Determinants of Enrolment Rate Decline in Higher Learning Institutions: A Case of the Tanzania Institute of Accountancy

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Abstract
The decline in the enrolment rate is not an uncommon trend in most higher learning institutions, and the reasons for this have never been common to all universities. This study contextually identifies the key determinants of enrolment rate decline for procurement and logistics management (PLM) programs in public higher learning institutions using the Tanzania Institute of Accountancy (TIA) as a case study. This study adopted a cross-sectional research design to collect empirical data from 302 respondents pursuing various programs offered by the institute, including Accountancy (ACC), Business Administration (BA), Marketing & Public Relations (MPR), Human Resource Management (HRM), and Public Sector Accounting and Finance (PSAF). Data were analysed using SPSS 24, where a multiple regression model was developed to determine the linear effects of the nine determinants of enrolment rate decline. The results show that the key determinants of enrolment decline include entry qualifications, lack of information about the PLM program, lack of passion for the PLM program, negative community myths, and lack of social support. Other determinants, such as students' ambitions, lack of funds, lack of information about the labour market, and inadequate training facilities, have an insignificant influence on enrolment rate decline. This finding implies that information regarding the PLM program is very important. Therefore, it is important to disseminate information about the PLM program's structure, cost, and duration to potential applicants.

Keywords: *higher learning institutions, student enrolment rate declines, determinants*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The drop in student enrolment rates in universities is something that troubles many colleges (Aina & Ayodele, 2018; Hine, 2019; Matsolo et al., 2018). This is because the enrolment rate indicates the continuation of programs, proper use of resources prepared for those programs, and availability of funds for running the college (Belfield et al., 2020; Matsolo et al., 2018). However, there has been a decline in the number of students who apply to join some programs at universities (Aina & Ayodele, 2018; Hine, 2019), thus causing concern about the future of those programs and even the college itself.

In public colleges, the main source of funds used to run a college is the tuition fees paid by students who join the college (Goldschmidt & Wang, 1999; Hine, 2019; Johnson & Rahman, 2005). This situation has caused many colleges to closely examine the enrolment rate for each course offered by the college. Similarly, many public colleges in Tanzania have invested in encouraging students to join their respective colleges through various programs offered by those colleges (SEKA et al., 2008; Tarimo, 2013). Despite these efforts, there are still some programs whose enrolment is dropping continuously, thus causing concern about the survival of those programs and the proper use of the resources prepared by the college for running those programs.

A similar situation has befallen the Tanzania Institute of Accountancy (TIA), where for about four consecutive years, one of its purchasing and supply programs has shown a decline in the number of students applying to join. The situation has brought concern to the institution, and thus, it was decided that a professional study should be conducted to determine the source of the situation. In conducting the research, three things were done: first, enrolment trends analysis was done to see for sure the direction of institution enrolment for each program offered; second, a systematic literature review was conducted to find various reasons that could cause a drop in admissions; and third, to find data for the existing problem of declining enrolment of students who join the procurement and logistics management program offered by the accounting institute in Tanzania.

1.1 Case Study: Tanzania Institute of Accountancy (TIA)

TIA was established as a Government Executive Agency under the Ministry of Finance and Planning in 2002 to surpass the former Dar es Salaam School of Accountancy (DSA). Its main responsibilities are stipulated in S. 3 of the Executive Agencies Act Cap. 245 of 2002 which includes providing training services to the public, conducting research, and providing consultancy services. Its areas of specialisation include, but are not limited to, accountability,

procurement and logistics, business administration, human resource management, public sector accounting and finance, Marketing & Public Relations, and education. The TIA has eight strategic locations in the regions of Kigoma, Mbeya, Mtwara, Mwanza, Singida, Tanga, and Zanzibar, and its main campus is in Dar es Salaam. TIA aims to become the "Institute of Excellence in the provision of Quality Business Education, Research and Consultancy Services in Africa". In that vision, the institute aims among other objectives to increase student enrolment in all programs and improve the quality of education offered.

1.2 General Enrolment Trends at the Institute

The institute has six programmes: Accountancy (ACC), Public Sector Accounting and Finance (PSAF), Procurement and Logistics Management (PLM), Business Administration (BA), Marketing and Public Relations (MPR), and Human Resource Management (HRM). Trends show that there is generally a linear increase in student enrolment at the institute. The trend equation in Figure 1 shows that the increase rate is 420.17 units for every additional student enrolled, while the average enrolment is approximately 6137. However, the specific enrolment for PLM programs shows declining trends, as shown in Figure 2.

