Research Article

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AT NORTHEAST NORMAL UNIVERSITY

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A R T I C L E   I N F O

A B S T R A C T

Higher education globalization is attracting to students across the world. Universities and higher education institutes are recruiting the students over world who can conduct research and work for them. The host universities and institutes facilitating and compelling to international students to maximize their academic performance. The academic performance of international students is being effect by learning facilities, learning strategies, communication and teaching pedagogy. The objective of this quantitative paper is to find to impact of these four factors on their academic achievements as well as check the relationship of academic performance with their respective schools and regions. Determination are portraying that learning facilities and respective departments have significant impact and relation with academic performance of international students respectively.

INTRODUCTION

In current modern era, higher education is a powerful strategic tool to develop the society. It opens new horizons and windows of wisdom as well as knowledge through creativity and invention. Educational globalization is the key source of innovation which leads towards synergy by managing cultural diversity. Higher educational institutes provide innovative platforms to convert the ideas into invitation. The United States of America is the example in terms of innovation that are taking benefit of higher education globalization by hosting international students at large scale as compare to world while United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Austria and New Zealand are also facilitating international students from last two decades (Gang, Wei and Jing-Lin, 2009). The number of financial support by different companies and institutes are attracting to international students especially in terms of laboratories, instruments and access over numerous precious databases as well as libraries. The British universities have alliance with British Council and Australian universities have confederation with Individual Development Plan (IDP) Education Australia to escalation international students up till 5.8 million by the year of 2020 (Asteris, 2006). China Scholarship Council (CSC) has strategic collation with Chinese universities to host international students by providing numerous scholarship and financial grants to grab the educational globalization opportunity.

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According to 2010 annual report of CSC, 13,038 international students (Ph. D or joint Ph. D programs: 45.71%, visiting scholars and senior research scholars included Post Doc: 43.54% and other categories included Masters, short-term scholars and undergraduates:10.75%), were financially sponsored by CSC in 2010 only (China Scholarship Council, 2010) which are being increased sharply by the years.

To meet the essentials of international students, Chinese host universities are providing research platform to international students e.g. research laboratories, research institutes and other research facilities while international students need to across through their institutes' academic standards to take graduation certificates. The success of graduation, bases on academic performance. There are a lot of factors which are effecting the performance of international students including learning facilities, learning strategies, communication and teaching pedagogy. This study aims to check the relationship between these four factors and academic performance of international students, evidence one of the host university named; university named Northeast Normal University (NENU).

Academic performance bases on learning facilities which lead to failure or success. Availability of rich resources, library including university main library, department library, reading spaces, discussion rooms, appropriate facilities, and required latest equipment are key determinants of academic performance. The relationship between curriculum work load and student's abilities were analyzed and pointed out that learning facilities handiness and approachability have direct relation with academic competence and performance (Kleijn, van der Ploeg, & Topman, 1994).

In current arena, universities and other academic institutes are facilitating to their students by providing free access over different online databases, journals, book stores and globally well-known authentic libraries as well as other world leading universities libraries. Saenz, *et al*.(1999) indicated that notable students' grades are a cause of positive usage of library.

Satisfactory infrastructure of institute library, computer laboratory, learning environment, reading rooms, other facilities and their positive use affect the performance of students. Karemera *et al*. (2003) observed that student satisfaction is significantly correlated with their performance. Remarkable student performance is the consequence of appropriate and constructive usage of available facilities (Norhidayah Ali, *et al*., 2009).

Learning strategy is a series of tactics and work scheme which help a student to achieve his/her academic objectives to win good grades by developing critical learning abilities. The smart and effective learning tactics significantly enhance the scholarship of learners and efficient learning strategies are valuable for students as well (Lebcir, *et al*., 2008). Norhidayah, *et. al*. (2009) found positive correlation between students' CGP and smart learning strategies. They concluded that there is positive relationship between smart learning style and student performance because student learning style has significant impact on student performance.

