

Determinants of Graduating College Students Retention in Lyceum of the Philippines – Laguna, Basis for Management Improvement

Veronica S. Ilagan, Emmanuel U. Mindanao

Bachelor of Science in Business Management major in Marketing Management

ABSTRACT

Competition in the academic industry has been intensely rising due to innovation in technology and information. The researchers aim to identify and make use of the determinants of college student retention for the management improvement of Lyceum of the Philippines—Laguna, hence the limitations on data regarding student attrition, which the researchers believe can be highly significant for the study. Initial data was found through related literature, which led the researchers to ten final determinants. The study used a quantitative descriptive survey method and gathered data from a total of 215 respondents, attained through stratified sampling techniques on campus. The self-constructed questionnaire showed the Cronbach's Alpha at 0.866, above average. The distinguished outcomes in frequency and ranking confirmed the three top determinants that affect the students of LPU-Laguna: tuition fee, location, and facilities, respectively. The satisfaction rate of students on the factors in relation to the institution resulted in a composite mean of 3.45, verbally interpreted as "strongly agree" or "highly satisfactory. Only the income profile out of the four demographic profiles was found to be significant for the study, with an f -value of 18.873 and a p -value of 0.000. The results of the survey strengthen the accuracy of the factors affecting graduating college students' retention at the Lyceum of the Philippines—Laguna. The study proves that the factors can be used as a tool for continuous improvement and to create a competitive advantage against competitors.

Keywords: *Academic Retention, Lyceum of the Philippines – Laguna, Determinants, Management Improvement, College*

INTRODUCTION

Education is critical to self-fulfillment, which is the process of achieving one's own potential, abilities, and tastes via persistent effort and performance in an activity (Stebbins, R.A., 2016). It is seen as extremely important since education is an investment that can be utilized as a tool of revival from adversity and poverty, and because knowledge is the most powerful weapon anyone can possess to face life's daily challenges. Education begins with teaching the essentials and progresses to educating individuals on the principles of everyday survival and security in this daunting environment. Finally, after children learn the foundations of survival, schools educate them how to develop their jobs, families, and personal objectives in life. Education instills in us a way of viewing life; it enables us to form views and have points of view on many issues (Dombia, K., 2013).

Lyceum of the Philippines—Laguna aims to provide quality education to develop individuals, future leaders, and lifelong learners. The institution has proven its supremacy and excellence with its prestigious awards. There are an estimated 18 universities and 37 colleges today in the Laguna province. The institution might find a way to adjust to their strength and weaknesses and use recommended ideas on how they could continue to expand, increase achievements, and provide quality education in present and future. Even though some prospective learners left, voluminous number of students still preferred to stay and finish their degree at the university.

Review of Literature

According to Cuseo, J. B. (2015), there are three main reasons why faculty behavior affects student retention: (1) Professors have the most frequent and continuous contact with the students at any school representative. (2) The faculty is responsible for calculating and measuring the performance of students, and (3) the instructors are in the best position to detect specific behaviors that may lead to student attrition; thus, they can play a significant role in encouraging students to stay in the institution and remain positive.

Sagemuller I. (March 2017) stated that, beyond any other signal, financial capability is the primary predictor of student attrition. It makes it harder for students who lack money to join school activities that require money like research, projects, competitions, educational trips, joining organizations, community services, and other extra-curricular activities that affect the final output of the students, especially when some instructors set these activities as exams or other major requirements.

Students that live far from universities are less likely to finish school activities and assignments. Long trips cause pain, hunger, and exhaustion, making it harder to complete school loads. Students are also prone to a lot of danger when traveling for a long distance. According to Claire McEvoy and Gergely Hideg, (2017), at least 560,000 people were killed violently in 2016. Students and faculty can lose efficiency, creativity, engagement, learning, and focus if school facilities are substandard, according to a study by Penn State University. There are five primary facets of school facilities: acoustics and noise, air quality, lighting, temperature, and space. Comfort may not be the top goal of an institution, but it certainly can amend learning. Students in their first year will encounter dualism, a world made up of dichotomies. Dualistic students feel there is only one "correct" major for them and seek solutions from others. Most freshmen are still searching for themselves and their own identities, so rather than making a decision, they seek input from their peers.

