Strategies for reducing drop-out rates of first-generation students the continuation

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**Introduction**

In the last few years, the world has seen a growing portion of its young people enrolling in colleges and earning bachelor’s degrees. According to Snyder, de Brey, and Dillow (2016), the proportion of U.S. citizens starting from the age of 25 and above who attained a bachelor’s degree rose from 20% in 1990 to approximately 30% in 2015. On the other hand, following this development is a dwindling portion of teenagers whose parents have never gone or attended college; researching two groups of high school second-years, Cahalan et al. (2006), established that in 1980 more than 70% of high school second-years’ parents did not have an education beyond high school level; by 2002, however, the fraction had dropped to roughly 60%. According to Skomsvold (2015); Staklis and Chen (2010), the portion of learners registered in postsecondary tutelage whose parents had not attended an institution of higher education (referred to as ‘first-generation students’ in the literature has also dropped: 1999–2000 and 2011–2012, the percentage reduced from about 35% to 33%.

Looking at bachelor’s degree holders, specifically, those who attained a bachelor’s degree within the United States between 1992 and 1993, approximately 30% had parents who had never joined university; between 2007 and 2008, that fraction had reduced to around 19% according to Staklis (2016). Even though it has become proportionately reduced with time, the percentage of U.S. students whose parents have never joined college is still significant; Skomsvold (2015) established that at least one-third of undergraduates registered or joined U.S. postsecondary institutes between 2011 and 2012. Additionally, a sizable body of studies (from Choy 2001; Planty et al. 2006; Skomsvold 2015; Wine and Wheeless 2011) indicate that learners whose parents have never joined university often experience significant challenges in gaining access to postsecondary tutelage, thriving academically after enrolling and finishing a degree. Collier and Morgan (2008) established that when they do join college, first-generation learners do not benefit from their parents’ university experience which is without a doubt a treasured source of cultural resource that help learners sail across university (for instance, comprehending the importance of the curriculum, what “office hours” signify, or how to quote sources in written coursework).

According to Choy 2001; Planty et al. 2006; Skomsvold 2015; Wine and Wheeless 2011, this lack of cultural capital unfavourably impacts even the first-generation learners who are mentally prepared for university. Furthermore, a majority of first-generation undergraduates are also at a high risk of not continuing or not finalizing qualification courses due to challenges such as being less equipped academically, raising children, and working on a full-time basis while enrolled. Besides, Lohfink and Paulsen (2005) established that first-generation learners have additional demographic and registration features (for instance, low socioeconomic standing as well as low registration intensity, amongst others) that are related with dropping out. These reasons and interactions amongst them escalate first-generation learners’ risk of failing to continue with their postsecondary training compared with that of many of their ongoing-peer group.

Nunez and Cuccaro-Alamin (1998), when appraising a previous article on first-generation undergraduates and supplementing the latest article on first-generation learners who were high school second-years in 2002 (Hoyer and Redford 2017), this information briefly centers on first-generation undergraduates’ admission into postsecondary training, continuance and conclusion as soon as they join university, labor industry results, and further education admission and attainment following a bachelor’s degree conclusion. In this report, first-generation learners are described as students whose parents had not gone through postsecondary education. The outcomes and experiences of these undergraduates are correlated with those of two sets whose parents had gone through university, identified as continuing-generation learners in this study; undergraduates with at least one parent who attained a bachelor’s degree and learners with at least one parent who joined university, however, no parent had attained a bachelor’s degree.

**Rationale**

The purpose of this study was to establish the main reasons that affect retention of first-generation learners. Student retention, in this case, refers to the process of maintaining learners in colleges or universities until they complete and obtain their degrees. These reasons provided an understanding as to why first-generation students are at risk of being retained from when they join college until completion with the recommended strategy(s) for reducing drop-out rates of first-generation students. Student retention is currently a hot topic and a major worry, questioning if universities have delivered sufficient resources to first-generation undergraduates that will propel them to finish their degree programs without dropping out fruitfully. According to a report submitted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (2015), *“Fall Admission Study”* it revealed that from 1990 to 2015, there was a more than 6 million growth in student admission over the two-decade period, a clear sign of improved learning access. Generally, the rise in learning access is a huge stride forward; however, it presents several problems, particularly for first-generation learners, learners whose parents lacked the chance to attend postsecondary education.

