

The Factors Influencing Academic Affairs Services Management at the National University of Laos and Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania

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This research aims to investigate the attitude levels of staff's and students' on the motivation, effectiveness towards the academic affairs services management at the faculty of Economics and Business Management, DongDok campus in the National University of Laos, and the faculty of Economic Sciences and faculty of Sciences, Sibiu campus in Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania. There were 220 participants, five groups; presidents, deans, heads of departments, lecturers and students. The five-point Likert scale rating questionnaires were used to collect data. The SPSS version 20 was used to perform the needed analysis for reaching the proposed aims. In this regard, univariate and bivariate statistics were computed; Pearson Chi-Square Test, ANOVA, scale reliability and validity analysis were undertaken. The research goals are to improve the academic affairs services management systems in the two mentioned universities. Therefore, the results advised the university committee boards, the governments, the national, international donors, curriculum developers, staff and students to use them for the educational purposes.

Keywords: *The motivation, Academic affairs services management, the effectiveness of management*

1. Introduction

This is the research of the academic affairs services management conducted in two universities mentioned above. The academic management is the heart of the university in terms of all educational activities success which is able to drive force economic growth and coordinate every organizational area to work effectively in the organizations, (Cole,G.A, 1993, p. 3-7); cited in Fayol, (1916), Brech, (1957), Koontz and O'Donnell, (1976). The main factors of this research theme are related to the motivation, academic professional fields, educational qualifications, academic affairs services management systems operated and the needs to improve the academic affairs services management systems. Specifically, the Likert scale format with five categorises was used to measure Lao and Romanian participants' the attitudes levels towards academic affairs

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services management and compare their attitudes within the two universities about significant correlation statistics which are based on the collected data of this research. This is also to find out some possible solutions to solve academic affairs services management.

2. Literature review

This section presents the management theories and literature reviews which are related to Laos and Romania academic affairs services management situations. This research based on a variety of management theories such as Frederick Taylor's Scientific Management in the era of modern management (Richard, 2010, p. 45, cited in Frederick Taylor (1856-1915, p. 45). In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century's to overthrow management "by rule of thumb" and replace it "the one best" practice. Richard, (2010, p. 44) cited in Frederick Taylor, (1856-1915). Furthermore, Richard, (2010, p. 48) cited in Henri Fayol (1841-1925), 's administrative theory mainly focuses on the personal duties of management at a much more granular level. His theory consisted of 5 principles and 14 fourteen principles of administration which are still actively practiced today. Douglas McGregor (1906-1964) postulated management ideas as contained in "Theory X" and "Theory Y" which is about using human behaviour in an organization depends on the beliefs of its managers. There were six basic assumptions for 'Theory Y' Richard (2010, p. 51-53), cited in Douglas McGregor (1906-1964). This research is based on the management theories mentioned above which play very important roles, not only from the top levels, but also for every section in the organizational areas without all coordination in the organisation, it is impossible to work successfully, (Harding & Long, 1998, p. 181, cited in H. Mintzberg and J.B. Quinn, 1991).

3. Research objectives

The overall aims of this research are to determine the major factors which influence the academic affairs services management in two mentioned universities. To achieve the research goals, staff and students were questioned about their levels of educational qualifications, attitudes levels towards the motivation, the effectiveness and the importance of improvement the academic affairs services management. Furthermore, the researcher desires to describe the significant correlations amongst specific factors. It is hoped that this research also contributes to a better understanding the nature of the academic affairs services management, to set up the feasible management and offer some suggestions to make the new effective academic management practices which are able to be appropriate for those two universities from now onwards.

4. The research hypotheses

This research is expected to examine the following hypotheses:

- Hypothesis₀₁ There is an unequal distribution among the participants which based on their genders and academic titles.
- Hypothesis₀₂ There is an unequal distribution among Lao and Romanian's university staff which based on their educational qualifications.
- Hypothesis₀₃ The students' motivation for choosing their home university differs between Lao and Romanian students.
- Hypothesis₀₄ The staffs' and students' attitudes towards the effectiveness of the academic affairs services management differs greatly between two universities.
- Hypothesis₀₅ The staffs' and students' attitudes towards the importance of improving the academic affairs services management systems differs greatly between two universities.

