

The Academic Performance Challenges of Students in terms of Obtaining the Cumulative average Required from Donors to Continuing Study

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Abstract

The study aimed at identifying the challenges faced by Jordanian students on scholarship who are studying abroad. A descriptive method was used and an e-questionnaire was selected to collect data. The questionnaire consists of five parts: demographic information, financial challenge items, social challenge items, academic and management challenge of donors, and lastly, cumulative average required of continuing study. The sample size of this study was 357 students. Accordingly, the researcher distributed 357 questionnaires and received 350. Only 346 questionnaires were analyzed after cleaning data. The study found that financial challenge and social challenge have a significant impact on cumulative average required. On other hand, it is found that academic and management challenge of donors does not have a significant impact on cumulative average required. This study can provide further insights for scholarship bodies, organizations, and education sectors on how to pay attention to such factors that affect scholarship students. Further studies are recommended to investigate the effect of these factors on similar contexts with looking at the use of qualitative research design.

Keywords: The Academic Performance Challenges, Scholarship Cumulative Average Required, Donors, Social factors, Financial factors.

1. INTRODUCTION

Academic performance is defined as a student's ability to complete academic assignments, and it is assessed using objective criteria such as final course grades and grading point average (e.g., Carroll, & Garavalia, 2004; Naser, & Hamzah, 2018; Olivier et al., 2019). Many scholars have identified several factors that affect a student's academic achievement (Kim et al., 2018; Lei, 2018). In this day and age of globalization, increasing economies, and rapid development, improving educational output and retention rates is critical to the prosperity of any nation. Thus, education is seen as extremely important for an individual because it is required for obtaining good jobs,

achievement, and prospects for better living (Alsheikh, 2019; Mishra, 2019).

With the growing number of educational institutes, there is a greater need to place focus on providing students with specialised knowledge and technical skills in order to boost their productivity and prospects for better living, which leads to a country's economic progress (Stanca et al., 2021; Tri, et al, 2021). Indeed, the primary goal of educational institutes is to assist students in understanding course material and obtaining a grade that allows for academic and professional advancement (Apriana et al., 2019; Indrawati, & Kuncoro, 2021). Gender, study habits, age, discipline, the contribution of a teacher in

academic achievement of students, class attendance, time management, socialization, sleep patterns, socialization, partying behaviors, socioeconomic status, educational background of parents, and other factors all have an impact on students' learning performance. In recent decades, there has been an increase in research on characteristics that contribute effectively to the quality of academic accomplishment of students (Al-qadi, & Naser, 2022; Al-Thamawi, 2017; Farah, 2021).

One of the most important issues in regard to academic performance is related to those students who have scholarship. More deeply, the issues of scholarship students and their social, economic, and academic conditions in the scholarship countries have received the attention of researchers in different fields. Scholarships to study inside or abroad are not new to the communities. With the development of education, the increase in the number of students enrolled in education in its comprehensive and sustainable development plans, for cadres with a qualified company in all disciplines needed by the labor market. The scholarship programs are seen to be an advanced and qualitative leap in higher education; to keep pace with the rapid global developments in scientific and technical fields. The program aims primarily to send qualified competencies to study in the best international universities in various countries of the world to build qualified, trained, and professional cadres capable of paying the wheel of economic and social development (Al-Mousa, 2009; Farah, 2021).

Accordingly, the current study aims to investigate various factors impacting college students' academic performance and to improve educational quality in terms of earning the cumulative average required by donors to continue study. To accomplish this goal, well-structured questionnaires were issued to engineering students enrolled in various universities with scholarship programs. Undoubtedly, different elements influence the quality of students' academic achievement, including instructor efficacy, student study habits, distracting issues, family environment,

and so on. The examination of student academic achievement may be beneficial to both students' parents and college policymakers. The quality of education can be enhanced by implementing effective measures and taking necessary action on the factors that are most responsible for students' academic achievement.