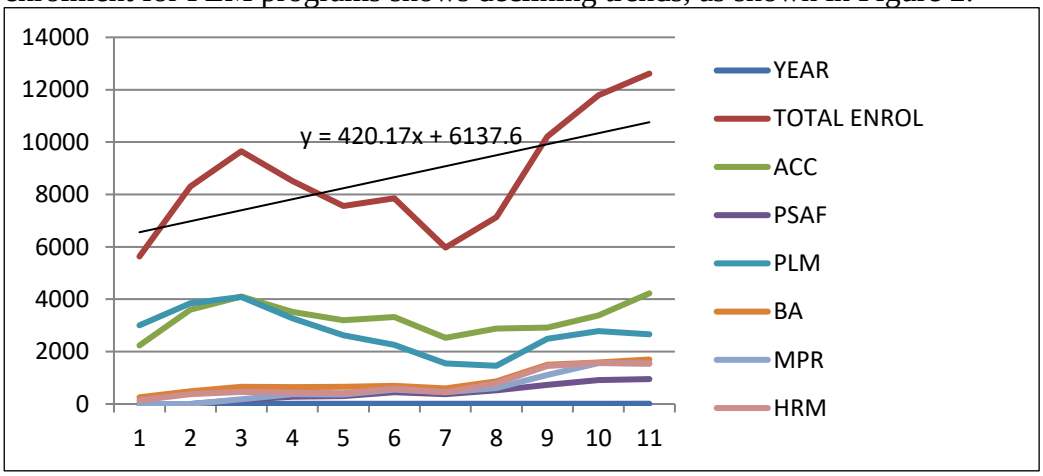

Figure 1: General Enrolment Trends at the Institute

1.3 Specific Enrolment Trends for PLM

The PLM general enrolment trend is declining at a rate of -140.33 units for every additional student enrolled. The Trend model in Figure 2 shows an average annual enrolment of approximately 3571. However, this trend differs among the PLM programs, as shown in Figures 3, 4, and 5 which are the enrolment trends for Bachelor's degree (BPLM 1), Diploma (DPLM 1), and Basic Technician Certificate (BTCPLM).

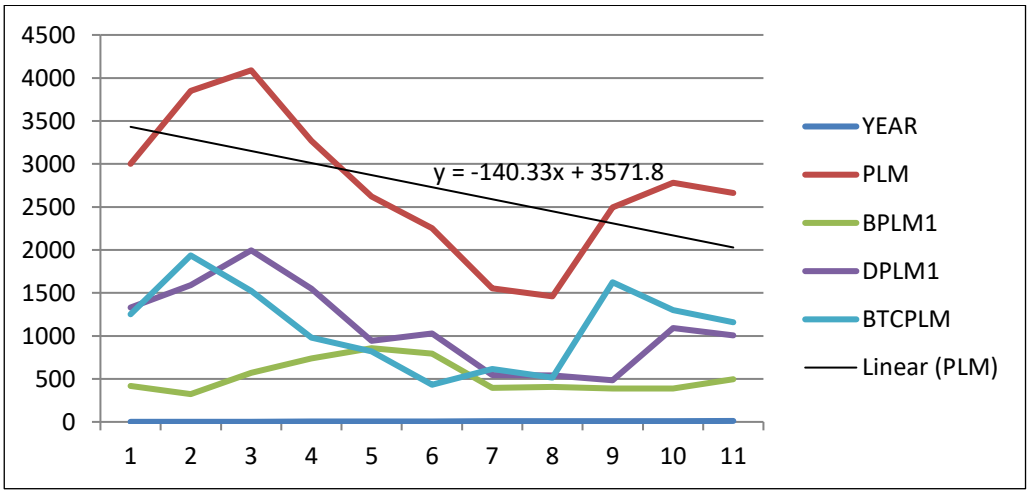

Figure 2: PLM Enrolment Trends

1.3.1 BPLM 1 Enrolment Trend

Figure 3 shows the normal distribution curve for the BPLM 1 enrolment trend. However, the trend model shows that enrolment for the program declines at a rate of -9.2182 units for every additional student enrolled. In addition, the model shows a constant of approximately 580.13 students enrolled to pursue a Bachelor's degree in Procurement and Logistics Management (BPLM) per year.

