

Parents' Perception on De La Salle University-Dasmariñas Services

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The study was conducted to find out the parents' perception on the De La Salle University-Dasmariñas services which are grouped as follows: (1) Academic instruction factor; (2) Quality of human ware (includes faculty, administration, staff support through medical services, guidance and discipline); (3) Quality of hardware (dorm facilities, transportation, canteens and security services); and (4) Expectations (graduates' job placement). Likewise, this study was conducted to echo out the perception to the university officials for possible improvement and to share these observations with other sister La Salle schools, thus possibly enhancing better educational management based on an actual review from the parents, the "clients" and major stakeholders of the school. POLCA (Parents' Organization of La Salle Cavite), the legitimate parents' organization of DLSU-D (De La Salle University-Dasmariñas), a tertiary university finds the study significant: (1) in being able to verbalize its concerns on the academic instruction factor, quality of human ware, quality of hardware and expectations on graduates' job placement; (2) for university officials' awareness of the parents' perception; and (3) for considering the results of this study as eye openers for improvements and development of their services. Lastly, this study hopes to find answers to the perennial question of why the choice of DLSU-D for their children. The findings reveal that the overall rating of the services of the university to the students is satisfactory. Breaking down the services into 4 groups: academic instruction, quality of human ware, quality of hardware and expectations, that highlight the graduates' employability after graduation, the biggest number of parent respondents agreed on the perception that academic instruction factor ranked first, followed by expectations/graduates' employability after graduation as second, and quality of human ware and quality of hardware as the 3rd and 4th respectively. Finally, the responses to the question on the reasons of choosing DLSU-D as the school for their children, the parents gave out the following ranking: (1) high academic standards; (2) safety and security; (3) employability after graduation; (4) reasonable tuition fees; and (5) prestige/name/image and reputation.

Keywords: perception, parents, services

Background of the Study

Parenting is the process of raising and educating a child from birth, or before until adulthood (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parenting/10/17/2008>). There has been a lot of questions raised as to who is a parent. However, anyone who provides the needs of a child in his/her growing-up years until adulthood qualifies to be a parent. For human beings, a parent can be the biological father and mother or a relative or

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anyone without any relation at all who acts as a guardian in the absence of the parents.

In this particular case, the goals of a parent are usually reasons for disagreement open for arguments. It is always expected that parents/guardians for that matter provide for the child's physical and physiological needs, security and safety needs, social needs as shown by the guidance the parents offer to the children and development of self-esteem and self-actualization or goal achievement, following the hierarchy of needs of Abraham Maslow. Likewise, it is always the goal of any parent to see to it that the children grow up enriched with values and enhanced skills to be able to grow emotionally, psychologically and socially capable. As expected too, the spiritual side of a child is likewise checked and is any parent's concern for the child.

In providing physical security, physical development, intellectual security, intellectual development, emotional security, emotional development, social skills and exposure, the choice of a school is expected for children to develop all these matters so much. Since, it is always the intention of the parents to provide the best for the child, and the best can be made possible if a child is sent to the right school where he/she can develop his/her potentials and grow up to be a responsible citizen of the community. Part of parental duties includes providing the basic necessities and provision of their rights starting off within the home environment and expanding to the outside world as their journey starting out in the field. Physical development can be provided to a child by way of providing a healthy environment for him/her to grow, perhaps sports orientation and introduction in order for him/her to develop worthy habits of health maintenance.

Intellectual security includes conditions for the child's mind to be fully developed, where he/she recognizes the value of relationship with every member of the family, bonding together. Growing up mentally with family is something that helps develop a child's idea of intellectual security.

Likewise, the intellectual security also provides development for every child's opportunity to learn—learn about laws both natural and moral. With a good understanding of intellectual security providing intellectual development, a child experiences an environment of peace and harmony in the family which is very important in growing-up process. What he/she has been used to when he/she was born, is nurtured and developed in order to make the best out of his/her talents and abilities. Ethics and value system also matter, and his/her norms contribute to a child's beliefs, customs and cultural traditions.

Providing a safe loving environment checks on the child's emotional security. With such a secured feeling, he/she develops emotionally and finds ease in loving any member of his/her community.

