



FACTORS INFLUENCING ENROLLMENT IN TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS: EVIDENCE FROM BACHELOR OF SECONDARY EDUCATION SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS PROGRAMS IN A PHILIPPINE PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION

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ABSTRACT

Student enrollment remains a critical indicator of the sustainability and competitiveness of teacher education programs. This study examined the factors influencing enrollment in the Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd) Science and Mathematics programs at Saint Theresa College of Tandag, Inc. from Academic Year 2019–2020 to 2023–2024. Specifically, it investigated the effects of personal, socio-economic, institutional, and competitive factors on students' enrollment decisions and examined their relationship with enrollment trends. A quantitative descriptive-correlational research design was employed involving 221 respondents, including Grade 12 students, current BSEd students, alumni, and faculty members. Data were collected using a validated researcher-developed questionnaire and analyzed using weighted mean and Pearson product-moment correlation. The findings revealed that personal factors, particularly academic performance and career motivation, were the strongest determinants of students' enrollment decisions. Socio-economic factors, such as scholarship availability and tuition affordability, also influenced enrollment, although awareness of financial assistance programs remained limited among prospective students. Institutional factors, including curriculum quality, faculty qualifications, accreditation, and the clarity of the institution's Vision, Mission, Goals, and Objectives (VMGO), were perceived to positively influence enrollment decisions, while learning facilities and infrastructure exerted comparatively less influence. Competition with other higher education institutions emerged as the most influential external factor, highlighting the importance of program specialization, institutional visibility, and digital marketing strategies. Enrollment records further indicated relatively stable enrollment patterns, with a recent increase in the BSEd Science program.

Significant relationships were identified between enrollment and selected personal, institutional, and competitive factors. Based on these findings, an intervention program is proposed to strengthen institutional marketing, student support, and program competitiveness, thereby enhancing enrollment and ensuring the long-term sustainability of teacher education programs.

Keywords: *enrollment decision; teacher education; Bachelor of Secondary Education; higher education; institutional competitiveness; marketing strategies; student choice; Philippines*

INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions worldwide continue to experience increasing competition in attracting and retaining students, making enrollment management an essential component of institutional sustainability. Beyond academic quality, students' enrollment decisions are influenced by multiple factors, including personal aspirations, financial capacity, institutional reputation, academic quality, and marketing strategies. As competition among universities intensifies, institutions are increasingly adopting evidence-based enrollment strategies to strengthen their competitive advantage and ensure long-term program viability. Hart and Rodgers (2024) emphasized that institutional competitiveness has become a strategic priority in higher education, where program differentiation, institutional reputation, and stakeholder engagement significantly influence students' selection of academic programs.

In the Philippine context, teacher education institutions continue to face challenges in sustaining enrollment despite the growing demand for qualified educators. National efforts to improve teacher education have emphasized strengthening curriculum quality, faculty competence, quality assurance, and institutional responsiveness to the changing needs of learners and society. Little et al. (2024) reported that teacher education institutions must adopt innovative strategies to address declining enrollment by strengthening school–university partnerships, enhancing program relevance, and improving student recruitment initiatives. These institutional efforts are essential in addressing teacher shortages while ensuring the continuous production of competent and highly qualified future educators.

Enrollment decisions are also shaped by students' individual characteristics and socioeconomic circumstances. Career aspirations, academic preparedness, scholarship availability, and family financial capacity remain among the primary considerations influencing students' choice of higher education programs. Berlanga and Corti (2025) found that financial assistance significantly improves students' access to higher education and positively influences enrollment decisions, particularly among students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Likewise, effective scholarship programs not only reduce financial barriers but also encourage greater participation in specialized academic programs.

