



International Journal of Advanced Research in Future Ready Learning and Education

<https://www.akademiabaru.com/submit/index.php/frle/index>
ISSN: 2821 - 2800



The Effectiveness of Academic Advising on Student Performance

'Aaishah Radziah Jamaludin¹, Deepa A/P Alagappan¹, Wan 'Atikah Wan Ibrisam Fikry¹, Siti Zhafirah Zainal¹, Fatin Shaqira Abdul Hadi¹, Nawal Shaharuddin^{1,*}, Nurul Izzati Abd Rahman¹

¹ School of Professional and Continuing Education (SPACE), Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Skudai, Malaysia

ABSTRACT

Academic advising serves an important role to the foundation students as this programme is a transition platform before students proceed to their degree courses. In order to reach academic goals and pursue educational or career ambitions, guidance from others is an essential requirement. Therefore, this study was conducted to explore the relationship between the role of academic advisor and student performance by examining factors such as a student's academic success, including grade point average, campus involvement and chances to further study to degree courses. This study involved a total of 219 respondents from UTMSPACE foundation programme to answer a questionnaire; 55 of them were pilot test respondents and the remaining were the real respondents. Data obtained were analysed by using SPSS and R software. The findings have shown a significant relationship between academic advising and students' performances. Aspects of academic advising needed have shown different needs in different aspects and the students are fond of academic advisors who are trustworthy and helpful. It is also found that students can gain clear and accurate information regarding academic regulations and requirements through academic advising.

Keywords:

Academic advising; students performance; foundation students

1. Introduction

Adaptability among foundation students has been an issue of concern in the faculty. It is a main factor that leads to excellent student performance. According to Afshar and Dhiman [1], one of the factors that results in excellent student performance is support system not just from parents, but also from the educators. Educators and faculty have important roles to play towards the learning capabilities of students. Their roles include promoting active learning, developing thinking skills, creating effective learning zones, promoting success, providing effective feedback, recognizing and creating learning windows, developing good relationships, developing learning pedagogy, enhancing motivation and accepting individual differences.

An academic advisor plays an important role in students' academic success by mentoring students throughout their academic career and by providing them with expert advice and resources to enhance their learning and development. For example, the student and the advisor should have a professional relationship that involves knowledge about their personal lives, specifically extracurricular activities,

* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: nawal@utmSPACE.edu.my

hobbies, and work. However, the responsibility falls on both parties. There is a need for dual effort to form a professional relationship between the faculty advisor and the student.

Numerous studies have described the important role of the quality of academic advising on student performance. From the student's perspective, there were four important factors for advisee satisfaction; being recognized by the advisor, having a professional advisor, and receiving warmth and support from the advisor [4]. Meanwhile, Afshar and Dhiman [1] found that excellent academic advising has a strong relationship with students' personal, cultural, and academic background, including the quality of their relationship with their advisor.

Therefore, this paper aims to examine the relationship between foundation students and their academic advisors. It is believed that students with different cultural, personal, and academic attributes may assess the effectiveness of their advisors quite differently. Gender difference, age, CGPA, longevity with the current advisor, number of visits to the advisor and their duration, all these variables may influence the excellence in academic advising.

To address the objective of the research, the literature review has looked into past studies related to academic advising. Academic advising is an important aspect of higher education and students' academic performance. Van and Said [5] pointed out that academic development, personal development and career development were the first, second, and third themes most stated by the academic advisors when asked regarding their perceptions towards academic advising. [6] found multiple factors (advisor accountability, advisor empowerment, student responsibility, student self-efficacy, student study skills, and perceived support) that contribute to student success and identified specific areas for targeted interventions.

Some students fail to perform in college due to the loss of ability or academic skill but significant non-academic factors may also inhibit students' ability to perform to their potential. This is when academic advisors can take part for poor students in academic performance and offer negotiated agreements for future action to improve their college grade point average (GPA) and to avoid academic dismissal from current school [7]. From the academic advice effort, students can manage their time management, improve and keep high grades, set academic performance and career goals among other areas by supplementing existing counseling programmes and maximizing full realization of students' potential [8]. Based on the survey by Jaradat and Mustafa [9], 45.6% of the 1725 participants of the survey express no influence of advising on students' decisions to select their major and this survey shows the poor effect of academic advising. However, according to Crockett [3], academic advising is needed in higher education process for several reasons, including the increase in the number of non-traditional students, concern for individual student growth and development, interest in increasing student retention, greater choice of curriculum for students than ever before, and growing concern among students over the linkage between academic preparation and the world of work. Based on the previous studies, there was no specific definition or theory of academic advising, but certain researchers stated that academic advising is the second most important function in the college or university. In general, academic advising contributes and focuses on educational or career goals of students that are related to the academic offering [10]. The advising practice such as to select the related program that can achieve their aim and career goals will give positive advantages on student and retention [11].

