



The college choice among freshmen of the University of Baguio

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Abstract

A decline in the number of students choosing college after the K-12 program affects colleges and universities nationwide. The study identified the level of agreement of UB college first-year students on reasons for choosing UB and examined the relationship of high school strand and the chosen school. The study is a quantitative descriptive survey on the profile of UB college freshmen using total enumeration. Only students who were willing to take part in the study and completed the questionnaires were included, which made up a total of 1,837 first-year college students enrolled during the 1st semester of SY 2018-2019. This study utilized a self-made questionnaire. Results showed that female gender outnumbered the male and LGBTQ population in the UB freshmen profile. The University attracted more students from the private high schools and STEM strand and was famous to students from provinces and cities outside Baguio City. Majority of freshmen chose programs of the School of International Hotel and Tourism Management. There is no correlation between high school strand and school of choice. College freshmen chose UB because of its remarkable academic history, location, diverse program offerings, and open-



door policy. Choosing UB is dependent on the inherent individual qualities of the college freshmen as well as on the characteristics and services of the University of Baguio. The University could revise its marketing strategy to attract and retain students.

Keywords: college choice, freshmen, marketing, program offerings, University of Baguio

Introduction

Higher education worldwide has faced various dynamic challenges that it has never encountered in the past, such as a decline in the number of high school graduates, increased cost of attending a college, a growing number of new competitors, diminishing government funding, and the advent of modern technology. These challenges call for an acute awareness of the needs of the student market (Howe & Strauss, 2003). Within the previous ten years, colleges had begun to approach comprehensive enrolment management through the implementation of consumer-based knowledge when recruiting qualified students. As a result of this approach, educational institutions have been spending on marketing efforts to understand, manage, and attract potential students (Hossler, 2004).

Higher education administrators implement effective marketing techniques and concepts due to globalization, intense competition, and deregulation of higher education in many countries. The elements of globalization in higher education are widespread and multifaceted, and the market is now well established as a global phenomenon. Higher learning institutions now recognize that they need to market themselves in a climate of competition and to apply sales techniques that will differentiate them from competitors (Armstrong, 2001; Jongbloed, 2003).



Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the Philippines are also undergoing a transformational period. The implementation of the k-12 program, globalization, and the highly competitive recruitment environment among universities are a few of the many unavoidable challenges that change the arena of higher education. The new law that allows the operation of private universities, the intent of international schools to enter the Philippine market, the rise of online education, and the high costs associated with higher education also contribute to the said challenges. Such changes necessitate solutions, practices, and strategies that will enhance institutional reputation, student diversity, student recruitment and retention.

Philippine HEIs must overcome barriers to innovation and improvement. The institutions need to re-evaluate current institutional processes, adapt to new technologies, think outside the box, and utilize available time and resources. The bottom line is making decisions that will best serve students. The private education sector is not on equal financial footing as public institutions do not charge any tuition fees. Since private institutions do not have access to government funds, the major source of income is tuition fees from their primary clients, which are their students. Therefore, students become the lifeblood for these institutions, and how to recruit enough students is a critical issue.

Among these HEIs is the University of Baguio (UB), one of the oldest higher educational institutions in Baguio City. The University is officially registered with the Commission on Higher Education. It is authorized to offer educational programs leading to Diploma, Bachelor, Master, and Doctorate degrees. Most of the programs provided gained accreditation from the Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities Commission on Accreditation (PACUCOA).

UB is experiencing a period of rapid change and development. This development can be seen in the introduction of the K-12, changes in the enrolment population and the plans for expansion of college facilities.



The University also continues to monitor economic and business activities nationwide and globally, not just in Baguio City. Its objective is to develop programs and services that will satisfy the current and anticipated needs of the industry. The University looks to the future with high confidence. To secure its long-term survival and stability initiatives and activities should be performed. The University of Baguio's reputation and long-term survival are dependent on enrolment trends. The quality of the institution can only be developed and maintained in a stable enrolment environment. Stable enrolments can be achieved through sound planning, development, and management of academic or administrative processes and programs. The success of the industry, in general, is closely tied to effectiveness in attracting and enrolling the kinds and numbers of students needed to make it possible for institutions to survive.

