

Universite Mohammed VI Polytechnic Students' Challenges On Academic Orientation

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ABSTRACT

The difficulties with academic orientation faced by UM6p students, the variables influencing them, and strategies for improving academic orientation were all examined in this study. The study utilized a within group design, and all participants willingly answered the same survey questions. The study, used the Qualtrics platform to ask participants about their academic orientation and level of satisfaction with the current state of academic orientation in the school, based on the data gathered from 108 students that enrolled in this study which includes undergraduate, master's, and doctorate programs level of study. The results of our study showed that undergraduate and doctorate students have greater obstacles with academic orientation, master's students encounter the fewest difficulties from this study. According to the data, many students are not aware of the various resources offered by the school to help them shape their orientation toward their career goals. This indicates that to further boost student engagement in their programs, the university needs to become more visible about academic orientation programs and there is a need to tailor their programs to students' needs to ensure that they are addressing students' concerns. This study found out that there is a positive correlation between academic orientation and students' satisfaction which implies that further efforts towards improved orientation for student will raise students' satisfaction and further assist them in making correct career choice and help them easily integrate into professional life. The result of the study was statistically significant at alpha level of 5% with a p-value of 6.22e-09.

KEYWORDS: Academic orientation, Students' satisfaction, Academic orientation challenges, Level of study.

INTRODUCTION

School academic orientation has been a concern for individuals and families because it can sometimes determine opportunities for successful professional integration into the labor market. The choice of discipline remains a particularly serious issue and a source of concern for young people, given its importance in ensuring long-term development (Sellamy, 2023). And advising students on the career options available to them (Stevanovic, 2008), as well as providing guidance to young people, families, and many adults who need to make career changes, is now an integral part of academic orientation. (Sellamy, 2023). Given that a country's economy will always need to supply the labor market with the skilled labor it needs, academic orientation is now becoming a crucial component of education policies (Sellamy, 2023). The choice of discipline remains a particularly serious issue and a concern for young people, as it plays a significant role in granting sustainable development. The latter is based on three axes: social, environmental, and economic. If the choice made is well-adapted to the skills and personal characteristics of the individual, it guarantees success in the school career and promises professional integration. It is, therefore, very interesting to clarify the problem of the educational orientation of young people and the factors involved in the development of an orientation choice.

UM6P students struggle with multifaceted challenges in assessing academic orientation, hindering a seamless transition into their academic programs, and impeding their ability to effectively prepare for future careers. Issues such as limited access to vital information, inadequate guidance, and a lack of understanding regarding career paths create significant hurdles. These challenges not only impact the students' academic

integration but also undermine their overall preparedness for the demands of their chosen fields. Addressing these barriers is essential to cultivating a supportive learning environment and ensuring that students can maximize their academic potential while confidently navigating their career trajectories.

This study is to investigate the issues faced by UM6P students during academic orientation and propose recommendations for improving their experiences, which will answer the question “is there a relationship between academic orientation and student satisfaction?”

Research results from What Factors Determine the Academic Orientation in Moroccan Higher Education? (Sellamy, Fakhri, & Moumen, 2023) found that it is not only school results that influence the young people’s orientation, but there are other elements such as the requirements of the job market (which would appear to be unclear for young people), preferences, interests, objectives, qualities. Therefore, it is noted that the choice of path is not made in an objective way, but it is influenced by the family and the job market’s requirements, which seem unclear to the young people.

Furthermore, in Morocco, the school orientation process for young people is subject to various limitations and is subjected to a multitude of limitations. It is observed that insufficient funding and human resources are unavailable to mentor and educate students. The number of students outnumbers the quantity of counselors that conduct orientation for students, suggesting that most students do not gain from academic orientation awareness and its additional inquiries to help them become better-oriented; insufficient individualized support has also been identified as a major factor in accessing academic orientation (Sellamy, 2023).

Research Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis (H₀): There is no relationship between academic orientation and Um6p student satisfaction.

Alternative Hypothesis (H₁): There is a relationship between academic orientation and Um6p student satisfaction.

METHOD

Participants:

The chosen participants for this study are Um6p students, undergraduates, and graduates. 146 students from different departments (FGSES, SCI, ABS, EMINES, SHBM...) were first invited to participate in the survey. However, the final dataset included responses from 108 students who completed the survey. The breakdown of participants by academic level is as follows: 25 First Year Undergraduate, 8 Second Year Undergraduate, 13 Third Year Undergraduate, 35 First Year Master, 9 Second Year Master and 19 PHD Students.

Sampling Method:

The sampling method used for this study was the voluntary response sampling method. Participants were invited to take part in the survey voluntarily, letting individuals share their experiences regarding academic orientation challenges at UM6P.