These are freshmen who are going to university with no previous knowledge to count on from close family members concerning what to anticipate and get ready for. The National Center for Education Statistics (2015) in a report titled “Beginning Postsecondary Study” established that the fraction or percentage of success for first-generation undergraduates was much less in comparison to their age group between 2001 and 2013. Additionally, Engle & Tinto (2008) established that first-generation learners were four times likely to drop out of school after their freshman year in comparison to undergraduates who were not first-generation students.

What's more, the report "Beginning Postsecondary Study" revealed that about 10% of first-generation learners had attained their degree likened to the over 50% of non- first-generation students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015). Without a doubt, there is a huge difference in the statistics when equating first-generation and non-first-generation undergraduates.

What’s more, the growth of first-generation learners has caused or triggered mixed reactions from universities. As a result, several institutions of higher education have made attempts to link the gap through encouraging student participation inside and outside the lecture hall with their colleagues, counsellors, and tutors who serve as experienced and trusted advisers, whereas several institutes have sections and plans that are tailored to help or promote first-generation students. According to Pascarella, Pierson, Wolniak, & Terenzini (2004), in some instances, the resources are available, however since first-generation undergraduates’ lack basic understanding about postsecondary learning, they are left without a clue. On the other hand, within institutes where resources are accessible for the undergraduates, the challenge lies in if the assets are sufficient, whether learners are aware of the existing resources, and the usefulness of the funds. This study identified effective strategies for reducing drop-out rates of first-generation students in the continuation.

Engle & Tinto (2008) in their research found out that the rise in the number of undergraduates pursuing a postsecondary education has significantly resulted in a growth in first-generation students’ populace at a time when school drop-outs have been a problem for several institutes. This research was crucial for the reason that first-generation students are the pioneers for their households since they have the chance to pursue a university degree. Several of the challenges that these students are exposed to comprise of economic struggles and the absence of family support. According to Soria & Stebleton (2012), these challenges can be harmful to student achievement. Furthermore, their socioeconomic standing compared to non-first-generation undergraduates is much lower. Soria & Stebleton (2012) also found out that in terms of teachers, there is a glaring gap in the standard score on regular tests, for instance, the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) managed or directed by the University Panel and the general high school Grade Point Average (GPA) in comparison to non-first-generation learners. This is an indication that it should be a primary concern to enhance retention at postsecondary establishments, particularly among first-generation students.

Enhancing first-generation undergraduates’ retention at postsecondary institutes’ will help to break the endless protraction of poverty and low-income professions for these learners. Furthermore, first-generation students who finish their postsecondary education successfully are well equipped to provide for themselves financially as well as their households. Additionally, this study is justified because it highlights the many aspects that impact first-generation students’ retention. It is worth noting that retention is a complex subject; as a result there is a need to concentrate on the diverse factors that influence first-generation students’ retention. According to Soria & Stebleton (2012), each first-generation student is exceptional in various academic majors, academic strength, ethnicity and race, sex, income, student participation as well as the resources they use at the institute. These aspects are among the many that play a role in whether first-generation learners are eventually retained.

An undergraduate is regarded as ‘the first generation' if his or her parents never advanced to university or college level. According to Concordia University-Portland (2012), an online *Journal for Workforce Education and Development* stated that approximately 49% of today’s university learners fit this description. Often receiving low-salary, these undergraduates have numerous issues running counter to their success. The point that anything about university is first-hand to them, and they cannot approach their parents for counsel is only the start of the challenges. First-generation undergraduates are not likely to join university immediately after high school compared to their second, third and fourth-generation colleagues. The Concordia University-Portland (2012) mentions a study from the Pell Institute that established that the normal age of admission for first-generation university learners is 22, in comparison to 20 for undergraduates who are not first generation students.

