

Assessment of factors influencing students' general learning in Kabul City, Afghanistan

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Abstract: Design/methodology/approach-. For this quantitative research, a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire is distributed to 200 students from three different universities in Kabul City. 180 filled questionnaires are returned (130 males and 50 females) Using descriptive statistics (i.e. mean scores and percentages). Purpose - The purpose of this study is to determine factors affecting Afghanistan university students' general learning with the aim of improving their learning experiences and outcomes. Findings - The findings show that the medium of education and the education interest fields are the most significant factors affecting Afghanistan's students' general learning. Moreover, the quality of educational materials, deep parental attention, the country's political situation, and the educational degree of lecturers are very significant influential factors in the student's general learning. Afghanistan students also identified professors' friendly behavior, availability of computer labs and the internet, and parents' educational level as key effective factors in their general learning. The study concludes that parents should pay more attention to their children's learning, as well as that lecturers maintain their friendly behaviors as key factors in improving students' general learning. Recommendations and limitations of the study are also discussed. Originality/value- In order to create favorable conditions for high-quality education, this research will assist policymakers in Afghanistan and other nations with circumstances similar to Afghanistan.

Keywords: successful learning outcomes, influential factors on university students' general learning, parental educational background, parental, lecturers' behavior

INTRODUCTION

With the aim of improving the quality of general learning, it is deeply important to understand impactful factors, as well as less impactful factors of students' learning process. (Beyaztaş and Senemoğlu, 2015). Quality of learning is defined as the degree to which an educational service meets the students' needs and expectations. Therefore, to improve the quality of learning, academic institutions must consider the student's needs to accommodate the allocation of their resources to the real requirements (Rodriguez, Ooms, & Montañez, 2008). The teachers, in the light of students' expectations, should be able to effectively prepare the learning materials and design the methods, techniques, and evaluation of learning so that the learning outcomes in an educational unit can be obtained optimally and with high quality (Rachman, 2020). Similarly, when students are able to realize and be aware of their needs and expectations regarding their studies, they will be able to evaluate themselves as students start developing their academic expertise and ensure quality learning (Parpala & Lindblom-Ylänne, 2012).

A high-quality learning process contributes to the success of students in their academic achievements (Chinyerem Madumere-Obike, Okeke, & Nwabueze, 2013). Academic achievements are the outcomes of education -the level to which a student, teacher, and institution have achieved their educational objectives. It could be defined as the extent to which students grasp the knowledge, skills, and proficiencies that the teachers teach or assign (Salvia & Ysseldyke, 2000). Therefore, academic achievements could be derived from good teaching and learning and certain factors that may significantly determine the quality of teaching and learning. These factors include effective communication, provision of a variety of methods and techniques, combination of theory with practice, conducive environment, respect, connection of knowledge, and the use of new technologies (CU Madumere-Obike & Nwabueze, 2012). Other related factors include students' interests, motivation, learning styles, lecturer's teaching styles, and learning facilities (Ekowati, 2019). There is a direct relationship between quality learning and academic achievements, and many different factors start from institutional and interpersonal and end to intro-personal factors affecting quality learning (Brink et al., 2021).

Students' home learning environment could also affect their academic achievement. In this respect, studies have identified the role of parents in meta-cognitive training as an important one (Cetin, Sendurur, & Sendurur, 2014). According to Suan (2014), highly educated parents have a higher influence on students' good learning outcomes. Family background may also significantly influence academic achievement, whereby students from lower socioeconomic status may be at higher risk of failure in academic achievement (Buckhalt, 2011). As 50% of such students work in part-time jobs to cover daily expenses and pay tuition fees (Li, Peng, Yang, & Chen,

2020), increased absenteeism is unavoidable, leading to higher failure rates and non-graduation rates (Kassier & Veldman, 2013).

In Afghanistan, the above issues are pertinent, especially in the higher educational institution. Unfortunately, for the sake of lower socioeconomic the majority of the youth could not pursue their education, but some others could attend university while they are busy with part-time jobs (Alemi et al., 2017). Doing a job besides education has increased the absenteeism of these students in classes. Also, the learning activities and assignments that are counted as the basic part of learning do not perform well due to their job. As a result, on the one hand, these students have lower academic achievement, and on the other hand, there would be a gap between their abilities after graduation and the requirements of the labor market (Kator-Mubarez 2014).