While institutions can control their marketing mix factors, including product, price, promotion, and place, other environmental forces are beyond their control. These forces include social, economic, competitive, and technological forces. By identifying trends related to each of these forces, institutions can develop and maintain successful marketing plans (Kerin, Hartley, & Rudelius, 2011).

All college students must eventually choose and complete a major. However, incoming college students have many options to choose from when deciding if and where to attend college. College-bound students may not have a solid decision on where to go in college and what degree program they may take. They are planning to enter college without a clear idea of what career to pursue for their future (Ramirez & Dizon, 2014). Their options may usually range from the traditional public and private universities to colleges, to state colleges and more. Some potential students consider going to various colleges and universities, while some of them quickly decide to enroll in a particular school. Some students will follow their parents' footsteps by selecting their parent's alma mater. Others will look to venture as far from home as possible, seeking true independence. Students choose a particular



college or university for several different and often very personal reasons. The decision on right career choice and school sometimes depend on the way students perceive the world and their future.

While studies on college choice in other countries enjoy a lengthy history (Southerland, 2006). Studies indicated several models and influencing factors in understanding college choice among students. Hossler & Gallagher (1987) developed a three-stage model of college choice, including predisposition, search, and selection. The model considers the nature of higher education options and the organizational factors at precollege and college levels. Likewise, Cartledge, Baldwin, Persal, Woolley, and Tom (2015) created a model that included a set of determinants on factors that influence college choice. The collection of predictors included high school grade point average, college entrance exam score(s), socio-economic status, and communications from admissions, financial aid, and student home proximity to a college campus.

The three-stage model of Hossler and Gallagher (1987) inspired the researchers of this present study. While several factors can influence college choice, the researchers opted to include only those factors that have comprehensive and current literature. Moreover, the model can be applied in the Philippine's education setting. The study also considered today's millennial students and the personal experiences of the researchers in relative conditions such as enrolment, academic advising, and University program promotion, among others.

Factors from the social environment, mainly the parents as an immediate family who plays an active role in choosing the education of their children can influence career choice (Pafili & Mylonakis, 2011). Workman (2015) mentioned that parental influence remains to be a key theme in student decision making processes. The report of Water, Abrahamson, and Lyons (2009), stated that parents are deeply involved and influential to their "academic superstar" children's college choices. The elderly are consulted



first by their children as a sign of respect, particularly for the Filipino culture. Such practice is observed because parents are the ones providing the financial support for college (Laguador, 2013).

Aside from parents as primary motivators for students' decision making, other factors also are considered in the choice process. A study by Zewude and Ashine (2016) showed that variables including study time, peer influence, securing a first-choice of the department, amount of money received from family, and father's education level influence academic achievement. It was also found that these variables also contribute to making college choices. A related study in the Philippines (Pascual, 2016) identified that the availability of work after college is the first consideration of students in choosing a college course. The data showed that most Filipino students prefer to take science-related field courses or the "popular courses." The type of high school seems to contribute to the decision-making process, in that training and attitude development for a career choice in the formative high school years is different in a public high school setting from a private high school set-up. The University of Baguio has an open-door policy when it comes to admission of first-year students. It does not limit enrollees from their base high schools or other private high schools only but instead includes public high schools as well. According to Coughlin and Castilla (2014), private schooling has a significant, positive effect on college enrolment and degree attainment. A study conducted among students of a Philippine private high school presented that the students tend to choose universities with specific features, such as high quality and standard of education, school curriculum specializes in the course of their choice, has established a prestigious reputation in their chosen field, future job placement, an affordable tuition fee, and proximity and accessibility (Quintillan-bugas, 2006).

Gender gap studies on decision making, university choice, career choice, and university admissions is the current trend in social research. Adams (2015) reported that women are particularly strongly represented in subjects allied



to medicine. On the other hand, a study by Ratcliffe (2013) claimed that men outnumber women on computer science and engineering and technology. An article by Ikem (2018) stated that science, technology, engineering, and math career is a less likely option for LGBT students. This proposed research will entail a survey on college choice among all genders.