Survey Instrument:

The experiment was conducted using a Qualtrics Survey platform. The survey design involved categorizing the questionnaire into four distinct blocks, each serving a unique purpose.

- Consent Block: This initial survey segment asks participants about their consent and willingness to contribute to the study.
- Academic Orientation Questions: This part focused on asking participants about different aspects including Open days, Academic advisory, um6p orientation programs, Career Center and job networking.
- Student Satisfaction Questions: This segment is dedicated to assessing student's satisfaction. This block addressed participants' contentment with their courses, their academic programs and their class activities.
- Demographics: This section included questions about participant's department, level of study and age.

Variables:

One independent variable was examined in this study: Academic Orientation

The dependent variable used in this study is: Student's Satisfaction

The primary objective of this study is to explore is there a relationship between the academic orientation experiences of um6p students and their overall satisfaction, which consists of our research question.

Data Collection:

The data for this research was collected from the completed survey by participants, providing information on academic orientation and overall satisfaction. In addition to Demographic details to ensure the classification of participants, especially by departments.

RESULTS

According to the output of the summary of the linear regression, the result is significant at an alpha level of 0.05, also there was a significant positive correlation of 0.52 between academic orientation and student satisfaction.

Table 1: Shows the summary statistics of the linear model.

	Estimate	Standard Error	T-stat	P-value
Intercept (<i>Academic Orientation</i>)	1.86364	0.29989	6.214	1.03e-08
Satisfaction	0.55822	0.08829	6.323	6.22e-09

Table 2: Summary means of academic challenges for each study level

Academic Orientation Challenges	Undergraduate	Masters	PhD
Effectiveness of Open Day	3.00	3.92	3.50
Effectiveness of Academic Adviser	2.12	2.95	3.64
Access to Academic Resources	3.70	3.70	3.81
Effectiveness of Orientation Programs	3.37	3.80	3.00
Job Network Facilitation	3.67	3.98	3.72
UM6P Social Inclusiveness of Student	4.14	4.25	3.60
Career Center's Impact on Career Choice	1.00	2.56	2.00
Overall Academic Challenges	21.00	25.64	23.28

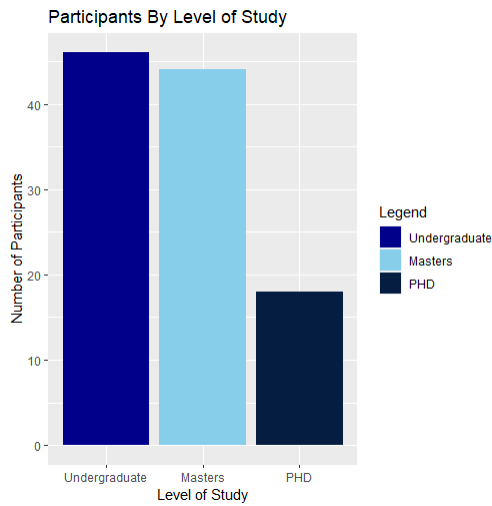


Fig 1.1: A plot of participant by level

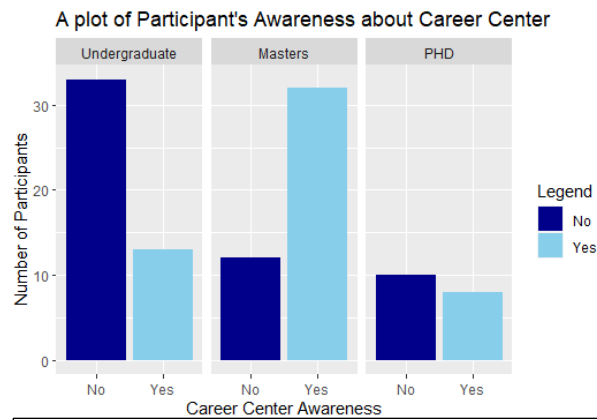


Fig 1.2: A plot of participants awareness about the career center

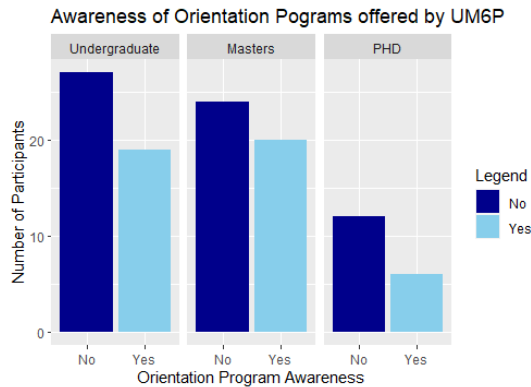


Fig 1.3: A plot of participants awareness about orientation programs offered by UM6P.