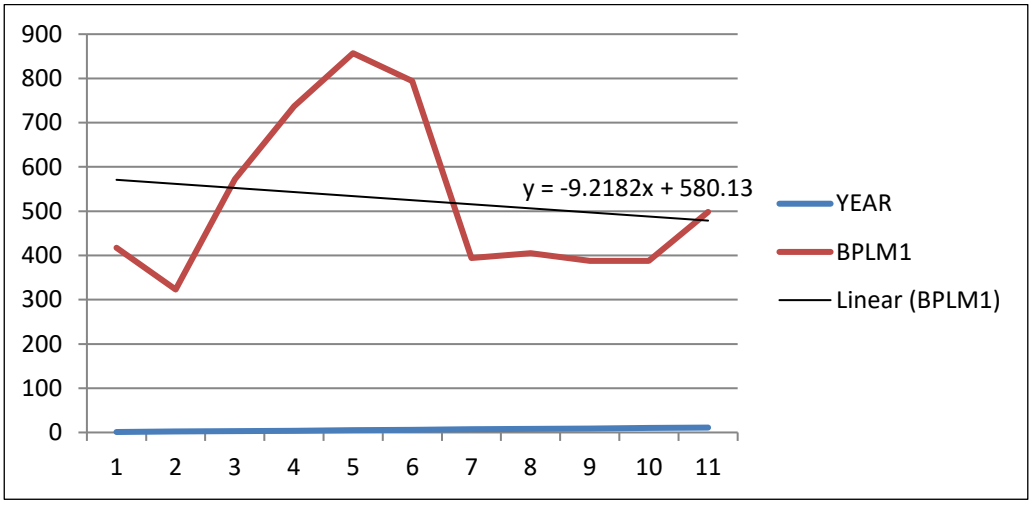

Figure 3: BPLM 1 Enrolment Trend1.3.2 DPLM 1 Enrolment Trend

Figure 4 shows a declining enrolment trend at a rate of -96.045 units for every additional student enrolled. The trend model shows an average of 1676 students

enrolled for a Diploma in Procurement and Logistics Management (DPLM) per year.

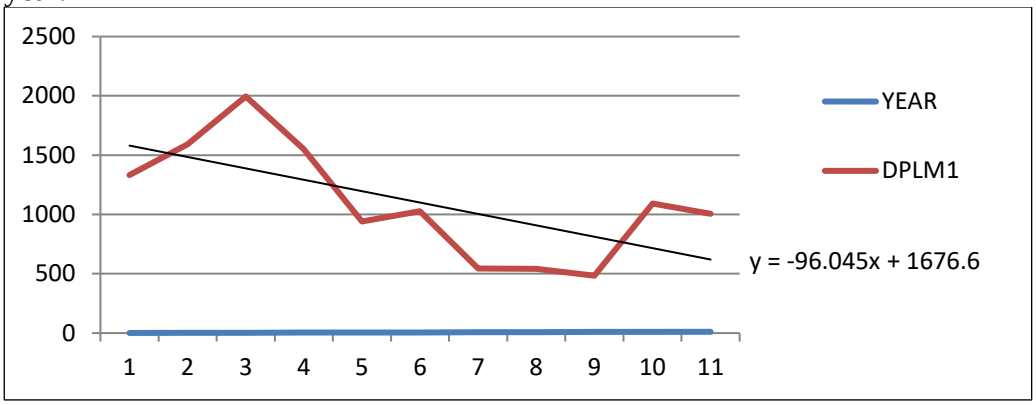

Figure 4: DPLM 1 Enrolment Trend

1.3.2 BTCPLM Enrolment Trend

Trend analysis showed a declining enrolment for BTCPLM at a rate of -35.064 units for every additional student enrolled. The trend model shows a constant enrolment of about 1315 students enrolled annually to pursue a Basic Technician Certificate in Procurement and Logistics Management (BTCPLM).

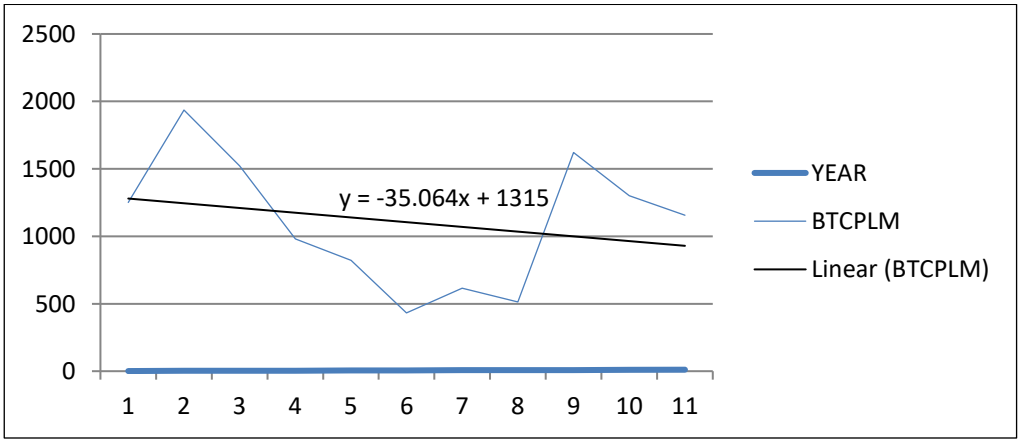

Figure 5: BTCPLM Enrolment Trend

1.4 Statement of the Problem and Study Objectives

The observed trend analysis in Figures 2 to 5 shows declining enrolment for PLM programs at the institute. A declining trend for PLM programs has also been observed in other higher learning institutions in Tanzania (Ahiakpor & Swaray, 2015; Aina & Ayodele, 2018; Hassan et al., 2020; Shamsudin et al., 2019; Tarimo, n.d., 2013). However, the likely reasons for the decline in enrolment at

the institute are not firmly known; therefore, it is difficult for the institute to devise measures to reverse the observed tendency. Therefore, this study aimed to determine the specific reasons for the decline in enrolment rate for the PLM programs and suggest real-time measures to combat the observed situation.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEWS

Systematic reviews on the possible reasons for enrolment decline in various programs show that many studies have been conducted (Aina & Ayodele, 2018; Hine, 2019; Levy, 2013). A systematic review followed Mayring's four steps in forming the process model for qualitative content analysis (Schreier, 2014):

i) Delimitation of literature collected
ii) Assessing formal characteristics of the literature providing the background for content analysis
iii) Selection of structural dimensions and analytic categories; and
iv) Analysis of the literature according to the analytic dimensions

The identification and delimitation of the literature base are based on four dimensions: country context, industry, phenomena, and actors (Schreier, 2014). The country context considered for retrieving included "Tanzania", "East Africa", "Developing Countries" and "Sub-Saharan Africa". Industry is defined as "higher learning institutions", "universities" and or "tertiary education". Also, we used specific programmes such as; "Science Programmes", "Mathematics Course OR Programme", "Accountancy", "Business Administration", "Statistics" and "Law".

Phenomena was defined as; "Enrolment Decline" OR "Enrolment Weakening" OR "Enrolment Decrease". "Enrolment" synonymous terms such as "Registration" and OR "Admission" was also considered. Terms such as "Incline", "Strengthening" and "Increase" were used as antonyms for "Decline", "Weakening, and "Decline". The actor was defined as "students" and OR "scholars" to ensure the relevance of the retrieved articles. The search engines used were Google Scholar and the EBSCOhost Database which generated the following likely determinants of the enrolment rate decline in higher learning institutions.

2.1 Potential Reasons for Enrolment Rate Decline and Hypotheses

2.1.1 Lack of Information about the Program

Getting correct information about the programs in time facilitates proper decision-making while giving potential students a wide scope to choose an appropriate course (Sivakumar et al., 2016). However, the information content is the most important issue to consider when designing an advert package (SEKA

et al., 2008). The information content package should include general and specific issues related to the items in question. Studies show that a lack of timely information reduces not only program enrolment but also provides space for community myth and fear of developing (Sivakumar et al., 2016). Therefore, this study hypothesizes that

H_1 *Lack of Information about the Program has a positive effect on the enrolment rate decline*

2.1.2 Lack of Passion

Passion concerns liking an object or program (Yukhymenko-Lescroart, 2021; Zhu et al., 2020). Passion is directly linked to an increase in enrolment in the programme (Yukhymenko-Lescroart, 2021), while a lack of passion for certain programmes has a significant relationship with enrolment decline (Iyortsuun et al., 2021; Mazer & Titsworth, 2012). Passion is not an inborn but a learned experience in the sense that one can learn to like or dislike something for several reasons (Yukhymenko-Lescroart, 2021). Information plays a significant role in developing passion for the program (Russo & Russo, 2019). Therefore, we hypothesised the following:

H_2 *Lack of passion for the program has a positive effect on the enrolment decline*

2.1.3 Inadequate Training Facilities

Institution-related reasons include, but are not limited to, the availability of training facilities such as classrooms, class furniture, and training equipment, or in-class facilities such as sound systems (Ahiakpor & Swaray, 2015; Hine, 2019; Levy, 2013). Others include library services, food and accommodation services, health services, stationery services, teaching approaches, education quality, and student welfare policy (Goldschmidt & Wang, 1999; Von Hippel & Hofflinger, 2021). All of these items are meant to create a convenient, secure, and comfortable environment for students. The shortage of any of the aforementioned facilities may negatively affect the enrolment rate (Matsolo et al., 2018), leading to the following hypothesis:

H_3 *Inadequate Training Facilities have a positive effect on the enrolment decline*

2.1.4 Lack of Social Support

Studies have shown that various social entities influence enrolment trends (Ahiakpor & Swaray, 2015; Fentiman et al., 1999; Willging & Johnson, 2019). Social entities that may influence decisions to register for certain programs include parents, relatives, friends, and class/schoolmates (Bright et al., 2012; Bright et al., 2005; Eidimtas & Juceviciene, 2014). Social entities are normally

linked to ensuring continued support and establishing a comfortable environment through friendliness and togetherness in the study, especially at the beginning of the course (Matsolo et al., 2018; SEKA et al., 2008; Tarimo, 2013). This led to the hypothesis that; -

H_4 Lack of Social Support has a positive effect on the enrolment rate decline

2.1.5 *Lack of Financial Support*

Empirical studies have found that the cost of a study program is directly related to the enrolment rate (Ahiakpor & Swaray, 2015; Matsolo et al., 2018). The higher the program cost, the lower the enrolment rate (Ahiakpor & Swaray, 2015; Shamsudin, Ali, Wahid, et al., 2019). In most cases, the cost aspect not only covers tuition fees and other in-training costs, such as field or internship training, but also costs in terms of the time spent in training and study convenience which students have to incur to ensure a comfortable environment for learning (Belfield et al., 2020; Shah & Nair, 2010). Therefore, we hypothesised the following: -