Probably, the last but the most important of the parental duties is financial support that is to be provided by parents to their children. Part of this support goes to education, and maybe to some people, this is one of the most if not the most important. It has always been said that education is the only legacy parents can leave to their children which no one is ever capable of snatching away from them. True enough, the best kind of education that a parent can provide his/her child is always an important goal to be achieved. After all, the achievement of this goal is more than enough definition of success for the parents. Seeing their children succeed in any course undertaken gives the parents the feeling of elation. When a child is able to acquire the highest educational background, a parent can rest assured that his/her future is secure. He/she will not find difficult fighting in the battle of life.

Based on these facts and experiences, this study is made with the intention of finding out parents' satisfaction in sending their children to DLSU-D (De La Salle University-Dasmariñas). POLCA (Parents' Organization of La Salle Cavite) Inc., the only legitimate parents' organization of DLSU-D, has decided to find out if services given to the students have been satisfactory and have met their expectations. It has dramatized its

intentions through this study. Although the results of the study could just be perception, in any way, this provides a presentation of actual parents' feeling of how DLSU-D has serviced their students/children.

Statement of Objectives

This study defines the following objectives:

(1) To find out the parents' perception on the DLSU-D services which are grouped: (a) academic instruction factor; (b) quality of human ware (faculty, administrators, staff support through medical services guidance and discipline); (c) quality of hardware (dorm facilities, transportation, canteens and security services); and (d) expectations (graduates' job placement);

(2) To be able to echo out this perception to the university officials for possible improvement;

(3) To be able to share this perception with other sister La Salle schools.

Statement of the Problem

(1) How do DLSU-D parents perceive DLSU-D services in terms of: (a) academic instruction factor; (b) quality of human ware (faculty, administration, staff support through medical services, guidance and discipline); (c) quality of hardware (support services through dormitory facilities, transportation, canteen and security services.); and (d) expectations (graduates finding job placements);

(2) Further, this study hopes to find out the profile of parents, classification according to colleges/courses the students are enrolled in;

(3) How does parents' perception differ in terms of factor services and other differences in their perceptions when grouped in terms of: (a) colleges; (b) general rating; and (c) reason for choice of school.

Significance of the Study

The study is very significant to the following:

(1) For POLCA, Inc. having initiated this study to verbalize concerns on: (a) academic instruction factor; (b) quality of human ware (faculty, administration and staff support); (c) quality of hardware (dormitory facilities, transportation, canteen and security services); and (d) expectations on graduates' job placement;

(2) For university officials to become aware of what parents, being stakeholders perceive on academic instructions and quality of human ware, which consider faculty competence, administration and staff support, quality of hardware that includes dorm facilities, transportation, canteen, security services and discipline, and finally, on expectations which include chance of job placement of graduates;

(3) Likewise, this study can be very useful for other La Salle sister schools as eye openers for them to consider improvements and development of their services;

(4) And finally, this study hopes to find answers to the perennial question of why DLSU-D was chosen as a school for their children. Reasons are expected to be explored in this study.

Scope and Limitation

This study is conducted among a total of 310 active parents of students of this university from all the 7 colleges in the undergraduate courses. As an observation, whenever there is a call for parents to attend meetings and important gatherings which have something to do with students' concern, reality reveals that of the total numbers of parents of the total student population of DLSU-D, only 2,000 parents are active. It is a presumption that the other parents are just complacent and prefer to be in the background.

Operational Definition

(1) Academic instruction factor: course offerings and curriculum programs;

(2) Hardware factor: support services through dormitory facilities, transportation service, canteen and security;

(3) Human ware factor: faculty, administration and staff support through medical services, guidance and discipline;

(4) Parent: a father, mother, relative, guardian who raises a child from birth to adulthood part of which is providing education for the child;

(5) Loco parentis: in Latin means, "in the place of a parent";

(6) Parenting: process of bringing up and providing emotional, psychological, physical, spiritual and social needs of a child;

(7) Perception: an individual's view of the quality of a particular service or one's thinking;

(8) Quality: degree of level of excellence that gives satisfaction to a person.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study is as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 shows parents/students in the center of all. This best explains how parents perceive DLSU-D's services for their students in terms of academic instruction factors which are represented by the course offerings and the curriculum programs; quality of human ware which includes faculty through the professors, administrators and the staff support through medical services, guidance and discipline; quality of hardware through dormitory facilities, transportation services, canteen and security services; and lastly, expectations which are translated in terms of employability/job placement of the graduates.

