

The Relationship Between the Distance from University and the Participation of INTI International University Students

Leong X.L., Lim K.Y., Yeoh L.B.H., Phang K.S., Wong C.K. and Koh W.S.

Faculty of Business, Communications and Law,
INTI International University, Nilai, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia.

Corresponding email: weisin.koh@newinti.edu.my

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the statistical relationship between the distance from INTI International University and how it affects students' participation of university's activities. Descriptive and inferential statistical methods are applied in this study. From this study, it is generally understood that the perception of students towards the importance of university's activities is relatively neutral. The number of clubs joined is relatively small and there exists cases of absenteeism and lateness. The mean distance from residence to University is relatively short at 14 minutes as most students live at the hostel or nearby private residences. Therefore, it can be noted that distance is not a determining factor for students' participation in University activities.

Keywords

Statistical Analysis, Distance, INTI International University, Participation, Students

Introduction

INTI International University, Nilai, Negeri Sembilan, is a private institution of higher learning catering to both local and international students that offers a diverse area of fields (INTI University & Colleges, 2018a). As a vibrant campus, students can actively participate in a variety of clubs and societies be it sports, religious groups, music and dance, student bodies, charities, academic clubs and cultural societies (INTI University & Colleges, 2018b). Participating actively in student activities is highly resourceful. Its benefits include learning the values of teamwork, responsibility, physical health, competition, diversity and a healthy sense of community (O'Brien & Rollefson, 1995). Active participation in activities also helps to lift loyalty towards the university, ensures academic success and a sense of well-roundedness, plus applying the knowledge students learnt towards outside of the classroom (O'Brien & Rollefson, 1995). There exists a relationship between distance from the university and participation in the university's activities. Geographical distance remains a determining factor and possible barrier in whether they actively participate. A longer travelling distance might prove costly in terms of finance, time, comfort and psychological health and lead to students not wanting to actively participate (Vermeersch & Groenez, 2015). Financial costs include fuel costs and transportation fees, time and comfort include time costs which can accumulate if university activities are spread out. Psychological costs include stress from travelling, socioeconomic status also plays a role as those who are poorer tend to save costs on travelling (Vermeersch & Groenez, 2015). Thus, those who are poorer tend not to actively participate actively in university's activities. It is researched that there exists a relationship

between distance from university and participation in the university's activities. In Belgium, where students can take part in out-of-school arts education, it is concluded that the farther the arts centre is from the residence of the students, the less likely they are willing to participate (Vermeersch & Groenez, 2015). Similarly, in Germany, youth participation in designated sports centres are also affected by distance as it requires more effort to take part in sports, offset by the disadvantages of long travelling time. This is especially true for rural students who live far away from urban areas with sports facilities (Reimers et al., 2014). Participation in the university's activities is especially important to expand and develop their soft skills. Nevertheless, there exists a development of laxness and apathy towards these activities. This poses a problem as those that do not participate in university's activities take a risk of losing academic achievement and a decrease in employability (Al-Ansari et al., 2016).

Hence, the objectives of this study are to describe and analyse the statistically relationship of the distance of the students from university and their participation.

Materials and Methods

A sample of 100 students from the total population of students at INTI International University participated in the survey by completing the questionnaires given in the Google Forms. The survey conducted examines the following areas which are age, gender and nationality, place of residence, distance from the university, mode of transport, time taken for travel, activeness in university's activities whether it be participation or involvement in hosting events and attributes on participation in the university's activities. The survey is completely anonymous in respect to the sample's confidentiality.

Once the data has been compiled, it was keyed into IBM SPSS software to be analyzed. In terms of descriptive statistics, the mean, median, mode and normality/skewness are determined and suitable graphs and cross-tabulations table are illustrated. In terms of inferential statistics, confidence interval, hypothesis testing, t-test I and II, chi-square test I and II, regression and correlation are implemented at 5% of significance level.

Results

All the statistical results were processed, analyzed and shown in the IBM SPSS. Tables 1 and 2 and Figures 1, 2 and 4 show the descriptive statistics of the data.

The one-sample t-test for distance from hometown to university is tabulated in Table 3. According to Arnett (2014), the average distance from hometown to university at the United Kingdom from a survey of 1000 students gathered by Education Phase on behalf of BBC TV Licensing is 146km. Hence, the null hypothesis for the mean population of distance from university is 146km. It was tested at 5% significance level. Since the p-value is 0.841 and more than 0.05, the null hypothesis is not rejected. Therefore, it is significant to show that the average distance from home town to university is 146 km.

Independent sample t-test were done also to test whether there is a difference of travelling time from home or hostel. The null hypothesis is that the mean of travelling time from home and hostel are significantly the same. Table 4 shows the mean and standard deviation of the travelling time from home and hostel. Referring to Table 5, as the p-value of Levene's test is 0.022 and less than 5% significance level, equal variances are not assumed.

Since the p-value for the t-test is 0.373 is more than 0.05, we do not reject the null hypothesis. Hence, there is enough evidence to say that the mean travelling time for residence to university has no difference whether they are staying at hostel or home.