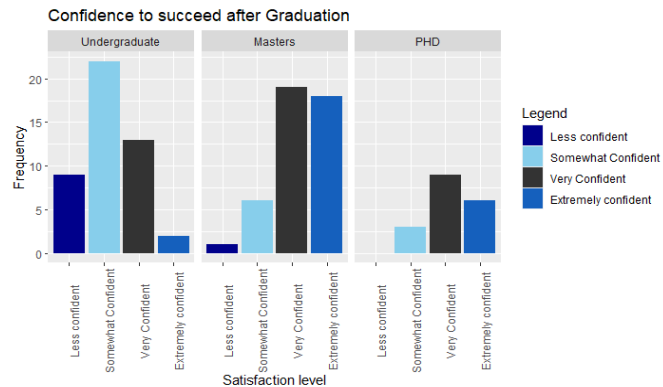


Fig 1.4: A plot of participants confidence level to succeed after graduation

DISCUSSION

The summary of the linear regression analysis underscores the robustness of the model in explaining the relationship between student academic orientation and satisfaction. Notably, the model is statistically significant at a 0.05 significance level ($p < 0.05$), signifying a strong association between academic orientation and student satisfaction ($p\text{-value} = 6.22e-09$). This leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis which states that there is no relationship between academic orientation and student satisfaction in favor of the alternative hypothesis which states that there is a relationship between academic orientation and student satisfaction.

The academic orientation challenges were measured using a Likert scale of 1 to 5, and the questions were asked directly about their perceptions of different academic challenges, with a scale of close to 5 denoting being positive and having fewer academic orientation challenges. The total cumulative mean of each question was calculated for each level of study, and the majority of the academic challenges questions have a score above 3, which is the midpoint, and this denotes that they have fewer academic challenges except for the "effectiveness of academic advisers" for undergraduate and masters students and also the "impact

of the career center on their professional career choice" in the future, with all levels of study having challenges relating to this. The overall academic orientation challenges denote that undergraduate have the highest academic challenges, followed by PhD students, and master's students have the highest cumulative score, which denotes they are more positive and have the fewest challenges.

Figure 1.1 shows participants by level of study; the graph displays each participant by level of study, with 46 undergrad students, 44 master's students, and 19 PhD students, for a cumulative total of 108 students.

A significant disparity in the career center's awareness can be seen in Figure 1.2, which shows that while most undergraduate students are unaware of it, most master's students are aware of it. Regarding awareness of the orientation program provided by UM6p, Figure 1.3 illustrates a similar pattern for all participants with minimal variation in the proportion of most individuals are unaware about the orientation programs for all level of study, but undergraduate is the most unaware about it.

When it comes to their level of confidence to succeed after graduation, master's and PHD students exhibit similar patterns of being very confident and extremely confident, as seen in Figure 1.4, while most undergraduates, on the other hand, exhibit moderate level of confidence.

Limitations of the study

After completing the experiment on the academic challenges of UM6P students and analyzing the data obtained, three limitations of this study were identified.

Firstly, the study only focused on 108 students from um6p which might be too small compared to the overall population of about 4,562 students. This issue needs to be considered to ensure the validity of the experiment.

Furthermore, it is unclear whether the students who completed the survey encountered difficulties related to their academic orientation, which raises the possibility of student participation bias. This could lead to questions over the accuracy of the information gathered.

Third, there would be differences in the interpretation of the survey question between the students who participated in the focus group interview and the survey and the students who just participated in the survey. This could also raise questions about the accuracy of the data that was acquired.

Lastly there were limited journals and past work that could serve as a guide and references for this study.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on our findings, we suggest increasing awareness of the career center's existence and activities, collaborating more with all departments and schools within Um6p rather than concentrating on a few chosen schools and providing students with more individualized career counseling and mentorship opportunities. Additionally, the career center ought to have a location on the campus in Rabat. Companies and organizations that are in dire need of hiring should be invited, to guarantee that students receive internships in areas of interest, offer internship opportunities customized to students' interests, and, lastly, offer opportunity for industry professionals to mentor students.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, this study examined the important aspects of UM6P's academic orientation with the goal of identifying students' problems and determining their satisfaction levels. The null hypothesis was rejected by the results, which showed a strong positive association between academic orientation and student satisfaction. This emphasizes how crucial a strong academic orientation is to raising students' general

satisfaction for their desired career pathways. Notably, the study showed an awareness gap in the career center and um6p's orientation programs, with specifically undergraduates displaying the highest degree of unawareness across all academic levels. Moreover, examining the level of confidence of participants about post-graduation success, graduate students showcased high confidence compared to undergraduates, who showed a moderate level.

In simple terms, this study emphasizes the significance of raising confidence levels at various academic phases and enhancing resource awareness. In general, this project clarifies the relationship between academic orientation and student satisfaction, indicating prospects for improving orientation strategies at UM6P.

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