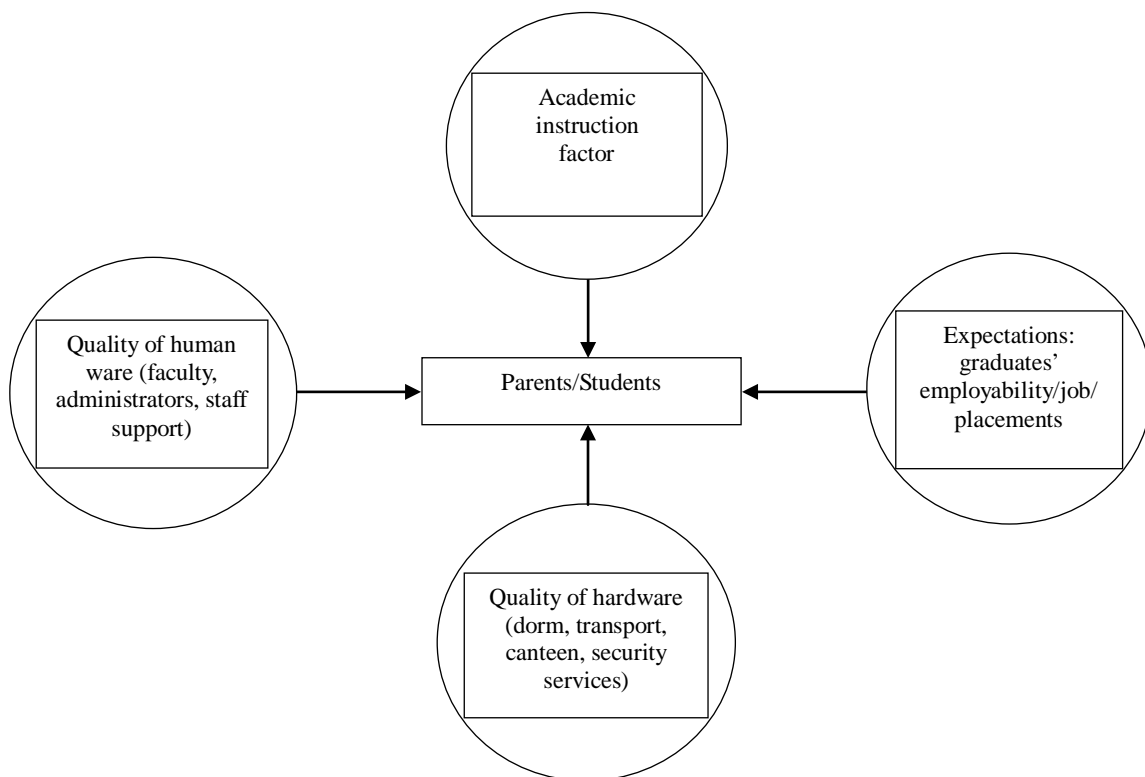


Figure 1. Conceptual framework.

Research Methodology

The study made use of the descriptive and inferential research method. From a total of 2,000 active parents, 310 were considered respondents. An initial number of questionnaires were distributed to a selected few of the parents present during the first general assembly of College of Science parents for the current school year to validate the instrument. The general assembly was initiated by POLCA Inc., the legitimate parents' organization of the university. The improved questionnaires were likewise distributed to the parents present during the first general assembly for the current school year in the other 6 colleges. Considering only a few parents present, a follow-up distribution was made to selected classes of the 7 colleges for the students to distribute to their parents. Retrieval was 100% since the class president played a very important role providing the link.

Frequency distribution was used to determine the distribution of the 7 colleges and to find out the mean. Cross tabulation was also done to determine each college's response on the 4 variables. Analysis of variance was drawn to determine the significant differences in the parents' perception of the service factors.

The Kruskal-Wallis test/Chi-square likewise was used in order to determine if there are significant differences in the ranking among the 4 variables considering the colleges grouped together.

Responses were interpreted according to the following adjectival ratings: 0.0-1.0 disagree, 1.1-2.0 moderately agree and 2.1-3.0 highly agree.

