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INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH ON STUDENT DROPOUT FROM FOUNDATION PROGRAM AT MODERN COLLEGE OF BUSINESS & SCIENCE, SULTANATE OF OMAN.

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Abstract

The main reasons for student dropout from higher education could be low academic performance, low socialization, low confidence levels, busy social life such as marriage and job, along with financial aspects. As the student dropout from higher education has been rising, there is a need to understand this problem. As the dropout problem is high in Foundation program of Modern College of Business and Science, this institutional research is conducted with the objectives of exploring patterns in the dropout data, establish criteria for identifying students at-risk of drop out and identifying areas of improvement for reducing dropout rate in Foundation program. Analysis based on secondary data pertaining to 21 semesters, Spring 2012 to Summer-I 2017 revealed that 1,966 students dropped out of Foundation program during the study period on an average of 94 students per semester. The Dropout rate is higher among male students and is more at Levels I and IV of the programs. Though the dropout happened at Foundation, major loss is to various academic departments, as Foundation is the 'feeder program'. Estimated loss of revenue due to dropout was high and causes serious concern. It is recommended to have a dropout process flow-chart not only to understand the exit journey of dropping students but also to reverse the journey, to set up a dropout committee, to design an early warning system for creating alerts, and to bifurcate Foundation department into Language sub-department and Technical sub-department (MATH and IT courses). Furthermore, it is recommended that effective data management would enable administration to reduce dropout and create a 'feel good' environment for students.

Keywords: Dropout, Stop Out, System Dropout, Retention.