A study on academic advising stated that in an era of more excellent student choices, colleges need to diversify their advising protocols and methods of guiding students (Woods, Richard, Park, Tandberg, Hu and Bertrand Jones, 2016). Learning about student expectations could be one of the most effective tools that universities hold to face the new, highly competitive environment. The need for a deeper understanding of how customers make their choices and who make the options are essential considerations in image building, marketing, and advertising. The institution needs to determine why students choose their institution and particular programs. Knowing the reasons gives initial information to strengthen the services of educational institutions towards the attainment of its objectives and the fulfillment of the expectations of its clients, stakeholders, and the community.

Administrators need to understand why individuals choose to enroll at their particular institution of higher education instead of other schools (Filter, 2010). The need for a thorough understanding of college choice factors is critical to successful recruitment efforts. This paper draws upon this marketing background to study the factors that influence and affect student college choice and the implications on the recruiting and marketing strategies of the University of Baguio.

The objective of the study is to provide guiding principles for the development of the University's strategic student recruitment plan as well as market positioning and promotion. The study identified the level of agreement of UB college freshmen on reasons for choosing UB. This study also examined the relationship between high school strand enrolled in and college choice. The research outputs intend to guide students towards their selected college



degrees and generally provide satisfactory service for students.

The primary purpose of the study is to evaluate factors that influenced college choice among freshmen of the University of Baguio. Specifically, the study aimed to a.) determine the profile of UB college freshmen in terms of gender, type of high school attended, high school strand attended, place of origin, and school chosen; b.) determine the relationship between the school choice and high school strand of UB college freshmen; c.) assess the level of agreement of UB college freshmen on reasons for choosing UB; and d.) find the level of agreement of UB college freshmen on reasons for enrolling in UB in terms of gender, type of high school attended, high school strand, place of origin, and school chosen.

Methodology

The researchers utilized a quantitative descriptive survey design which aimed to describe the profile of UB college freshmen. The study aimed to gather information regarding the respondents' reasons for choosing UB's respective programs and recruitment and marketing strategies.

The researchers included first-year college students primarily enrolled in the University of Baguio in the first semester of SY 2018-2019. The participants are mostly the first graduates of the senior high school of the K-12 program of DepEd, including those who graduated from senior high schools from other countries. This study used total enumeration, which involved all college freshmen of the first semester of SY2018-2019. Only those who gave consent and were willing to answer the questionnaires participated in the study. A total of 2,386 questionnaires were retrieved; however, 549 questionnaires revealed incomplete data which were not analyzed. The study included a total population of 1,837 respondents. The study took place at the University of Baguio.

The research used a self-made survey questionnaire focused on the students' profile, including data on the gender type, which provided choices on female,



male, lesbian, gay, and others from the LGBTQ+ group. It also comprised of data on the high school attended, whether private or public high school. The survey likewise included choices on the respective high school track or strand attended. It asked the place of origin which comprised options on Baguio City, outside Baguio City but within the Philippines, and outside the country for international students. The survey asked for the respective program enrolled in the University. It included data on students' agreement on reasons of enrolling in UB as well as reasons for choosing their college program of the respective schools. Another part of the questionnaire was information on respondents' perception of UB's marketing and recruitment strategies. The questionnaire underwent reliability testing with 100 freshmen enrollees who were not part of the actual population. Cronbach alpha resulted in 0.9, which means that the tool was reliable.

With the assistance of the UB Research and Development Center, the researchers forwarded communication letters to the deans to gain permission to conduct the study. Attached to the letter was a request to access data on student population per program as well as a copy of the survey questionnaire and consent forms. Upon approval, the researchers coordinated with the NSTP office and distributed the questionnaires to NSTP1 and FILFOR1 classes.