The main objective that we follow in this research is to compare the various factors affecting the education of students, factors which have the highest level of influence on students' learning, according to the socio-economic conditions of society and the condition of the country's universities. For the purpose of establishing favorable conditions for high-quality education, this research is going to help policymakers of Afghanistan and other countries with conditions that are comparable to Afghanistan.

Literature review: The following elements have been recognized as having an impact on students' learning outcomes: Research by Lubben et al. (2010) found that factors such as lecturer experience, the availability of instructional resources like teaching aids and technology, as well as family troubles, financial hardships, and academic workload, all had an impact on students' learning results. Another study by Linskie (1983) came to the conclusion that the key factors influencing student learning were physical needs, such as the classroom setting and the physical placement of the pupils, emotional requirements, and social needs.

According to Comeaux's (205) research, having adequate learning facilities boosted pupils' learning levels. Libraries and computer labs, according to Kirmani and Siddiquah (2008), have a good impact on pupils' learning. Cox (2013) identified three elements that affect students' learning: positive relationships with lecturers, the right motivation, and effective communication. The teaching approach was emphasized as an important aspect of students' learning by Trigwell et al. in 1999.

According to Ojelabi et al. (2017), factors influencing student learning include the lecturer's capacity and teaching style. According to Kim et al. (2006), if a student's learning style is fully known, it can have a favorable impact on both their learning and performance. According to Ayersman (1996), a student's level of learning is directly impacted by the learning environment. According to Ekowati (2019), there are two categories of elements that affect students' learning. Both internal and external variables are listed here. The student's physical and mental health, as well as their

motivation, intelligence, interests, and talents, are referred to as internal factors. The social environment, time, and university atmosphere are among the external elements, nevertheless.

Hidayat (2020) warned that a student's interest in the subject can greatly impact how well they study.

Mekala (2018) (2018) investigated "The Impact of Facilitating Student's Learning Competency vs Demographic Profile of Faculties in Educational Institutions" and discovered the importance of education language in student learning levels. The use of educational language can assist pupils in developing their creativity, ingenuity, and ability to solve issues. In addition, the language used in education promotes personal accountability and helps students manage their time, money, and health. According to Ambarwati (2018), parental attentiveness directly influences children's academic performance.

Kocic (1988) divided the components into a number of categories. The first group reported the students' aptitude, drive, and prior knowledge. The second group focused on family status, including things like the parents' education levels, the family's surroundings, and their financial situation. The third group can include external factors including environmental development, environmental culture, employment, and living conditions. The final group refers to academic work and lectures. Hendikawati (2011) emphasized that the following variables had an impact on students' learning: (a) factors relating to physical condition; (b) elements relating to sports; (c) factors relating to the environment; (d) factors relating to self-management; and (e) factors relating to the environment.

Anggresta (2015) carried out research to identify the variables that affect students' learning. The study's findings are as follows: There are eight factors that affect how well students learn, including (a) factors related to the effectiveness of the teacher, which include their creativity, comprehension, availability of resources, and the learning environment they create; (b) factors related to the student's independence, which include their competing interests, willingness to take on responsibility for their own actions, and (c) factors related to their readiness for learning. (c) Internal conditions, which include the home environment, parent-child relationships, and parental attention, (d) Ethical considerations, which include a desire to learn and problem-solving skills. (e) factors of consideration, such as physical condition, exhaustion, and consideration to learn; trends to prosper; cooperative factors, such as learning environment, family economics, and being energized while learning; and factors relating to parents, which include parental nourishments. Similarly, Priyanda and Amalia (2021) claimed that a student's learning outcome is significantly influenced by their primary aptitude, motivation for learning, learning environment, and ease of learning.

In their studies, Camacho-Thompson et al. (2016), Fan and Chen (2001), and Wang et al. (2016) discovered that financial resources can be a significant enabler of parental participation in children's academic performance. It is obvious that financial resources enable parents to buy educational supplies for their kids, which can be used to raise the students' learning levels. Despite the fact that economic conditions vary, steady financial standing enables parents to share their time with their children in order to increase their educational activities. Leung et al. (2008) found that assessment practices had an immediate impact on learning. It may serve as a potent motivator for students to raise their level of learning.