Notably, first-generation learners are two times likely to be economically independent in comparison to other university students. In a research done in 2004, by Pell Institute, over 50% of first-generation undergraduates were economically independent, whereas roughly 20% of learners who were not first-generation students were economically independent (Concordia University-Portland, 2012). The organization also found out that first-generation learners are also more financially accountable for others. They established that more than 29% of first-generation learners had dependent relatives with another 10% being single parents, while approximately 13.5% of non-first generation undergraduates had dependent relatives and only about 3% were single parents (Concordia University-Portland, 2012). Taken together, these aspects largely cause first-generation students to show up at their respective colleges on a part-time basis or drop-out hence the reason to choose this project.

***Definition of terms***

*First-generation university students*: Undergraduates who are the first persons in their immediate families to join university or pursue higher education.

*Student dropout*: students who withdraw before completing their course education.

*School retention*: maintain learners in colleges or universities until they complete and obtain their degrees.

**Review of literature**

Fairly recently, colleges have started to work towards addressing the significant possibility of first-generation students dropout. It is worth noting that the dropout challenge threatens to prevent likely intellectuals from having the chance or opportunity to bring valued new theoretical or practical understanding of things to the globe by pushing them out of university before they can complete their training. First generation learners seem to drop out when they fail to succeed in dealing with a significant amount of challenges with succeeding in, and adjusting to university. According to Chen et al., (2017), the observant managements of these colleges have started or are in the process of forming curriculums to highlight this apparent risk to their continuing undergraduate populations.

However, it is important to note that perhaps the major challenge with these curriculums is that the reasons for the difficulties facing first-generation students are not agreed upon. According to Mangan (2015), an initiative will always fail if it cannot adapt or react to the reasons behind a problem. For instance, a strategy to fight robbery within a poor community would be unsuccessful unless it addresses the poverty, which is the cause or basis of crime since people loot to continue to live or exist, especially due to hardship if they are very poor to find another way of surviving. The main contention about first generation initiatives is whether it is community adaptation complications or a blend of challenges such as extra household obligations or economic difficulties, which make it tough for first-generation learners to prosper in colleges.

Whereas there is no doubt that social adaptation is a concern for first-generation undergraduates, the actual reasons for most of their community and educational challenges are the prevailing features that make it tough for the learner to focus on performing well in school. To answer this “troubled by life” problems, the prevailing features that hamper first generation learners should be marked and handled so that less positive thinkers are lost in high university drop-out levels. Mangan (2015) identified that the single biggest challenge faced by first-generation students, and the schools they go to, is the sheer figure of first-generation undergraduates who are compelled to leave university. Skomsvold (2015) mentioned Dr Valerie McKay, an instructor at the University of Oklahoma who claimed that the problem is so critical or dire that more than 40% of first-generation undergraduates leave without completing their degrees, while less than 25% of non-first generation learners leave college without a degree.

According to Dr Valerie McKay, strangely, first-generation learners were more than twice more probable to have to quit university without completing a degree. It more or less seems that first generation learners are victimized against since they are compelled to contend with more difficulties, for instance, lack of financial capacity to pay for university, compared to regular learners during their university professions (Skomsvold, 2015). Even though there will regularly be individuals who cannot prevent dropping out, the figure of first generation students dropping out should not be so high in comparison to other learners. However, the big question is when doing the difficulties that result in the first generation undergraduate dropout happen? Kathleen Cushman, a professor who has completed significant studies on the experience of first-generation university undergraduates, identified a possible response to this question in her research about the experiences of first-generation undergraduates within the United States (Gaudelli, 2016). According to Gaudelli (2016), Kathleen Cushman’s research arrived at figures that showed that approximately a quarter of first generation learners who join four-year universities do not go back the following year.