Data Treatment

The researchers used frequency count and percentage distribution to make the respondents' profile in terms of gender, high school, and high school strand attended, place of origin, and school enrolled in the University. Pearson Correlation was used to determine the relationship between high school strand attended and school choice. Weighted mean was used to assess the level of agreement on reasons that influenced the college choice of the UB freshmen. The researchers used ANOVA for establishing significant differences of the level of agreement on reasons that influenced college choice of UB freshmen in terms of the following variables: gender, high school strand graduated from, place of origin and school enrolled in the



University. T-test was used to establish significant difference on level of agreement on reasons that influenced college choice of UB freshmen in terms of type of high school attended, i.e. public or private high school. The level of agreement on reasons that influenced the college choice of UB freshmen was interpreted with a four-point Likert scale as follows:

1.00 - 1.75	Strongly disagree
1.76 - 2.50	Disagree
2.51 -3.25	Agree
3.26 - 4.00	Strongly agree

The researchers practiced ethical procedures throughout the conduct of the study. The study commenced only upon approval of the Research and Development Center. Appropriate communication to respective offices and deans were observed before the distribution of questionnaires. Consent was solicited from respondents. The researchers also asked for approval from the parents or guardians of respondents below 18 years old at the time of conduct of the study. Gender sensitivity was considered so that variables on gender were not limited to male and female only. Respondents were not forced to participate in the study, and only voluntary participation was encouraged. The data collected were treated with the utmost confidentiality and utilized for the study’s objectives only. The results of study will be disseminated through a research colloquium where deans, program chairs, and UB personnel will be invited.

Results and Discussion

Demographic profile of participants

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the college freshmen of the University of Baguio. It is evident that females dominated the population, which implies that females (64.1%) chose to pursue a UB college degree more than the other gender types. The gay, lesbian and others in the LGBTQ-gender spectrum make up 30.8%, 2%, 1%, and 2% of the population, respectively.



Table 1
Demographic Profile of the Freshmen of University of Baguio

Variables	N = 1837	%
Gender		
Female	1178	64.1%
Male	566	30.8%
Gay	36	2.0%
Lesbian	20	1.1%
Other	37	2.0%
High School attended		
Private	1304	71%
Public	533	29%
High School strand attended		
STEM	561	30.5%
ABM	289	15.7%
HUMSS	289	15.7%
GAS	183	10.0%
SPORTS	18	1.0%
TECH-VOC	424	23.1%
ARTS and DESIGN	43	2.3%
GRADE 12 With No Specific Strand	30	1.6%
Place of Origin		
Within Baguio City	570	31.0%
Outside Baguio City, within Philippines	1233	67.1%
Other Country	34	1.9%
Program Enrolled		
SBAA	156	8.5%
SCJPS	205	11.2%
SOD	169	9.2%
SEA	170	9.3%
SIHTM	481	26.2%
SIT	118	6.4%
SLAHS	195	10.6%
SON	1	.1%
SNS	267	14.5%
STE	75	4.1%



Ratcliffe's (2013) study showed that the type of subjects offered influenced gender make-up of a university. The results show that the University attract more of the female population. However, the females choosing a college degree may also be influenced by other factors as supported by Alona and DiPrete (2017). They discussed that the final choice of field of study among college students is moderated by cultural perceptions about gender identity and gender differences. Again, several studies support this present data that there is indeed a gender gap in universities. Women are observed to surpass men in overall rates of college graduation in many industrialized countries (Alona & DiPrete, 2017). Gender gaps in universities are noted to have increased with women making up more than half of students in two-thirds of subject areas (Adams, 2015).

The majority (71%) of the UB college freshmen came from private high schools. The results mean that UB has been more popular in private high schools than public schools. Moreover, it is more likely that students graduating from a private high school choose to enroll in a private University for college as well. The results likewise imply that private high schools influenced students to enroll in a private University. Coughlin and Castilla (2014) found that a private secondary schooling increases the probability of college enrolment and completion of a college degree.