A chi-square test on the independence for the null hypothesis that there is no association between travelling time from residence to university and the absenteeism was implemented. Refer to Table 6 and 7. The chi-square value is 1.434 and the p-value is 0.998. Since α less than p-value, do not reject H_0 . Hence, there is no association between the travelling time from residence to university during lecture weeks and number of times absent from class during last semester.

Based on Figure 3, Tables 8 and 9, there is no correlation between the absenteeism and travelling time from residence as the Pearson Correlation coefficient is 0.078. The regression equation is

$$y = 2.46 - 0.02x \quad [1]$$

where, y is the number of absenteeism and x is the travelling time from residence to INTI International University. As the coefficient of x is 0.02 which is near to 0, there is no significant contribution of the variable x . Hence, there is no statistical relationship between the student travelling time from residence and absenteeism.

Discussion

In this section, we give some discussion upon the results of the data analysis.

The average distance from hometown to university is 146km. Thus, those we live more than 100km from university would stay in a hostel or rent at a nearby residential area. Based on the bar chart in Figure 1, most of the students stay in the hostel, follow by those staying at home and nearby residential area. Thus, university can provide more hostel rooms. Otherwise, the renting agent or owner can give more affordable rental.

The mean time of travelling time is only 14 minutes. In addition, the independent t-test shows that there is no significant different between travelling from home or hostel. This is support by the independent chi-square test shows where there is no association between travelling time and absenteeism. Furthermore, based on the regression and correlation analysis, the relationship between the travelling time from residence to university and absenteeism is weak. Hence, travelling time should not be a reason for student's absenteeism nor lateness to class or activities. Therefore, as a solution to solve absenteeism, university should set more effective rules with harsher punishment such as bar from final and initiate to counsel the students that absent from class frequently.

Based on the Table 1, most of the students prefer to join only one club and majority do not join more than two clubs in university since they are neutral to the lesson learnt in events and clubs. In the Figure 4, majority of the students agree to just focus on study only during their university life. To discourage this problem, university should organize more meaningful and beneficial events such as campfire, visiting to well-known company, and talk. Besides, university can award the clubs which contributed meaningfully and actively as an encouragement.

Table 1

*Cross tabulation for number of clubs and societies joined and travelling time from residence to university *.*

**Travelling time from residence to University during lecture weeks have been grouped to group 1 (less than 15 minutes), group 2 (15-30 minutes), group 3, (30-45 minutes) and group 4 (more than 45 minutes).*

		Travelling time Group				
		1	2	3	4	Total
Clubs	0	20	2	2	1	25
	1	38	1	1	2	42
	2	18	1	3	1	23
	3	7	1	0	0	8
	4	1	1	0	0	2
Total		84	6	6	4	100

Conclusions

Students' participation in University activities should be made paramount as it reaps huge benefits such as an increase in employability, healthier social exchange and development of soft skills. Yet, students often point out distance as a reason why they do not actively participate. As such, we've conducted a survey of 100 respondents in INTI International University, Nilai, Negeri Sembilan. This is to achieve our objective to explore the statistical relationship between the distance of the students from INTI International University and their participation in the University's activities.

The research question of our study is: How to explore the statistical relationship between the distance of the students from INTI International University and their participation in the University's activities? To answer this question, we identified the subsequent variables to measure and conducted an in-depth analysis via descriptive and inferential statistics. Therefore, it has been found that there exists a relatively weak relationship between distance and participation in University's activities. Despite most students living in relatively nearby residences with a mean travelling time of 14 minutes, perception on the importance of University activities is relatively neutral and there do exist cases of absenteeism and tardiness. As such, the University should determine other factors to solve this issue and institute awareness programs to expose students to the importance of holistic education.

References

- Al-Ansari, A., Al-Harbi, F., AbdelAziz, W., AbdelSalam, M., El Tantawi, M., & ElRefae, I. (2016). Factors affecting student participation in extra-curricular activities: A comparison between two Middle Eastern dental schools. *The Saudi Dental Journal*, 28(1), 36-43. doi: 10.1016/j.sdentj.2015.05.004

- Arnett, G. (2014). Students travel an average of 91 miles from home to attend university. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2014/aug/18/students-travel-average-91-miles-home-university>
- INTI International University & Colleges. (2018a). Why INTI - INTI University & Colleges. Retrieved from <https://newinti.edu.my/why-inti/>
- INTI International University & Colleges. (2018b). Clubs & Societies. Retrieved from <https://newinti.edu.my/why-inti/clubs-societies/>
- O'Brien, E. & Rollefson, M. (1995). Extracurricular Participation and Student Engagement. *National Center for Education Statistics*, 95-741. Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs95/web/95741.asp>
- Reimers, A., Wagner, M., Albanides, S., Steinmayr, A., Reiner, M., Schmidt, S., & Woll, A. (2014). Proximity to Sports Facilities and Sports Participation for Adolescents in Germany. *Plos ONE*, 9(3), e93059. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0093059
- Vermeersch, L. & Groenez, S. (2015). Young People in Out-of-School Arts Education: The Influence of the Proximity of the Provision on Their Participation Decision. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 116(2), 63-77, doi: 10.1080/10632913.2014.944962