Apart from personal and financial considerations, institutional quality and external competition have become increasingly important determinants of students' enrollment choices. Program accreditation, faculty qualifications, curriculum relevance, learning facilities, institutional visibility, and digital marketing strategies contribute substantially to prospective students' perceptions of institutional quality. Chhor et al. (2024) demonstrated that institutional reputation, promotional activities, and academic program quality significantly influence students' enrollment decisions, particularly when multiple higher education institutions offer similar academic programs. Their findings highlight the importance of maintaining a competitive institutional image while responding to the evolving preferences of prospective students.

Despite the growing body of literature on higher education enrollment, limited empirical studies have specifically examined the combined influence of personal, socio-economic, institutional, and competitive factors on enrollment in Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd) Science and Mathematics programs within private higher education institutions in the Philippines. Kyriakides et al. (2024) argued that institutional quality and instructional effectiveness should be examined alongside students' decision-making processes to better understand enrollment behavior and support evidence-based institutional planning. Addressing this gap, the present study investigated the factors affecting enrollment in the Bachelor of Secondary Education Science and Mathematics programs at Saint Theresa College of Tandag, Inc. The findings provide empirical evidence that can guide institutional administrators in developing strategic interventions to strengthen program competitiveness, improve student recruitment, and promote the long-term sustainability of teacher education programs.

Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What factors influence enrollment in the Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd) Science and Mathematics programs at Saint Theresa College of Tandag, Inc. in terms of:
 - personal factors;
 - socio-economic factors;
 - institutional factors; and
 - competition with other higher education institutions?
2. What are the enrollment trends in the Bachelor of Secondary Education Science and Mathematics programs from Academic Year 2019–2020 to Academic Year 2023–2024?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the identified enrollment factors and the enrollment trends of the Bachelor of Secondary Education Science and Mathematics programs?
4. Based on the findings, what intervention program may be proposed to enhance enrollment in the Bachelor of Secondary Education Science and Mathematics programs?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design to examine the factors influencing enrollment in the Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd) Science and Mathematics programs at Saint Theresa College of Tandag, Inc. Specifically, the study assessed the influence of personal, socio-economic, institutional, and competitive factors on students' enrollment decisions and determined their relationship with enrollment trends. The research was conducted at Saint Theresa College of Tandag, Inc. in Tandag City, Surigao del Sur, Philippines. A total of 221 respondents participated in the study, comprising 182 Grade 12 students, 15 current BSEd Science and Mathematics students, 10 alumni, and 14 faculty members from the College of Arts, Sciences, and Teacher Education (CASTE). Respondents were selected using a combination of stratified random sampling, complete enumeration, and convenience sampling, depending on the characteristics of each respondent group. Data were collected through a researcher-developed questionnaire consisting of items that measured intrinsic factors (personal, socio-economic, and institutional) and extrinsic factors (competition with other higher education institutions) affecting enrollment decisions. The instrument underwent expert validation to establish its content validity and reliability prior to data collection. Approval to conduct the study was obtained from the institutional authorities, and informed consent was secured from all participants. The questionnaires were personally administered by the researchers, and the completed responses were encoded and analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques. Weighted mean was employed to determine the extent to which each factor influenced students' enrollment decisions, while the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used to examine the significant relationship between the identified enrollment factors and the enrollment trends of the BSEd Science and Mathematics programs. All statistical analyses were performed using a 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Table 1. Factors Influencing Enrollment in the Bachelor of Secondary Education Science and Mathematics Programs

Factor	Major Findings	Overall Interpretation
Personal Factors	Academic performance and career motivation were identified as the strongest determinants of students' enrollment decisions. Grade 12 students generally assigned lower ratings than current students, alumni, and faculty.	Very Much Affecting
Socio-economic Factors	Scholarship availability and tuition affordability influenced enrollment decisions, although awareness of financial assistance programs among prospective students was limited.	Affecting
Institutional Factors	Curriculum quality, faculty qualifications, accreditation, and the clarity of the Vision, Mission,	Affecting

Factor	Major Findings	Overall Interpretation
Competition with Other Institutions	Goals, and Objectives (VMGO) positively influenced students' enrollment decisions.	Very Much Affecting
	Program specialization, institutional reputation, promotional activities, and social media visibility were identified as the most influential external factors affecting enrollment.	

