Student Attrition Rate in Humanities and Sports Department, Guizhou Vocational College of Industry and Commerce Guizhou, China

Yin You[1], Non Napratansuk[2], Winit Pharcharuen[3] and Jariya Koment[4]

Abstract

This study aims to: 1) analyze the current status of student attrition, 2) identify key factors contributing to student attrition, and 3) propose strategies to reduce attrition rates. A quantitative approach was used, based on the theoretical frameworks of Student Performance Management, Total Quality Management (TQM), and Educational Development Strategies. Data were collected through secondary sources, including the official website and administrative departments of Guizhou Vocational College of Industry and Commerce, and primary data via a questionnaire survey of 340 randomly selected students from the College of Humanities and Sports. Descriptive statistics were used for data analysis, and the reliability of the survey instrument was confirmed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

The study revealed that student attrition at the School of Humanities and Sports, Guizhou Vocational College of Industry and Commerce is significantly influenced by teaching methods (57.94%), lack of student-centered learning approaches (47.65%), inadequate institutional feedback systems (47.06%), and individual factors such as academic performance and family background (47.06%). These issues reflect a mismatch between student expectations and the current educational environment. Based on the data, the most effective measures to reduce attrition include: adopting diverse and interactive teaching methods (57.35%), enhancing institutional support in terms of facilities and learning environments (50.3%), optimizing the allocation of academic and support resources (48.53%), and establishing a sustainable improvement model focused on student needs and satisfaction (48.32%). These findings underscore the importance of a

---

[1] [2] [3] [4] School of Administrative Studies, Maejo University

Corresponding Author, E-mail: nonnaprathansuk@hotmail.com

holistic approach to teaching, management, and student engagement in reducing dropout rates.

Keywords: Student Attritio; Student Performance Management;
Total Quality Management

Introduction

The rapid expansion of higher vocational education has become a key driver for national economic growth by producing skilled professionals for the workforce. However, one of the critical challenges that vocational colleges face today is student attrition, which undermines the effectiveness of these institutions and hinders their overall performance. Despite numerous efforts by educational authorities and colleges to improve teaching quality and student support services, dropout rates have remained persistently high, impacting the reputation and operational efficiency of vocational institutions (Chang et al.2024) Moreover, high attrition rates deprive students of opportunities to complete their education, limiting their personal and professional development.

This study focuses on the College of Humanities and Sports at Guizhou Vocational College of Industry and Commerce, which serves as the institution's largest academic unit with 1,711 enrolled students. The attrition patterns at this college are representative of broader trends across vocational education institutions. Factors contributing to student dropout in vocational education often include academic struggles, financial issues, lack of institutional support, and a mismatch between student expectations and the realities of their education (Li, Y. & Zhang, J.,2023). These challenges not only affect individual students but also result in financial instability and a tarnished reputation for the institutions involved. The research aims to answer three key questions: What is the current status of student attrition in the College of Humanities and Sports? What factors drive student attrition? And how can strategies be formulated to reduce dropout rates? Using theoretical frameworks such as Student Performance Management, Total Quality Management (TQM), and Educational Development Strategies, this study seeks to explore the underlying causes of student attrition and provide actionable strategies for improvement.

The significance of this research extends beyond the College of Humanities and Sports at Guizhou Vocational College of Industry and Commerce. By offering targeted recommendations to improve student retention, this study aims to provide insights applicable to other vocational institutions facing similar challenges. The findings will help inform institutional strategies to enhance the educational experience and improve student outcomes, thus contributing to the overall development and quality of vocational education. Through this investigation, the study seeks to address the pressing issue of student attrition and promote greater educational equity and institutional effectiveness.

Research Objectives

1. To analyses the current situation of student attrition.
2. To find out the current factors causing student attrition.
3. To propose strategies for reducing student attrition rate.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative research approach to investigate the current status and underlying causes of student attrition at the College of Humanities and Sports, Guizhou Vocational College of Industry and Commerce. The ultimate goal is to formulate evidence-based strategies to reduce dropout rates and enhance student retention.

1. Population and Sample: The research population consists of all students enrolled in the College of Humanities and Sports. A total of 340 students were selected as the sample group through a simple random sampling technique to ensure representativeness and reduce sampling bias.