High school graduates from STEM strand dominated the population (30.5%) followed by graduates of TECH-VOC (23.1%). The data show that high schools have more graduates from the STEM and TECH-VOC track. This further implies that such strands are more popular than the rest of secondary school strands. Fifteen percent of the population took up ABM and HUMSS tracks in high school each, while 10% graduated from GAS, 2.3% from Arts and Design, and 1% from Sports tracks. These strands most likely are less popular among high school students. Among the respondents, 1.6% graduated from Grade 12 with no specific strand, meaning there are high schools not covered by DepEd such as the secondary school programs from outside the Philippines.



With regards to the place of origin, UB freshmen are mostly from outside Baguio City, but within the Philippines (67.1%). Such results mean that college-bound students most likely leave their homes to attend to college. The figures further imply that the majority of students are not from Baguio City where UB is located and that only 31% of the respondents are from Baguio City. The University is likewise known to a few in other countries as manifested with 1.9% of the population coming from other countries.

As can be gleaned from Table 1, there are 481 or 26.2% of freshmen enrolled in the programs offered in the School of International Hotel and Tourism Management (SIHTM), the school with the highest number of freshmen enrollees. The results show that programs under SIHTM are more appealing to high school graduates than other programs offered by the University. A good number (268 or 14.59%) of respondents have chosen programs in the School of Natural Sciences (SNS), the school that has the 2nd highest number of freshmen enrollees. There are 205 (11.2%) freshmen enrollees who have interest in the programs of School of Criminal Justice, and Public Safety (SCJPS) and 95 (10.6%) chose programs offered in the School of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences (SLAHS). Further, 170 freshmen are interested in programs of the School of Engineering and Architecture (SEA), and another 169 students placed interest in the School of Dentistry (SOD) making up 9.3% and 9.2% of the respondents, respectively.

Moreover, the profile shows that there are students who are interested in the programs of School of Business Administration and Accountancy (SBAA), School of Information Technology (SIT), and School of Teacher Education (STE). These students make up 8.5%, 6.4%, and 4.1% of the population, respectively. The profile further depicts that, except for the high number of enrollees in SIHTM, SNS, and SCJPS, other programs share almost an equal number of freshmen in corresponding schools. The results did not reflect CHED's report on the five most sought-after courses in college, which are business administration-related, education, engineering, IT, and medical-allied programs (Malipot, 2017).



Correlation between school choice and high school strand

There is no significant correlation between the school choice and high school strand of UB college freshmen., $p > 0.05$. The data implies that graduating from specific strands in high school does not influence one's choice of program or school in college. Further, the results of the study correspond to the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) memorandum 105, s. 2017, which allows the admission of senior high graduates regardless of their strand or track.

The University of Baguio has an open-door policy and does not conduct a college entrance examination. Grade 12 graduates are welcome to apply in the programs regardless of their strands. There were no noted specific preparatory measures or screening of schools or programs given to students who had different tracks from the program or the school they are enrolled in as well. The results imply that learning experiences in the senior high strands do not necessarily influence the decision-making process in college choice.

Freshmen's level of agreement on reasons for choosing UB

Table 2 depicts the respondents' level of agreement on reasons for choosing the University of Baguio.

The college freshmen strongly agree that UB's academic history, location, program offering, and open-door policy are reasons for choosing UB. The freshmen's topmost basis was the variety of programs offered by the University, ($M = 3.46$). UB schools combined offer a total of 45 programs to choose from. This variety suits the different interests of college-bound students. Qunitillan-bugas (2006) discussed that most students know what they want to take in college. They prefer universities that offer and specialize in the course of their choice.



Table 2

Level of Agreement of UB college freshmen on reasons for choosing UB

Indicators	N	M	SD	Descriptive Interpretation
1. I choose UB because of				
a. Reputation	1837	3.30	0.67	Strongly Agree
b. Academic History	1837	3.30	0.69	Strongly Agree
c. Location	1837	3.34	0.76	Strongly Agree
d. Scholarship Grants	1837	3.02	0.87	Agree
e. Modern Facilities	1837	3.09	0.76	Agree
f. Program Offering	1837	3.46	0.63	Strongly Agree
g. Open Door Policy	1837	3.38	0.82	Strongly Agree
h. Faculty's Academic Reputation	1837	3.20	0.71	Agree

The respondents agreed that the faculty's academic reputation, UB's modern facilities, and scholarship grants also influenced them to choose UB but to a lesser extent than the variety in its programs. This result may imply that these indicators were not considered as primary reasons for choosing UB.

