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Academic Determination among University Students

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ABSTRACT: The study aimed to explore the concept of academic determination and its differences among university students according to the variables of gender (male/female) and academic specialization (scientific/humanities). The research adopted a descriptive and analytical approach, in which an instrument was designed to measure academic determination, which included 36 items distributed on three main axes: (passion, perseverance, and commitment), with the aim of assessing the level of determination and its differences between the selected groups. The research population included all 8,877 students of Kufa University, with a focus on two main majors: Scientific (such as medicine and pathology) and humanities (such as law and arts). A stratified random sample of 400 students was selected, equally distributed between genders (200 males and 200 females) and majors (200 scientific and 200 humanities), to ensure an accurate representation of the original population. The researcher used statistical tools such as t-test and analysis of variance (ANOVA) to analyze the data, relying on SPSS and Excel to extract the results.The researcher came up with a set of results, most notably the existence of statistically significant differences in the level of academic determination between the two majors (humanities majors outperformed scientific majors) and between the two genders (females outperformed males). The study also recommended designing psychological and academic support programs aimed at strengthening the determination of students of scientific disciplines, holding workshops to develop stress management skills, and reconsidering the curricula of humanities disciplines to enhance students' engagement with their academic goals. In addition, it called for providing a learning environment that encourages interaction and provides continuous feedback to enhance students' confidence in their abilities.

KEYWORDS: Academic- Determination-Students - University of Kufa- Develop.

I: RESEARCH INTRODUCTION:

Academic grit is a key driver of academic success and coping with academic challenges.

Most universities are still not keeping up with the educational development processes that are called for in educational conferences and seminars, as the teacher is the owner of the word and the center of gravity, and the monopoly of all lecture time, and in most classrooms the teacher monopolizes the talk most of the time without paying attention to questions and activities and without diversifying methods that require deep thinking and giving a positive role to students who are the focus of the educational process, and all these factors contribute to a decrease in students' motivation and academic determination due to boredom and lack of interaction that makes it difficult to participate effectively in the learning process, leading to academic pressure, stress and lack of flexibility in performing academic work. (Abu Ghali 2010: 92).

According to the researcher's open-ended questionnaire, the results showed the following:

1. 90% of the students did not feel that they had improved in achieving their desired academic goals.
2. 96% of students did not feel satisfied and motivated enough to seek new knowledge to enhance their academic learning.

According to the previous percentages above, the researcher was convinced that there is a real issue facing students that requires research to identify all aspects of the issue and develop appropriate proposals, and from here we can formulate the research issue through the following question:

- Academic determination among university students?

The research seeks to achieve the following objectives:

Identifying the academic determination of Identifying the differences in academic determination among university students according to the gender variable (males - females) and the academic specialization variable (scientific – humanities).

II: RESEARCH THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

The concept of academic determination:1.

(Martin & Marsh, 2008) "The ability of students to succeed and overcome the obstacles and challenges they face during their academic career" (Martin & Marsh, 2008: 343)

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*It is defined byand (Datu &et al,2016) as "a combination of persistence, which refers to students' persistence in performing tasks despite the presence of challenges and obstacles, and passion, which refers to students' ability to sustain their interests over long periods of time, with the aim of achieving long-term goals associated with positive academic behaviors and outcomes". (Datu &et al, 2016: 22)

-The researcher defines it procedurally as the motivation, commitment, and seriousness shown by the student while striving to achieve the desired goals to achieve academic success and is measured by the total score obtained by students when answering the items on the Academic Determination Scale.

2. Academic Determination Theories:

1- **Behavioral Theory**: This theory focuses on how the environment influences the academic determination of learners and leaves external incentives, which it sees as an energy that stems from the individual's desire to make a good impression on others. (Adas, 1998: 351)

It is noted that academic determination stemming from the external motivation available to learners may represent a performance orientation rather than a learning orientation, and adopting a performance orientation may make learners focus on the impressions that others form about them and respond to the external motivations provided by these others (Dweek, 1985: 301).

External academic determination may exist outside the educational institution, and it has nothing to do with it except in terms of goal, organization or method, and it may be in the form of reinforcement or material or moral rewards such as prizes and grades. (Al-Azirjawi, 1991: 21)

2- **Causal Attribution Theory**: This theory argues that students during learning may succeed. They may fail, so they try to search for the reasons for success or failure, that is, they may attribute success or failure in performance to several reasons such as the difficulty of the exam, the teacher's attitudes towards them or the lack of desire for a particular subject, this attribution serves as a guide for students about their expectations of success or failure in that task in the future and students who perform some tasks poorly expect to continue to perform poorly and before the teacher tries to change students' expectations towards success, he must know how those students attribute the reasons for their success or failure. (Ghobari& et al,2008:231)

3.Psychological foundations of academic determination: Academic determination is based on four psychological foundations:

1-Interests: Academic determination requires a large amount of passion on the part of students, as we find students who are passionate about studying have academic determination.

2- Practice: It means continuous improvement in students' performance regardless of the level of competence they have achieved, as practice contributes to increasing the individual's mastery of the skill.