Results and Discussions

Table 1 shows the sample size per college. The highest percentage is College of Business Administration with 20.6% followed by College of Liberal Arts with 20.3%. College of Engineering, Architecture and Technology, however, followed with 16.1%, College of International Hospitality Management is 14.5%, and College of Science is 13.5%. College of Education represents 8.1%, and College of Law Enforcement Administration and Public Safety is 6.8%.

Table 1

Profile of Respondents

College	Frequency	Percent (%)
College of International Hospitality Management	45	14.5
College of Law Enforcement Administration & Public Safety	21	6.8
College of Liberal Arts	63	20.4
College of Business Administration	64	20.6
College of Education	25	8.1
College of Engineering, Arch & Technology	50	16.1
College of Science	42	13.5
Total	310	100

These parent-respondents when asked about their perception of DLSU-D services responded in terms of: (1) academic instruction factor; (2) quality of human ware (faculty, administration, staff support thru medical services, guidance and discipline); (3) quality of hardware (support services through dormitory facilities, transportation, canteen and security services); and (4) expectations (graduates finding job placements).

Table 2 shows the overall perception or overall rating of the services of the university to the students. As shown, the parent-respondents totaling 109 gave a rating of “Satisfactory” which is the highest or 35.2% of a total of 260, and 104 or 33.35% parent-respondents gave a rating of “Very satisfactory”, 40 or 12.9% parent-respondents gave a rating of “Excellent”, while 4 parent-respondents or 1.3% gave a “Needs improvement” rating and 3 parent-respondents or 1% gave a “Poor” rating of the sample size of 310 parent-respondents. Table 3 shows the mean of the responses of sample size for the 4 factors.

Table 2

Frequency Distribution on General Rating of DLSU-D Services

Ratings	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid percent (%)
Satisfactory	109	35.2	41.9
Very satisfactory	104	33.5	40.0
Excellent	40	12.9	15.4
Needs improvement	4	1.3	1.5
Poor	3	1.0	1.2
Total	260	83.9	100

Table 3

Mean of Service Factors

Factors	N	Mean	Std deviation
Academic instruction factor	303	2.4003	
Academic standards	301	2.5	
Co-curricular programs	297	2.47	0.02505
Balanced curriculum	302	2.38	
Parents provided with reports	301	2.34	
Meaningful activities	303	2.31	
Expectations	292	2.3877	
Higher chances of employment	289	2.48	
Graduates exude self-confidence	291	2.47	0.03275
More chances of getting better placement	291	2.43	
Comprehensive training and preparation	290	2.43	
Employment assistance after graduation	290	2.13	
Quality of human ware	303	2.2965	
Discipline and guidance	299	2.42	
Administrators within reach	301	2.34	0.02976
Support staff are efficient	298	2.26	
Faculty are competent	294	2.25	
Loco parentis	294	2.20	
Quality of hardware	303	2.2332	
Safety and security	302	2.53	
Venue for seminars	292	2.49	0.02823
Medical facilities	289	2.28	
Canteen facilities	290	2.04	
Dorm facilities	289	1.85	

Table 3 shows that of the 4 service factors, academic instruction factor which covers the details, such as academic standards, co-curricular programs, balanced curriculum, parents provided with reports and meaningful activities, has the highest mean of 2.4003. This simply means that the bigger number of parent-respondents agree that academic instruction factor ranks the highest among the 4 service factors. The service factor on expectations ranked second with a mean of 2.3877. This covers the details of higher chances of employment is 2.48, graduates exude self-confidence is 2.47, more chances of getting better placement is 2.43, comprehensive training and preparation is 2.43 and employment assistance after graduation is 2.13. Quality of human ware which includes faculty, administration, staff support through medical services, guidance and discipline followed closely with a mean of 2.2965 ranking third. The details include discipline and guidance with a mean of 2.42, administrators within reach is 2.34, support staffs are efficient, 2.26, faculty members are competent, 2.25 and the principle of “loco parentis” is being practiced in the university, 2.20. The lowest mean of 2.2332 was reflected by the service factor on quality of hardware which includes support services through dormitory facilities, transportation, canteen and security services. The details are safety and security, 2.53; venue for seminars, 2.49; medical facilities, 2.28; canteen facilities, 2.04; and dorm facilities, 1.85.