There are 12 research-validated characteristics that influence student retention, the majority of which are personal in nature. One of them is a dearth of informal information about college life. To thrive at college, one must have an implicit understanding of how to act and function on a regular basis. Human conduct is influenced by one's notion of the norm. This applies to both academic and business settings. Student performance is influenced not only by personal benefits such as grades or exam pass rates, but also by existing performance norms. School recognition encourages pupils to compete and aspire to be the best. Students in the Philippines value their guardians' and parents' advice. Peer pressure is another kind of social support. According to Linsay Wayt, kids who had a majority of friends who planned to attend college were four times more likely to enroll than adolescents whose friends did not expect to attend college. Career organizations may assist students in learning the culture and conventions of their new institution. Organizations for careers also foster contacts that may lead to future work opportunities. Employability is one of the leading drivers of college student retention, and career prospects play a significant role in college retention. The "employability agenda" is of crucial significance to any leading university, and there is little doubt that it impinges upon student recruitment, retention, and satisfaction (Bangor University, 2012).

Conceptual Framework

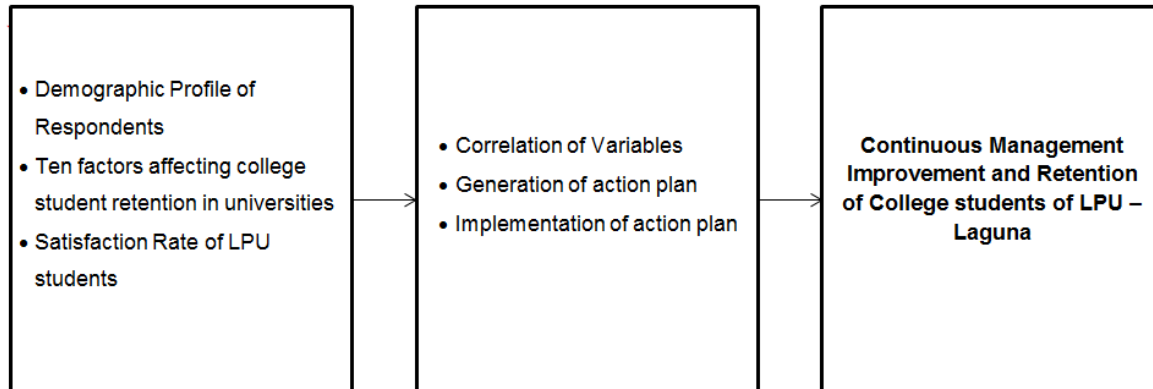


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

The input section of the figure is made up of all the data needed to be gathered; this includes the related literature, theories relevant to the study, and the responses of the students. The process section includes the conclusion and recommendation, relevant to achieving the third section, the expected outcome of the researchers, which is to overall contribute to the betterment of the management and increase student retention.

Objectives of the Study

The study's objective is to continuously improve and upsurge the volume of the college students. The researchers aim to determine the profile of the respondents in terms of sex, residence, college department, and monthly income of the family, to determine the factors of retention of College students in LPU – Laguna up until graduation, to determine the level of satisfaction of graduating students according to the factors of retention of College students in LPU – Laguna, to determine if there is a significant difference on the level of satisfaction of graduates when grouped according to the variable, and to form an action recommendation to the beneficiaries of the study.

METHODOLOGY

This study used quantitative and descriptive methods to collect and describe data. The researchers selected the students of Lyceum of the Philippines – Laguna to be the respondents of the study. The researchers used a survey questionnaire as a tool composed of demographic profile, factors affecting the students' retention and satisfaction rate of the respondents. The questionnaire passed the reliability test by sampling thirty respondents. Different statistical tools were used to interpret the gathered data: percentage frequency distribution, frequency and ranking, and weighted mean using the Likert's four-point scale that was formulated with an interpretation of 1 represents strongly disagree, 2 represents disagree, 3 represents agree and 4 represents strongly agree responses. Other statistical tools used were analysis of variance or ANOVA to analyze difference among variables and Cronbach' Alpha to determines whether the self-made questionnaire is valid and reliable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The respondents' demographic profile is examined in terms of gender, residence, college department, and family monthly income. The demographic profile of the responders is shown in table 1.

Table 1. Demographic profile of the respondents

Category	Frequency	Percent
Sex		
Male	92	43
Female	123	57
Residence		
0-20 KM	125	58
21-40 KM	28	13
41-60 KM	26	12
61-80 KM	5	2
81-100 KM	29	14
101 KM and above	2	1
College/Department		
CAM	49	23
CAS	28	13
CBA	29	13
COECS	46	21
CITHM	63	30
Family Monthly Income		
20,000 and below	7	3
20,001-40,000	69	32
40,001-60,000	105	49
60,001-80,000	20	9
80,001-100,000	10	5
100,000 and above	4	2

Table 2 shows that the most relevant factor according to the respondents is tuition fee, followed by location, facilities, faculty, awards and recognition, curriculum, individual skills, employability, extracurricular activities and family and social support. The results signify that financial factors are most considered. One of the reasons could be the norms in the country; although it is far from reality, most students are expected to brush off “negativity” and consider that psychological problems easier to deal with by remaining to be hard-working and disciplined.