5. The research methodology

To meet the aims of this research, a quantitative paradigm was chosen as the most appropriate method to determine the staffs' and students' attitudes levels of motivation and effectiveness towards the academic affairs services management, (Khawaja, 2012, p. 16, cited in Sekaran & Bougie, 2010, p. 169) and makes use of variety of quantitative analysis techniques that range from providing simple descriptive of the variables involved, to establish the statistical relationships among variables through complex statistical modelling (Raphael, 2010, p. 38, cited in Saunders et al., 2009, p. 199). It is also to describe, explain and predict phenomena, uses probability sampling and relies on larger sample sizes as compared to qualitative research designs (Cooper & Schindler, 2006, p. 39). In order to make a good flow of this research, the researcher has a clearly defined purpose of research, research process is detailed in form of research proposal, research design is thoroughly planned, research relies on adequate analysis, the findings are presented unambiguously, conclusions are properly justified, limitations, reliability and validity are frankly revealed and high ethical standards are applied (Cooper & Schindler, 2006, p. 47). There were 220, categorized into five groups, (1). Presidents / rectors, vice-presidents / rectors, (2). Deans, vice-deans, (3). Heads of departments, (4). Lectures / teachers, and (5) and the second and third year students. The questionnaires were distributed directly to Lao and Romanian participants from February 2012 to July 2013. The 5-point Likert scale rating format and multiple choice questionnaires were used to collect data in this research which consisted of 100 items. Those adapted questionnaires were designed to measure the staffs' and students' attitudes levels towards the effectiveness, motivation and importance on the academic affairs services management. The Bivariate and Univariate descriptive statistics were used to show the frequency, percentages, mean, std. Error of Means, Median, Mode, std Deviation, Variance, Skewness, std. Error of Skewness, Kurtosis, std. Error of Kurtosis, Range, Minimum and Maximum. The test of reliability and validity Cronbach's alpha of questionnaires from part 1A to part 9. Factor 8 were from **0.713 to 0.924**. Based on these statistics test results mean that the questionnaires were used in this research were reliable and acceptable.

6. The research results and data analysis

Hypothesis 1: The total numbers of participants who involved in this research were 220 (100%), out of which 102 (46.4%) participants were males and 118 (53.8%) females. Another interesting information to notice is that the number of Romanian females 70 (59.3%) was higher than the number Lao females 48 (40.7%), while Lao males 62 (60.8%) were more than Romanian males 40 (39.2%). Thus, an unequal distribution of the participants' genders can be observed.

The table No 1 below contains the participants' distribution according to their academic titles/academic functions. There were eight different target groups of participants in this research. One (0.5%) was the president / rector of university. Eight (3.6%) were vice-presidents / rectors of university. One (0.5%) was director of the academic affairs office in the university. Two (0.9%) were deans of faculties from two universities. Four (1.8%) were vice-deans of faculties from two universities. Four (1.8%) were the heads of departments in the faculties of Economics and Business Management and faculty of Economic Sciences from two universities. One hundred (45.5%) were lecturers / teachers from two universities and one hundred (45.5%) were 2nd and 3rd year students from two universities, (See table No: 1 below).

Table 1. The academic titles and functions of Lao and Romanian participants

Target groups	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Presidents / rectors	1	.5	.5	.5
Vice-presidents/rectors	8	3.6	3.6	4.1
Director	1	.5	.5	4.5
Deans	2	.9	.9	5.5
Vice-deans	4	1.8	1.8	7.3
Heads of the departments	4	1.8	1.8	9.1
Lecturers / teachers	100	45.5	45.5	54.5
Students	100	45.5	45.5	100.0
Total	220	100.0	100.0	