The ANOVA revealed a significant difference in the level of agreement of UB college freshmen on reasons for choosing UB according to gender, $p < 0.05$. Gender differences in college choice are very complex, and no simple explanation can be provided for them. The analysis presented in this paper tries to enhance our understanding of these issues.

Specifically, the mean values for the lesbian gender are significantly higher in areas of UB's reputation ($p = 0.001$), and academic history ($p = 0.003$). The data means that UB could have been known to have a welcoming culture to accept first-year students of all gender types, which include the LGBTQ group. Wheeler (2019) mentioned that a school's perspectives on diversity and inclusion, the presence of other LGBTQ community members, values at the board level, and legal protections all play a role for LGBTQ individuals in their perceptions of acceptance in a school environment. Furthermore,



this result could mean that the lesbians in this study have known UB to produce successful individuals of the same-gender types in the programs they have chosen.

On the other hand, the mean values for female gender are higher on the reasons of UB's location ($p = 0.002$) and program offering ($p = 0.013$). Females significantly agree that a University's location is a factor in choosing a school to enroll. It could mean that females agree that UB's place in the heart of the city is a safe and comfortable school environment, conducive for learning, accessible and probably near from the female students' hometowns. The results agree with the study on gender and difference in distance traveled to college, where it discussed that more females tend to stay closer to home than males (Mattern & Wyatt, 2009).

The data reflect that females agreed that a variety of programs offered in the University is a significant factor in choosing UB. A study showed that females enroll in programs that generally conform to feminine norms. The level of conformity to specific feminine standards, including the norms for being relationship-oriented, caring for children, and being domestic, is related to the postsecondary field of study, especially for choosing a major in arts and humanities, business, communication and journalism (Beutel, Burge & Borden, 2018). Though this study is limited in looking into the number of enrollees in programs by gender type, it could be inferred that the females dominate programs related to some of the mentioned feminine norms supported by Beutel, Burge, and Borden (2018).

The mean value for the male gender is higher in the area of the University's open-door policy, ($p = 0.046$). The results indicate that male students agree that the open admissions strategy of the University is a significant factor in the male student population's college choice. Open admissions could provide more equality for all students, regardless of how academically prepared they are.



Overall, since $t(1835) = -1.416$ and $p > 0.05$, then there is no significant difference in the level of agreement of the respondents on reasons for choosing UB according to the type of high school attended. The result implies that, regardless of high school completion from either a public or a private school, the freshmen strongly agree on the reasons for choosing UB over other schools. The results of the study of Quintillan-bugas (2006) on certain qualities of a University that private high school students consider seems similar to the interest of students from public high schools. The students coming from either public or private high schools choose UB for its reputation, academic history, location, scholarship grants, modern facilities, program offering, and open-door policy.

Since $F(7,1829) = 2.475$ and $p = 0.16 < 0.05$, then there is a significant difference in the level of agreement of UB college freshmen on reasons for choosing UB according to the type of high school strand. Notably, the mean value for sports track is significantly higher in areas of UB's reputation ($p = 0.001$), academic history ($p = 0.012$), scholarship grants ($p = 0.002$), and faculty academic reputation. This is attributed to UB as a great training ground for athletes in various sports. Athletes are recruited as university scholars. The University has harvested numerous awards and recognitions locally and internationally in the athletic field. Several alumni have done feats in their respective sports. Many of them have become great athletes, instructors or coaches. These could be the reasons why these factors are significantly appealing to freshmen from the sports track. The data also show a significantly higher mean value for the GAS strand on the area of modern facilities ($p=0.006$). This means that freshmen who graduated from the GAS strand considered UB's modern facilities as an essential reason for enrolling in UB.

