatively little about the relationship between state policy and these outcomes. This book addresses this knowledge gap. Drawing on data collected from descriptive case studies of the relationship between public policy and higher education performance in five states (Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Texas, and Washington), this book offers a more complete conceptual framework for understanding how state public policy can promote educational attainment. The resulting framework has five central tenets that help us understand how to improve overall educational attainment and increase equity in that attainment. At its core, the model assumes that higher education performance is determined by effective state policy leadership for higher education. The book also illustrates the need for state policies that reduce the cumulative negative implications of policies that perpetuate differences in educational outcomes across groups and that proactively address the barriers that limit educational attainment for underachieving groups. This book has important implications for public policymakers, college and university leaders, educational researchers and others who are interested in understanding how public policy can improve educational attainment and equity in attainment across groups"--
