An Emprical Study toward Students' Academic Performance and Students' Residential Status

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ABSTRACT

Fundamentally, students are being judged through their academic performance. Excellence in education leads to good work ethic and a path of having a good job, good income as well as happy life in the future. Joining Universities is a challenge to students. Moreover, most of them may have to stay outside the campus due to shortage of hostel facilities. Unfortunately, based on people perception, students who live outside the campus usually will show a poor academic performance. Hence, this study was conducted as to prove the perception or otherwise. Besides that, this study analyzed the difference between students' academic performance and students' residential status. A structured questionnaire was distributed in the classroom to 245 students from part 5 and 6 from the Faculty of Business Management. SPSS version 20 was used to analyze the data. The outcome of the study would contribute insight information and recommendation to UiTM Jengka in particular and other higher-level institution on how to plan strategically in order to increase the students' academic performance.

Keywords: *academic performance, residential, students*

Introduction

Students are universities' assets. They become the human workforce upon graduation to keep the growth of country's economy. However, those who fail in education will find out that it is hard to get jobs. Hence it is very important to focus on students' academics performance so that they can fulfill the supply chain in the labor market. Therefore, universities are the organization that are responsible to fulfill the campus resources such as residential, libraries, parking space, comfortable classroom and equiptment so that students are able to undergo a good learning process and yet can perform in academic. Nevertheless, there are many issues arise related to facilities provided by university especially residential matters. The university could not fulfill the demand in providing hostels to all students. Therefore, in most university environment, the students have been given two options whether to be a residence (stay in campus) but need to actively involve in the campus activities or to be non-residence (stay off campus) and they need to bear their own cost such as rental, transportation and many more. (The term non-residence and stay off campus will be used interchangeably in this paper.)

According to Mohd Najib, Yusof and Zainal Abidin (2011) students who stay on campus will enhance good rapport and socialize among them whereby it could also broaden the students' knowledge. Logically, the students who stay on campus have the privilege to obtain information related to academic immediately. They also need not to worry about transportation since it is only a walking distance among the buildings on the campus. Yet, the universities provide public transportation if the students need to go outside the campus or to the nearest town. Contradictly, for those who are non-residence they need to rent house and look for housemate in order to save cost. Some of them might confront with absentism due to domestic problems such as transportation, raining season and others. Schemulian and Coetzee, (2011) agree that the reason for off campus students become late comers or absence to the class is due to traffic jam and transportation problems. They conclude that, there is a positive relationship between class attendance and academic performance. In other words, if the students are absent for class it will affect their performance.

Universiti Teknologi Mara Pahang (UiTM Pahang) is located in Bandar Tun Abdul Razak, Pahang with the capacity of 9000 students. Therefore, for those who want to stay on the campus, one of the requirements is active participation in the campus activities. However, some of them preferred to stay off campus for freedom purposes. UiTM Pahang, however is located in rural area, a small township and yet still can be exposed to negative activities such as drug addiction, social loafing and etc. The existence of UiTM Pahang has helped the development of Bandar Tun Razak, Jengka. Many housing areas were developed to fulfill the demand of the population. The university provides public transportation but it is unable to support all the students in or off campus because the services are limited. Therefore, some of them preferred to have their own vehicles.

According to Limanond, Butsingkorn and Chermkhunthod (2011) non resident students need their own vehicles to make it easier for them to commute to campus. In addition, by having their own transport the students have easy access to various destination to complete their daily academic activities such as attending lectures, going to the libraries, having group discussion and meeting the lecturer at any time. Furthermore, if the students have their own vehicles they help them to go to non-academics activities as well such as shopping mall, grocery shops even clubbing. Consequently, if they are really into these bad activities it might affect their academic performance. Indeed, with all the benefits the residential students should perform better in their academic.

Students Lifestyle

Student is a learner; someone who attends an educational instituitions either kindergarten, primary/secondary schools or universities/colleges. They are asset to the country and to every educational instituitons as future generations to continue the delegation of previous leaders in developing economy. The challenges of university life in terms of learning environment where independent study is the main approaches in higher education. As mentioned by Holdsworth (2006) life as a student has to built-in together with other aspects of life. Moreover, to archive succesful results students must strive hard and fully utilize all the university resources. According to Hacıhasanog˘lu, Yildirim, Karakurt & Saglam (2011) healthy lifestyle behavior as university students can be determined through their grade level, income level of students and families, smoking status and the students' place of residence.