After conducting research, A (2014) came to the conclusion that the Outcome-Based Education (OBE) technique is suitable for pupils. due to the emphasis placed on students' attempts to learn and broaden their knowledge. As a result, it may positively impact their learning. Unlike the traditional educational approach, which specifies a specific teaching and learning style. Because of this, the majority of pupils do not appreciate it, which may negatively impact their ability to learn. According to Castronova (2002), traditional teaching and learning approaches no longer give students a business perspective. As a result, it can harm students' ability to study.

Teodorovi (2011) carried out an investigation, and the results showed that the following factors, including labor connection in academic, disciplinary issues, happy working environment, fair leadership style, great anticipation for students, the high goal of the academic center, nice relationship of inter-staff, insist on academic success, persuading and active intervention of parents, professional management team, and teaching quality at the university, influence the students.

According to Speake et al. (2013), green areas can play a significant role in many academic contexts. Universities with attractive green spaces can draw in a lot of students. In addition, the university's polished image inspires students to improve their academic performance.

Suan (2014), Quimbo (2003) have shown that factors such as the provision of appropriate teaching materials (books, charts, visual aids, and others) and parental education have an impact significantly on student learning. Beyaztaş and Senemoğlu (2015) conducted a survey to understand the impact of assessment, curriculum, and instruction on student learning. The results show that the above factors have a strong impact on the learning speed of the children. Ehrenberg et al. (2001) explain the number of students in a class can affect student learning. For example, if the level of social interaction is high, students feel comfortable, but can sometimes make noise and cause disruptive behavior, reducing productivity in the classroom.

Chanboulapha and Islam (2012) conducted an investigation to find out the relationship between Internet use and student learning outcomes. The results show that Internet use has a positive impact on student learning. Currently, the field of Internet

in education is growing rapidly, leading to the satisfaction of students in collecting redundant information and teaching materials. Especially in developed countries, Internet use has a positive relationship with student learning.

Zhoc et al.(2019) investigated the relationship between future goals and student achievement. The results show that future goals can be classified into internal and external temperaments. Therefore, this can directly affect the learning level of students. In addition, intrinsic goals can be described as social cooperation, personal development, dependence; autonomy, etc. In contrast, external goals can be defined as financial success, fame, personal image, raising money, etc.

Based on this argument, it is important to study the factors that influence students' academic performance and increase their GPA at universities in the city of Kabul.

Its goal is to find better solutions to improve the quality and outcomes of student learning.

Methodology

This was descriptive quantitative research. A total of 200 students from different universities in Kabul were included in the survey. The questionnaire was adopted from previously published studies. (Ojelabi et al., 2017) it consisted of ... items to assess factors affecting students' learning outcome. For this study, a local version (Dari/Pashto) of the questionnaire was used. To ensure the quality of the data collected, three experts reviewed the questionnaire content and approved it for the study. Moreover, a pilot test was also performed on 30 randomly selected students to make sure the questions were readable and understandable. The comments of the reviewers and students were incorporated in the final version of the questionnaire before data collection. The measurement of items in the questionnaire was based on a 5-point Likert scale with 1 representing "strongly disagree" and 5 representing "strongly agree". A mean range was used to categorize the significance level of the factors affecting students' learning in different Universities. The mean categorization was as follows:

$5 \geq x \geq 4.70$ Extremely Significant

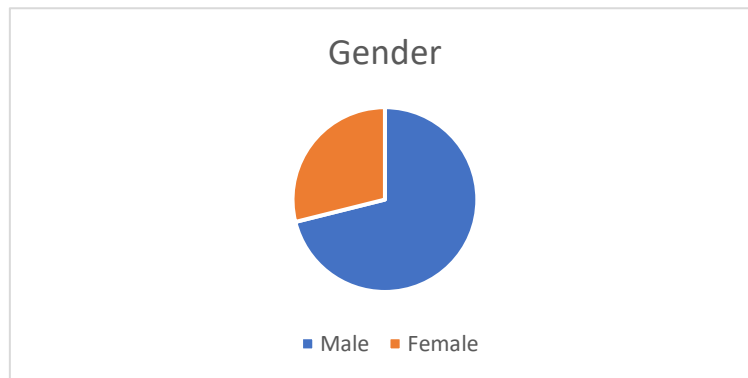
$4.69 \geq x \geq 4.50$ Very Significant

$4.49 \geq x \geq 4.30$ Somewhat Significant

$4.29 \geq x \geq 3$ Not Significant

Statistical Package for Social Studies (SPSS) version 25.0 was used for analysis.