2. Literature Review

The scholarship is defined as sending students on scholarships to study in universities in various disciplines and degrees, which is organized by a government agency or one of the bodies with educational goals (Campbell, & Neff, 2020; Latief, & Lefen, 2018). During learning process, some challenges are seen to be obstacles for these students to completing their educational path and obtaining educational certificates, we have dedicated this article to shed light on the most prominent problems experienced by scholarship students. Learning is not only the product of formal education, but also the product of families, communities and peers. Social, economic and cultural forces influence learning and thus academic achievement (Farah, 2021).

Indeed, many postsecondary institutions throughout the world are competing to expand university attendance, including targeting under-represented cohorts of students and claiming to improve engagement, retention, and employment results for all students (Morgan, et al., 2018; Robson, et al., 2018). To achieve these goals, many universities allocate varying amounts of money to provide scholarships, bursaries, and grants - all of which are often misused terms that refer to giving money to students based on academic merit or to assisting disadvantaged or under-represented students in gaining access to tertiary education. Little studies have been performed to examine the benefits that these scholarships provide to students and their families (Al-Mousa, 2009; Farah, 2021; Latief, & Lefen, 2018).

2-1 Problems facing scholarship students of continuing study

There are many problems that students may face between psychological, academic and legal problems, where the student is placed in different atmosphere, customs, cultures, and legal systems, these challenges are presented below based on reviewed studies (e.g., Al-Mousa, 2009; Al-Thamawi, 2017; BTS Academy, 2022; Farah, 2021; Latief, & Lefen, 2018).

Firstly, the failure to understand the nature of the new educational stage for most beginners and the study system among all students can be serious challenges. A student may face a problem in adapting to the university system, which may differ radically from the previous education system. One of the challenges is associated to legal problems. The scholarship student may be ignorant of the laws of the universities and/or donors' conditions. For example, students who study in a foreign country can face serious challenges regarding laws. For instance, in the country where she/he studies, which may differ from the laws of his/her country in the wake of many legal violations, such as the occurrence of violations while driving, or in matters related to social and health care, and the law may differ from one state to another, or from one city to another within the same country. This makes it difficult for the student if he/she wants to move in the country of scholarship, and if the student faces any legal problem, he/she must communicate directly with the embassy or consulate of his/her country.

In addition, the difficulty integrating with the cultures of others is also a serious challenge. Students may suddenly find themselves in an environment other than their environment, and a world other than theirs, where they meet a large number of students from different cultures and religions. Besides, language problem is also seen to be a challenge. This problem appears at the beginning of the student's academic life, despite the possibility of mastering the language, which is a requirement for many international universities, he/she may not master how to use it

appropriately, and this problem disappears by mixing the student with the rest of the students, getting to know them, and using the foreign language constantly.

In addition, the difficulty of living alone is another issue. The scholarship students may find it very difficult to live alone, and manage their life at first, as he/she has to find a house, take care of its cleanliness and arrangement, take care of food matters, and manage his/her personal expenses appropriately, in addition to focusing on his/her studies. Besides, racism could create a challenge among scholarship students. Racism is a bad act, which is still prevalent in many countries, and the student may be exposed to racism during his/her university studies, so he/she must deal with it with caution and calm.

There is a considerable amount of research available on factors affecting the academic performance of students at different study levels. The previous research pointed out many factors that influence students' academic performance in general. Undoubtedly, previous studies that dealt with the problems faced by students on scholarships to continue study.

As an example, Al-Abd al-Moneim (2017) attempted to identify the cognitive obstacles facing students on scholarships in the countries of America and Britain. The researcher used the descriptive analytical approach and designed a questionnaire and applied it to 542 students on scholarships in the countries of America and Britain, and it was concluded that the obstacles related to the embassy of the country of the study. In the Kingdom, it ranked first with a rate of 91%, and one of the most prominent of these obstacles was the delay in the dates of personal interviews from the embassy in the country of study. The scholarship students agreed that the most prominent obstacles related to the Ministry of Education were the lack of a list of administrative procedures that the scholarship should follow, and the lack of clarity e.g., the scholarship rules and regulations. The three highest obstacles were from the viewpoint of the scholarship students in both countries: the high cost of living in the candidate country for