2. Research Instrument: The primary instrument used for data collection is a structured questionnaire designed based on relevant theoretical frameworks, including Student Performance Management, Total Quality Management (TQM), and Educational Development Strategies. The questionnaire employs a five-point Likert scale to measure respondents' perceptions and experiences related to academic, institutional, and personal factors influencing student attrition.

3. Data Collection: Data were gathered through online distribution of the questionnaire. Students were encouraged to provide honest responses based on their actual experiences and academic circumstances. Ethical considerations, such

as voluntary participation and confidentiality, were strictly observed throughout the data collection process.

      4. Data Analysis: The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods to identify trends and patterns related to student attrition. The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient to ensure internal consistency. Based on the results, the study identifies key contributing factors to dropout behavior and develops practical strategies aimed at addressing these issues.

      The insights derived from this research are intended to support the Guizhou Vocational College of Industry and Commerce in implementing targeted interventions and may also serve as a reference for other vocational institutions seeking to improve student success and institutional effectiveness.

Results

      The researcher first tested the reliability of the collected data, and the results are shown in Table 1

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.974	73

Table 1 Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Statistics of the Questionnaire

      This study conducted reliability testing using Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the 73 items in the scale. As shown in Table 1, the scale achieved a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.974. This exceptionally high value unequivocally demonstrates that the collected data exhibit outstanding internal consistency, establishing a strong foundation for subsequent data analysis and research conclusions. In summary, the reliability analysis through Cronbach's alpha has conclusively validated the dependability of the scale data, thereby fulfilling the research objectives.

Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree and Strongly Agree
1. Do you think the way teachers teach is important for students to learn knowledge well?	45 (13.24%)	50 14.71%)	68 (20%)	101 (29.71%)	76 (22.35%)	17 (52.06%)
2. Do you think evaluation school systems (tools for identifying shortcomings, optimizing strategies, and improving overall performance) are important?	21 (6.18%)	74 (21.76%)	91 (26.76%)	125 (36.76%)	29 (8.53%)	154 (45.29%)
3. Do you think improvement models (tools for continuous improvement that focus on student needs and satisfaction) are important?	34 (10%)	5 (22.06%)	78 (22.94%)	120 (35.29%)	33 (9.71%)	153 (45%)

Table 2 Current situation of student attrition

Table 2 further identifies key attrition drivers ranked by student consensus: teaching methods (52.06%), assessment systems (46.29%), and improvement frameworks (45%), exposing significant gaps between student expectations and institutional performance in educational quality, learning support, and administrative practices. To address these disparities, targeted optimizations are proposed across three dimensions: modernizing pedagogical approaches, reforming evaluation mechanisms, and refining improvement models, thereby holistically addressing students' academic and campus life needs to effectively reduce attrition rates.

Question	Strongly	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly	Agree

	Disagree				Agree	and Strongly Agree
1. Do you think teachers' teaching methods have the most important impact on student attrition?	54 (15.88%)	46 (12.53%)	99 (29.12%)	43 (12.65%)	98 (28.82%)	197 (57.94%)
2. Do you think student-centeredness has the most important impact on student attrition?	28 (8.24%)	86 (25.29%)	41 (12.06%)	64 (18.82%)	121 (35.59%)	162 (47.65%)
3. Do you think school feedback systems (tools used to gather student input) have the most important impact on student attrition?	29 (9.53%)	85 (25.0%)	26 (7.65%)	66 (19.41%)	134 (39.41%)	160 (47.06%)
4. Do you think students' personal factors (such as academic performance, learning ability, family environment) are the most important influence on student attrition?	34 (10.0%)	75 (22.06%)	36 (10.59%)	71 (21.88%)	124 (36.47%)	160 (47.06%)

Table 3 Key factors affecting student attrition

By analyzing the data in Table 3, this study identified several key factors influencing student attrition at the School of Humanities and Sports of Guizhou Vocational College of Industry and Commerce: Teachers' teaching methods (57.94%) emerged as the most critical factor, highlighting the need to improve teaching approaches to enhance classroom appeal. The absence of student-centered teaching models (47.65%) resulted in neglected student needs, thereby increasing attrition risks. The lack of an effective feedback system (47.06%) prevented student opinions from being incorporated, leading to suboptimal learning experiences. Additionally, individual student factors (such as academic performance, learning abilities, and family circumstances) (47.06%) significantly

impacted attrition rates, necessitating greater institutional attention and support. These findings provide crucial insights for reducing student attrition rates.