H_5 Lack of Financial Support has a positive effect on the enrolment rate decline

2.1.6 Community Myths

Studies have identified several myths affecting the enrolment rate for certain programs (Ashmos et al., 2016). There are myths about program name, cost, and status (Bishau & Samkange, 2015; Melese & Fenta, 2010). There are also myths about the study environment, training facilities, and trainers for certain programs (Butt et al., 2014; Forgasz, 1998b). Myths are mainly caused by a lack of sufficient information about the program (Cockcroft et al., 2009). However, empirical studies have found that myths normally influence the decisions of candidates who are less informed about the programme (Butt et al., 2014). Therefore, this led to the hypothesis that; -

H_6 Community Myths has a positive effect on the enrolment rate decline

2.1.7 Lack of Information about the Labour Market

Empirical studies have found that employment opportunities after completing a study are directly linked to the enrolment rate of a programme (Fentiman et al., 1999; SEKA et al., 2008; Shamsudin, Ali, Wahid, et al., 2019). Prospective students should be informed about the strength of the program in the labour market (Matsolo et al., 2018; Tarimo, 2013). Preparing graduates' alumni and their respective contact addresses helps to prove the potential of the program to graduates (Shamsudin et al., 2019; Ming, 2010a). However, information about employment opportunities should not be prepared incorrectly to attract applicants (Shamsudin, Ali, Wahid et al., 2019; Sia Kee Ming, 2010b). Based on that it was hypothesised that: -

H_7 Lack of Information about the Labour Market has a positive effect on the enrolment rate decline

2.1.8 Lack of Entry Qualifications

Normally, each program has well-defined entry qualifications that are developed in linkage with certain primary and secondary education qualifications. Therefore, studies have found a direct relationship between background educational qualification and enrolment rate for the respective program (Fentiman et al., 1999; Moogan et al., 1999). However, prospective students should be informed clearly about the entry qualifications for the program (Shah & Nair, 2010). Studies have found that ambiguous entry qualifications reduce enrolment rates (Sia 2011). However, entry qualifications should not be set to increase the enrolment rate but to obtain the right candidate for the program (Moogan et al., 1999; Sia, 2011). Therefore, this led to the hypothesis that; -

H_8 Lack of Entry Qualification has a positive effect on the enrolment rate decline

2.1.9 Student's Ambition

Every student dreams of becoming somebody; programmes are alternative ways for them to realise their dreams (Hou, 2021). Empirical studies have found a direct relationship between ambition and enrolment rate for the study program (Cremonini et al., 2008; Russo & Russo, 2019). However, ambitions can be developed or changed based on one's surroundings (Ryan, 2016; Wolfgang, 2017). Information plays a role in developing or changing ambitions (Hou 2021; Wolfgang 2017). Normally, prospective students will need to hear about how a certain program will enable them to realise their goals (Ryan, 2016; Wolfgang, 2017). Normally, students wish to study programs which offer well-paying job opportunities, respect, and recognition (Gen & Ambi, 1999; Wolfgang, 2017) leading to the hypothesis that;-

H_9 Student's Ambition has a positive effect on the enrolment rate decline

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Variables Measurements and Questionnaire Development

The independent variables in this study are the likely reasons for the decline in enrolment rate, which were adapted from other empirical studies (Appendix 1). The likely reasons identified included lack of information, lack of passion, facility-related reasons, social reasons, financial reasons, and community myths. Other reasons are the employment and labour market, background education qualifications, and ambitions.

The questionnaire was developed using a five-point Likert Scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). This scale was employed because of its capacity to categorise respondents' opinions without overlap, while enabling respondents to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with the item statement (Babin & Anderson, 2014; Casella, 2017; Michaelidou & Dibb, 2006; Sobh & Perry, 2006). The scale additionally establishes the foundation for assessing the validity of the measurement and consistency of responses across individuals as a measure of reliability (Field, 2013).

The neutral option was also included in the scale to allow respondents to provide genuine opinions (Westland 2015). However, this was not considered in the discussion because it had no study meaning. Although neutral had no meaning in the study, it should be included in the questionnaire to increase the response rate and precision among respondents (Westland, 2015). However, it is sometimes used to determine the level of familiarity with a question or the willingness to respond. Real enrolment data were extracted from the institute's students' management information system (SMIS) (Figures 2, 3, 4, and 5) for the dependent variable.