scholarship, and the mission's failure to hold meetings with the scholarship student to listen to the problems they face. With regard to the obstacles associated with the university, the most prominent of them were the lack of acceptance from one university for both spouses, the lack of knowledge of some state university systems, and the long response from the universities that were sent. The results of the study also indicated that the general average of obstacles related to the academic supervisor faced by the scholarship students e.g., the most important of which was the difficulty of contacting the supervisor, and his/her delay in responding to administrative inquiries. Additionally, the supervisor's lack of interest in the student, and they agreed that the student does not have the right to express his/her opinion about the supervisor. The results of the study showed that there were statistically significant differences between the averages of both groups of American and British scholarship students in favor of those studying in America regarding cognitive obstacles. While it was found that there were no statistically significant differences between the averages of both groups about the obstacles related to the scholarship student.

In addition, Al-Ghamdi, (2015) aimed to examine the relationship between psychological stress and academic achievement among a sample of students on scholarships to the Oregon University in the United States of America, in addition to identify the differences on the psychological stress scale between male and female students, and between high and low academic achievement. Of both sexes, the study sample consisted of 170 Saudi students, and the researcher used the descriptive correlative approach and the psychological stress scale prepared by him, and concluded that there is a negative relationship between psychological stress and academic achievement, and it was found that there are no differences on the psychological stress scale between male and female students.

A study by Al-Naeem (2014) with the aim of revealing the factors that help girls to prefer scholarships to developed countries. The study was applied to Saudi scholarship students in the

United States of America, Australia, and Barkatania. In her study, she described the repulsive factors in the sending country and the attracting factors in the receiving country. The study was applied to 247 female students, and the researcher used the social survey method, and a simple random sample was chosen. The researcher observed that there are a number of expulsive factors that pushed the girl to prefer scholarships abroad for study, the most important of which is the lack of specialization in Saudi universities for females, and the dependence of education in local universities on indoctrination and conservation, and local universities get low marks in their evaluation. The most prominent attractive factors were their desires to obtain an advanced education and acquire a new language, in addition to the certificate they would obtain. It also shows the girls' desires to transfer new hides to their community; on the most prominent personal factors, the importance of self-reliance changers and fulfilling their needs on their own, followed by the desires to change the view of others about Saudi women.

3. Methods and Hypotheses

A questionnaire was used to collect data from the participants (See Appendix). This questionnaire was adapted from Farah (2021). It includes four sections as follows: demographic information, financial challenge's items, social challenge's items, the items of academic and management challenge of donors, and lastly, cumulative average required of continuing study. This questionnaire was administered through online survey. Each item was measured using a 1-5 point Likert scale where 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, and 5=Strongly Agree. The items are built to serve the main research aim. Accordingly, this questionnaire intends to address the effect of financial challenges, social challenges, and academic and management challenge of donors towards cumulative average required of continuing study. As for the study sample, the sample included a total of 357 subjects both male and female by period starting from the first of May till the end of

June 2022. The study sample was collected in Jordanian students who get scholarships from different bodies including Ministry of Education, Embassies located in Jordan, Jordanian Universities, and Companies providing scholarships. These students study in various countries located in European e.g., Greece, Hungary, ..., Asia e.g., China, India, Malaysia.....and North America.

The decision to accept or reject the hypothesis in this study is based on statistical significance when the probability is less than the significance level which is below (0.05). The current study intends to investigate the following hypotheses:

H1: There is a relationship between academic performance challenges of scholarship students (financial challenges, social challenges, and academic and management challenge of donors) and cumulative average required of continuing study among Jordanian scholarship students studying abroad.

H1-a: There is a relationship between financial challenges and cumulative average required of continuing study among Jordanian scholarship students studying abroad.