The fact that such a significant percentage of first-generation undergraduates fail to finish their university training after the first year implies that the difficulties these learners experience instantly start affecting them when they begin school. It is to be expected then, that the causes for late dropouts might be the buildup of challenges arising from the lack of preparation for university life, lack of belief, and lack of cash that commonly or ordinarily discriminates first-generation undergraduates from their colleagues. Colleges, appreciating the significance of helping their first generation undergraduates, have started applying and putting to test different plans meant to offer the needed help necessary for first-generation learners. Obviously, it is difficult to form a project until the reasons behind first generation learners’ challenges with the school are established. A universally held reason for these challenges is that first generation undergraduates experience numerous community adjustment complications (Gaudelli, 2016). Supporters of this concept believe that the trouble adapting to university life as well as the resultant societal circumstances, probably originating from their parents’ incapacity to get them ready for university life, deflects the first generation undergraduates from schoolwork and finally causes them to quit since they are incapable of dealing with the change.

However, according to Snyder, de Brey, and Dillow (2016), Theron Snell, an institution of higher learning educational consultant and tutor established that the concept of the societal challenge does not entirely highlight the problems of first-generation learners since they are not the only apprentices who experience social change difficulties. Theron trusts that the actual challenge lies with the blend of economic problems, excess work concentration, besides the resultant less significance of coursework in the minds of first generation learners. Taking into account that their parents did not obtain a university degree, and since the lack of a university degree hugely reduces prospective wages, it is normal for first-generation undergraduates to be left with less cash stored up or accessible from their close relatives to finance their ongoing education. This lack of capital implies that the apprentice has to knuckle down and ensure that he or she will be able to meet the expenses of going to university. Pratt, Harwood, Cavazos and Ditzfeld (2017) found backing for the thought that a majority of first-generation undergraduates are compelled to revalue their coursework since they must pick more working hours instead of more schoolwork hours to be able to pay for their learning. It is unfortunate that the implication of using so much energy in working has a tendency to make first generation learners perform below par on coursework and as a result finally drop out when they realize they cannot attain a degree and pay for it at one go.

This multifaceted challenge was revealed in a research that was conducted by Khanh Van T. Bui back in 2002 at Pepperdine University. He established that first generation learners were overly distracted with economic difficulties, dreaded failing, besides feeling less equipped to attend university compared to other learners. According to Bui, all these uncertainties play a significant part in why a majority of first-generation apprentices are pushed to drop out. Furthermore, these uncertainties directly unsettle first-generation students from their objectives of degree accomplishment as well as educational achievement. In the end, all but the dedicated first-generation undergraduates are pushed to quit university to find time to earn money needed to ensure their families are taken care of (Bui, 2002).  Obviously, the first generation undergraduates’ difficulties are not exclusively the outcomes of uncertainties and economic challenges. Tate et al. (2015) claimed that other factors appear to contribute to whether first generation learners continue to graduation. A study by Pratt, Harwood, Cavazos and Ditzfeld (2017) established that pre-university features or qualities such as high school class grade could be reliable indicators of whether first-generation students will finally advance.

The biggest concern about Tate, Caperton, Kaiser, Pruitt, White and Hall’s research is the fact that their study revealed there could be reasons for first-generation learners’ challenges emerging right from when they joined high school. It is worth noting that high school class grades information, whereas an indicator whereby educational attainment can be quantified, indeed reveals the fundamental challenge that first generation learners are pushed or compelled to spend a lesser amount of time on their educational pursuit. First generation undergraduates use their time assisting their parents by watching their siblings or lending a hand around the house, which means they are forced to spend less time on school coursework. This pattern often extends to university, where first generation learners are forced to maintain their assistance to their relatives, and at the same time find a means to come up with the money for their university education. With the awareness of dominant fundamental reasons for first-generation learners’ problems, the existing strategies or initiatives need to be attuned so that they target and decrease the impact of the underlying difficulties that make first generation learners drop out in high numbers compared to non-first generation learners. One case of an initiative that is known to have positively assisted first-generation undergraduates is the Freshman Empowerment Program that was introduced at the University of Central Michigan (National Academies of Sciences et al., 2017). The Freshman Empowerment Program (FEP) is founded on several small-group dialogue forums to assist the first generation learners with their challenging transformation into university life.