3.2 Study Population, Sampling Method and Sample Adequacy

The focus of this study was to determine the reasons for the decline in PLM enrolment. A thorough review of the empirical literature identified likely reasons for the decline in enrolment. Therefore, the need to test all the reasons in a group of students who did not pursue the PLM course to determine the specific reasons is justified. Sample size determination followed the assumption that the total population was not certain, the desired precision level was set at 95%, providing an error margin of 5%, and the population proportion likely to participate was 50%. Therefore 'p' and 'z' values are 0.5 and 1.96 respectively while the error margin 'e' is 0.05. These parameters yielded a sample size of 385. A standard questionnaire was distributed to students with all qualifications to enrol in PLM programs, but instead opted to enrol for other programs of Accountancy and Finance (ACC), Business Administration (BA), Marketing & Public Relations (MPR), Human Resource Management (HRM), and the Public Sector Accounting and Finance (PSAF). Table 2 shows the respondents' profiles. The valid sample size was 302. Since the instrument had 33 variables, the response ratio was 9:1, which is adequate for the analysis intended to detect medium-to-large effects (Field, 2013).

Table 1: Respondents' Profiles

		Frequency	Per cent
GENDER	Male	126	41.7
	Female	176	58.3
EDUCATION LEVEL	Basic tech certificate (NTA 4)	7	2.3
	Tech cert or diploma I (NTA 5)	10	3.3
	Diploma II (NTA6)	19	6.3
	Bachelor I-II (NTA7)	131	43.4
	Bachelor III (NTA8)	135	44.7
PROGRAMME	Accounting and Finance (ACC)	139	46
	Business Administration (BA)	81	26.8
	Marketing and Public Relations (MPR)	39	12.9
	Public Sector Accounting (PSAF)	34	11.2
	Human Resource Management (HRM)	9	3
		N= 302	100

3.3 Data Analysis

The data analysis process involved checking cases with missing values, coding the variables, and analysing descriptive statistics of the variables to prepare the dataset for a higher-order analysis (Field, 2013; Sobh & Perry, 2006). Additionally, a descriptive analysis of the participants was conducted to examine the credibility of the data based on respondents' profiles (Muijs, 2010). Reliability tests were conducted to examine measurement consistency using Cronbach's alpha (Noor et al., 2021; Xu et al., 2021), and an inferential analysis was conducted, where regression statistics were generated to examine the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable. Table 2 shows that the measurements are reliable since all variables have a Cronbach's alpha above 0.6 which is acceptable (Field, 2013).

Table 2: Variable Measurements and Reliability Tests

Main Variable	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
AMBIT	4	0.729
EQUAL	5	0.686
ILABOR	5	0.708
IPROG	6	0.600
LFUND	5	0.660
LPASS	6	0.782
MYTHS	5	0.684
SOCIO	5	0.676
TFACIL	5	0.748

Additionally, an analysis was conducted to ensure that there was no multicollinearity between the variables constituting the equation. This is because multicollinearity can result in a final regression model that achieves the highest level of predictive accuracy but has little managerial relevance (Babin & Anderson, 2014). The rule of thumb used in the study was that variables with a correlation coefficient ≥ 0.8 or more were considered perfectly correlated (Field, 2013). However, the assessment revealed that the independent variables were not perfectly correlated, as all predictors had a coefficient of < 0.8. Thus, it was assumed that there was no significant multicollinearity problem (Table 3).

Table 3: Variables Correlation Tests

	AMBIT	EQUAL	ILABOR	IPROG	LFUND	LPASS	MYTHS	SOCIO	TFACIL
AMBIT	1.000								
EQUAL	0.068	1.000							
ILABOR	0.287**	0.200**	1.000						
IPROG	0.222**	0.024	0.101	1.000					
LFUND	0.172**	0.09	0.227**	0.184**	1.000				
LPASS	0.188**	0.155*	0.125	0.172**	0.473**	1.000			
MYTHS	0.142*	0.148*	0.141*	0.200**	0.444**	0.361**	1.000		
SOCIO	0.160*	0.189**	0.298**	0.202**	0.445**	0.385**	0.268**	1.000	
TFACIL	0.080	0.247**	0.12	0.167*	0.337**	0.341**	0.266**	0.321**	1.000

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

4.0 STUDY FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A multiple regression model was used to measure the influence of the nine factors on enrolment rate decline. The results (Table 3) show that there are generally nine (9) factors which explain about thirty-eight per cent (38.1%) of the variance in the enrolment rate decline ($R^2 = 0.381$). R^2 adjusted = 0.353 which was just below R^2, indicating that the prediction model was stable. The model fit indices indicated that the model was optimal at df = 9, 293, and $F = 7.695$, $p < 0.05$. The individual predictors were further examined, which indicated that AMBIT ($\beta = 0.034$, $t = 0.579$, $p > 0.05$) had no significant effect on EDROP, whereas EQUAL ($\beta = 0.167$, $t = 2.51$, $p < 0.05$) had a significant positive effect on EDROP. ILABOR ($\beta = 0.018$, $t = 0.297$, $p > 0.05$) had no significant effect on EDROP, while IPROG ($\beta = 0.255$, $t = 3.999$, $p < 0.05$) had a significant effect on EDROP. LFUND ($\beta = 0.127$, $t = 1.121$, $p > 0.05$) had no significant effects on EDROP, whereas LPASS ($\beta = 0.127$, $t = 3.341$, $p < 0.05$), MYTHS ($\beta = 0.207$, $t = 2.662$, $p < 0.05$), and SOCIO ($\beta = 0.295$, $t = 3.210$, $p < 0.05$) had significant positive

effects on EDROP. TFACIL (β = 0.123, t = 1.119, p > 0.05) had no significant positive effect on EDROP.