A financial support is the most important aspect for students in order to have a healthy lifestyle. According to Curtis and Klapper, (2005) the academic and living costs that are associated as a student's major expenditures in university. Previously the main costs including a tuition fee, personal expediture on books or personal computer but later on they divided into essential and non-essential costs and include accommodation, food, travel, entertainment and clothing (Curtis & Klapper, 2005). Therefore, students are burdened with not only the costs to complete their studies but also other costs likes accommodation as to ensure them to have a comfort place to stay.

Furthermore, the healthy environments for students will influence the healthy lifestyle patterns and lead them to perform better in academic (Lee, Loke, Wu & Ho 2010). Prices, Matzdorf, Smith & Agahi (2003) agree that the social life and networking in campus life usually come from the characteristics of students that fit with the ability of instituition itself, and it will lead to increase students satisfaction, academic achievement and personal growth.

Students Academics Performance

Life as university student is hectic. They are bounded with tight schedules such as classes, assignments, group discussion and also participation in either campus or non campus activities no matter if they are living on or off campus. Residential status affects student's achievement either from neither academic nor non academic performance. This statement has been agreed by Pascarella and Terenzini (1991), where they confirm that there is positive effect of residence living and academic performance because residence living contributes to intelectual growth and improved thinking ability. Furthermore, Blimling and Hemple (1989) state that the establishment of special floor and silent-hour at residence might have some effects to the academic performance since students are able to focus on their study. Plant, Ericsson, Hill & Asberg (2005) mention that the total study time does not give impact to grade point average of students but it depend on total hour spent studying in quiet environment. Due to that, students who are staying on campus experience the condition of silent-hour and good facilities provided as compared to students stay off campus. They need to tolarate with their neighbourhood and moreover it is very difficult to get silent-hour as campus offered. There are some adequate evidence indicate that quality facilities provided by university can affect the academic achievement of student's including accommodation and class room which directly affects the learning outcome (Kok, Mobach & Omta, 2011 & Temple, 2008). Concomittantly, Hassanain (2008) purports that lack of a campus housing system may affect to the students' academic performance. Due to that, the students who stay at residential area have more advantages in enjoying the facilities provided. Differently, non-residence students will have lack advantages as they need to share their accommodation with other colleagues and stay at inconvenient places. Thus, their study will be interrupted by distractions at surrounding area (Hassanain, 2008). Turley and Wodtke (2010) identify that the students who lives on campus have significantly more advantages where they can save transportation cost, academic intergration, interacted with faculty more frequently and involve more in university activities. Tackey, (1999) also mention among the benefits that students have are technologies provided on campus area due to information interactive improvement and decision making tools in order to focus and personalise information.

Previous studies also indicate that the students living in campus obtain slightly higher grades in GPAs rather than students living off campus (Nowack and Hanson, 1985).

According to Ross (1991) as university students the most important in maintaining a healthy lifestyle is to have an excellent academics achievement, to be independent and adapt to a new social environment. The other challenge as a student's is a transition experience in terms of the stucture of teaching and learning environment that makes students lifestyle changed (Keating, 2006). For example, the transition of student's life in university is the way of learning and teaching as two ways interactions whereby students and lecturers interact simultaneously. On the other hand, the other factors that contribute to the performance of students once they are staying in residential area are the discipline, time allocation and extra-curricular obligations. Hlavac, Peterso, & Piscioneri (2011) also point out that there are interrelationship between these factors between student performance and their lifestyle.

Methodology

The data collection method used a self-administrated questionnaire that comprise of three parts; Part A: Demographic background, Part B: Student's Academic Performance and Part C: Option of residential. It also included seven items measured on a 4-point Likert scale in Part B to determine the difference of academic performance between residence and non-residence students among UiTM Pahang students. The hard copies of the questionnaires were distributed in the classroom to 245 students from part 5 and 6 from the Faculty of Business Management. The part 5 and 6 students were chosen as the respondents since they are assumed to have an enough experience being residence and non-residence students. Descriptive analysis using SPSS version 20 was performed to analyze the collected data.