Learning strategies varies from student to student like throwing the light on important ideas and concepts, sketching, open constructive discussions over important concepts and idea, summarization, repetition of important points, individual study, group study and raising the query, all are learning strategies (Luis Antoñanzas & Lorente, 2017) which help to students to explore new windows of knowledge especially subject matters by clearing the concepts. How a student manages his/her studies and goals which are linked with academic performance (Dowson & McInerney, 2003; Dowson & McInerney, 2004). pointed out that students' outcomes are based on their learning strategies, for instance student motivation, utilization of resources, cognitive and metacognitive particles. Furthermore, learning strategies have direct relation with student performance. While Pintrich, *et. al*. (1993) stated tha tlearning strategies play vital role for a student to learn learns new subjects, ideas and concepts (Pintrich, *et al*., 1993). Biggs (1999) argued that no doubt learning strategies are contingency and personal technique while studying a subject. The best way to clear a specific concept, is to develop a common strategy which can help both student and teacher (Harpe & Radloff, 2001).

The language is a focal point of academic communication which rely on skills, culture and cross-cultural impact as well as institutional support (Abel, 2002). Additionally, for the effective guidance and directions from a tutor and faculty, the understandable language is key element which ultimately effects the grades and outcome of a student (Ryan, 2000; Abel, 2002; Griffiths, *et al*., 2001). When international students enter into new culture or institute, they face communication issue due to language barriers specially to communicate with the supervisor or professors (Cortazzi & Jin, 1997) for learning and clear the concepts because they need to achieve their academic goals (Ridley, 2004). Santangelo *et al*. (2007) researched that the soul of communication is writing which is an art and technique. Furthermore, in educational world writing is heart of academics and research. Efficient writing and diversification in writing enhance student performance remarkably. To cope up with the academic communication, linguistic competence is key to international students (Jones, 2005). The close interaction and communication between teaching staff and International students, have positive significant impact on their academic achievements and performance (Adams, 2004).

Teaching pedagogy is the basic pillar of teaching process and learning. The primary purpose of lecture and lesson is to enhance learning of students. Every individual student learning power is different, some grab the delivered lectures and lessons quickly and some slow. Teaching pedagogy is the key element which impacts the students' academic performance broadly due to usage of different style of pedagogy by the resource person and teachers (Elvis, 2013).

Teacher-centered, student-centered and teach-student interactive method, are core style of pedagogy which are being used in famous educational setups (Elvis, 2013).He further explained that in teacher centered method, tutor delivers the lecture while students only listen it as information seeker. Moreover, students need to follow the instructions, what to do, how to do without participating in subject matters. While in student-centered method Elvis (2013) stated that students' participation and encouragement are the focal aims of it. This teaching pedagogy method develops critical thinking and analytical reasoning especially independent learning among the learners. It targets pupils learning due to direct involvement of students in learning process which leads ultimately towards attain students' personal learning goals and achievements. On the other hand, teacher-student interactive method is the combination both teacher and student-centered approaches. Both parties (tutors and learner) participate in learning process actively together to achieve the learning goals and objectives (Elvis, 2013). Damodharan & Rengarajan (1999) verified that teacher-student interactive style is best fit model to maximize academic performance of students.

Universities have their own academic vision, goals and objectives. To achieve them, universities drawn the academic policies and set the academic standards to measures academic performance of the students. Although, the academic performance of international students bases on some other determinants which effect the academic performance but these elements mostly remain ignored by host institution in terms of assessments (Hartnett, Römcke, & Yap, 2004). On the other hand, universities need high grade accomplishments of international students (Yunke and Heather, 2009). Whereas, these factors especially learning facilities, learning strategies, communication and teaching pedagogy, contribute in international students' high academic performance and success. NENU International students' academic performance is being effect by these four factors and major hurdle in the way of academic success and high academic achievements.

The objective of this study is to disclose the factors which are contributing in academic success of international students in terms of academic performance as well as check the relationship between academic performance with respect to faculties and cultural diversity.

Research Questions

- Which factor is significantly affecting the performance of international students?
  H0: µ1 = µ2 = µ3 = µ4 H$_{R:}$ µ1 ≠µ2 ≠ µ3 ≠ µ4
- What is the relationship between students' faculty of studies (school and department) and their academic performances?
- What is the impact of region (Africa, Asia, Europe and America) on the performances of international students?

METHODOLOGY

The essential and major part of research methodology is research strategy which defines the strategy for data collection to analyze evidence for findings to solve the problem (Singh, 2006). The data was collected through close ended questioner survey for this quantitative research. The questioner of "a study of Factors that Affect Students' Academic Achievement in Government Secondary Schools of Asella Town, Oromia National Regional State in Ethiopia" by (Zenebe, 2015) was adapted after modification as per objective of this study with 0.83 Chronbach's alpha value as reliability test.