3- Purpose: The students' understanding of the purpose and goal of performing the task makes them continue to perform it and urges them to exert more effort.

4- Hope: Hope helps him to look forward to the future, overcome obstacles and achieve goals. (Jaljil &Hindawi, 2023:453)

4. Types of Academic Determination:

Academic determination is characterized by several aspects that directly or indirectly contribute to the progress of students, including the following:

1. Behavioral determination: This type includes behaviors associated with academic commitment, such as regular attendance at lectures, completing assignments on time, and preparing for tests. Positive behaviors support persistence and goal attainment.

2. Cognitive grit: Relates to the development of mental and cognitive skills necessary for academic success, such as critical thinking, analytical, and problem-solving skills. Students who can improve these skills facilitate learning and academic progress.

3. Emotional determination: Relates to a student's psychological and emotional state, including managing academic stress and pressure, and intrinsic motivation. The ability to maintain emotional balance and overcome frustrations contributes to academic grit.

4. Social grit: This type includes social support from family, friends, and members of the academic community. Having a supportive environment enhances students' motivation and encourages them to persist in achieving their academic goals.

5. Institutional determination: It depends on the policies and facilities provided by educational institutions, such as: (providing academic support, counseling, and financial possibilities such as: scholarships), these institutional factors form an environment that motivates students to progress faster towards graduation.

6. Career Determination:) It is related to the student's vision of his career path and how his academic education relates to his future career, having a clear vision of career direction after graduation helps in enhancing the motivation to continue studying and achieving academic goals. (Poropat. A. E, 2009: 322)

III: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES:

1. Research approach:

In the current research, the researcher relied on the descriptive-correlational method, as it fulfills the research objectives. The researcher presented an open-ended questionnaire consisting of five open-ended questions to a sample of (30) male and female university students to help identify the research issue, and then the researcher constructed the two research tools represented in the following:

1. **Scenario-based learning scale:** It consists of (40) items distributed in four areas (clarity and realism, motivation and participation, application of concepts, and general evaluation).
2. **Academic Determination Scale**: It consists of (36) items distributed over three domains (academic passion, persistence and perseverance, commitment and academic engagement). A stratified random sample was selected from the 8877 students of Kufa University, where the number of sample members (400) male and female students, equally distributed between males and females and between scientific disciplines (pathological sciences, medicine, nursing) and humanities (art education, media, law).

2. Scale Building Steps:

the scale aimed to identify the level of academic determination among the students of Kufa University in its scientific and humanitarian departments and the researcher when building the items of the scale used the logical approach in addition to conducting an open survey questionnaire for a sample of students of Kufa University The questionnaire consisted of two questions and the scale included three main axes (passion, continuity and perseverance, commitment and participation) The number of items of the scale reached (32) items The self-report method was adopted in building the scale items and the scale was corrected according to the five-point Likert scale Five levels were selected, namely: (Always, Sometimes, Often, Often, Rarely, Never). Each scale was scored according to the weights (5,4,3,2,1)

3. Psychometric properties

A. Apparent validity:

In order to verify the apparent validity of the academic determination scale, the scale was presented in its initial form to (30) referees from specialists in educational and psychological sciences, where they were asked to express their opinions about the validity of the scale items, and the percentage of agreement was adopted (80%), and the May square was also used accordingly. It was found that the calculated value is greater than the tabular value (3.84) and at the level of significance (0.05) and degree of freedom (1) according to the opinions of the arbitrators, some items were reformulated and the scale was kept in its final form consisting of (36) items**.**

B. Construct validity :

The scale was applied to a sample of (400), after which the data was transcribed and tabulated by Excel program and the statistical indicators of the scale were checked, to be able to identify the distribution of data and students' scores in a normal and moderate manner, the warp coefficient was calculated provided that the calculated value is between (-1, + 1), i.e. close to zero, as the value of the warp coefficient reached (.599) and the flattening coefficient reached (.669).The value of the skewness coefficient amounted to (.599) and the kurtosis coefficient amounted to (.669), so it turns out that the data are normally and moderately distributed, then the researcher verified the structural validity by the method of internal consistency by applying (spss) Internal consistency was extracted by Pearson's correlation coefficient (Pearson correlation coefficient (to clarify the correlation between the item score and the total score of the scale :

Correlation coefficient values ranged he correlation coefficients of the items with the total score of the scale ranged between (0.465-0.747), and the correlation of each item with the total score of the sub-axis ranged between (0.555-0.801), and the correlation of the sub-domains with the total score of the sub-axis: The values of the correlation coefficients of each item with the total score of the sub-axis to which it belongs ranged between (0.555-0.801), and to clarify the correlation relationship of the sub-dimensions with the total score of the sub-axis:) The values of the correlation coefficients of the sub-dimensions with the total score of the sub-axis to which they belong ranged between (0.835-0.907), and clarify the correlation relationship between the sub-axes with each other and with the total score of the scale: The values of the correlation coefficients of the sub-axes with each other and the total score of the metacognitive learning scale ranged between (0.713-0.945), which are good correlation coefficients and statistically significant at the significance level (0.01). This indicates that the construct validity of the For the Academic Determination Scale.