This makes the role of academic advisor important for all students especially on student performance. One of the roles of an academic advisor is guiding a decision making process when students realize their future educational potential through communication and sharing that involve three important focuses: curriculum, pedagogy and student learning outcome. From these focuses, it shows the wide role of academic advisor, for example in the aspects of academic, personal life, social, mentoring, suggesting, counselling, coaching, or even teaching. Academic advising is the basic

tradition in American higher education that is crucial in terms of assisting students to know their path and the educational benefits to them [3]. Many academic advisors nowadays may be underestimating the effectiveness and capabilities of advising due to the dependence on the single institution samples [12]. According to Tinto [13], successful students are closely related to academic advising. There are a number of terms that can be associated to the academic advisor, such as a teacher, friend, mentor, gatekeeper, facilitator or any other term that refers to a role of an academic advisor [14]. Based on Fricker, [10], in order to analyse the purpose, content, focus and the average length of time for each type of face to face advising interaction, five levels of advising are needed, which are informational, explanatory, developmental, mentoring, and counselling. Academic advisors advice students to choose the suitable courses to join in with outcomes-oriented approach in mind, direct students in making decisions, assist in development of study plans that include the institutional resource and policy, programs details and curricula such as course requirement and student performance [15].

There are a few ways to improve the quality of academic advising. Cuseo [16] identifies one-dozen target areas of improvement of academic advice where most likely any potentially effective attempt to improve academic advice must be guided by a clear vision of what “good” or “quality” advising actually is. McGill *et al.*, [17] found that professional values, professional skills and behavior, plus training and continuing professional education/development are the aspects and skills for Academic Advising and Personal Tutoring to be effective.

To ensure student satisfaction with the advising system, a number of authors have found few approaches on this issue. Having a professional advisor, and receiving warmth and support from the advisor plus the advisor’s interpersonal skills and styles were important factors for advisee satisfaction [18]. Meanwhile, Anderson *et al.*, [19] have suggested that the developmental approach is preferred by advisee when perceived advisor behaviors are aligned with students’ prescriptive or developmental expectations. In addition, developing a professional relationship with one’s faculty or academic advisor has significant benefits not only on student development, but overall student satisfaction with college as well [4].

The expectations of students, advisors and administrators towards academic advising has been studied, where students suggest that the responsibility of advisors be clarified and the technological support be maintained and updated while advisors focus on assessment and rewards as well as staff development. However, administrators focus on the components leadership, staff development, finance and assessment [5].

The effectiveness of academic advising on student performance is a crucial factor in their academic and professional success. Guiding students throughout the education process via face-to-face advising session can be more meaningful for students because it can develop learning and persistence, especially for students who are at-risk of dropping out. Academic advising can support all students towards success, especially for students who are at risk because the long-term effect of one-time intrusive advising interventions has a significant positive relationship to student grades and persistence outcomes [10,15,20]. According to Mu and Fosnacht [12], the positive relationship with students and frequency of meeting with an academic advisor contributes to improvement in terms of grades, student assessments and self-reported gains. Various theoretical frameworks from the previous studies that are related to the effectiveness of academic advising on student performance have been reviewed. King Abdul Aziz University created the new framework E academic advising (integrating the initial framework) to support and help academic advisors and students by providing all the information about the university [20].

During the transition to college life, students need support systems in place to help them make the transition from one stage to the next. Previous research showed first year students in the study preferred prescriptive advising and described their advising experience as primarily prescriptive [21].

