FACTORS OF STUDENTS' ACADEMIC SUCCESS IN UNIVERSITY

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MAY 2016

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5. Report

5.1 Proposed Executive Summary

This research intends to determine the factors of students' success in university to help university top management and students to monitor and predict their academic grade points during their university years. This research also aims to investigate if there is any relationship between the factors and the academic success of the university students. This research employs quantitative method design whereby quantitative data will be collected at the same time. The result from the quantitative data is used to determine the factors of students' success and compare the interventions that could play the roles to improve university students' academic success. The population of this research consists of the public university students in Sarawak. Random sampling method is used to select a total of 200 samples from public universities for all the clusters. The samples are full-time public university students who have successfully completed their diploma studies and undergraduate degrees. Data are collected through an academic year. The instrument of this research consists of questionnaire distributed to collect information on the possible factors of academic success of university students. The possible factors are ranging from demographic variables, biographic variables, institutional variables and personality related variables. The data analysis includes the calculation of descriptive statistics, such as mean, percentage and standard deviation and inferential statistics, such as independent t-test or Mann-Whitney U Test, ANOVA or Kruskal Wallis Rank Sum Test subject to the normality of the samples. The step-wise regression modelling is used to analyze the data collected. The expected outcome from this research is the identified factors of the academic success of the university students which can assist the top managements and university students to monitor, plan and forecast their academic results. This system is hoped to motivate the university students to be more systematic and deterministic in planning their academic progress.

5.3 Introduction

This section provides the background and rationale for the study. It intends to provide an overview of the factors that determine the academic success of the university students. Inevitably, it looks into the various dimensions of factors of academic success among university students. The statement of the problem addresses dilemma which is evident in the current scenario of students' factors of academic success. This leads to the ardent need to carry out this study which looked closely into the related factors that affect students' academic performance in their university life. Prior to discussing those issues, a list of research objectives is presented for the purpose of answering the research questions and related terms are defined by referring to previous established studies.

In this era of globalization and technological revolution, education is considered as the vital step for every individual to succeed and survive in the society. Indeed it plays an importance role in developing the human capital to create and sustain a well-being and opportunities for the betterment of the people. Battle and Lewis (2002) supported the role of education in developing a sustainable and success country. Saxton (2000) further elaborated on the impact of acquisition of knowledge and skills would enable individuals to increase their productivity which would lead towards new sources of earning and eventually enhances the economic growth of a country. Educators believe that the quality of students' performance remains top priority than anything else.

Initially, Mann (1985) has investigated about the role of demographic factors rooted back in the 17th century which include age, gender, geographical belongingness, ethnicity, marital status, socioeconomic status (SES), parents' education level, parental profession, language, income and religious affiliations. This study takes into consideration of the proposed term by Mann (1985) by exploring in details on the demographic factors that contributed to the academic success of the students. Farooq, Chaudhry, Shafiq and Berhanu (2011) define the context of demography variables as a way to explore the nature and effects of these factors in the biological and social context.

Among the listed factors by Mann (1985), the socioeconomic status is the most argued factors that affects the students' academic performance. In relation to this, Adams (1996) has revealed that due to the unfulfilled basic needs in the students' studies, this would contribute to low performance of the students' academic result which cause by the low socioeconomic status of their parents. Hence, there is a crucial need to further investigate the significant of socioeconomic status in contributing to the success of the students in their academic performance specifically in their tertiary education.

This study sought to discover whether any significant differences among low-income homes, parents' background, Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) results with regard to their graduating and performance in university level. The Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) or the Malaysian Certificate of Education is a national examination set by the Malaysian Examination Syndicate (Lembaga Peperiksaan Malaysia) taken by all fifth year secondary schools students in Malaysia.

5.3.1 Problem Statement

In spite of the diversity and complexity of Malaysian tertiary education, the Malaysian government mandates the use of a single and centralized instrument to evaluate the system. This study conducted in one of the Malaysian universities. Various research studies have been conducted to explore the factors that affect students' academic performance in their studies. Educator, trainers, and researchers have long been interested in exploring variables leading effectively for quality of performance or learners. There are many variables and these factors are termed by Crosnoe, Johnson and Elder (2004) which are student factors, family factors, school factors and peer factors. However, very few local studies explore the factors of academic performance in considering the complexity and diversity of Malaysian social environment. This study would reveal various crucial factors that indirectly affect students' academic performance during their university life. Besides that, the changing values of quality attributes associated with the different stakeholders' view point has contributed to the complexity of defining and measuring the quality of