Business Students' Attitude Towards Education

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Abstract. This paper focuses on the topic of university education of modern business students through the lens of their attitude towards university education. Several factors were considered such as attendance, peer influence, future aspiration, etc. These factors strongly affect students' attitudes and shape their opinions on what role the university education should play in their lives. A survey was conducted to create a complex image of the current reality. It was discovered that the attendance of modern business students is not affected by any of the factors that are usually considered to compose the quality of a university's education. More personal factors play a key role in influencing such decisions. The majority of business students put future job satisfaction in the first place.

1. Introduction

The role of university in educating young people has been well known for centuries. However, recent global changes have brought new developments in terms of how tertiary education is perceived and even more importantly what role it plays in life of young people. Their attitude towards education can be a resonating factor on their lifestyle and can have tremendous affect on their future choices in life.

Current literature is rich with studies tackling factors that affect students' satisfaction with university education [1, 2]. However, such studies rarely take under consideration factors such as students' attendance, part-time jobs and life values. Various studies [1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8] revealed that lecturers' expertise, elective courses offered, learning environment and facilities are the main factors that affect the student' satisfaction with the quality of education. Furthermore, the quality of university plays a significant role in influencing students' attitude towards education. The quality in education is a continuous process involving critical self-examination of the institution's contribution to the student's intellectual and personal development [9]. Understanding who students perceive this quality is a challenging process. However, it is necessary if there is a need to discover their attitudes towards business education.

In recent years no studies were conducted to explore these topics among students in business field of study. Our paper aims to fill this research gap.

2. Methodology

The main aim of this paper is to explore modern business students' attitude towards university education. In order to meet this aim a survey was conducted among university students whose field of study is business oriented. A questionnaire was used to collect data from students. Data collection was conducted during the period between April 2018 and June 2018. Overall, 156 students participated on this survey. Out of which 61.33 % were female students. The age varied between 19 to 36 years.

The structure of sample file according to field of business study is provided in Figure 1.
The majority of students participating in the research studied management (36.54%). Students of corporate economics and management represented 26.28% of sample file. Furthermore, the sample file also consists of 22 tourism students, 27 finance and accounting students and 9 students of public economics and regional development.

Particular correlation coefficients were calculated according to this formula 1 [10]:

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 r_{xy} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{n} (x_i - \bar{x})(y_i - \bar{y})}{\sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^{n} (x_i - \bar{x})^2} \sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^{n} (y_i - \bar{y})^2}}
\]

where:
- \( x_i, y_i \) are defined as a value of i-element belonging to dataset \( \{x_1, \ldots, x_n\} \),
- \( \bar{x} = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^{n} x_i \) - the sample mean and analogously for \( \bar{y} \).

3. Results and Discussion

Since the main aim of this paper is to explore modern business students' attitude towards university education the primary focus of this paper was to discover opinions of current business students on their education and lifestyle. Firstly, it was examined their life values and goals for the future. Figure 2 provides information on the importance of various factors current students put on for their future.

It is obvious that the majority of business students put future job satisfaction in the first place. According to the data personality development is also very important. Many students wish to have time and resources to focus on developing their personalities, as well as their job skills. It is an interesting finding that current students are fully aware that their salaries will not reach high levels at first. Therefore, they currently do not place financial evaluation of work very high on the list of future goals. Lastly, the status seems to be considered the least important achievement of current business students.

Furthermore, only 73.2% of students consider themselves ambitious. This rate is slightly higher in a group of male students (81.62%). Moreover, female students tend to put more importance on achieving
better grades than male students but are more likely to assume that they will do not enjoy the work that they will do after graduation.

Subsequently, the attendance of students was also examined. It was discovered that 70.37% of students attend more than 80% of direct teaching (lectures and/or seminars). Between 60% - 79% of direct teachings was attended by 14.81% of students. The same portion of students also declared that they attended less than 59% of designated lectures and/or seminars. Furthermore, it was examined whether there is relevance between the age of students and the rate of attendance. The correlation coefficient was calculated for the relationship between these factors. It was discovered that there is a medium-strong indirect dependency between them. It means that older students tend to skip classes more often than their younger counterparts. The existence of a part-time job may also significantly affect students' attendance in class. However, the results of our survey did not provide statistically significant results to confirm this assumption.

Since we discovered that so many current business students consider themselves to be highly ambitious, we also looked into the possibility that this belief can affect their attitude towards university education. Firstly, we examined the possibility that ambitious students are more likely to attend their classes. The findings indicate that this assumption is not entirely correct. There is no statistically significant relationship between students' attendance rate and their tendency towards ambitiousness. However, the case is different for the grades. More ambitious students tend to achieve higher grades and more likely to consider the lectures interesting.

Furthermore, it was discovered that even if students consider lectures interesting this does not affect their attendance since there is no statistically significant relationship between these factors. More importantly, as a reason for absence, social obligations occurred more frequently than work obligations. The difference was even more significant in a group of female students.
Since the lifestyle of modern students has changed drastically in recent years we also examined the importance of friends' influence on their attitude towards education and corresponding obligations. It was discovered that those students who regularly consult their peers on decisions regarding school obligations are less likely to consider the curriculum interesting. What's interesting is the finding that male students consult their friends on choices on elective courses more often than female students. However, it does not affect their overall results from these courses in terms of achieved grades.

4. Conclusion

The main aim of this paper was to explore modern business students' attitude towards university education. Several factors were considered such as attendance, peer influence, future aspiration, etc. These factors strongly affect students' attitudes and shape their opinions on what role the university education should play in their lives. A survey was conducted to create a complex image of the current reality.

It was discovered that the attendance of modern business students is not affected by any of the factors that are usually considered to compose the quality of a university's education. More personal factors play a key role in influencing such decisions. Therefore, it is possible to conclude that modern business students simply have other priorities that they put more importance on than school. The importance of university education as a precipice for achieving their goals has significantly decreased. Therefore, it is also possible to conclude that while university education is important modern business students are aware of the fact that they can achieve their goals without it. In their opinions education is merely a necessity in the current business world, but it does not automatically guarantee success. Such a belief has both pros and cons. The advantage is that students are aware that they have to make an effort outside school as well to find a suitable work position later in life. On the other hand, if the time they spend at university is considered merely as "waiting time for diploma", students may neglect to focus on the course material application in practice since their priority is achieving a passing grade and moving on to the next level.

The threat of escalation of such belief could lie in the possibility of a significant decrease in attention students put on their education and consequently the lecturers' motivation to provide their best. Such may be the future reality of some business universities. This interesting topic can also provide ideas for further research into the attitude and motivation of lecturers as well as students.

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References