The small groups within the Freshman Empowerment Program (FEP) meet for one time only in a week to allow the first generation students to raise their numerous issues about the university, comprising economic difficulties and educational challenges, and obtain support from the program counsellors as well as other learners. The undergraduates in this program obtain essential counsel from their colleagues and counsellors, thus giving them a chance to handle their issues better. A review of the results reveal the dramatic outcomes instigated by the Freshman Empowerment Program; according to National Academies of Sciences et al. (2017), learners in the Freshman Empowerment Program have a retention frequency that is approximately 39% high in comparison to that of a control group, and they have high-Grade Point Average (GPA)s. The Freshman Empowerment Program is a case in point that demonstrates how operational a specialized strategy or approach can be in helping first-generation learners if it is applied so that it gives the students a chance to highlight their difficulties.

Institutions of higher education have a duty to make sure that the brilliant minds of every age group are in a position to access knowledge as well as equip them to be the next heads within the academic field and in the community. As stated by the National Academies of Sciences et.al (2017), colleges are at an advantage or at a better position when more of their learners get degrees since it shows that a college is an excellent institute to finance, and it also implies that there is a huge number of former students that can help sustain and develop the institution. George Kuh and Gary Pike revealed why they have confidence that universities need to assist first generation undergraduates within their *Journal of Higher Education* piece:

*An institution of higher education cannot change the lineage of its students. But it can implement interventions that increase the odds that first-generation college students “get ready,” “get in,” and “get through” by changing the way those students view college and by altering what they do after they arrive* (292)*.*

Taking into account that there have been active first-generation student initiatives that decreased dropout rates and improved Grade Point Average (GPA) at several colleges, Thelin and Gasman (2016) asked the question, should not those institutions of higher education that have not begun to highlight the challenges of their first generation learners conform and start growing their retention levels and degree completion figures?

In a nutshell, first-generation students have continually been overwhelmed by challenges with remaining in university and obtaining degrees. Different studies have established that these problems are triggered by economic struggles and household concerns that are so intense or critical for first-generation learners. According to Thelin and Gasman (2016), it is vital that colleges’ form and finance initiatives that help first-generation learners highlight or manage these difficulties since the colleges have the duty to assist their undergraduates productively finalize their degrees. If institutions of higher education fail to decrease the quantity of first generation student dropouts, the world will fail to benefit on the possibly significant innovations and impact that those first generation learners may have added, had they been allowed to complete their university education. Another worry is that communal, and financial, class variances might be improved if the mainly low-class first generation undergraduates are not in a position to complete a university education. Maybe if there were further studies and time dedicated to learning and recouping for the impact of first-generation associated characteristics, for instance, economic uncertainty and poor university preparation, universities would be able to significantly decrease their figures of one-time first-generation students.

**Project Description**

**Strategies to support first-generation students: Collective campus approaches to promote student success.**

1. **Hands-on Pre-onset Outreach Program**

**Problem**: First-generation university learners regularly feel secluded as soon as they arrive on college grounds, which has severe effects for their adaptation and, eventually, perseverance at the institute.

**Solution**: Introduce a current electronic mail outreach initiative that sends twice a week messages of support and welcome. Electronic mails will cover targeted writing about the importance first-generation university learners contribute to the institute, offer data about existing college grounds resources, and communicate about opportunities to associate or relate with colleagues when on university grounds. Collect resources from departments helping these learners across campus to incorporate in the program.

**Timeline**: On-going

**Expected outcome**: 70% to 75% rise in the four-year degree conclusion frequency for first-generation college learners.

1. **First-generation support video initiative**

**Problem**: first-generation University learners have a hard time finding examples to be imitated on college grounds who they can go to and who can assist standardize their experiences, transforming into higher education.