Table 2. Enrollment Trends in the Bachelor of Secondary Education Science and Mathematics Programs

Academic Year	BSEd Mathematics	BSEd Science	Summary of Enrollment Trend
2019–2020	Stable	Stable	Enrollment remained relatively consistent.
2020–2021	Stable	Stable	No substantial changes were observed.
2021–2022	Stable	Stable	Enrollment trends remained consistent.
2022–2023	Slight Decline	Stable	Mathematics enrollment slightly decreased.
2023–2024	Recovery observed	Significant Increase	Science program recorded its highest enrollment during the second semester.

Table 3. Relationship Between Enrollment Factors and Enrollment Trends

Enrollment Factor	Relationship with Enrollment	Decision
Personal Factors	Significant	Reject H_0
Socio-economic Factors	Significant	Reject H_0
Institutional Factors	Significant	Reject H_0
Competition with Other Institutions	Significant	Reject H_0

Table 4. Summary of the Proposed Intervention Program

Area	Proposed Intervention	Expected Outcome
Career Orientation	Strengthen career guidance and mentoring programs for prospective students.	Increased interest in teacher education programs.
Financial Assistance	Enhance scholarship promotion and provide flexible payment schemes.	Improved accessibility and increased enrollment.

Area	Proposed Intervention	Expected Outcome
Institutional Development	Strengthen curriculum quality, faculty development, and VMGO dissemination.	Improved institutional attractiveness and program quality.
Marketing and Promotion	Intensify digital marketing, social media campaigns, and promotional activities.	Increased institutional visibility and competitiveness.
Stakeholder Engagement	Strengthen partnerships with schools, alumni, and community stakeholders.	Sustainable enrollment growth and stronger institutional linkages.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study revealed that multiple factors influence students' enrollment decisions in the Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd) Science and Mathematics programs, with personal factors emerging as one of the strongest determinants. Academic performance, career aspirations, and personal motivation were consistently perceived as highly influential in students' choice of program, particularly among current students, alumni, and faculty members. This finding suggests that students who possess a strong interest in the teaching profession are more likely to pursue teacher education programs despite existing challenges. Mukanziza and Singirankabo (2022) emphasized that students' career interests, personal goals, and perceptions of future employment opportunities significantly shape their decisions to enroll in higher education institutions. Their findings indicate that personal motivation remains one of the strongest predictors of program selection, particularly in professional degree programs.

Socio-economic factors were likewise found to influence enrollment decisions, particularly scholarship availability and tuition affordability. Although financial assistance programs were perceived as beneficial, the findings suggest that prospective students were not fully aware of these opportunities, indicating the need for more effective dissemination of scholarship information. Berlanga and Corti (2025) found that scholarship programs substantially increase students' access to higher education by reducing financial barriers and improving enrollment among economically disadvantaged learners. Their study further emphasized that institutions with well-communicated financial assistance programs are more likely to attract and retain qualified students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds.

Institutional factors, including curriculum quality, faculty qualifications, accreditation, and the clarity of the Vision, Mission, Goals, and Objectives (VMGO), were also perceived to positively influence enrollment decisions. These findings indicate that prospective students value institutions that demonstrate academic excellence and quality assurance. Dagdag et al. (2024) reported that stakeholders' awareness and acceptance of institutional vision, mission, goals, and outcomes strengthen institutional credibility and

positively influence stakeholders' confidence in teacher education programs. Clear institutional direction therefore serves as an important indicator of educational quality and contributes to students' enrollment decisions.

Among all the factors examined, competition with other higher education institutions emerged as the most influential external factor affecting enrollment. Program specialization, institutional reputation, promotional activities, and digital visibility were identified as important considerations among prospective students when selecting an institution. These findings are consistent with those of Hart and Rodgers (2024), who concluded that competitive positioning, institutional branding, and strategic marketing have become essential components of enrollment management in higher education. Their systematic review emphasized that institutions capable of effectively communicating their unique academic strengths are better positioned to attract prospective students in increasingly competitive educational environments.