The five-stage Likert scale was adopted to correct the study measures, where each of its items is given one score out of its five degrees (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree), and it is represented numerically (5, 4, 3, 2,1). The following scale was adopted for the purposes of analyzing the results as shown by using the following equation:

$$\frac{\text{The upper limit of alternatives} - \text{the limit the minimum for alternatives}}{\text{The number of levels}} = \frac{5-1}{3}$$

- The values of the mean of the individuals' responses were calculated according to the following equation: The response range is $5 - 1/3 = 4/3 = 1.33$, so the values are as follows:

A. The mean value from (1 to less than 2.33), the response is of a low degree.

B. The mean value (2.34 to less than 3.67) is of moderate degree.

C. The mean value from (3.68 to less than 5) the response is high.

4. Study-Model

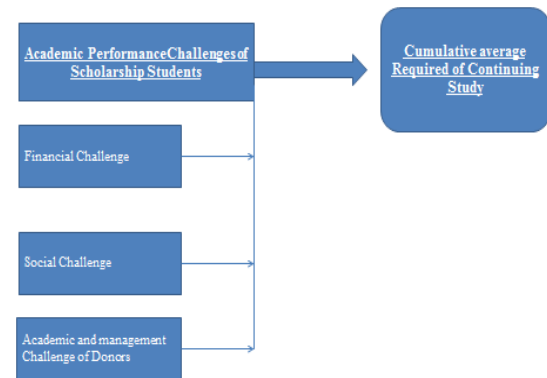


Figure 1: Study Model Presenting the Relationship between Variables.

5. Analysis and Discussion

5-1 Demographic Information of Respondents

This section consists of demographic information of respondents including gender and Academic year level. Table 1 illustrates the demographic information.

Table 2: Demographic information of respondents (N=346)

Demographic Variables	Category	Frequency	Percent (100%)
Gender	Male	233	67.3
	Female	113	32.7
Total		346	100%
Academic Year	First Year	150	43.4
	Second Year	61	17.6
	Third Year	37	10.7
	Fourth Year	66	19.1
	More than four years	32	9.2
Total		346	100%

As indicated in Table 1, the majority of the respondents were male comprising (67.3%), while the remaining are female (32.7%). This kind of difference could be due to the culture effect among parents who are willing or not willing to send their daughter outside of Jordan by themselves. Regarding academic year, the majority of the respondents belong to the first year students at (43.4%), it is followed by

students who are enrolled in the fourth year with the percentage of (19.1%). Next, it is followed by second year students at (17.6%). Third year students were (10.7%) of the entire respondents. In addition, (9.2%) of the respondents belong the fifth academic year or more.

5-2 Descriptive Statistics Analysis of Study's Variables

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics of the Study Variables

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
Independent Variable (IV):			Intermediate
Academic Performance Challenges of Scholarship Students	3.43	.242	
Dimension one of the IV:			High
Financial Challenge	3.81	.348	
Dimension two of the IV:			Intermediate
Social Challenge	2.50	.472	
Dimension three of the IV:			High
Academic Management of Donors	3.98	.252	
Dependent Variable (DV):			Intermediate
Cumulative average Required of Continuing Study	2.50	.412	
Valid N (listwise)			

It is essential to identify the variables according to their means in order to highlight how respondents replied to the questionnaire. Hence, this study sorted the items by mean accordingly. Academic performance challenges of scholarship students as the main IV scored a mean of (3.43) and a standard deviation of (0.242) ranked to be intermediate; in regard to its dimensions: it is illustrated that financial challenge with a mean of (3.81) and a standard deviation of (0.348) ranked to be high. Academic management of donors with the mean of (3.98) and a standard deviation of (0.252) was also ranked high. Social challenge scored a mean of (2.50) and a standard deviation of (0.472). This study also identified the mean of cumulative average required of continuing study scoring (2.50) and a standard deviation of (0.412).

5-3 Inferential Analysis and Discussion

This section discusses the inferences that may be gleaned from the data. It addresses the research main goals.

Do academic performance challenges of scholarship students (financial challenges, social challenges, and academic and management challenge of donors) affect cumulative average required of continuing study among Jordanian scholarship students studying abroad? To answer this question, the study tested the associated hypotheses, using regression analysis.