Findings

Out of 245 total samples, 191 respondents (78.0%) were females and 54 respondents (22.0%) were males with an average age 20 years old. The respondents were from three different programmes in Faculty of Business Management, UiTM Pahang. 134 respondents (54.7%) involved in this study were from Diploma in Office Management (BM118), 77 respondents (31.4%) were from Diploma in Business (General) (BM111) and the rest 34 respondents (13.9%) were from Diploma in Business (Banking) (BM112). 55.1% were part 5 students with an average age of 20 years old. The average of respondents' GPA was 3.27. Ninety seven respondents (39.6%) were residence students and 148 respondents (60.4%) were non-resident students. (Refer Table 1)

Table 1: Descriptive of Student Profile

Items	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	54	22.0
Female	191	78.0
Program		
BM118	134	54.7
BM111	77	31.4
BM112	34	13.9
Residential status		
Residence	97	39.6
Non-Residence	148	60.4

Total = 245 students

This study found that the average GPA of students who stayed on campus is better. The average GPA for resident students was 3.37 compared to the non residence students, with an average GPA of 3.20. The perception of residence students of staying inside the campus will affect their academic performance was at agree to strongly agree level (mean score is 3.65). Table 2, indicates that on overall seven items measured, resident student strongly agreed that their academic performance could be better if they stay on campus. The result obtained is similar to the finding of Nowack and Hanson (1985).

Table 2: Residences' perception level of academic performance

No.	Items	Mean
1	Staying inside is good for my studies	3.75
2	I can get better result if i stay inside	3.59
3	I can focus more on my studies when i stay inside	3.93
4	I can manage time properly when staying inside	3.53
5	I can easily meet the lecturers for consultation	3.55
6	I can easily form do a study group for studying/test/examination preparation	3.63
7	I can easily get information neccessary for my studies	3.58

On the other hand, the perception of non-resident students who stay outside campus will affect their academic performance was at disagree to agree level (mean score is 2.77). It showed that their perception level is not as strong as resident students in achieving better academic performance once they stayed outside campus. However, out of seven items measured, they perceived that they will get low advantage due to less facilities and campus resources provided because of staying outside, the perception level of non-residences students for item 2 still high, that they can get better result even if they stay outside (refer Table 3). The students who live on campus were significantly more advantages as compared than those who did not, in term of save transportation cost, academic intergration, interaction with faculty more frequently and are more involved in universities activities (Turley and Wodtke, 2010 & Hasanain, 2008).

Table 3: Non-residences' perception level of academic performance

No.	Items	Mean
1	Staying outside is good for my studies	2.76
2	I can get better result if i stay outside	3.51
3	I can focus more on my studies when i stay outside	2.69
4	I can manage time properly when staying outside	2.71
5	I can easily meet the lecturers for consultation	2.23
6	I can easily form do a study group for studying/test/examination preparation	2.91
7	I can easily get information when neccessary for my studies	2.57

The findings also found that, 68.2% of respondent preferred to stay inside the campus. They stated two main reasons of preferring to stay inside the campus. 31.8% stated to save cost and time and 18.8% stated easy to focus on study. Others listed reasons were more secured and no transportation problem. Students preferred to stay inside the campus not only because to get better academic performance but they could take have advantages as being a residence student besides could avoid bad things occurrence and indirectly solve their problem like cost and transportation (Limanond et. al, 2011 and Curtis, 2005).

Conclusion and recommendation

This study basically indicates that the respondents agreed that they can achieve better academic performance if they stay inside the campus. Nowack and Hanson (1985) conclude that students who stay on campus tend to have better performance than students who stay off campus. This is because those that stay inside the campus

could enjoy many advantages such as better accomodation, safe time in travelling, better learning environment and save cost. Indirectly, these factors contribute to better academic performance.

As mentioned by Limanond et. al (2011) and Curtis & Klapper (2005) by staying inside the campus could indirectly solve the students' problem and avoid bad things from happening. Therefore, it is also highly suggested that universities provide more residences so that it can accommodate more students hence leads to help them perform better as supported by Kok et. al (2011) the quality of facilities directly influence the education processes that may lead to excellence achievement. Moreover, as suggested the universities should provide facilities where students can choose an accomodations facilities on or out residence of campus.

As Tackey (1999) suggests the universities have to maximise the use of the new technologies, to improve interactive information and decision making tools in order to focus and personalise information. Thus, it acts a bridge that divides between information users and providers. Through technologies, there is no gap among residence or non-residence students as they still can reach the information directly.

Lastly, no matter where the students stay , the university should play active roles in making sure that the facilities and campus resources are sufficient in order to assure the learning process running smoothly. This is consistent with previous argument where Tackey (1999) verifies that the facilities provided by university were showed as an overall image of that instituition and the social life of their students. Therewith, they do not feel unfair then together improve their academic performance and enhance the image of the university.

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