

Perceived Probabilities of Graduation and Employment

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Background

In recent years, more and more high school students have been encouraged to go to college. For example, both the President Obama and the First Lady have been pressing students to attend college. To many high school students it now seems that college is a logical and natural move after high school graduation. However, there seems to be a disconnect between going to college and finishing college. For example, many higher education researchers have been pointing out dismal graduation rates among undergraduate students. According to the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, graduation rate for full-time, first-time undergraduate students who began their pursuit of a bachelor's degree at a 4-year degree-granting institution after six years was 59 percent.

Hypothesis

It is hypothesized that students of a younger grade level will have a higher perceived probability of graduating in four years and getting a job than those of an older grade level.

Descriptive Statistics

LIU Post Survey

8,315 Enrolled (Undergraduate) 238 Respondents

Gender

- 25.4% (2,109) Male
- 74.6% (6,206) Female

Residents

- 36% Live on Campus

Race/Ethnicity

- 53.4% White
- 11.5% Black/African-American
- 13.8% Hispanic/Latino
- 4.0% Asian
- 17.3% Other

Gender

- 26.5% (63) Male
- 73.5% (175) Female

Resident

- 27.31% Live on Campus

Race/Ethnicity

- 76% White
- 5% Black/African American
- 6% Hispanic/Latino
- 8% Asian
- 3% Other

Methods

- Conducted Online Survey and sent out to the student body at Post
- Asked questions such as age, gender, ethnicity, scholarship, financial aid, GPA, clubs/organizations, perceived probability on graduating college in 4 years, getting a job, etc
- Dependent Variable: Excellent Status of Graduating in 4 years (ordered categorical variable therefore we were unable to use Ordinary Least Square (OLS))
- Used Ordered Logistical Regression using Stata SE 13 to analyze data

Results (The Data)

FIRST REGRESSION

Graduate in 4 Years	Odds Ratio	P > z
Age:	0.95	0.435
Sex:	2.27	0.020
Race:	0.88	0.201
GPA:	4.64	0.000
Year in College:	1.07	0.686

- Only gender and GPA were statistically significant at 5%
- Year in college was not statistically significant, therefore we must reject the null hypothesis

CHANCES OF GRADUATING COLLEGE WITHIN 4 YEARS

	Freshman		Sophomore		Junior		Senior		Graduate	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Excellent	13	54.17%	28	58.33%	29	52.73%	51	64.56%	11	91.67%
Good	7	29.17%	14	29.17%	8	14.55%	9	11.39%	0	0.00%
Average	4	16.67%	5	10.42%	9	16.36%	6	7.59%	0	0.00%
Below Average	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4	7.27%	5	6.33%	1	8.33%
Poor	0	0.00%	1	2.08%	5	9.09%	8	10.13%	0	0.00%
Total	24	100.00%	48	100.00%	55	100.00%	79	100.00%	12	100.00%

SECOND REGRESSION

Graduate in 4 Years	Odds Ratio
Sex:	2.49
GPA:	6.67
Transfer Student:	3.57
Athlete:	3.04

- Gender, GPA, Transfer Student and Athlete are all statistically significant at 5%
- The odds for excellent status of graduation in 4 years for men are 2.49 greater than women
 - The odds of excellent status for one unit increase in GPA are 6.67 greater
 - The odds of excellent status for student who did not transfer are 3.57 greater
- The odds of excellent status for student non-athlete (not on a sports team on campus) are 3.04 greater

THIRD REGRESSION

Getting Any Job After Graduating	Odds Ratio
Clubs:	0.25
Wage:	1.17
Expected Salary:	1.43

- Clubs, Wage, and Expected Salary are all statistically significant at 5%
- Being part of a club increases your perceived probability of getting a job
- For one unit increase in wage, the odds of excellence versus the combined lower classes are 1.17 greater (given that all of the other variables in the model are held constant)
- For one unit increase in salary expectancy, the odds of excellence versus the combined lower classes are 1.43 greater (given that all the other variables in the model are held constant)

Conclusion

According to 2012 statistics, four year graduation rate for LIU Post is only 24.0%. However, so many students have such high expectations that they will graduate in time and get a job right away. We wanted to understand what some of the factors are that determine the perceived (self-reported) probability in graduating in four years after starting college and the probability of getting a job after graduating. Our original hypothesis explained that freshman and sophomores have higher expectations for graduating on time compared to seniors. Although, when we ran the regression it showed that the year in college was not statistically significant. Instead, gender played an important role. For example, in our regression men have a much higher perceived probability to graduate on time compared to women. Yet, men have been known to have lower graduation rates than women. Our second regression exemplified that athletes have lower expectation to graduate within four years. From these results we hypothesize that this change is due to spending an increase amount of time focused on sports games and practices, or needing to take less classes to fulfill team requirements. Furthermore, our third regression showed that people who expect a higher salary would also expect to get a job when they graduate. In conclusion, gender, GPA, not being a transfer student, not participating in sports teams on campus, having a higher wage, involvement on campus in clubs, and a higher expected salary all influence the student's perception of graduating on time.

THANK YOU TO THE LIU POST STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THIS SURVEY