Table 1: Study Findings

Variables	Unstandardised Coefficient		Standardised Coefficient		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
Constant	2.294	0.27		8.486	0
AMBIT	0.034	0.059	0.038	0.579	0.563
EQUAL	0.167**	0.066	0.127	2.51	0.013
ILABOR	0.018	0.06	0.02	0.297	0.767
IPROG	0.255***	0.064	0.299	3.999	0.000
LFUND	0.127	0.13	0.066	1.121	0.189
LPASS	0.190***	0.057	0.25	3.341	0.001
MYTHS	0.207**	0.078	0.184	2.662	0.008
SOCIO	0.295***	0.092	0.178	3.21	0.002
TFACIL	0.123	0.11	0.066	1.119	0.265
R-Square	0.381				
Adj. R-Square	0.353				
Std. Error	0.421				
df	9,293				
F Value	7.565				
P-Value	0.000				

a. Dependent Variable: EDROP

*** Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

** Significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

* Significant at the 0.10 level (2-tailed).

In this study, nine (9) possible determinants of PLM enrolment rate decline were systematically extracted from the literature, including students' ambition (AMBIT), lack of entry qualifications (EQUAL), lack of information on the labour market (ILABOR), and lack of information about the program (IPROG). Other determinants include lack of finance (LFUND), lack of passion for the programme (LPASS), community (MYTHS), lack of social support (SOCIO) and inadequate training facilities (TFACIL). Nine (9) hypotheses were developed to explain the effect of each determinant on enrolment decline. However, only five (5) determinants significantly affect enrolment rate decline: EQUAL, IPROG, LPASS, MYTHS, and SOCIO.

Entry qualifications are among the key determinants of students' decision to apply for the program (Moogan et al., 1999; Shamsudin, Ali, Ali, et al., 2019; Sia Kee Ming, 2010b); therefore, when the entry qualification is adjusted, it may have a significant effect on the enrolment rate. In addition, information about the programme is essential when deciding which programme to select (Shamsudin, Ali, Wahid, et al., 2019; Sia Kee Ming, 2010b). Therefore, a lack of information about course structure, cost, duration, and other related features leads to a decline in the enrolment rate (Ajzen & Driver, 1992; Shamsudin, Ali, Ali, et al., 2019; Sia Kee Ming, 2010b). This also shows the importance of canvassing and other marketing efforts to ensure that information about the programs offered is widely disseminated to potential applicants (Ahiakpor & Swaray, 2015; Matsolo et al., 2018; Tarimo, 2013). Furthermore, the study showed that there were students who had sufficient information about the program but did not select it because of a lack of passion for the program. Passion is developed by various factors, including the environment surrounding applicants and the type of information concerning educational qualifications exposed to the applicants in their early times, the lives of renowned elites, and other community figures (Grimes, 2021; Russo & Russo, 2019; Yukhymenko-Lescroart, 2021). Therefore, extending the effort to disseminate information about institute programs to primary levels using successful alumni is important. This will help develop a passion for programs for potential applicants.

Community myths are a sign of a lack of correct information about the programs offered (Butt et al., 2014; Cockcroft et al., 2009). The study findings show that community myths contribute significantly to the enrolment decline rates. Normally, community myths are directly linked to decision making (Butt et al., 2014; Forgasz, 1998a). As social beings, course applicants normally consider the community's perception of the course they are going to pursue (Cockcroft et al., 2009). Therefore, it is important to disseminate correct information about the programs to the community to develop positive myths that will increase the enrolment rate. Furthermore, a lack of social support from family members and friends may negatively affect the applicant's decision to select a certain program (Shamsudin, Ali, Wahid, et al., 2019; Tarimo, 2013). Therefore, it is important to ensure that the community is well informed about the quality of the programmes offered and the environment surrounding the learning process, as well as the aftermath. On the other hand, social support may also be influenced by community myths, a lack of information about the programs offered, and the employability of the program graduates (Cockcroft et al., 2009). This highlights the importance of the dissemination of information. The finding that students' ambitions, lack of information about the labour market, lack of funds, and

inadequate training facilities have little influence on enrolment rate decline requires further study.

5.0 CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The empirical findings in this study lead to the conclusion that there are five (5) key determinants of enrolment rate decline: entry qualification, information about programs, lack of passion, community myths, and lack of social support. Other factors such as students' ambitions, lack of information about the labour market, lack of funds, and inadequate training facilities have little influence on the enrolment rate decline. These findings imply that correct, timely, and adequate information about the programme is very important to the potential applicants of the programme. Therefore, information about the program structure, cost, and duration should be disseminated timely, correctly, and adequately to the potential applicants of the program. This will smash all community myths, create positive perspectives about the programme, and enhance the enrolment rate.

