Assessments of Bachelor of Science in Nursing Admission and Retention Policies Vis-à-vis the Program Intended Outcomes and Students' Academic Success

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Abstract

Students persisting to complete their educational goals is a crucial gauge of student success and institutional success (Voight, 2008). However, the academic institution must ensure that the admission and retention policy imposed in the programs offered is viable. This study determines the students' assessments of the University's admission and retention policies for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program.

This investigation utilized the descriptive-correlational research design using a researcher-made questionnaire. The study was conducted on the six hundred thirteen (613) Bachelor of Science in Nursing students of the University of Cebu-Banilad Campus using the purposive sampling technique. The data was analyzed using simple percentages, weighted mean, and Pearson R.

The results of the study show that the majority of the research respondents were aged between 18-22 years old. The respondents assessed that the admission was satisfactory. At the same time, the retention policy for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) at the University of Cebu-Banilad was excellent. It enabled them to enroll in the abovementioned course and comply with the requirements to earn the degree based on their capabilities. Likewise, the retention policy allowed the BSN students to have hope to become nurses in the future, and they have an

understanding and appreciation that the current educational system provided by the University of Ceb-Banilad prepared them to become world-class nurses. However, they revealed that the lengthy admission process in the BSN program upset them when they enrolled, and they also needed help adjusting to the University of Cebu-Banilad learning environment. In addition, there is a significant relationship between the research respondents' assessments of the admission and retention policy of the University of Cebu-Banilad Bachelor of Science in Nursing program.

Therefore, it is concluded that the student's appreciation of the academic policies relates to their experience of how well they were assisted during their four years of academic at the University. Hence, regular revisits and evaluations of the admission and retention policy of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program should be undertaken to update it with the new Commission on Higher Education [CHED] Memorandum orders and changes in the nursing profession's requirements.

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a pivotal role in producing qualified human power that accelerates economic development and solves the real problems of a community (Tadese et al., 2022). Thereby, the success of an institution and the success of its students are inseparable. Unsurprisingly, an increasing number of prospective students and their families visit campuses poised with questions regarding retention and graduation rates. An institution's success in recruitment ultimately depends on evidence that its students are satisfied, persisting to graduation, and thus receiving value for the investment they and their families make in higher education. Hence, students persisting to complete their educational goals is a crucial gauge of student success and institutional success (Voigt & Hunrieser, 2008).

Enrollment at each college is affected by the standards at the other college through student portfolio reallocation. In equilibrium, student college sorting may fail: weaker students sometimes apply more aggressively, and the weaker college might impose higher standards (Chade et al., 2014). Bound et al. (2009) said that gaining entrance to a four-year college or university, particularly a selective institution, has become increasingly competitive over the last several decades.

Moreover, going to higher education is a challenging time for most students, and for many, it is an intimidating leap into the unknown (Lowe & Cook, 2003). The shift from the controlled environment of school or college and family to a situation in which students are expected to accept personal responsibility for both academic and social aspects of their lives will create anxiety and distress. Students who need help transitioning from one institution or level to another usually drop out or underachieve (Conway, 2004). Although the roster of students attending universities continues to increase, improving graduation and completion rates remains challenging for higher educational institutions (Segismundo, 2016).

The admission process in universities is critical. Like any other nation, most institutions have historically used admissions information as a predictor of academic success. When evaluated, it helps identify students who may be at risk of low academic performance, as well as revolve the factors that may predict quality but may not be factors that predict low performance (Agboola et al., 2014).

Student quality, on its part, is a measure of the forces that shape student's attributes, such as their performance in academic work, study, coping skills, satisfaction with the course of research, and ability to persist in the educational system. It is one of the significant indicators of institutional efficiency (Agboola et al., 2014). Grades are essential for the admission of students in most higher education programs (Moen & Tjelta, 2010).

The two most frequently cited statistics concerning student success are the freshman-to-sophomore retention rate, or first-year annual return rate, and the cohort graduation rate (Voigt & Hunrieser, 2008). Since retention is one of the key performance indicators in university quality assurance processes (Chrysikos et al., 2017). Hence, many colleges speak of the importance of increasing student retention. Indeed, quite a few invest substantial resources in programs designed to achieve that end. Some institutions even hire consultants who promise a proven formula for successful retention. Nevertheless, for all that effort, most institutions do not take student retention seriously. They treat student retention, like so many other issues, as one more item to add to the institution's list of issues (Tinto, n.d.).

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) announced that based on the 2020 Census of Population and Housing (2020 CPH), the total population of the Philippines is 109,035,343 (Sarao, 2023). For school year 2019-2020, of the 3,408,425 enrollments, 1,321,773 (38.78%) were from State Colleges and Universities (SUCs), 248,731 (7.3%) were from Local Universities and Colleges (LUCs), 5,141 (0.15%) were classified under "Other Government Schools" (OGS), while 1,832,780 (53.77%) were from Private Higher Education Institution (Commission on Higher Education [CHED], 2021a).

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are classified as either a college or a university, either public or private, and also either secular or religious. As of 2020, records from CHED showed that the country has 1,975 HEIs (excluding satellite campuses of state universities and colleges). Of this number, two hundred forty246 are public HEIs, while 1,729 are private institutions (Commission on Higher Education [CHED], 2021b).

Although the roster of students attending universities continues to increase, improving graduation and completion rates remains challenging for higher educational institutions. Any public or private higher education institution faces the problem of the growing number of school leavers (Segismundo, 2016).

The projected attrition rate, or the number of students who dropped out of universities and colleges in the school year 2023 to 2024, is currently at 35.15 percent, slightly lower than the 40.98 percent the previous year, according to the Commission on Higher Education [CHEd]. Universities and colleges had an attrition rate of 15.90 percent in the school year (SY) 2020 to 2021, but jumped to 37.79 in SY 2021 to 2022 then further to 40.98 percent in SY 2022 to 2023 (Sarao, 2023). Also, students are expected to spend much of their time on their education and need to graduate with good academic results. However, the trend of graduating students is not proportional to the trend of enrolled students and an increasing number of students commit readmission, suggesting that they did not perform well in their academics (Tadese, 2022).