Table 2 Regression Analysis to discern the Relationship between the independent variable (academic performance challenges of scholarship students) and dependent variable (cumulative average required of continuing study) as listed

Coefficients ^a					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	2.617	.316		.000
	Academic Performance Challenges of Scholarship Students	-.035	.092	-.021	.701

a. Dependent Variable: Cumulative Average Required

Table 2 displays the relationship's findings between academic performance challenges of scholarship students and dependent variable cumulative average required of continuing study. It is found that there is no significant relationship between the IV and DV as the P.Value is below 0.05. More precisely, academic performance challenges of scholarship students was 0.701 which is above 0.05 rejecting the following hypotheses: H1

This could be due to the fact that even though these students are facing serious challenges due to the financial issues and donors' managements of scholarship, these students struggle to achieve the targeted cumulative average.

As for other hypotheses, this study also tested the relationship between each dimension and DV.

Table 3 Regression Analysis to discern the relationship between financial challenge, social challenges and towards cumulative average required of continuing study

Coefficients ^a					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	2.153	.395		.000
	Financial Challenge	.150	.065	.127	.022
	Social Challenge	-.127	.048	-.145	.008
	Academic Management of Donors	.022	.089	.013	.805

a. Dependent Variable: Cumulative Average Required

Table 3 presents the relationship's findings between independent variable's dimensions and the dependent variable. It is found that there are significant relationships between all of financial challenges and social challenges dimensions toward cumulative average required as the P.Value is below 0.05. More precisely, financial challenge was (0.022) which is below 0.05 and social challenge was 0.008 which also below 0.05 such results accept the following hypotheses: H1.1 and H1.2. As for the other dimension, the table shows that there is no significant relationship between academic management of donors and t cumulative average required. More specifically, the P Value of academic management of donors is 0.805 which is above 0.05. Such finding rejects the following hypotheses: H1..

6. Conclusion

In light of this economic reality experienced by the scholarship students in the scholarship country, they are trying to adapt economically and financially to continue studying and obtain a scientific degree. The financial challenges scored a mean of (3.81) indicating that respondents mostly agree and strongly agree that they were sometimes unable to manage their expenses in a way that is compatible with the amount of the reward, which leads them to seek help from parents and/or others. In addition, it is also observed that their monthly expenses exceed the scholarship money amount allocated to me. Accordingly such failure of some students to rationalize their monthly expenses caused them to complain about the insufficient stipend allocated to them and such thinking about monthly expenses distracts them from focusing on their studies.

In regard to social challenge, it is seen that it scored the mean of (2.50) indicating the responses were around neutral. Indeed, it is observed that students did not find it difficult to socialize with the locals in the city where they study. This is true as the entire world becomes a small village of the internet existence. Hence, they cannot fully feel lonely in the scholarship area. They can communicate with friends and family on daily basis and videos' calls. They also can feel safer in the city where they live. They can easily adapt to the culture of the society in which they study. In regard, to academic and management challenge of donors, this dimension has scored a mean of (3.98) indicating that most of them strongly agree and agree with items mentioned in the questionnaire. This indicates that meetings of scholarship awarding body for the scholarship students contributed to enriching students' knowledge of their enrollment in the university of study. However, it also indicates that they lack the guidance of their study by the donor supervisors when they face academic problems related to their studies.

In addition, students pointed out that some of the rules and regulations applied to the scholarship agency constitute an obstacle to continuing their studies. Also, the low skills of some students in the language of study constitute an obstacle to their passing language tests to enter universities. Furthermore, it is pointed out that the requirement to adhere to the list of distinguished universities makes it difficult for students to obtain university admission and academic progress. The length of administrative procedures for students' dealings with donors causes them academic problems during their studies. Accordingly, some steps have to be into considerations such as students' training, workshops, salary provided, administrative controls of scholarship bodies. Hence, further studies are required in this regard using interviews to be closers to scholarship students and deeply identifying further effective factors.

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