McFarlane [22] studied the relationship between how academic advising is delivered to first year students at a four-year public institution. The findings indicate that (a) who advises students, and (b) how frequently students choose to see an advisor are particularly noteworthy structures for first-year students in relation to student satisfaction with advising and attainment of certain advising learning outcomes. The finding by [8], stated that 21% of first and 27% of second year students are more attracted to get academic advice from advisors than third year students with 4%. Based on the gender, only 14% of male and female students sought academic assistance from their academic mentors. The past studies have proven that first year students are in need of academic advising. Hence, this study focuses on foundation students of UTMSPACE who are still at the early stage of their tertiary level study, which has made them the gap for the research since the foundation programme is only a two-semester programme.

1.2 Research Question

1. Is there a relationship between academic advising and excellence in students' performance?
2. Is there a relationship between academic advising and students' grade point average (GPA)?
3. Is there a relationship between academic advising and students' satisfaction of the programme?

1.3 Research Objectives

The research objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To determine the impacts of academic advising on students performances in UTMSPACE foundation programme
2. To find factors that influence students' satisfaction with foundation programme.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

This study applied the stepwise regression method which involved studying the relationship between the CGPA and the factor of academic advising among foundation students. The researchers endeavoured to investigate the effect of academic advising on academic achievement among foundation students in UTM.

2.2 Participants

A total of 219 respondents from UTMSPACE foundation programme had participated in this study; 55 of them were pilot test respondents and the remaining were the real respondents

2.3 Instrumentation

Data was collected using Google form developed by the researchers. The questionnaire sought information about gender, year of study, academic performance and the rate at which students consult their academic advisors. The students' cumulative grade performances average (CGPA) was used as an index of their academic performance. The respondents were also asked to provide other general information that assisted in the interpretation of the data. The data analysis was done by SPSS and R software.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Respondent Background

Among the respondents, 79.9% (131) respondents are students from the foundation programme and another 22% (36) of them are in the degree programme. 50.6% of them are male students while the remaining 49.4% are female students.

Table 1

Respondent's Background

Level of Education	(%)	Gender	(%)	Father's Occupation	(%)	Mother's Occupation	(%)
Foundation	79.9	Male	50.6	Professional	44.5	Professional	43.4
Degree	22	Female	49.4	Non-professional	55.5	Non-professional	56.6

The respondents' parents' occupations are as shown in the table presented above. The occupations are categorized into professional and non-professional categories. In terms of fathers' occupation, 44.5% of the respondents' fathers belong to professional occupation while 55.5% of them are in non-professional occupation. As for the mother's occupation, 56.6% of them have non-professional occupations and another 43.4% have professional occupations.

3.2 Aspects of Academic Advising Needed

The aspects of academic advising needed by students in this study were categorised into five main aspects; academic development, personal development, personal well-being (personal issues), career development and social skills. The data for the aspects needed under academic development was gained from students' perspectives and presented in the form of percentage, according to the priority, in Table 2.

Table 2

The academic development aspects

Academic development	Percentage (%)
Ways to obtain scholarships	73.2
Academic achievement (example: Educational Planning, requirements to get a degree, etc.)	70.1
Information on the institution's academic requirements (example: course registration, final examination, credit hours, etc)	68.3
Courses selection according to concentration/ field (courses to be taken every semester)	66.5
Strategies of studying in the tertiary level	60.4
Other academic issues (example; calculation on CPA & CGPA, managing own studies, etc.)	52.4
Procedure of rules and regulations to adapt with academic progress	51.2

Follow-up on any report of unsatisfactory work (notice of class probation for poor attendance, notice of failing grades, incomplete grades from past semesters), etc.	49.4
---	------

Table 2 illustrates the data for academic development aspect in the aspects of academic advising needed where 73.2% of them highly need advice on ways to obtain scholarships. Many of them (70.1%) also think that they need advice on the matters related to their academic achievement such as educational planning and academic requirements. 68.3% of them need the information on the institution’s academic requirements such as course registration, final examination and credit hours. 66.5% of the students need advice on the courses selection according to concentration or their fields. Other than that, 60.4% of them also think that they need advice from their academic advisors on the strategies to study at the tertiary level. 52.4% of them need advice on other academic issues such as the calculations of CPA and CGPA or simply managing their own studies. 52.1% of the students think that they need the advice of the procedure of rules and regulations to adapt with academic progress. Finally, less than half of them (49.4%) think that they need follow-up on any report of unsatisfactory work such as notice of class probation for poor attendance, notice of failing grades and incomplete grades from past semesters. Based on the results, these aspects shows that academic advising can contribute to and focus on educational or career goals of students that are related to the academic offering [10].