Table 2. Factors affecting college student retention in LPU-Laguna in terms of ranking

Determinants	Total	Rank
Tuition Fee	418	1
Location	537	2
Facilities	673	3
Faculty	987	4
Award and Recognition	1097	5
Curriculum	1197	6
Individual Skills	1616	7
Employability	1623	8
Extracurricular Activities	1731	9
Family and Social Support	1946	10

Tables 3 indicates that the respondents strongly agreed that the institution has been providing services with high standards and produces highly satisfactory results.

Table 3. Level of Satisfaction and Verbal Interpretation in terms of ranking

Levels of Satisfaction	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Recognition and awards are given to deserving students of LPU-Laguna	3.89	Strongly Agree
The extra-curricular activities available develop the students' social and communication skills and support academic outputs.	3.88	Strongly Agree
The professors and instructors are caring and approachable.	3.86	Strongly Agree
Extra-Curricular activities are available for students who are interested.	3.85	Strongly Agree
The environment of the institution boosts performance and encourages learning.	3.83	Strongly Agree
The institution is easy to locate.	3.83	Strongly Agree
Recognition and awards are motivational and pushes us students to perform better.	3.77	Strongly Agree
My companions encourage me to reach my goals finish my studies in LPU – Laguna.	3.76	Strongly Agree
The curriculum I have is reliable and effective.	3.73	Strongly Agree
I am confident that I will be employed within 6 months after graduation.	3.72	Strongly Agree
The industry partners of LPU – Laguna encourage me to finish my studies in the institution.	3.67	Strongly Agree
The courses offered in LPU are valuable for the career I want to pursue.	3.62	Strongly Agree
Tuition fees and miscellaneous fees are properly disclosed to the students.	3.59	Strongly Agree
Evaluations of the instructors to the students are fair and reasonable.	3.54	Strongly Agree
I enthusiastically believe I am capable of finishing my degree in LPU-Laguna and achieve my goals.	3.07	Agree
The location of the school is convenient to reach from my home.	2.82	Agree
My family approves and supports me to study in LPU – Laguna.	2.81	Agree
Tuition fees are affordable and rational.	2.78	Agree
I am certain of the path I want to track and the goals I want to reach in the future.	2.54	Agree
The equipment and machines in the campus are maintained and in good	2.36	Disagree

condition.

Notes: 1.00 – 1.99 Strongly Disagree; 2.00 – 2.99 Disagree; 3.00 – 3.99 Slightly Agree; 4.00 – 4.99 Agree; 5.00 – 6.00 Strongly Agree

In accordance with Table 11, only one of the demographic profiles is significant to the satisfaction of the students at the Lyceum of the Philippines—Laguna, regarding the determinants of college student retention. This determinant is the monthly family income.

Table 4. Profile Variables and Verbal Interpretation

Category	f-value	p-value	Interpretation
Sex	.527	.469	Not Significant
Residency	2.486	.116	Not Significant
Department	.536	.465	Not Significant
Income	18.873	.000	Significant

Notes: Significant at p -value < 0.05 and Not Significant p -value > 0.05 .

CONCLUSIONS

Lyceum of the Philippines – Laguna had gained numerous competitors since it was founded. The institution, however, has been losing students with high potential due to dissatisfaction, most of which had unknown reasons. The main objective of the study is to find these specific reasons affecting student retention and then create an effective solution for student attrition. Most of the enrolled students in LPU - Laguna belong to middle to upper class families. The institution requires forty thousand to forty-five thousand Pesos per regular or full load semester or a monthly payment of ten to eleven thousand unless the student can avail a scholarship. The survey also found that only one demographic profile was significant for the study and is the family monthly income. The determinants can be used as a tool for continuous improvement by identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the administration and regulating amendable issues; and for cultivating customer satisfaction.

The researchers recommend future researchers to focus on finding factors on student attrition rather than student retention for more accurate results. A specific study on one of the issues above is also recommended to further obtain the root of problems regarding discontent of the students regarding the following factors.

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