Thus, it becomes essential to understand and act on what research talks about student persistence, retention into the next year level, and graduation. Aside from admission, student persistence and retention are important issues facing Philippine higher education today. Although the number of students attending college continues to grow, improving graduation and completion rates remain a challenge (Ortega-Delacruz, 2015).

Moreover, the College of Nursing (CHN) of the University of Cebu-Banilad adopted a stringent admission policy and retention policy to ensure that the graduates of Bachelor of Science Nursing (BSN) graduates will be able to hurdle the rigors of the Philippine Nurse Licensure Examination (PNLE). However, the implementation of said admission and retention leads to attrition at a high degree. Hence, the ongoing challenge faced by the College of Nursing stimulated the conduct of this study to determine the

assessments of the students on the admission and retention policy as Lau (2003) posits that adequate measures for student retention must be implemented in order to increase the retention of qualified students at institutions of higher learning. Therefore, the results of this investigation will be utilized to craft an intervention scheme to improve the admission and retention policy for the BSN program, retain qualified students, and produce globally competent nurses.

Framework

Alexander Astin's Input-Environment-Outcomes Model (1984) explains the impact of various environmental experiences by determining whether students grow or change differently under varying environmental conditions. When assessing student retention, consideration of input characteristics helps to understand the influence of students' backgrounds and characteristics on their ability to persist. Environmental variables that might influence student success include institutional characteristics, students' peer group, faculty characteristics, curriculum, financial aid, major field choice, place of residence, and student involvement, whereas outcomes are the student's characteristics after exposure to the environment (Ortega-Dela Cruz, 2013).

Astin's (1984) model focused primarily on the behaviors in which a student engages: participating in campus organizations, interacting with faculty and peers, attending campus events, and spending time studying. What the individual thinks or feels is not as important as what the individual does and how he or she behaves, which defines involvement.

In Astin's Inputs-Environments-Outcomes (I-E-O) model, outcomes described as student characteristics after exposure to college (such as GPA and academic achievement measures) are thought to be influenced by inputs or student characteristics at the time of entry to college (such as gender, age, ethnicity, admitting GPA). In addition, environments such as institutional characteristics, curricula, faculty and peer environment, and individual involvement experiences of students in college mediate the relationship between inputs and outcomes (Astin, 1996). In addition, Astin (1993) proposed that student involvement on many levels (e.g., involvement with peer groups, involvement with faculty, and academic work) enhances almost all aspects of learning and academic performance.

The Student Integration Model of Tinto (2007) theorizes that students who academically and socially integrate into the campus community increase their commitment to the institution and are more likely to graduate. Tinto (2004) further suggested that to improve undergraduate retention, all higher education institutions must offer easily accessible academic, personal, and social support services. Students' interactions with individuals in academic, private, and support service centers can influence a student's sense of connection to the college or university and their ability to navigate the campus culture, meet expectations, and graduate. A university with high expectations and actively involves students in their learning creates an environment where students are more likely to succeed.

Likewise, the Student Integration Model applies the concept of integration to college students. Substantially, students drop out when they have yet to achieve sufficient integration into the fabric of college life. In other words, the "fit" between a person and an institution is not conducive to persistence (Ortega-Delacruz, 2015). This discoursed that there is a need to ensure that the quality of students is ascertained at the entry point as this will give rise to students who are widely diversified and talented in more than merely test-taking and essay writing (Agboola (2011).

Tinto's Student Integration theory helps analyze student retention, but this accounts for only a modest amount of variance in retention. Initial goals and institutional commitments accounted for the largest direct effect on retention, followed by later goals and institutional commitments. In addition, academic and social integration constructs can influence student retention processes. When all or some of these relationships operate toward students' benefits, appropriate services or programs, such as student support systems, can have maximum benefits (Chrysikos et al., 2017).

Sociologists have long used educational expectations to understand the complex mental processes underlying individuals' educational decision-making. However, students adapt their educational expectations only modestly and only in response to very large grade point averages (Andrew & Hauser, 2011). In order to achieve a good quality education, education management is needed to mobilize educational resources; one of those is the management of students (Imron, 2012).

One important factor of the management of students is the acceptance of new students, which basically cannot be separated from geographical factors, the role of parents and peer influence that determine whether or not the interest of students' new perspective in determining the continuing next level of the school, especially for the student who has good essential potential to be developed through education, on physically and psychologically, family environment, school and community where they are located (Oktaria, 2013) and the decision of new students to choose entering public or private schools, or public or vocational schools (Yuliani, 2018).

While the internal institutional reasons for embarking upon enrollment management/retention strategies vary, several general reasons are common across campuses. First, in today's complex and challenging higher education environment – a burgeoning college-bound population, escalating costs, lagging state support, and intense scrutiny from state and federal agencies – colleges and universities must not only be able to put policies and practices in place that promote academic goals but provide empirical evidence of student success (Kuh, 2005).

The criteria used to select applicants for nursing school admission often include an assessment of applicants' prenursing grade point average, using standardized testing, an interview, and, perhaps, a written essay (Crow et al., 2004). At a minimum, applicants' prenursing grades are evaluated for admission. However, the value of such grades in determining admission to nursing programs is questionable because of problems associated with grade inflation and variables (Chen & Voyles, 2013).

The sorting process that ultimately leads to college admission starts with the applicants themselves, who typically consider a combination of academic and nonacademic factors in deciding where to apply. For candidates who pick one of the "open-door" colleges, tests play no role in the admissions process: All that is required is to complete an application and, in some cases, show proof of high school graduation (Zwick, 2007).

As historically open admission institutions, with a primary focus on providing access to higher education, they have been pressed in recent decades--as has all of higher education--to be more accountable and demonstrate the benefits they offer and at what cost (Roman, 2007). However, teachers at colleges recruiting good students from upper secondary schools tend to be strict in their grading practices, while teachers at colleges recruiting less good students tend to follow a lenient practice. This has implications for interpreting grades and optimal admission procedures (Moen & Tjelta, 2010).

The Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) is a four-year degree program that teaches students the necessary skills and knowledge for health care. It revolves around four main components: health promotion, disease prevention, risk reduction, and restoration. The program aims to develop nursing students capable of providing holistic care to individuals of different ages, genders, and health statuses. Students who want to pursue a degree in BS in Nursing are encouraged to take the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) strand under the Academic Track. The strand provides the basics of applied mathematics and sciences that will be useful in their college life. The student must be a high school graduate. However, if they can not graduate high school, they may take the Alternative Learning System (ALS) and pass the Philippine Educational Placement Test (PEPT) to qualify for college; the availability of courses for PEPT passers depends on the university. The students must pass the college admissions test. To become a registered nurse in the Philippines, a BS in Nursing graduate must pass the Nurse Licensure Exam. The Board of Nursing examines the supervision of the Professional Regulations Commission (PRC) (Find University, n.d.).

Undergraduate retention is an institution of higher education's ability to retain a student from admission until graduation (Berger & Lyon, 2004). The notion of retention is grounded in student success.

Retention-related activities provide a campus environment where students successfully complete their goals and complete their academic program/certificate/diploma or graduate from an institution (Voigt & Hunrieser, 2008). The retention literature has increasingly documented over the years that for institutions to be maximally active and realize their mission, retention must be viewed as an ongoing, campus-wide responsibility requiring everyone's participation and contributions (Levitz, 2001; Noel et al., 1985).

Retention is an organizational phenomenon, and universities retain students. Institutional retention rates, the percentage of retained students in a specific cohort, are often presented as measures of institutional quality (Ortega-Delacruz, 2015). The freshman-to-sophomore retention rate measures the percentage of first-time, full-time students enrolled at the university the following semester. The cohort graduation rate is the percentage of an entering class that graduates within three years with an associate's degree and within four, five, or six years with a baccalaureate degree. Since the annual return rate of students as they progress through a program is directly related to their degree/certificate completion, retention usually includes year-by-year retention or persistence rates as well as graduation rates. These statistics represent student success (Voigt & Hunrieser, 2008).

Retaining a student is fundamental to the ability of an institution to carry out its mission (Ortega-Delacruz, 2015). Moreover, as measures of the quality of an institution's overall product, retention and graduation rates are of interest not only to accrediting agencies, policymakers, and the general public or taxpayers but especially to students, their families, and contributing alums (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Kuh et al., 2005), as Roman (2007) posits that a standard measure of accountability is student retention. According to Tinto (1993), the first principle of effective retention programs and, therefore, assuring student success is "institutional commitment to students.

While it is true that most student departures occur between the beginning of the first year and the beginning of the second year, significant attrition occurs after students enter the second year. It is also true that many campuses have deployed a front-loading strategy that commits significant resources to first to second-year retention interventions, only to experience no concomitant increase in degree completion rates (Habley & McClanahan, 2004).

Bean (1980) stressed the importance of background characteristics, including academic preparation, before college or university. The quality of a student's prior instruction and preparedness for college-level work can significantly influence whether or not a student will succeed at an institution of higher education. Many students entering college today need to prepare for college-level reading, writing, and math, requiring them to begin their postsecondary studies by enrolling in remedial coursework (Swail, 2004).

Positive faculty-student interactions and taking advantage of resources that promote academic success, such as academic advising, learning centers, tutorials, and office hours, have positively influenced retention by academically and socially integrating students into the university community (Habley, 2004). Indeed, it takes a campus to educate and graduate a student. The critical components that consistently have been shown to ensure student success and, therefore, institutional success include satisfied students and alumni, competent, caring faculty and staff, and (3) concerned/aware administration (Levitz, 2001). For decades, retention experts have claimed that an institution's ability to demonstrate student success and attract and recruit new students are intertwined (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Kuh et al., 2005).

It has been affirmed that student quality in academic performance, retention, and graduation rate could be predicted by examining the criteria by which students were admitted (Adeyemi, 2001; Allen & Sherry, 2008; Agboola, 2011).

Other research findings of Ali (2008) have revealed that academic factors considered in the admission criteria are more critically related to students' academic performance than non-educational factors and could also influence student quality and persistence in school. For instance, institutional administrators can help students stay in school by providing them with the appropriate funding for academic support services and the availability of physical facilities, in addition to the effective management of multiculturalism and diversity on campus. Faculty members can help to maintain a positive learning environment for students by using multimedia technology and innovative instructional techniques such as cooperative and

collaborative learning in the classroom. Ultimately, the success of college retention depends on the students themselves. Therefore, students must be motivated to participate actively in learning (Lau, 2004).

Studying what is right with students may illuminate new aspects of successful student experiences, which can, in turn, be applied to supporting all students (Demetriou & Schmitz-Sciborski, 2022). Thus, it becomes imperative to recognize and act on research about student retention into the following year's level and graduation. Although ability, motivation, and preparation are essential factors in student retention, they cannot explain why students stay or leave (Reason, 2009).

A high rate of attrition (the opposite of retention) is not only a fiscal problem for schools but a symbolic failure of an institution to achieve its purpose (Ortega-Delacruz, 2015). Lau (2003) opined that student retention has become a challenging problem for the academic community, and Braxton (2009) indicated that the lack of student persistence might be labeled the departure puzzle. It is puzzling that almost one-half of students entering two-year colleges and more than one-fourth of students entering four-year collegiate institutions leave these institutions at the end of their first year (Spedding, 2009).

Student retention is an important issue faced by Philippine higher education institutions. It is a key concern that needs to be addressed because the knowledge they gain can contribute to the economic and community development of the country aside from financial stability and employability (Febro, 2019).

In recent times, research studies revealed that for most students' poor academic performance, institutional factors such as the provision of enabling school environment, adequate and quality academic staff, infrastructures and facilities for quality teaching and learning, government policy on admission and selection process among others are some of the reasons adduced for students graduating from school without acquiring the relevant knowledge and skills that are pre-requisite for assessing student quality (Curtis et al., 2007).