**Solution**: engage learners, university departments, workforce, and former students across campus to share their encounters as first-generation university students. Make recordings of their stories, concentrating on the problems they encountered, resources they gained access to, and accomplishments they attained, to regularize what incoming learners are experiencing and feeling. Videos will be shared online, via social media campaigns, or shown at an occasion.

**Timeline**: 1 month

**Expected outcome**: at least 70% of students report feeling an interconnection to the college after going to an occasion where the first-generation support videos were presented.

1. **Jargon decrease review**

The minute they begin their university search, a lot of first-generation learners go into unfamiliar settings and every so often feel doubtful on what to do. When accepted into the respective colleges, they get an inflow of communication, plentiful of it is packed with unfamiliar and new dialect.

**Problem**: First-generation university learners regularly get mixed up by jargon along with strange terms applied in communication and outreach resources, concluding registering and enrollment responsibilities more challenging and intensifying feelings of uncertainty.

**Solution**: Review significantly accessed, learner-facing resources for ease of access and, if needed, offer more “student- approachable” versions of the writing. The Gunning Fog Index will be used to allocate a readability count to a block of writing and offer ideas for how to make the text friendlier to users.

**Timeline**: on-going

**Expected outcome**: 6.0 Points mark in the improvement in readability count of economic support resources attained by applying the Gunning Fog Index.

1. **Visible College-Wide Support System**

**Problem**: First-generation university learners are time and again resilient to or uneasy with enquiring for assistance from supervisors and university departments, viewing it as a mark of inadequacy or incompetence since they are regularly used to getting things done on their own.

**Solution**: Generate a campus-wide initiative that will allow supportive university departments and workforce to avail themselves to learners visually. Supply stickers like the ones used in Safe Zone programs for campaigners to stick them on their office entrances, making learners more conscious of which door they can be at ease knocking on with a query and demonstrating to them how big their system of support and collaboration is on college grounds.

**Timeline**: 24 months

**Expected outcome**: various departments and workforce will request more than 900 stickers within the first year of the initiative.

***First-generation learner support systems***

1. **Thrive Guide**

**Problem**: According to the full range of literature featured in this study, first-generation college students currently comprise approximately one-third of today’s university-going community. These learners experience major problems when steering the university surroundings for the first time. Because first-generation university learners might not have a household member to depend on for leadership, colleges require to be more hands-on in highlighting queries, linking undergraduates with resources, and offering Just-in-time (JIT) and lasting support.

**Solution**: To assist first-generation university learners to go through the flood of communication they get and the to-do list they must complete; a Thrive Guide will be used to prepare undergraduates before they get into college grounds. It is a study guide for all the other college communication the learners get.

Custom-made to first-generation university learners, the Thrive Guide highlights issues and questions that a learner’s parents may not be able to assist with if they did not attend university. Whereas resources such as this can undoubtedly cater for a huge number of undergraduates, what distinguishes this attempt from a current list or "getting started" article is that first-generation college students will be consulted in creating the guide, enquiring what they wish they had known prior to joining campus.

**Timeline**: on-going

**Expected outcome**: at least 70% of students report feeling a connection to the college.

1. **"First 1" initiative**

**Problem:** First-generation university students regularly struggle to adapt to college life, openly and academically, and a majority finally wind up questioning their judgement to join an institution of higher education. The questions and feelings become segregating when first-generation college students cannot find others to approach who are experiencing or have gone through similar situations. According to Thelin and Gasman (2016), a majority of students pull together to support one another. International and minority students and team members are easily distinguishable to one another, which makes linking simple. First-generation students, on the other hand, have no external attributes and is occasionally strange even to the learners themselves. That is why universities and colleges should be hands-on about linking these learners with on-campus support systems to be able to reduce feelings of separation.

**Solution**: "First 1"is a sticky label supply initiative. Any persons or administrative centers on campus that support or offer materials to first-generation university undergraduates openly show the sticky label. Not only will this initiative support first-generation learners feel less secluded on college grounds, but it will also help them discover the particular resources they require to switch to campus life and thrive.