Hypothesis 2: To validate or not hypothesis no. 2, bivariate statistics was computed and cross tabulation analysis was undertaken. The total numbers of university staff were 120 in this research, out of which 60 (50%) were from Laos and 60 (50%) from Romania, categorized into eight different educational qualifications. First, the total numbers of university staff who have been the lecturers-Professor holding Doctoral degrees were 16 (13.3%). Second, the total numbers of university staff who have been the lecturers-Associate Professor holding Doctoral degrees were 42 (35%). Third, the total numbers of university staff who have been the lecturers-Associate Professor holding Master degrees were 4 (3.3%). Fourth, the total numbers of university staff who have been the lecturers holding Doctoral degrees were 6 (5%). Fifth, the total numbers of university staff who have been the Teaching Assistant lecturers holding PhD degrees were 3 (2.5%). Sixth, the total numbers of university staff who have been the Teaching Assistant lecturers and being PhD Candidate were 3 (2.5%). Seventh, the total numbers of university staff who have been the Lecturers holding Master degrees were 21(17.5%). Finally, the total numbers of university staff who have been the Lecturers holding Bachelor degrees were 25 (20.8%), (See table No: 2 below).

Table 2. The educational qualifications of Lao and Romanian participants

No	Educational qualifications	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	Professor. Dr.	16	7.3	13.3	13.3
2	Assoc .Prof. Dr	42	19.1	35.0	48.3
3	Assoc. Prof. Master	4	1.8	3.3	51.7
4	Lecturer. Dr	6	2.7	5.0	56.7
5	Teaching Assistant PhD	3	1.4	2.5	59.2
6	Teaching Assistant PhDc	3	1.4	2.5	61.7
7	Lecturer Master	21	9.5	17.5	79.2
8	Lecturer Bachelor	25	11.4	20.8	100.0
	Total	120	54.5	100.0	

Hypothesis 3: Lao and Romanian of 2nd and 3rd students' perceptions regarding the educational quality which was recognized by the international standard of two groups in Laos and Romania. This was measured by a Likert scale with five categories. Descriptive statistics were computed for this variable. Thus, the total mean was **high = 4.03**, Std. Error of Mean = .1029, Median = 4.000, Mode = .5.0, Std. Deviation = 1.0294, Variance = 1.060, Skewness = -.798, Std. Error of Skewness = .241, Kurtosis = -.049, Std. Error of Kurtosis = .478, Range = 4.0, Minimum = 1.0, Maximum = 5.0. (See table 3 below).

Table 3. The educational quality is recognized by the international standard, students of 2 universities

N Valid	100
Mean	4.030
Std. Error of Mean	.1029
Median	4.000
Mode	5.0
Std. Deviation	1.0294
Variance	1.060
Skewness	-.798
Std. Error of Skewness	.241
Kurtosis	-.049
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.478
Range	4.0
Minimum	1.0
Maximum	5.0

The other interesting information to notice is that the ANOVA table which splits the students' perceptions regarding the educational quality which was recognized by international standard of two groups in Laos and Romania. According to the significance value of $0.00 < .05$, (see table No: 4 below), it can be stated that there is no statistical significant difference between the Romanian students' perceptions regarding

the educational quality for the reorganization of international standard in their universities as well as Lao students'.

Table 4. *The educational qualification is recognized by the international standard (ANOVA statistics)*

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Min	Max
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Laos	50	4.260	1.0844	.1534	3.952	4.568	1.0	5.0
Romania	50	3.800	.9258	.1309	3.537	4.063	2.0	5.0
Total	100	4.030	1.0294	.1029	3.826	4.234	1.0	5.0

Hypothesis 4: Lao and Romanian participants' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of academic affairs services management systems operated in the National University of Laos and Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania which was measured by a Likert scale with five categories. Therefore, the total mean **was moderate 3.571**, item Variances = 1.037, Inter-Item Covariances = .415, Inter-Item Correlations = .404. According to the significance value of $0.00 < .05$, it is able to conclude that there is no statistical significant difference between Lao and Romanian participants' perceptions of the effectiveness on academic affairs services management systems in two universities. (see table No: 5 below).

Table 5. *The effectiveness of academic affairs services management systems*

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Max/ Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	3.571	3.386	3.745	.359	1.106	.017	10
Item Variances	1.037	.788	1.444	.656	1.832	.031	10
Inter-Item Covariances	.415	.213	.644	.431	3.023	.009	10
Inter-Item Correlations	.404	.236	.614	.378	2.601	.007	10

Hypothesis 5: The interesting information to notice is that the ANOVA table of Lao and Romanian participants' perceptions regarding the academic affairs services management systems needed to be improved in the National University of Laos and Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania which was measured by Likert scale with five categories. Thus, the total mean **was moderate (3.755)**. According to the significance value of $0.00 < .05$, it is able to conclude that there is no statistical significant difference between Lao and Romanian participants' perceptions of the academic affairs services management systems improvement in two universities. (See table: 7 below).