Further, a cross tabulation by college is presented in the Table 4 to determine whether the factors have significant association by college.

Table 4

Distribution of Factors by College

Factors	Chi-square	P-value	Interpretation
Academic instruction factor	21.624	0.042	Significant
Quality of human ware	10.895	0.538	Not significant
Quality of hardware	13.148	0.368	Not significant
Expectations	14.59	0.265	Not significant

Table 4 simply means that of the 4 factors, only the rating on the academic instruction factor showed significant relationship with colleges considering that it has a p-value of 0.042 which is lesser than 0.05, while the rest of the service factors, quality of human ware, quality of hardware and expectations showed no significant relationships with the colleges. In short, the academic instruction factor is dependent on the 7 colleges, and therefore, this matters so much depending upon the college. However, the 3 other service factors as mentioned do not matter as much since these do not dependent on the colleges.

A Kruskal-Wallis test was done to determine the differences among the ranking of the ratings grouped by college and the 4 service factors. Table 5 presents the results.

Table 5

Factor Ranking by College

Factors	Chi-square Kruskal-Wallis test	P-value	Interpretation
Academic instruction factor	14.802	0.022	Significant
Quality of human ware	3.068	0.8	No significant difference
Quality of hardware	8.15	0.227	No significant difference
Expectations	7.4	0.285	No significant difference
General rating	8.868	0.181	No significant difference

Table 5 shows the general rating of the 4 factors as revealed by the Chi-square Kruskal-Wallis test as 8.868 with a p-value of 0.181 which reveals no significant difference. However, in the individual rating for the 4 factors grouped by college shows the ranking of academic instruction factor as the highest, followed by quality of hardware which includes support services through dormitory facilities, transportation, canteen and security services, then quality of human ware which includes faculty, administration, staff support through medical services, guidance and discipline and expectations, that is graduates finding job placements as the lowest. Thus, Table 5 shows the significant difference in the ranking of academic instruction factor by colleges.

Table 6 shows the analysis of variance on general rating based on reason for the choice of school.

Table 6

Analysis of Variance of General Rating Based on Reason for Choice of School

Reason for choice of school	F	Sig.	Interpretation
Employability after graduation	1.928	0.077	Significant at 10%
High academic standards	6.779	0.01	Significant at 5%
Safety and security	3.343	0.069	Significant at 10%
Prestige/name/image/reputation	0.125	0.724	No significance
Reasonable tuition fees	9.822	0.002	Significant at 1%

The results as presented in Table 6 simply shows significant differences in general rating based on 4 out of the 5 reasons for choosing DLSU-D, namely, employability, academic standards, safety and reasonable tuition fees. Reasonable tuition fees ranked highest with an F-ratio of 9.822. Prestige was not significant which means that parents' general ratings of DLSU-D services are not significantly different in terms of this reason for choice. Parents chose DLSU-D for their children for reasons like high academic standards, safety and security and employability after graduation and reasonable tuition fees which revealed significance. However, the reason like prestige/name/image and reputation is of no significance at all. General rating is influenced by choice of school.

Table 7

Overall Factor Rating Cross Tabulation of General Rating vs. Service Factors

Factors	N	Percent (%)
Academic instruction factor		
Low (0.00-1.00)	2	1
Average (1.01-2.00)	61	23
High (2.01-3.00)	197	76
Quality of human ware (faculty, administration, staff support through medical services, guidance and discipline)		
Low (0.00-1.00)	10	3
Average (1.01-2.00)	69	27
High (2.01-3.00)	181	70
Quality of hardware (dorm facilities, transportation, canteens and security services)		
Low (0.00-1.00)	5	2
Average (1.01-2.00)	89	34
High (2.01-3.00)	166	64
Expectations (graduates finding job placements)		
Low (0.00-1.00)	10	4
Average (1.01-2.00)	69	26
High (2.01-3.00)	181	70