Its been necessary to check the reliablity and validity of questionnaire whether it is addressing information according to context and populaiton smaple or manipulating something (Cronbach, 1946) because it is adapted and some questions are developed according to work setting to take reliable result. Reliability test is contained 10 respondent. Furthermore, cronbatch appha valsue is 0.83 which is in good and acceptable zone (Burns & Burns, 2008; Cronbach, 1946).

This questionnaire was also used by other researchers in their context, for instance Betsy, Jessica, Peter, Sally, Anne, Erin, and Karen, (2010) conducted the research, titled "Examining the Unexpected: Outlier Analyses of Factors Affecting Student Achievement".

It had three main dimensions, fist was related to demographics, second was based on focal point of the research containing 16 questions related to learning facilities, learning strategies, communication and teaching pedagogy. Each factor had four questions in second part of the questioner. The last part of the questionnaire which was third part of the questioner was related to academic performance report especially grades and percentages in common and major course. Moreover, second and third part questions were asked on point below likert scale:

Strongly Agree	**1**
Agree	2
Neutral	3
Disagree	4
Strongly Disagree	5

The international students of Northeast Normal University main campus were participated in this quantitative research. They were selected through random sampling from four departments of the university;

Faculties	Respondents		
	Female	Male	Total
Education	13	19	32
Chemistry	1	11	12
Life Sciences	7	13	20
Chinese	24	12	36
Total	45	55	100

173 questioners were divided among above four faculties international students and 100 were valid for analysis. Whereas others were contained missing information and malpractices of response.

One-way ANOVA was used to analyze the collected information because multiple factors involvement and correlation analysis was used to check the relationship among the variables with respected to their grades of international students.

Analysis

Factors that affect the Performance of International Students

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Learning Facilities	Between Groups	2.815	3	.938	5.238	.002
	Within Groups	17.195	96	.179		
	Total	20.010	99			
Learning Strategies	Between Groups	.918	3	.306	1.423	.241
	Within Groups	20.647	96	.215		
	Total	21.565	99			
Communication	Between Groups	.193	3	.064	.388	.762
	Within Groups	15.939	96	.166		
	Total	16.132	99			
Teaching Pedagogy	Between Groups	.175	3	.058	.347	.792
	Within Groups	16.202	96	.169		
	Total	16.378	99			

ANOVA table is depicting that learning facilities have significant impact on academic performance of international students while learning strategies, communication and teaching pedagogy are not effecting academic performance of international students of Northeast Normal University. P value (P= 0.02) of learning facilities is significant because its lesser than alpha 0.05 while F$_{obtained}$is 5.238 with 3 degree of freedom. Whereas, learning strategies, communication and teaching pedagogy are insignificant due their greater P values as compare to alpha=0.05.

The students who have grades between 70-79 and 80-89 score slabs were significantly different with .002 significant value each other and those students who attained grades within 80-89 and 90-100, are also significantly different with .034 value each other in terms of learning facilities (see post hoc table in appendix). However, those who scored grades within other ranges were found insignificant.

Correlation between faculties and grades

Correlations			
		School/depart ment of respondents	Grades with respect to marks of the participant
School/department of respondents	Pearson Correlation	1	.221*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.027
	N	100	100
Grades with respect to marks of the participant	Pearson Correlation	.221*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.027	
	N	100	100
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).			

The university departments have significant relation with academic performance of international students due to P=0.027 while there is no significant relationship was found between regions and academic performance of international students (see attached correlation table in appendix).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The analysis part is highlighting that learning facilities have quite significant relation with the performance of international students. Research facilities like research laboratories, research materials, research equipments and innovative research centers as well as access over advanced data bases and current knowledge houses are quite crucial elements for international students to boost up their academic performance. Although, learning strategies, communication and teaching pedagogy are valuable after learning facilities because learning facilities are base of their study and research.

Moreover, each faculty of university has significant relation with the performance of international students because each school of Northeast Normal University is directly responsible to educate international students by providing research space, learning platform, adequate instructional material, key books and research papers. Furthermore, the schools are straightly involved in international students mentoring, guidance, counseling services and training workshops. Learning facilities and departments of Northeast Normal University are foundation of academic performance of international students.

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