Further, Allen and Sherry (2008) found that an area that needs to be addressed in most previous research is discipline-specific admission criteria at the undergraduate level and its relationship to student retention.

The study of O'Keeffe (2013) explored the causes and potential solutions to student attrition. This paper cites key risk factors that place students at risk of non-completion, which include mental health issues, disability, socioeconomic status, and ethnicity. Furthermore, first-year students and higher degrees are susceptible to attrition. The capacity of a student to develop a sense of belonging within the higher education institution is recognized by this paper as a critical factor determining student retention. Creating a caring, supportive, and welcoming environment within the university is critical in creating a sense of belonging. It is recommended by the development of positive student/faculty relationships, the presence of a well-resourced counseling center, and the encouragement of diversity and difference.

The Febro (2019) investigation analyzed the factors associated with student success among first-year students through feature selection. This is a critical step prior to modeling in data mining as a way to reduce computational processes and improve prediction performance. This work applies filter methods to datasets queried from university databases. To demonstrate the applicability of this method as a pre-processing step before data modeling, a predictive model is built using the selected dominant features. The accuracy result jumps to 92.09%. Also, the feature selection technique revealed that post-admission variables are the dominant predictors. Recognizing these factors, the university could improve intervention programs to help students retain and succeed. This only shows that feature selection is an important step that should be done prior to designing any predictive model.

Objectives of the Study

This study determined the students' assessments of the admission and retention policies for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program of the University of Cebu-Banilad. Specifically, this study aims to present the following: 1) the profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, year level, and type

of senior high school graduate; 2) their assessments on the admission and retention policy being implemented in the BSN program; and 3) the challenges they encountered in the current admission and retention policy.

METHODOLOGY

This section presents the research design, environment, respondents, instruments, procedures, statistical treatment, and ethical considerations.

Research Design

This study utilized the descriptive research design with the use of a researcher-made questionnaire as a tool to assess the admission and retention policy for the Bachelor of Science Nursing (BSN) of the University of Cebu-Banilad.

Research Locale

This study was undertaken at the University of Cebu (UC)-Banilad, a private, non-sectarian Higher Education Institution in the Philippines. The University of Cebu envisioned democratizing quality education, being the visionary and industry leader, giving hope, and transforming lives. As its mission, the University of Cebu offers affordable and quality education responsive to the demands of local and international communities. UC – Banilad is located at the center of a residential cum business district in Cebu, offering students professional teaching instructions set on industry-based and world-class standards. Linkages and partnerships with various industries allow the students a more significant immersion and on-the-job training. The nursing and healthcare undergraduates are trained in Cebu's premier and technologically advanced medical establishments- the St. Vincent General Hospital (SVGH), Vicente Sotto Memorial Medical Center (VSMMC), and the University of Cebu Medical Center (UCMED), the Information Technology Courses are conducted with SMART Communications, IBM, and CISCO.

Research Respondents

The respondents of this investigation were students enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program at the University of Cebu-Banilad. Out of the three thousand two hundred fifty-four (3,254) enrolled students in the BSN program, the sample size was six hundred thirteen (613). Inclusion criteria include bonafide and regular students of the BSN program for the 2nd semester, S.Y. 2023-2024. Irregular students are not included in the study.

Research Instrument

This investigation used the modified survey questionnaire, which consisted of three (3) parts. The first part identifies the student's profile in terms of age, gender, civil status, and monthly allowance. The second section contains questions about the students' assessments on the admission and retention policy of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) Program of the University of Cebu-Banilad. The third part assessed the challenges encountered in the current admission and retention policy.

Data Gathering Procedure

The research protocol was subjected to review by the Academic Research Ethics Committee (UCAREC). The permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Campus Director of the University of Cebu Banilad. Permission to conduct the study was sought from the University of Cebu-Banilad's Campus Director and the Dean of the College of Nursing. The survey questionnaire was administered using Google-distributed copies of the survey tool, wherein, as part of the ethical protocol, the proponents primarily explained the purpose of the study to the intended respondents. The respondents were asked to signify their cooperation and support by signing the consent form, although participation was voluntary and without coercion. The data gathered was treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Treatment of Data

The data were tabulated and analyzed using the appropriate statistics. Frequency count and simple percentage were used to describe the profile of the research respondents. Weighted mean was used to analyze the data about the admission and retention policy assessments of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) Program of the University of Cebu-Banilad. The third part assessed the challenges encountered in the current admission and retention policy.

Ethical Considerations

This study ensured that it afforded benefits to the target research participants. Hence, the proposed intervention scheme is to improve the current admission and retention policy of the BSN program at the University of Cebu-Banilad. The principle of non-maleficence was followed, wherein participants engaged in activities that could cause harm and risk their well-being. The data to be utilized in this investigation will be treated with utmost confidentiality to protect the privacy of the research respondents. De-identification and codes were practiced to protect the identity of the research respondents). Random sampling will be applied to choose the research subject, mitigate instances of bias and discrimination, and prevent the risk of biased evaluation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents the data about the assessments of the students relating to the admission and retention policies for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program of the University of Cebu-Banilad. This section presents the following: 1) profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, year level, and type of senior high school they graduated; 2) research respondents' assessments on the admission and retention policy being implemented in the BSN program; and 3) challenges they encountered in the current admission and retention policy.

Table 1 presents the profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, year level, and type of senior high school they graduated.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents (n=613)

Profile	Frequency (f)	Percentage
Age		
18-22 years old	571	93.15
23-27 years old	37	6.04
28-32 years old	2	0.33
33-37 years old	2	0.33
38-42 years old	1	0.16
Gender		
Female	494	80.59
Male	119	19.41
Year Level		
First year	217	35.40
Second year	182	29.69
Third year	154	25.12
Fourth year	60	9.79
Type of Senior High School Graduated		
Private	475	77.49
Public	138	22.51

Table 1 shows that out of the six hundred thirteen (613) research respondents, five hundred seventy-one (571), or 93.15%, belonged to 18-22 years old. This data indicates that the majority of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing students who are currently enrolled followed the curriculum, and the composition of the respondents is widely distributed among various year levels. Also, the predominant life stage of the BSN students who served as respondents in this study was young adults.