Results: Participant demographics Gender was the only demographic detail considered in this study. Fig 1 indicates that 28.89% of the respondents were females, while 71.11% were males. most of the respondents are male because the number of male students in Afghanistan universities is more than females (Musawi & Baktash, 2021).



Factors affecting students' learning

The bellow table gives information about the level of significance of different factors that influence student learning in universities who are studying in Kabul city.

It is clear from the findings in the bellow table that the educational language is the most important factor affecting students' learning with a mean score of 4.81 (Table 1). This mean score lies within the range of $5.00 \geq x \geq 4.70$, showing that educational language is the most significant factor affecting students' learning (Mekala, 2018). Hence, there is a need for the lectures to translate clearly the lessons into the native languages of the students. (Sirbu, 2015). Similarly, educating in an interesting field is also extremely significant in the learning process. Therefore, this is the responsibility of youth and their parent to take this factor into consideration while deciding about their education field.

Factors	N	Mean	Rank	Remark
Educational Language	180	4.81	1	Extremely Significant
Interested Field	180	4.76	2	Extremely Significant
Quality of Educational Materials	180	4.64	3	Very Significant
Parents Attention	180	4.64	4	Very Significant
Situation of country	180	4.62	5	Very Significant
Lecturer Educational Level	180	4.59	6	Very Significant
Friendly Behavior of Lecturer	180	4.57	7	Very Significant
Availability of Computer Lab and Internet	180	4.52	8	Very Significant
Parent Education Level	180	4.51	9	Very Significant
Educational equipment	180	4.46	10	Somewhat Significant
Future goals	180	4.40	11	Somewhat Significant
Availability of Library	180	4.38	12	Somewhat Significant
Household Economic Level	180	4.32	13	Somewhat Significant
Assessment Method	180	4.31	14	Somewhat Significant
OBE	180	4.08	15	Not Significant
Green courtyard of the University	180	4.06	16	Not Significant
Number of Students in the Class	180	3.87	17	Not Significant
Tradition Method of Teaching	180	3.30	18	Not Significant

Moreover, the results of the survey (table 1) further showed that Quality of educational material (4.64), parent attention (4.64), External Environment condition (4.62), Lecturer Education Level (4.59), Friendly Behavior of Lecturer (4.57), Availability of Computer Lab and internet (4.52) and Parent Education Level (4.51) are the subsequent factors affecting students' learning. The mean values for these

factors were > 4.51 and < 4.64 , indicating that the factors are very significant in affecting students learning. Furthermore, the positive situation of the country encourages the students to prolong their studies in a welfare atmosphere that it can increase the learning outcome (Hendikawati, 2011). Whereas, the educational degree of the lecturer is mostly observed by the student (Lubben et al., 2010). Moreover, The high quality of educational material is mostly appreciated by the student and here based on table (1) it is marked very significantly impacts the learning surface. Besides, the friendly behavior of the lecturer effect positively enhances class productivity (Cox, 2013). While, the parent education level and their attention influence very significantly the students' learning (Ambarwati, 2018), (Kocic, 1988).

However, factors like 'Educational equipment' (4.46), 'future goals' (4.40), 'Availability of Library' (4.38), 'Household Economic Level' (4.32), and 'Assessment Method' (4.31) are little significant in acquiring of an optimum learning outcome. The mean scores of these factors were > 4.46 and < 4.31 . The parents have enough financial ability, they can provide proper educational materials for their children that can help the student to study hard and increase their learning (Camacho-Thompson et al., 2016), (Suan, 2014), (Quimbo, 2003); Future goals can be described as a motivational factor for the students to boost their learning (Zhoc et al., 2019); availability of library in the university compass can help students to enrich their knowledge (Kirmani & Siddiquah, 2008); high economic level of households will persuade the students to study conveniently their lessons (Priyanda & Amalia, 2021); the lecturer's acceptable method of assessment can lead the student to adjust themselves to the class rules that will cause raising their class abilities (Leung et al., 2008).