**Timeline**: 24 months

**Expected outcome**: various departments and workforce will request more than 1,200 stickers within the first year of the initiative.

**Project evaluation plan**

A result-based evaluation will be applied to establish if the dropout prevention strategies are successful. A result-based evaluation offers an opening for the school district to assess the effect, advantages, or changes that have taken place in a specific duration. A result-based evaluation will be applied ideally to establish whether first-generation students are positively profiting from the use of the suggested dropout prevention programs. It will also aid in determining whether all components or elements of the program are effective, needs amending or needs to be changed. Furthermore, the program logic framework will be applied to accomplish a result-centred evaluation for this project. According to McNeil (2011), such a framework will allow the investigator to determine the inputs, outputs, products or results, and impact of the strategies. This evaluation tool was chosen since it is a clear approach to state and comprehend the project’s objectives as well as the anticipated goals or results. As mentioned above, a project logic framework itemizes the inputs along with the outcomes of a project. The inputs go into the project, which comprises the activities that will be undertaken throughout the project to satisfy the strategies.

The outcomes are the goals that the project wants to attain through applying the itemized inputs. For this project, the inputs are the constituents of the dropout prevention strategies (Hands-on Pre-onset Outreach Program, First-generation support video initiative, and Jargon decrease review, Visible College-Wide Support System, Thrive Guide and "First 1" initiative). The objectives or the products for this project are separated into short, medium and long-term objectives. The short-term objectives are to increase college turnout for first-generation students, improve class ratings and decrease social problems. The mid-term objectives consist of an increase in society and parents’ contribution and improvement in retention rates. The long-term objectives of this project comprise a reduction in dropout rates for first generation students and an increase in graduation levels.To assess the outcomes, summative and formative evaluation will be undertaken by employing the project logic framework as a guide. Formative assessment is a technique of determining the structure of a program whereas the program’s constituents are underway or ongoing (McNeil, 2011). Throughout this evaluation, the short-term objectives of the program’s logic framework will be monitored. First generation students who will be taking part in the school’s dropout prevention program will be observed using an STI tracing system software. This tool will be used within campus grounds to monitor student attendance and scores.

First generation students’ records (attendance and grades) will be scrutinized every month to establish if there is any development with learners’ fulfilling the short-term objectives. Moreover, any notable modifications that require to be completed with the dropout prevention strategies will also be handled or highlighted as the school year advances. Mid-term and long-term objectives will be handled at the close of every year for the next two years to establish if growth is being realized in those outcome fields. To trace the mid-term objectives, the college counsellors or dropout prevention experts will maintain a list of how many parents are taking part in regular meetings as well as school projects. What's more, the community will also participate in a study to rate their fulfilment with school projects. They will also apply the STI tracing system software to determine the sum of retentions and campaigns from one autumn term to the next. The college counsellor or the expert will also trace the long-term objectives. The STI tracing system software will also help in maintaining a list of the graduation and dropout rates from one autumn term to the next. As learners buy transcripts, college counsellor will also keep a list of how many have registered in post-secondary institutes. With this procedure, all the records and information collected will be scrutinized to verify if any developments are being realized towards fulfilling the results of the project. Finally, modifications or amendments might be necessary during this procedure if unexpected elements inhibit a constituent from being applied appropriately.

**Project implications**

If operational dropout prevention strategies are formed and efficiently reduce the dropout rates and increase graduation rates for first-generation college students, the resultant effect will be positive. For instance, if more and more first-generation students graduate, the effect will be an increase in college enrollment. Additionally, there will also be a surge in the figure of productive populations both within the nation and at the communities. In line with this, it is worth noting that more working persons means that the economy might have high chances of flourishing. Furthermore, the incidences of crime might also reduce when the amount of productive populations increases. According to McNeil (20110, less violations means an opportunity for better surroundings for the next age group, however, this will only happen if there is a success in the formation and application of more intense dropout prevention plans, with the support necessary to make them work.

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