Biologically and psychologically, young adulthood is fundamentally a period of maturation and change, although the degree of change may seem less striking than the changes that occurred during childhood and adolescence (Cole, 2003; Zagorsky & Smith, 2011). In some ways, the tendency for the developmental change that happens during young adulthood to be gradual instead of dramatic may have led to the devaluation of young adulthood as a critical developmental period, but that developmental change should not be underestimated. It is integral to transforming children and adolescents into adults. The psychological and brain development during young adulthood illustrates this point (Committee on Improving the Health, Safety, and Well-Being of Young Adults et al., 2005).

However, one (1) student was within the age range of 38 to 42 years old. This student is taking the Bachelor of Science in Nursing as a second course since nurses are in demand in highly developed nations with competitive salaries. This market demand for nurses attracts students to study the nursing program.

Moreover, four hundred ninety-four (494) or 80.59% of the research respondents were females, while males accounted for one hundred % (119), comprising 19.41%. This data indicates that females are usually more enticed to take nursing courses due to their inherent ability to provide care.

While men dominate the most influential companies in the world, holding down high-paying executive positions, women rule the roost in nursing. Female dominance in healthcare is not just a U.S. phenomenon. The results of a 2019 survey show that female nurses dominate healthcare in every country (Blackmore, 2024).

According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD] (n.d.), women make up the majority of the overall health and social workforce (i.e., 20 million women compared with 6.3 million men).

Concerning the year level of the respondents, two hundred seventeen (217), or 35.40%, were in the first-year level, while sixty (60), comprising 9.79%, were in the fourth-year level. These results indicate that the majority of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) students at the University of Cebu-Banilad

were freshmen, considering that lots of Senior High School (SHS) graduates are attracted to take the nursing courses due to the high demand in the United States healthcare industry and with high salary level.

In terms of the type of Senior High School (SHS) where the research respondents graduated, four hundred seventy-five (475), or 77.49%, were from private school, while only thirty-eight (138), or 22.51%, came from public school. This information implies that most of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) students enrolled at the University of Cebu-Banilad obtained their high school diploma from the private school system, considering that private schools in the Philippines usually provide better quality of educational service compared to the public schools, which lacks resources like laboratories, facilities, and others that are essential preparation for the rigors in the nursing education. Also, the nursing program is more expensive than other programs and requires the parents or benefactors to spend more money to enable their students to complete the BSN degree.

Enrollment management administrators, departments or committees work to facilitate collaboration across academic and student affairs divisions to encourage institutional recruitment, admissions and retention (Demetriou & Schmitz-Sciborski, 2011).

Table 2 presents the data about the research respondents' assessments of the admission policy of the University of Cebu-Banilad to the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program.

The highest weighted mean of 3.44 indicates that the research respondents strongly agreed that the admission process of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program of the University of Cebu UC-Banilad gives hope to them as students to study and earn the BSN degree. This data means that the current BSN students of UC-Banilad viewed the admission system as excellent, and they were optimistic that they would be able to achieve their dream of becoming nurses in the future through the University of Cebu (UC) since there is a mechanism wherein the College of Nursing with the support offices provides assistance to the applicants to the program. In this way, the applicants who experienced difficulty during the enrolment process will be given the chance to pass and comply the admission requirements.

Table 2. BSN Students' Assessments to the Admission Policy for BSN Program at UC-Banilad
(n=613)

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
The admission of BSN program in UC-Banilad...		
1. is easy and convenient for me when I enrolled or student applicant at the College of Nursing of the University of Cebu-Banilad.	3.11	Relatively Agree/ Satisfactory
2. is fast, convenient and hassle free for me when I enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program.	2.80	Relatively Agree/ Satisfactory
3. encourages me as student to enroll in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program at the University of Cebu-Banilad.	3.11	Relatively Agree/ Satisfactory
4. ensures consistency and fairness in assessing enrollees/applicants in the (BSN) program.	3.09	Relatively Agree/ Satisfactory
5. provides equal opportunities to students to enroll in the BSN (BSN) program irrespective of race, gender and socio-economic status.	3.43	Strongly Agree/ Excellent
6. contributes to raising the standard and quality of the nursing education.	3.37	Strongly Agree/ Excellent
7. provides flexible admission by acknowledging prior learning attained through informal learning in the	3.43	Strongly Agree/ Excellent

non-healthcare field (e.e. accepting student applicant not belonging to non-STEM Senior High School group.		
8. gives hope to the students to study and earn the BSN degree.	3.44	Strongly Agree/ Excellent
9. undertakes actvities to enable me as a new student in the BSN program to be comfortable at UC-Banilasd.	3.30	Strongly Agree/ Excellent
10. makes me proud as student taking the BSN program at the University of Cebu-Banilad.	3.39	Strongly Agree/ Excellent
Average Weighted Mean	3.25	**Relatively Agree/ Satisfactory**

Legend: 3.26-4.00 (Strongly Agree/Excellent); 2.51-3.25 (Relatively Agree/Satisfactory); 1.76 -2.50 (Agree/ Fair); 1.00 -1.75 (Disagree/Poor)

Moreover, the lowest weighted mean of 3.09 denotes that the respondents agreed that the current admission process at the University of Cebu-Banilad ensures consistency and fairness in assessing enrollees or applicants in the BSN program. This information indicates that the BSN students viewed the system of accepting applicants for the program as non-discriminatory and that everyone is allowed to pursue the nursing course regardless of the background, type of school attended in Senior High School, socio-economic status, etc.

However, despite these numerous requirements, a huge number of SHS graduates all over Visayas and Mindanao still preferred to enroll in the Bachelor of Nursing (BSN) program at the University of Cebu since they are hopeful that with the vision of democratizing quality education, being the visionary and industry leader, it will give them hope to transform their lives for the better.