The four least factors affecting students' learning are the OBE method, Green Space of the University, number of Students in the Class, and Tradition Method of Teaching, with mean values of 4.08, 4.06, 3.87, and 3.30 respectively. These mean values were > 3.30 and < 4.08 , indicating that these factors were not significant.

Outcome-based education is a model of education that refuses the traditional method that concentrates on what the academic center prepares for students, this method enables the student to demonstrate that they know and are able to accomplish the necessary activities (An, 2014). The reason why this method did not take a significant influence, we think it would be due to the unfamiliarity of most of our respondents. Although the physical structure of the university including its green space must be settled fairly as well, it is not significantly affecting the students' learning according to the response of our research participants (Speake et al., 2013). Finally, based on the table, the number of students in one class also does not affect the quality of learning (Ehrenberg et al., 2001).

Based on the mentioned logic, a reasonable condition should be provided for the students to follow their study, whether it is internal or external. As the social learning

theory categorized the student influential factors on learning into internal and external, thus, efforts to uplift the students' achievement should be accomplished in an acceptable way (Priyanka & Amalia, 2021).

Discussion: In the realm of education, various factors play pivotal roles in shaping the learning experience and ultimately impacting student outcomes. Among these, the prominence of the "Educational Language" stands out, underscoring the crucial role language proficiency plays in the learning process. This recognition emphasizes the need for educational institutions to provide language support, ensuring inclusivity and better learning outcomes for students who may not have English or the primary instructional language as their first language.

Moreover, the emphasis on "Interest in Field" highlights the significance of personalized learning. By tailoring curricula to align with students' passions and interests, education systems can foster greater engagement, motivation, and ultimately, improved learning outcomes. This personalized approach acknowledges the diverse needs and interests of students, promoting a more effective educational experience.

The significance attributed to the "Quality of Educational Materials" underscores the importance of investing in up-to-date, relevant, and accessible educational resources. Institutions must continually review and update their curriculum and materials to meet the evolving needs of students and the demands of the job market, ensuring the highest quality of education possible.

Equally important is the recognition of parental involvement, as indicated by "Parents' Attention" and "Parent Education Level." Engaging parents through open communication channels, workshops, and resources empowers them to actively support their children's academic journey, contributing significantly to their success.

Socioeconomic factors, such as the "Situation of Country" and "Household Economic Level," shed light on the impact of external circumstances on learning. Schools and policymakers must acknowledge these influences and work towards providing support and resources to students from disadvantaged backgrounds, thereby promoting equity and leveling the playing field.

The significance attributed to teacher qualifications and behavior underscores the pivotal role educators play in shaping the learning experience. Professional development opportunities and training in interpersonal skills can enhance the overall classroom environment, fostering a conducive atmosphere for learning and growth.

In the digital age, technological resources have become increasingly essential, as highlighted by the importance of the "Availability of Computer Lab and Internet." Educational institutions must ensure access to technology and provide adequate training to bridge the digital divide among students, thereby enabling them to fully participate in modern educational practices.

Evaluation strategies also warrant careful consideration, as suggested by the significance of "Assessment Method." A balanced approach to assessment, incorporating various methods such as formative and summative assessments, offers a comprehensive view of student progress, guiding instructional decisions and promoting continuous improvement.

Finally, while factors like the "Green Courtyard of the University" and "Number of Students in the Class" may not directly impact learning outcomes, they contribute to the overall student experience and satisfaction. Creating a positive and supportive learning environment, including appealing campus amenities, can indirectly influence student engagement and retention, thus warranting attention despite their lower significance in the educational hierarchy.

Conclusion

These conclusions suggest that educational language and the student's interest in the field of study are the most crucial factors affecting learning. Additionally, factors related to the quality of education materials, parental involvement, and the overall educational environment play a very significant role. Other factors like educational equipment, future goals, and the availability of resources in the library are somewhat significant but still contribute to students' learning outcomes. On the other hand, factors like the teaching method, the size of the class, and certain campus amenities appear to have less impact on students' learning. Addressing the various factors influencing students' learning outcomes requires a multifaceted approach. Educational institutions, policymakers, and educators must collaborate to create an inclusive, supportive, and dynamic learning environment that considers linguistic, cultural, socioeconomic, and personal factors. This discussion underscores the need for a holistic approach to education that goes beyond traditional classroom instruction and considers diverse needs and backgrounds of students.

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