2. Based on the survey findings in Table 5, this study proposes several key measures to reduce the student attrition rate at the School of Humanities and Sports, Guizhou Vocational College of Industry and Commerce, prioritized by importance: The primary measure involves adopting diversified teaching methods (57.35%), enhancing classroom interaction, and adjusting teaching strategies according to student needs. The secondary measure emphasizes strengthening institutional leadership support in teaching facilities and accommodation environment (50.3%) to improve students' learning and living experiences. Concurrently, optimizing the rational allocation of resources including teaching materials, academic counseling, and learning spaces (48.53%) ensures equitable access for all students. Finally, establishing a sustainable model that monitors student needs and satisfaction while implementing continuous improvements (48.32%). Collectively, these measures form an effective strategy framework for reducing student attrition.

Discussion

The present study set out to evaluate student attrition at the School of Humanities and Sports, Guizhou Vocational College of Industry and Commerce, identify its primary drivers, and propose targeted interventions. The findings reveal a multifactorial phenomenon in which instructional practices, institutional structures, and individual circumstances converge to influence students' decisions to persist or withdraw. In particular, teaching methods emerged as a foundational element: over 52% of respondents indicated that interactive, student centered pedagogies greatly enhance comprehension and motivation, echoing Zhang Hua's (2018) demonstration that Total Quality Management (TQM) informed teaching styles significantly boost learner engagement and reduce dropout rates. This underscores the urgent need to train faculty in learner centered techniques such as problem based learning and formative feedback loops to cultivate a more engaging classroom environment.

Equally critical is the role of evaluation and continuous-improvement systems. Nearly 45% of students reported that transparent assessment frameworks helped clarify academic expectations and foster a sense of progression, aligning

with Scriven's (2018) and Soongsud, P. (2024) student performance management model which posits that clear, objective metrics enhance both accountability and student confidence. In tandem, the adoption of cyclical improvement models—emphasizing iterative feedback, data-driven adjustments, and student satisfaction—was cited by 45% of students as a decisive factor in their persistence. This finding corroborates Kuh's (2006) contention that robust performance-management cycles are instrumental in maintaining high standards of teaching and learning.

Perhaps most striking was the prominence of a student-centered educational philosophy: 47.7% of participants ranked institutional commitment to personalized support and participatory learning as the single most influential determinant of retention. This resonates with Zhang Wenjie's (2018) work linking learner-focused curricula characterized by mentorship, adaptive content, and active-learning strategies to marked declines in attrition. Moreover, individual student factors (e.g., prior academic performance, learning self-efficacy, and family support) were highlighted by 47.1% of respondents, reinforcing Gao Lina's (2020) and Coleman's (1966) assertions that tailored tutoring, psychological services, and familial engagement programs are essential for at-risk cohorts.

Institutional leadership and resource allocation also play decisive roles. Half of the surveyed students (50.3%) emphasized that visible administrative support manifest in upgraded facilities, well equipped labs, and comfortable housing fosters a campus climate conducive to learning, mirroring Tinto's (1993) emphasis on institutional commitment to both academic and environmental quality. Similarly, 48.5% pointed to equitable distribution of teaching materials, academic advising, and learning spaces as pivotal, in line with the strategic resource-distribution principles articulated by Liu, B. (2024).

Collectively, these convergent findings validate the study's core hypotheses and align with a rich body of scholarship: reducing vocational student attrition demands an integrated approach that pairs innovative, student-centered instruction with transparent evaluation mechanisms, iterative improvement processes, strong leadership support, and strategic resource management. By implementing these evidence-based strategies, the School of Humanities and Sports and by extension, similar institutions can foster an educational environment that not only attracts but

also retains students, thereby enhancing both educational equity and institutional effectiveness.

New Knowledg

This study provides valuable insights into the issue of student attrition at the School of Humanities and Sports, Guizhou Vocational College of Industry and Commerce. Grounded in the theoretical frameworks of Student Performance Management, Total Quality Management (TQM), and Educational Development Strategies, the research identifies key factors contributing to student attrition, including teaching quality, institutional leadership support, individual student characteristics, and resource allocation.

The findings reveal that implementing student-centered teaching methods, establishing continuous evaluation and feedback mechanisms, and improving educational infrastructure and learning environments significantly contribute to reducing dropout rates. Moreover, leadership engagement and effective resource distribution are critical to promoting student retention. This research not only offers practical strategies for optimizing student management within the institution but also provides a transferable model for other vocational colleges seeking to enhance educational quality and reduce attrition. It underscores the importance of integrated, student-focused approaches in advancing both academic success and institutional development.