Education is a powerful agent of change that improves health and livelihoods and contributes to social stability. At the micro-level, it is associated with better living standards for individuals through improved productivity, given that those who have received a higher education tend to have more economic and social opportunities. At the macro level, education builds well-informed and skilled human capital, considered an engine of economic growth that positively contributes to economic development (Sothan, 2019).

Gaining knowledge, attitudes, values, and skills through education is not a simple task but a long and challenging trip in life. Students are expected to study on time and must graduate with good academic results (Tadese, 2022).

Table 3 shows the assessments of the research respondents pertaining to the retention policy implemented in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program of the University of Cebu-Banilad.

Table 3. BSN Students' Assessments to the Retention Policy for BSN Program at UC-Banilad (n=613)

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
The retention policy of BSN prorgram in UC-Banilad..		
1. serves as my motivation to study hard and pass the BSN course requirements.	3.36	Strongly Agree/ Excellent

2. serves as my guide to perform excellently in the various courses/subjects in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing curriculum.	3.40	Strongly Agree/ Excellent
3. encouraged me in developing a good study habit.	3.33	Strongly Agree/ Excellent
4. enabled me to become a more responsible BSN student.	3.53	Strongly Agree/ Excellent
5. increased my consciousness in maintaining high/excellent grades in the different subjects that I enrolled.	3.40	Strongly Agree/ Excellent
6. enabled me to practice appropriate time management between doing academic and non-academic activities.	3.33	Strongly Agree/ Excellent
7. assures me that the University of Cebu provides quality nursing education at lesser school fees without compromising the quality.	3.21	Strongly Agree/ Excellent
8. enabled me to feel that I really deserve my grades as an indicator of my academic performance.	3.26	Strongly Agree/ Excellent
9. encourage me to be participative during class discussions and other class activities.	3.32	Strongly Agree/ Excellent
10. enabled me to feel proud of my academic contributions and non-academic accomplishments as part of holistic development of the students of the University of Cebu-Banilad	3.31	Strongly Agree/ Excellent
11. enabled me to demonstrate knowledge and skills in client care management in accordance with the Nurse's Code of Ethics and Legal Principles.	4.46	Strongly Agree/ Excellent
12. enabled me to practice as caring and compassionate clinical, community health, occupational health, private duty and entrepreneurial nurses.	3.49	Strongly Agree/ Excellent
13. enabled me to Apply principles of partnership and collaboration to improve delivery of health care services.	3.47	Strongly Agree/ Excellent
Average Weighted Mean	**3.38**	**Strongly Agree/Excellent**

Legend: 3.26-4.00 (Strongly Agree/Excellent); 2.51 -3.25 (Relatively Agree/Satisfactory); 1.76 -2.50 (Agree/Fair); 1.00 -1.75 (Disagree/Poor)

The highest weighted mean of 3.53 indicates that the respondents strongly agreed that the admission process for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) of the University of Cebu [UC]-Banilad enabled them to become more responsible BSN students. This assessment shows that the students manifest appreciation of the educational system adopted by the College of Nursing and the support office of UC-

Banilad and that they believe that the standard procedures that they have to undergo are part of the training to prepare them to become competent nurses.

Al-Dossary (2008) explained that normative congruence, grade performance, intellectual development, and friendship support all affect the student's social integration. This practice affects the student's satisfaction with the university, which affects the student's commitment to the institution. Consequently, the student's level of institutional commitment directly affects the student's decision to stay or leave university.

However, the lowest weighted mean of 3.21 indicates that the respondents strongly agreed that the retention policy for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program assured that the University of Cebu provides quality nursing education at lesser school fees without compromising the quality motivated them to study harder. This data implies that BSN students highly regard the school's retention policy since they perceive it as an essential process that will enable them to achieve their dream of becoming nurses. This appreciation also relates to their shared understanding that the University of Cebu affords quality nursing education that suits their financial capacity.

The aggregate mean of 3.38 shows that the respondents rated the retention policy for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program of the University of Cebu-Banilad (UC-Banilad) as excellent. It can be gleaned from these results that the students understood and accepted the myriad of requirements implemented by the College of Nursing on how they can be retained in the BSN program. In this manner, they are ready to learn nursing and comply with the corresponding course and program requirements. This is also an indication that the students understood the underlying reasons why there is a retention policy even though there are times that they experience inconvenience in studying their lessons to pass the exams, perform the practical examinations, and work on the myriad of practical activities. These responses imply that the students find the retention policy appropriate and favorable to them as students, thus encouraging them to stay in the university because they feel that they were given an excellent opportunity to learn the the nursing course that they pursue as Ortega-Dela Cruz (2015) posited that retaining a student is fundamental to the ability of an institution to carry out its mission. Institutional retention rates, the percentage of retained students in a specific cohort, are often presented as measures of institutional quality.

Pre-entry qualification, academic performance or achievement in nursing school, and pre-board examination are significantly correlated with Nurse Licensure Examination (NLE) rating (Banua, 2017; Navarro et al., 2011; Ong et al., 2012; De Leon, 2016; Soriano, 2016). Previous academic success in High School indicates future success in the NLE, as indicated by the correlation between High School Grades and NLE ratings. At the same time, the National Achievement Test (NAT) and College Admission Test (CAT) remain useful pre-admission criteria that can be used by nursing schools in screening and selecting applicants for the nursing program. Aptitude tests, like NAT, serve as a good measure of potential and estimate future performance (Belo-Delariarte et al., 2018; Mohan, 2016).

Merrylees (2002) described gatekeeping as a professional nursing responsibility achieved through —the entry requirement for training and education, the exit criteria for graduation from training and education, and criteria for entry to the professional register, including personal attributes [and] employment specifications. Brammer (2008) studied gatekeeping as a registered nurse's responsibility to monitor and supervise student nurses in a clinical setting in the absence of nurse education faculty.

This part reveals the summarized data on the respondents' assessment of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program of the University of Cebu-Banilad. Table 4 shows the data as mentioned earlier.