The above responses are interpreted according to 3 adjectival ratings: (1) 0.00-1.00 disagree (low); (2) 1.01-2.00 moderately agree/neutral (average); and (3) 2.01-3.00 highly agree (high). Table 7 shows that academic instruction factor which includes course offerings and curriculum programs rates the highest in the make-up of the general rating with 197 respondents or 76% rated as high, 61 or 23% rated as average, and only 2 or 1% rated as low. The service factors, quality of human ware which includes faculty through professors, administration and the staff support through medical services, guidance and discipline; and expectations which are translated in terms of employability/job placement of the graduates rate second to the highest in the make-up of the general rating with 181 respondents or 70% rated as high, minimal differences of 69 and 68 respondents or 27% and 26% respectively rated as average, and only 10 respondents for each or 4% rated as low. The service factor quality of hardware which includes dormitory facilities, transportation services, canteen and security services rates the lowest in the make-up of the general rating with 166 respondents or 64% rated as high, 89 respondents or 34% rated as average, and 5 respondents or 2% rated as low.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In the light of these findings, the researcher has come up with the following conclusions:

(1) The overall perception or overall rating of the services of the university to the students is satisfactory, reflected in the 41.9% of the total respondents. "Very satisfactory" rating followed closely with a slight difference as it reflected 40%. This means that a greater number of parent-respondents perceive that services of the university in general is satisfactory;

(2) Breaking down the services into 4 groups, such as academic instruction factor which includes course offerings, co-curricular programs, balanced curriculum; quality of human ware which includes faculty, administration, staff support through medical services, guidance and discipline; quality of hardware which includes dorm facilities, transportation, canteens and security services; and expectations which highlight graduates' employability/job placement, the bigger number of parent-respondents agreed on the perception that academic instruction factor ranks highest. The ranking is followed by expectations, that is graduates' employability/job placement registering second, then followed by quality of human ware and quality of hardware as the lowest;

(3) In consideration of the relationship of these service factors with the college, it revealed as perceived by the parent-respondents that academic instruction factor is very significant. This means that as a service factor, it is dependent on the college as it matters most. The 3 other factors, such as quality of human ware, quality of hardware and expectations, however, are not as significant as these do not dependent on the college. Further, the College of Liberal Arts and College of Science reflected significant differences while College of Business Administration registered slight differences;

(4) In response to the question "What is the reason that DLSU-D was the choice of a school", the 5 reasons indicated were high academic standards, safety and security, employability after graduation, reasonable tuition fees and prestige/name/image and reputation. In the final analysis, the highest among the 5 is high academic standards, followed by safety and security, then employability after graduation and reasonable tuition fees which are very significant, while the lowest which is not significant at all is prestige/name/image and reputation;

(5) In the analysis of the general rating versus the service factors of academics instruction factor, quality of human ware, quality of hardware and expectations, consistently academic instruction factor ranked the highest

since a bigger number of parent-respondents highly agree on this service factor. The rest of the ranking reflected quality of human ware, followed by expectations and the lowest is quality of hardware which specifically includes dorm facilities, transportation, canteens and security services.

Given the results of parents' perception of DLSU-D services, the following recommendations are presented.

In order to improve the overall general rating of all the factors from "Satisfactory" to "Very satisfactory", the university administration should focus on the different service factors that need improvement, such as:

(1) Quality of hardware: This includes dorm facilities, medical facilities, canteen facilities, and transportation and security services. This being the lowest, it is suggested that working closely with the parents' organization to actively participate in the planning and financial support of infrastructure, such as dorm provisions and transportation is ideal. The present transportation facility operated by the parents is a big help, perhaps adding more units to the present number of one traditional jeep and one electric jeep could be given a thought. Expansion of medical facilities and canteen operations likewise is suggested. Security services can also be improved by providing the group with the proper logistics for them to efficiently and effectively carry out their functions. It is also worth mentioning that at the time of this study, the tricycle which is acquired by the parents' organization is about to be turned over to the administration as a donation for the use of the security personnel for mobilization;

(2) Quality of human ware: This service factor included discipline and guidance, administration within reach, support staff are efficient, faculty are competent and the principle of loco parentis. It is suggested that the ones concerned should look deeper into these areas in order to improve the perception of parents;

(3) Expectations: It is flattering to know that parents perceive that for their students/children being enrolled in DLSU-D, there is a higher chance of employment in consideration of the provision of a comprehensive training and preparation which helps the graduates exude self-confidence coupled with the fact that the university provides employment assistance after graduation. However, it is still recommended that the university should not just feel confident about this but rather work things out to improve for the better. Perhaps coordinating with the right parties involved will help.

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