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Appendix 1: Construct Measurements

S/N	CONSTRUCTS	ITEMS	REFERENCES
1	Student's Ambition (AMBIT)	1. Lack of student's desire to become PLM professional 2. Lack of student's desire to become PLM-renowned professional 3. Lack of student's desire to earn a job 4. Lack of student desire to work in the PLM-registered profession	(Gen- & Ambi-, 1999; Hou, 2021; Ryan, 2016; Wolfgang, 2017)
2	Lack of Entry Qualifications (EQUAL)	1. Secondary School Entry qualification 2. Educational Qualifications 3. PASS in Mathematics 4. PLM subjects in secondary school 5. Business subjects in secondary school	(Fentiman et al., 1999; Matsolo et al., 2018; Melese & Fenta, 2010; Moogan et al., 1999; Sivakumar et al., 2016; Tarimo, 2013; Wiese, Van Heerden, & Jordaan, 2010)
3	Lack of Information about Employability (ILABOR)	1. Employed PLM graduates' alumni 2. Renowned professionals 3. Renowned politicians 4. Current adverts for employment opportunities 5. Sectorial growth trends	(Matsolo et al., 2018; SEKA et al., 2008; Shamsudin, Ali, Wahid, et al., 2019; Sia Kee Ming, 2010)
4	Lack of Information about the Programme (IPROG)	1. Programme structure 2. Cost structure of the programme 3. Pass rate/Failure rate 4. Course difficulties 5. Late information about the programme 6. TIA staff through canvassing	(Bright et al., 2005; Cremonini et al., 2008; Eidimtas & Juceviciene, 2014; Moogan et al., 1999; SEKA et al., 2008; Sia, 2011; Sivakumar et al., 2016)
5	Lack of Finance (LFUND)	1. Lack of tuition fee 2. Lack of accommodation allowance 3. Lack of meal allowance 4. Lack of books and stationeries allowance 5. Lack of field allowance	(Ahiakpor & Swaray, 2015; Bettinger et al., 2012; Johnson & Rahman, 2005; Lauer, 2002; Padlee et al., 2010; SEKA et al., 2008; Shamsudin, Ali, Wahid, et al., 2019; Sia Kee Ming, 2010; Vergolini & Zanini, 2015)
6	Lack of Passion with the Programme (LPASS)	1. Course structure dislike 2. Law Dislike 3. Mathematics Dislike 4. Accounting Dislike	(Iyortsuun et al., 2021; Mazer & Titsworth, 2012; Ruiz-Alfonso & León, 2017; Russo & Russo, 2019;

		5. Passion with PLM or Other Courses 6. Dislike of PLM linkage with ICT, HRM, MKTING	Yukhymenko-Lescroart, 2021; Zhu et al., 2020)
7	Community Myths (MYTHS)	1. Myth that PLM is a course for men 2. Myth that PLM is a course for women 3. Myth that PLM professionals are likely to be jailed 4. Myth that PLM course is useless 5. myth that the PLM course is simple	(Butt et al., 2014; Cockcroft et al., 2009; Forgasz, 1998; SEKA et al., 2008; Shah & Nair, 2010; Sia Kee Ming, 2010)
8	Lack of Social Support (SOCIO)	1. Influence of Friends 2. Influence of Parents 3. Influence of Employer 4. Influence of Sponsor 5. Influence of professional registration board	(Ahiakpor & Swaray, 2015; Bishau & Samkange, 2015; Fentiman et al., 1999; Kagaigai, Anaeli, Mori, & Grepperud, 2021; Khan, Saleem, Farooq, Naqvi, & Akram, 2021; Shamsudin, Ali, Wahid, et al., 2019; Tarimo, 2013)
9	Inadequate Training Facilities (TFACIL)	1. Physical and Virtual Library 2. Internet Service 3. In-class Audio Visual Systems 4. Classes with comfortable chairs, tables and air conditioning devices 5. Hostels with convenient facilities	(Bishau & Samkange, 2015; Imenda, Kongolo, & Grewal, 2004; Nurul Liyana, Nurulhayah, & Muhammad Khalil Tarmizi, 2019; Padlee, Kamaruddin, & Baharun, 2010; SEKA et al., 2008; Shamsudin, Ali, Wahid, et al., 2019; Sia Kee Ming, 2010)
10	Enrolment Rate Declines (EDROP)	1. NTA Level 4 enrolment rate declines 2. NTA Level 5 enrolment rate declines 3. NTA Level 7 enrolment rate declines	(Aina & Ayodele, 2018; Matsolo et al., 2018; Tarimo, 2013; Willging & Johnson, 2019), TIA smis,