Table 4. Summarized Data on the Students' Assessment on theAdmission and Retention Policy for the BSN Program of the University of Cebu-Banilad

Indicators	Average Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. Admission	3.25	Relatively Agree/ Satisfactory
2. Retention	3.38	Strongly Agree/ Excellent
Grand Mean	**3.32**	**Strongly Agreed/Excellent**

Legend: 3.26-4.00 (Strongly Agree/Excellent); 2.51 -3.25 (Relatively Agree/Satisfactory); 1.76 -2.50 (Agree/Fair); 1.00 -1.75 (Disagree/Poor)

The average weighted mean of 3.25 indicates that respondents relatively agreed that the admission policy for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) of the University of Cebu-Banilad is satisfactory. This means that the abovementioned policy of admitting Senior High School (SHS) students to the nursing program was achievable and favorable to them. They are given the chance to achieve their dream of becoming a nurse.

Predetermined admission criteria are a matter of institutional program policy and guide student selection (McNelis et al., 2010; Siktberg & Dillard, 2001; Zinn, 1983). These admission criteria become keepers of the gate to control access to nurse education programs. Identified admission criteria substantiated the complexity level of student nurse admission through a quantifiable number and the implementation of a weighted point prioritized selection process (Jarmulowicz, 2012).

Understanding how to increase nursing student retention is a persistent challenge. Current retention policies and practices need to address the problem effectively. It is time for a different approach—a shared responsibility where all college community members do their part to help students complete their degrees (Everett, 2020).

However, the average weighted mean of 3.38 indicates that the respondents strongly agreed that the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) retention policy of the University of Cebu-Banilad was excellent. This information indicates that the students were delighted and accepted the various requirements for being retained in the nursing program at the University of Cebu. This is also a manifestation that they were willing to undergo the process of teaching-learning based on the academic institution's norms. Hence, the retention policy of the university encourages them to stay because they are assured that they will be able to get the educational services they deserve from the school (Doumet, 2018).

Successful retention strategies require considering social and academic institutional systems with attention to student integration in a program (Mitchell et al., 2021). Programs and initiatives designed to support undergraduate retention should address both formal and informal student experiences inside and outside of the classroom Demetriou & Schmitz-Sciborski, 2022).

Further, Tinto (2004) suggested that to improve undergraduate retention, all institutions of higher education must offer easily accessible academic, personal, and social support services. The interactions students have on campus with individuals in academic, personal, and support service centers can influence a student's sense of connection to the college or university and their ability to navigate the campus culture, meet expectations, and graduate. A university that holds high expectations and actively involves students in their learning creates an environment where students are more likely to succeed

The grand mean of 3.32 denotes that the respondents strongly agreed that the admission and retention policy for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program was excellent and that the requirements course enables them to enroll and finish their preferred degree. This data further explains that the students

enrolled in this program feel that the policy of enrolling and retaining the students to continue their courses had helped them to attain success in their studies.

Recruitment or admission processes and academic performance influenced student quality and subsequent retention (Swail, 2004; Boyd, 2004; Curtis et al., 2007; Bruce, 2009). Lau (2003) also reveals that students who understand the importance of education and know how to apply classroom-learned theories to real-life problems are motivated to do well in school.

Table 5 shows the data on the challenges experienced by the respondents in the current admission policy of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) of the University of Cebu-Banilad.

Table 5. Problems/Challenges/Issues in the Current Admission Policy for the BSN Program

Indicators	Frequency	Ranking
1. The lengthy admission process in the BSN program upsets me when I enrolled.	378	1st
2. Insufficieny of well-defined enrolment procedure for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program.	216	2nd
3. Paper-based enrollment system discouraged me as students to enroll in the University of Cebu-Banilad.	179	3rd
4. There is preferential treatment of enrollees/applicants to the BSN program.	61	4th
5. Based on my knowledge, the students who are admitted in the BSN program failed to meet industry requirements in the healthcare industry (e.g. hospitals).	47	5th
6. The entrance examination for the BSN program was very difficult to pass.	24	6th

The data in Table 5 shows that respondents reveal that their primordial problem was that the lengthy admission process in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program upset them when they enrolled. This information denotes that the students experienced challenges in complying with the admission requirements for the BSN program when they enrolled at the University of Cebu-Banilad. However, they still pursued to enroll.

The next (ranked second) challenge they experienced during admission was the insufficiency of a well-defined enrolment procedure for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program. This assessment might be hypothetical since there are aspects of the enrolment procedures and requirements the school imposes that they need help understanding or find cumbersome.

The third (3rd) admission challenge that confronted the research respondents was the paper-based enrollment system that discouraged them as students from enrolling in the University of Cebu-Banilad. It can be deduced that some students find paper-based enrolment a hassle since Fujo and Dida (2018) opined that for private universities and universities, college applicants physically collect the application forms themselves, which in turn costs in terms of time and money. The paper-based method is prolonged, less accurate, challenging to complete, and effort-consuming. However, the University of Cebu is already adopting the online enrolment system.

Notermans (2023) explained that with online enrollment in place, students can skip filling in long, tedious forms to enroll for different courses, saving time and travel costs. It makes it easier for higher education institutions to handle inquiries, build strong communication, and effectively maintain records. Nevertheless, there are still printed documents that the first-year students need to submit as requirements from the Registrar's Office, like Birth Certificates, Report Cards from Senior High School, and others.

Table 6 presents the students' problems or challenges in the current retention policy of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program.

The primary problem the respondents experienced in the retention policy of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program was the difficulty in adjusting to the University of Cebu-Banilad learning environment. This information relates to the normal adjustment that any freshmen student will experience when they enter the University since the environment, the people, the class schedule, and the arrangement are very different from high school.

Bradley et al. (2008) divulged that university will not only expand the students' minds, but it may also make them uncomfortable, challenge their identity, and, at times, make them doubt their abilities. It can be transformative for the student and transform the communities and the nation more broadly through developing a love of learning for its own sake and a passion for intellectual discovery.

The reasons behind BSN drop-out were: understanding that they were not suited to be nurses, perception of missing/lack of psychological, physical, and practical resources needed to cope with both nursing school and the nursing profession successfully, inconsistencies between the image of the profession and the reality of the job, feelings of disappointment for the experiences of internship, perceived lack of support from the clinical teacher while going through difficult experiences (Canzan et al., 2022).