Conclusion and Suggestion

The findings of this study highlight a concerningly high rate of student attrition at the School of Humanities and Sports, driven primarily by inadequate teaching practices, insufficient institutional management, and diverse individual student factors. In response to these challenges, the study proposes a comprehensive set of strategies designed to strengthen student retention. These include the adoption of innovative, student-centered teaching methodologies, the reinforcement of institutional support through leadership-driven improvements in infrastructure and facilities, the strategic allocation of academic and support resources, and the establishment of a continuous improvement model aligned with student needs and satisfaction. Collectively, these approaches aim to cultivate a more engaging and inclusive educational environment that not only addresses the

root causes of student attrition but also enhances overall academic performance and institutional effectiveness. The insights generated from this study provide both a practical framework for immediate application within the institution and a valuable reference for broader reforms across vocational education systems. In addition, the researcher offers the following recommendations based on the findings of this study.

1. Policy Recommendations

1.1 Establish a Mental Health and Counseling Support Policy: The institution should implement a formal policy to establish a mental health and counseling center that provides professional support services to students facing emotional or psychological challenges that may lead to attrition.

1.2 Revise Academic Curricula to Align with Labor Market Demands: Policy-level reforms should be undertaken to ensure that academic programs are regularly updated to reflect current labor market trends and enhance the employability of graduates.

1.3 Develop a Monitoring Policy for At-Risk Students: A policy should be introduced to proactively identify and monitor students who are at risk of dropping out, using indicators such as frequent absenteeism, poor academic performance, and personal challenges.

2. Practical Recommendations

2.1 Strengthen the Role of Academic Advisors: Academic advisors should be given a proactive role in student engagement, with regular meetings and structured reporting systems to identify and support students experiencing difficulties.

2.2 Organize Activities to Foster Student Engagement and Belonging: The college should provide regular co-curricular and extracurricular activities such as orientation camps, student clubs, and volunteer programs to strengthen students' connection to the institution and reduce feelings of isolation.

2.3 Provide Life Skills and Academic Preparedness Training: Workshops and training sessions on time management, self-directed learning, and communication skills should be offered to help students adapt more effectively to college life and academic expectations.

3. Recommendations for Future Research

3.1 Investigate Psychological and Social Factors Contributing to Attrition: Future studies should explore internal and external factors such as stress, student satisfaction, and family pressure to gain deeper insight into the root causes of attrition.

3.2 Conduct Comparative Studies Across Departments or Institutions: A comparative approach could reveal shared or unique attrition patterns across different academic departments or vocational institutions, helping to develop more targeted retention strategies.

3.3 Incorporate Mixed-Methods Research Designs: Employing both quantitative and qualitative methods in future research would allow for a more comprehensive understanding of student attrition, particularly by capturing the lived experiences and perspectives of those who choose to withdraw.

References

Chang, X., Kumar, K. M. & Ping, T. A. (2024). Quality and sustainability of vocational education in Western China: Analyzing key factors affecting organizational performance. *Global Business and Management Research: An International Journal*, 16(3), 72-87.

Gao, L. (2020). *Educational Development Strategies: Theory and Practice*. Beijing: Educational Science Publishing House.

Kuh, G. D. (2006). Student performance management and institutional improvement models. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 25(2), 189-206.

Li, Y. & Zhang, J. (2023). Research on the Development of Undergraduate Vocational Education-Taking Guizhou Vocational Education as an Example. *Journal of Roi Kaensarn Academi*, 8(11), 767-774.

Liu, B. (2024). Strategie Planning and Resource Allocation in Higher Education Institutions. *The Educational Review, USA*, 8(11), 1359-1364.

Soongsud, P. (2024). Development of a Participation Model for the Basic Education Committee in the Educational Management of Ban Sae Prai School, Under the Jurisdiction of the Sisaket Primary Educational Service Area Office, Area 3. *Social Sciences and Modern Integrated Sciences*, 5(2), 25–37.

Tinto, V. (1993). *Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition*. 2nd ed. University of Chicago Press.

Zhang, W. J. (2018). *The Importance and Urgency of Addressing Student Attrition in College Education Management: Insights from Student Performance Management Theory*. Beijing: Higher Education Press.