Table 7. *The Academic Affairs Services Management Improvement (ANOVA statistics)*

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between People	636.927	109	5.843		
Between Items	20.764	9	2.307	3.018	.001
Within People	Residual	750.036	981	.765	
	Total	770.800	990	.779	
Total	1407.727	1099	1.281		

Grand Mean = 3.755

7. Discussion and implications

The first results of a survey on the countries and genders revealed that the total numbers of female participants (53.8%) were more than males (46.4%). The other interesting information to notice is that the numbers of Romanian females (59.3%) were more than Lao (40.7%) while Lao males (60.8%) were more than Romanian (39.2%). The second results of a survey on the target groups of participants revealed that there

were sixteen groups of participants from two universities; presidents / rectors (0.5%), vice-presidents/rectors (3,6%), director (0.5%), deans (9%), vice-deans (1.8%), heads of the departments(1.8%), lecturers / teachers(45.5) and students (45.5%). The third results of a survey on the educational qualifications revealed that the numbers of Romanian staff who have been the lecturers-Professor holding Doctoral degrees (13.3%), and lecturers-Associate Professor holding Doctoral degrees (35%) were more than Lao staff. On the other hand, Lao staff who have been the lecturers holding Doctoral degrees were (10%), the Lecturers holding Master degrees were (35%) and the Lecturers holding Bachelor degrees (41.7%) were more than Romanian staff. The other interesting information to notice is that Romanian staff who have been the Teaching Assistant lecturers holding PhD degrees were (5%) and Teaching Assistant lecturers and being PhD Candidate were (5%), while none of them was Lao staff. The fourth results of a survey on the motivation levels of Lao and Romanian students of second and third year revealed that the educational quality was recognized by the international standard in the National University of Laos and Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania was high (total mean = 4.03). The fifth results of a survey on the effectiveness attitudes levels of Lao and Romanian participants revealed that the academic affairs services management systems operated in the National University of Laos and Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania was moderate (total mean = 3.571).

Lastly, the results of a survey on the importance attitudes levels of Lao and Romanian participants indicated that the academic affairs services management systems needed to be improved in the National University of Laos and Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania **were moderate (the grand mean = 3.755)**. According to the significance value of $0.00 < .05$, it is able to conclude that there is no statistical significant difference between Lao and Romanian participants' perceptions of the academic affairs services management systems improvement in two universities.

8. Conclusion

Based on those results, the National university of Laos has to recruit and provide more opportunities for female staff to work in this university while Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu also has to recruit and encourage male staff to work in this university. It is necessary for those two universities to find out the educational policies and other criteria to motivate female and male graduates to work in those universities.

According to the sample size theory, (Bartlett, Kotrlík, & Higgins, 2001:44) pointed out that the larger population, the better results will be. In addition, the National University of Laos has to provide more opportunities and educational policies for Lao staff to upgrade their higher educational degrees as much as possible. In terms of academic affairs services management systems in those two universities, Lao and Romanian participants indicated that those two universities have had well-equipped materials with modern technology, a variety of courses to study, the concepts, theories and practical work are able to link within the regions and other countries. However, this is not appropriate to the real situations. In fact, many things have to be improved and changed in order to provide satisfaction for people's demands in the society.

9. Recommendations

Based on the results of this research, the following recommendations should be considered:

1. It is necessary for those two universities to recruit and motivate young female and male graduates with balance numbers of genders to work in those universities.
2. The survey should be included with many participants and many universities in order to have more accurate results.
3. In case of Laos, the ministry of education and sports and other related organizations have to find out appropriate educational policies and opportunities for staff to upgrade their educational degree to higher levels.
4. It is necessary for those two universities to have as many subjects as possible for students to choose in order to work with international organizations effectively.

5. The further research of academic affairs services management systems should be more and specific areas in those two universities.

10. References

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