Table 6. Problems/Challenges/Issues in the Current Retention Policy in the BSN Program

Indicators	Frequency	Ranking
1. I encountered difficulty in adjusting to University of Cebu-Banilad learning environment.	299	1st
2. I feel discouraged because I cannot meet the standards set by the teachers/clinical instructors in the class.	144	2nd
3. The personnel at the Registrar's Office does not assist my needs as a student when I asked assistance and help during enrolment and in other instances when I visit their office.	93	3rd
4. I have high tendency to dropout from the BSN program at UC-Banilad.	93	4th
5. My academic and personal expectations in taking the BSN program at UC-Banilad was unclear and ambiguous.	81	5th
6. I experienced challenges in connecting with other students or the students' social group/ Nursing Student Body Organization (NSBO).	70	6th
7. The personnel at the Guidance Center did not conduct activities that help me as student who experienced difficulty in their enrolled subjects and in times when I experienced psychological problems (e.g., stress, anxiety, depression, and others).	70	7th
8. The personnel at the Student Affairs Office (SAO) did not provide appropriate assistance to the students' and request for assistance.	65	8th
9. I find it hard to attain my goal and objective in enrolling the Bachelor of Science (BSN) in Nursing program.	62	9th

10. I experienced challenges in connecting with other students or the students' social group/ Nursing Student Body Organization (NSBO).	60	*10th*
11. I find it hard to finish the BSN degree on time/based on the the University of Cebu BSN curriculum.	53	*11th*
12. The personnel at the Clinic did not provide me with appropriate medical and dental services.	53	*12th*
13. I have high tendency to dropout from the BSN program at UC-Banilad.	7	*13th*

The second (2nd) problem faced in the retention policy for the BSN program was the difficulty they experienced in meeting the standards set by the teachers or clinical instructors in the class. Since the BSN program entails the provision of healthcare, the nature of the teaching-learning in the program is comprehensive, combining theoretical and practical nursing concepts. Also, the assessment is stringent as part of their training for the Philippine Nurse Licensure Examination (PNLE). Hence, to pass the different subjects, they must pass the examinations and comply with all other requirements.

Nursing education significantly impacts the knowledge and competencies of nurses and all health care providers. Nurses with Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degrees can meet various patients' needs, function as leaders, and advance science that benefits patients and the capacity of health professionals to deliver safe, quality patient care (Institute of Medicine, 2011).

The third (3rd problem) encountered by the research respondents was the lack of assistance from the personnel at the Registrar's Office on their needs as a student during enrolment and in other instances when they visit their office. This information from the BSN students denotes that their motivation to continue their studies at the University of Cebu-Banilad was adversely affected due to poor customer service, especially during enrolment. This revelation also denotes that the student personnel services did not meet their expectations of how they would want to be taken care of, considering the increasing number of enrollees in the BSN program. This data indicates that the students experienced hardships that were in tune with the general practices of the people in the school.

Over the last decade, there has been a substantial focus on the factors pertinent to retention that are internal to universities and are within immediate institutional control and action (Tinto & Pusser, 2006).

This part presents the data pertaining to the test results of a significant relationship between the respondents' assessments of the admission policy and retention policy of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program of the University of Cebu-Banilad.

Table 7. **Results on the Tests of Significant Relationship between the Respondents' Assessment on the Admission and Retention Policies of the BSN program of UC-Banilad**

Paired Variables	Pearson Correlation	P-Value	Decision	Interpretation
Assessment on the Admission Policy and Retention Policy for BSN Program of UC-Banilad	0.725	<0.0001	Reject Null Hypothesis	Significant

Statistically Significant at 0.05 levels

Table 7 shows a significant relationship between the research respondents' assessments of the admission and retention policy of the University of Cebu-Banilad Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program. This result indicates that the students' appreciation and valuation of the University's policies relating to maintaining standard and quality educational services relates to their decision to submit to these pedagogical requirements and standard operating procedures implemented in the program, especially since the nursing program courses are challenging to pass. Also, this manner of obedience to school policies relates to their acceptance and understanding that they need to prepare to pass the Philippine Nurse Licensure Examination (PNLE).

Students' performance in the entrance examination upon entry to the University, their IQ, aptitude in nursing, and academic achievement in college contribute to the success or failure of the respondents in the board examination. It is inferred that students who performed better in the entrance examination, college academic achievement, and preboard examination performed better in the licensure examination. It is further implied that the quality of admission and retention policies of an institution is an essential consideration that every college or University should strengthen in relation to their aspiration to have better licensure examination performance (Pulgarinas, 2022).

Conclusions

In light of the significant results of this investigation, the students viewed the stringent admission policy for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) as logical and acceptable even though they faced some inconvenience in the lengthy and time-consuming process. Likewise, the retention policy is deemed appropriate, although they experienced hardships adjusting to the University of Cebu-Banilad learning setting. They perceived that the requirements to stay in the BSN program are part of the preparation for them to attain academic success and ensure that they can hurdle the rigors and difficulties as well as pass the Philippine Nurse Licensure Examination (PNLE), which is the primary indicator of the achievement of their dream to be a full-fledged nurse. Also, the admission and retention system implemented in the University of Cebu BSN program was appreciated since it amalgamates the regulatory requirements and the institutional commitment to achieve its vision of democratizing quality education and transforming the lives of its students.

Translational Research

Concerning the salient findings of this research endeavor, an intervention scheme shall be devised which includes the provision of the periodic and regular revisit, evaluation, and updating of the admission and retention policy for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program of the University of Cebu to ensure that its provisions afford assistance to the needs of the applicants. It shall incorporate viable measures that provide quality nursing education in line with the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) requirements, hospital partners, the healthcare industry, and the community. Also, the retention policy should strengthen the appropriate mechanisms in preparing the students for the rigors of the Philippine Nurse Licensure Examination (PNLE) and other examinations that they will take in the future for a promising career ahead of them.

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