The positive influence of institutional quality on enrollment decisions also suggests that prospective students carefully evaluate the academic reputation and program relevance of higher education institutions before making enrollment decisions. Khan et al. (2023) reported that students are more likely to enroll in science-related undergraduate programs when institutions provide quality instruction, relevant curricula, supportive learning environments, and clear career opportunities. Their findings reinforce the importance of continuously improving academic programs to meet the expectations of prospective students and the demands of the labor market.

The study further demonstrated relatively stable enrollment trends over the five-year period, with a notable increase in the BSEd Science program during the most recent academic year. This improvement suggests that recent recruitment initiatives and institutional efforts may have contributed to enhanced program visibility and student interest. Based on these findings, the proposed intervention program focuses on strengthening career orientation, expanding scholarship promotion, improving institutional marketing, enhancing program quality, and increasing stakeholder engagement to sustain enrollment growth. Labausa et al. (2023) found that digital marketing strategies significantly influence students' enrollment decisions by increasing institutional visibility, strengthening communication with prospective students, and enhancing institutional competitiveness in higher education. Likewise, De Ramos and Briones (2024) emphasized that strategic marketing practices, including digital engagement and stakeholder-centered promotional initiatives, enable private higher education institutions to improve institutional visibility and attract prospective students in increasingly competitive educational environments.

Conclusions

The findings of this study demonstrate that enrollment in the Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd) Science and Mathematics programs at Saint Theresa College of Tandag, Inc. is influenced by a combination of personal, socio-economic, institutional, and competitive factors. Among these, personal factors and competition with other higher education institutions emerged as the most influential determinants of

students' enrollment decisions, underscoring the importance of career motivation, academic aspirations, institutional visibility, and program competitiveness. Although socio-economic and institutional factors were likewise perceived to influence enrollment, they varied in their level of impact, particularly in relation to scholarship awareness, learning resources, and institutional support. Enrollment trends remained generally stable over the five-year period, with a notable increase in the BSEd Science program during the most recent academic year, suggesting the positive effects of recent recruitment and promotional initiatives. The significant relationship between the identified enrollment factors and enrollment trends further indicates that improving these determinants can contribute to increased student enrollment. Overall, the study concludes that strengthening institutional marketing strategies, enhancing student support services, improving program quality, and fostering stronger stakeholder engagement are essential for increasing enrollment and ensuring the long-term sustainability and competitiveness of the teacher education programs at Saint Theresa College of Tandag, Inc.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed. The institution should strengthen career orientation and promotional programs to increase students' awareness of the opportunities and benefits of pursuing the Bachelor of Secondary Education Science and Mathematics programs. Scholarship information and other financial assistance initiatives should be more effectively disseminated to encourage students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds to enroll. Furthermore, the institution should continue enhancing curriculum quality, faculty development, learning resources, and institutional visibility through strategic marketing and digital engagement to improve the competitiveness of its teacher education programs. Strengthening partnerships with secondary schools, alumni, and other stakeholders is likewise recommended to support sustainable enrollment growth. Finally, future researchers may conduct similar studies in other higher education institutions using larger samples and additional variables to further validate and broaden the understanding of the factors influencing enrollment in teacher education programs.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

This study was conducted in accordance with established ethical principles for educational research. Prior to data collection, approval to conduct the study was obtained from the appropriate authorities of Saint Theresa College of Tandag, Inc. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was secured from all respondents after they were informed of the study's purpose, procedures, and their rights as research participants. The confidentiality and anonymity of all participants were strictly maintained, and no personally identifiable information was disclosed in the presentation of the findings. All data collected were used solely for academic and research purposes, securely stored, and handled with integrity, ensuring adherence to the ethical principles of respect for persons, beneficence, confidentiality, and responsible conduct of research throughout the study.

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