The scale was applied to (27%) of the psychometric research sample and their scores were calculated and ranked in descending order, and the highest score was taken by (108) responses and the lowest score by (108) responses, so the total number of the two groups reached (216) responses out of (400) and in order to extract the discriminant power of the scale items, the t-test was used for two independent samples and through testing the significance of the differences between the means of the two extreme groups Accordingly, it was found that all items are statistically significant because they are greater than the limit value of (1.97) at a

degree of freedom of (214) and a significance level of (0.05), which indicates the protected validity of the items of the academic determination scale .

2. **Scale Reliability**: Considering reliability as the most important characteristic of a good scale, the researcher verified the scale's reliability using several techniques, the most important of which are:

A. **Reliability using the Cronbach's alpha equation**: The values of the reliability coefficients using this method ranged between 0.905 and 0.966, indicating a high degree of reliability for the scale.

B. **Reliability using the split-half method:** The researcher calculated the split-half reliability coefficient for the sub-dimensions and the total score of the scale, then corrected the reliability coefficient using the Spearman-Brown equation. The values of the reliability coefficients using this method ranged between 0.925 and 0.973, which are high reliability coefficients indicating the scale's reliability according to the split-half method.

IV: RESEARCH RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION:

1. First objective: Identify the academic determination of university students:

This objective was verified by extracting the arithmetic mean which amounted to (118.9400) and the standard deviation which amounted to (25.19630), and then comparing the arithmetic mean to the hypothetical mean of (108) by using one-sample t-test to calculate the significance of the difference, the calculated t-value amounted to (8.684), which is greater than the tabular t-value of (1.96) and statistically significant at (0.05) level and degree of freedom (399), this result indicates that the research sample members have an acceptable level of academic determination. The acceptable level may be attributed to the university environment that supports students' determination to learn, as explained by Porter (2019) in the dimensions of organizational determination.

The reason for this, according to the researcher, is due to students' self-motivation, as students want to achieve their personal goals in light of the academic challenges they face, and ambition is one of the most important drivers of academic grit I agree with the study of Al-Mashad and Jassim (2024), which indicates that there is an intermediate level of academic determination among students

2. Second objective: To determine the significance of the difference of the academic determination scale according to the variables of specialization (science – humanities) and gender (males – females): This objective was verified through the researcher's use of bivariate analysis of variance (ANOVA), according to the specialization variable (science-humanities) and the gender variable (male-female)

The results of the two-way analysis of variance indicated the following:

1.**Statistically significant differences according to the specialization variable (scientific-humanitarian):** There appear to be no statistically significant differences between the two specializations, as the calculated p-value was (1.184), which is lower than the tabular p-value of (3.86) with two degrees of freedom (1-399)

According to the researcher's modest experience, the reason may be due to several factors, most notably the similarity of learning methods between the different specializations (scientific, humanistic), as well as the academic and intellectual homogeneity of students at this stage, and the homogeneity between the psychological and social factors common to the specializations (scientific, humanistic.

2.**Differences according to the gender variable (male-female):** There appear to be no statistically significant differences between the two genders, as the calculated p-value was (0.8270), which is lower than the tabular p-value of (3.86) with two degrees of freedom (1-399). This result indicates several factors causing the lack of differences in the gender variable, including similar educational opportunities, equal interaction with educational scenarios, similar academic motivation, and shared sociocultural factors between the sexes, which leads to similar levels of academic determination among students.

3. Interaction of specialization and gender: It appears that the difference between the variables of specialization and gender, according to the binary interactions, does not reach the level of statistical significance, as the calculated p-value reached (1.605), which is less than the tabulated p-value of (3.86) with two degrees of freedom (1-399). The researcher attributes this to the weakness of the interactive effect between specializations and gender, and the equality of effects between gender and specialization, meaning that students in various scientific and humanities specializations interact with the educational material in a similar manner, regardless of whether they are male or female. In addition, there are no fundamental differences between the sexes in academic determination. Psychological and social factors may play a greater role than the variables of specialization and gender in influencing their academic determination. This may reflect equal educational opportunities between specializations and genders in the university environment, as explained by Duckworth's (2016) theory on the role of shared perseverance in academic determination.

Comparison with previous studies:

-Consistency: Consistent with the study (Jassim, 2024), which found no gender differences in academic determination.

V. CONCLUSION:

From the above, we have learned the importance of academic determination in motivating students to learn. Therefore, it is necessary, customize content based on students' needs, develop individualized support programs based on the assessment of academic determination levels, and provide training workshops to enhance academic determination among university students. To provide an interactive and integrated learning environment to enhance academic determination, and to provide an integrated learning environment to provide equal educational opportunities for both males and females and from different disciplines (scientific, humanitarian).

Studying the impact of artificial intelligence systems on academic determination.

Studying the role of modern technology in enhancing academic determination.

Conducting a longitudinal study to track the development of the two variables and follow students over different time periods to observe how the levels of academic determination evolve over time.

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