The result, $F(2,1834) = 3.093$ and $p < 0.05$, shows that there is a significant difference in the respondents' level of agreement on reasons for choosing UB in relation to their place of origin. Specifically, the mean value for respondents outside Baguio but within the Philippines is higher in the



areas of UB's academic history ($p=0.003$), modern facilities ($p=0.004$) and faculty's academic reputation ($p=0.002$). The results mean that UB's academic history is well-recognized throughout the country and that this entices students to choose the University of Baguio. The University sees to it that its facilities are up-to-date and likewise assures a highly qualified pool of faculty members. These resources significantly attract freshmen from different cities and provinces outside Baguio City.

A study by Manski and Wise (1983) revealed that an important factor in student predisposition to attend college is the proximity of the higher education institution to home. It was found that a low-cost, nearby college was a vital stimulator of a student's decision to further his or her education. Shanka, Quintal, and Taylor (2005) also found that the location of an institution has a significant influence on the college choice decision.

Since $F(9,1827) = 5.946$ and $p = 0.000 < 0.05$, then there is a significant difference in the level of agreement among respondents on the reasons for enrolling in UB according to school. Mostly, the mean value of first-year students from SIHTM is significantly higher in the areas of the University's reputation ($p = 0.000$) and the presence of modern facilities. The University has been known in the fields of hospitality and tourism industries. The SIHTM is tagged as the "home of champions" indicating that UB has been successful in making its mark in the field. Students who enrolled in SIHTM programs were attracted to such reputation; hence, they chose UB for college. The SIHTM is equipped with state-of-the-art facilities which inspired respondents to enroll in UB.

The results also show that there is a significantly higher mean value for freshmen in STE on the areas of UB's location ($p = 0.000$), scholarship grants ($p = 0.000$), and the faculty's academic reputation ($p = 0.003$). The data mean that freshmen looked into a University's location, scholarship grants, and faculty academic reputation as vital reasons in choosing UB.

On the other hand, the mean value for respondents in SLAHS is significantly



higher in the area of program offering ($p = 0.000$) by the University, which means that the program offering has convinced them to come to UB.

A mean value for students in SOD is significantly higher in the area of the University's academic history ($p = 0.000$). The University has produced a number of topnotchers and top-ranking school status for the Dentistry program for years, and the history of the program for such endeavors have significantly motivated SOD freshmen to come to the University of Baguio. Students evaluate programs based on the following criteria: a selection of courses (Qureshi, 1995); availability of courses and entry requirements (Bourke, 2000); quality and variety of education (Shanka, Quintal & Taylor, 2005).

Conclusion and Recommendation

Choosing UB is dependent on the inherent individual qualities of the college freshmen as well as on the characteristics and services of the University of Baguio. The University of Baguio must be responsive to the students' needs and selection criteria to deliver quality services. As such, a clearer understanding of their needs and preferences in college through the conduct of needs assessments, surveys, or researches may be undertaken.

By using the data from the study, the University can revise its marketing strategy to attract more and retain students such as maximizing mass and social media to advertise UB programs and services. On promoting the programs during the career guidance enrollment, the academic advisers must focus on the significant factors that have influenced the students to enroll in UB.

Based on the freshmen's profile, there were evident gender gaps among UB's freshmen. Hence, further studies on college preferences per gender type are needed to increase understanding on the factors that affect their college and program choices.



The University has attracted more students from private high schools; therefore, the partnership with private high schools for UB career guidance endeavors is successful and needs to be sustained. It needs to work towards attracting high school students from public schools such as inviting them to open house events.

UB is popular to college freshmen from the STEM strand. Thus, UB has to undertake measures should it want to attract other high school strands. At the same time, UB may wish to concentrate on enriching program offerings and supporting programs that attract students from the STEM strand. Meanwhile, the college programs in SIHTM are more appealing to freshmen. It is recommended that other schools have to further strategize on their program offering and promotion activities to attract more high school students to choose UB for college.

UB is well-known to college-bound students from neighboring cities and provinces. Thus, marketing endeavors to reach other out-of-town high schools are effective and must persist.

The freshmen strongly agree that UB has a remarkable academic history, great location, diverse program offering, and open-door policy that made them choose UB over other higher education institutions



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