

Towards Sustainable Enrollment and Revenue: A Qualitative Study with Benchmarking for the School of Business in a Faith-Based Institution

Jahnstela Roxas Lumalang

<https://orcid.org/0009-0005-5534-7815>

jahnstelarlumalang@gmail.com/jrlumalang@mac.edu.ph

Philippine Christian University

1648 Taft Avenue, Malate, Manila 1004 Metro Manila, Philippines

Abstract

This qualitative exploratory study investigates the sustainability of enrollment and revenue in the School of Business at a faith-based higher education institution in the Philippines, addressing the challenges posed by intensified competition, shifting student expectations, and limited financial resources. The objective of the study is to identify the factors influencing student enrollment and their correlation with revenue performance, while also examining strategic initiatives that can support long-term institutional viability. Guided by Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM), the Resource-Based View (RBV), and Market Positioning Theory, the research focused on tuition fees, institutional reputation, marketing strategies, geographic location, and financial aid as critical variables. Methods included in-depth interviews with institutional administrators and a benchmarking institution, complemented by focus group discussions with current students. Thematic analysis revealed that while tuition is competitive, affordability remains a barrier; institutional reputation is positively shaped by its faith-based identity but underutilized in marketing; financial aid improves access but lacks inclusivity; and the urban location enhances accessibility but raises safety concerns. Results further indicated that revenue is heavily tuition-dependent, leaving the institution vulnerable to enrollment fluctuations, with cross-subsidization serving only as a temporary measure. Benchmarking insights highlighted the importance of diversifying income streams, expanding academic offerings, adopting digital platforms, strengthening industry linkages, and engaging alumni networks. The study concludes that sustainable enrollment and revenue require an integrated enrollment-financial management system, stronger value-driven branding, and the institutionalization of best practices aligned with mission and market needs.

Keywords: business management; enrollment and revenue sustainability; qualitative exploratory and benchmarking; Philippines