Table 3
 Personal development aspects

Personal development	Percentage (%)
Exposure to experiences and opportunities	73.8
Providing alternatives and problem-solving	67.7
Assistance in decision-making process	66.5
Life goals	57.9
Boosting awareness on individual values and behaviour	56.7
Enhancing interpersonal skills	55.5

Under the personal development aspects, students are interested to have the exposure to experiences and opportunities the most, with the highest percentage of 73.8%. Apart from that, 67.7% students think that they need the advice in the alternatives and problem-solving that can be provided by advisors. Assistance in decision-making is also considered important to students as 66.5% of them have agreed on this. 57.9% of them need advice on life goals. Lastly, 56.7% of them agree that advice is needed in boosting awareness on individual values and behaviour, while 55.5% of the students need advice in enhancing their interpersonal skills. Crockett [3] stated in higher education, it is crucial for students to know their path and the educational benefits for them.

Table 4
 Personal well being aspects

Personal well-being (Personal issues)	Percentage (%)
Lifestyle	89.0
Time management	81.7
Financial management	53.7
Family issues management	26.2

On the aspect of personal well-being, 89.0% of the students are interested in obtaining advice on lifestyle such as health and other issues. 81.7% of them agree that they need advice on time management and 53.7% of the students think they need academic advising on financial management. On the contrary, only 26.2% of them think that they need to be advised on family issues management. From the academic advice effort, students can manage their time management, improve and keep high grades, set academic performance and career goals among other areas by supplementing existing counseling programmes and maximizing full realization of students' potential [8].

Table 5
Career development aspects

Career Development	Percentage (%)
Career path advice	69.9
Awareness in career path planning	64.0
Career orientation	63.4

Table 5 shows the results for career development aspect. 69.9% of them agree that they need the advice on career path. 64% of them need awareness in career path planning. Lastly, 63.4% of the students need the advice on career orientation. According to [3], academic advising is needed in higher education process for several reasons, including the increase in the number of non-traditional students, concern for individual student growth and development, interest in increasing student retention, greater choice of curriculum for students than ever before, and growing concern among students over the linkage between academic preparation and the world of work.

Table 6
Social skills

Social Skills Development	Percentage (%)
Social activity skills	74.4
Guidance on extra-curricular activities	65.2

As for the aspect of social skills development, 74.4% of them need the advice on social activity skills and 65.2% of the students need the guidance on extra-curricular activity. This is further supported by [3] who mentioned that academic advising can help in curriculum choices among students as well as increase their academic and personal growth.

3.3 The Relationship between Students Performance and Academic Advising

This section provides the data on the students' performances and academic advising. The performances of the students were measured by their Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA). Based on stepwise regression method it was found that CGPA of the students have significant relationship with the factors of academic advising such as the role of advisor, the role of advisee and the effect of academic advising. These aspects were analysed thoroughly and the percentage of the students vote was divided into three scales which were agree, neutral and disagree.

Table 7

The Roles of Advisor

The Roles of Advisor	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Skilled in providing necessary information regarding academic matters	57.3%	14.6%	28.1%
Own good listening and communication skills	56.7%	14.6%	28.6%
Trustworthy and helpful toward students	55.4%	15.8%	28.6%

Table 7 shows the results for the roles of advisor in academic advising. More than half of the students (57.3%) agreed that academic advisors need to be skilled in providing necessary information regarding academic matters. 14.6% of them are neutral on the item and 28.1% of them disagreed. Next, 56.7% students agreed that academic advisors should have good listening and communication skills. 14.6% of them were neutral on it, and 28.6% disagreed. Last but not least, 55.4% students agreed that advisors are trustworthy and helpful towards students while 15.8% of them are neutral about it. 28.6% of them disagreed. The results proved that the role of academic advisor is significant in academic advising as [12] also mentioned that the positive relationship with students and frequency of meeting with an academic advisor contributes to improvement in terms of grades, student assessments and self-reported gains.

Table 8

The Roles of Advisee

The Roles of Advisee	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Provide accurate information on issues discussed with academic advisors	57.9%	14.0%	28.0%
Appreciate time and efforts given by academic advisors	58.5%	15.2%	26.2%
Contact and schedule regular appointments with advisor each semester as required or when in need assistance	53.0%	25.6%	21.3%
Clarify personal values, abilities, interests and goals for academics and life	53.0%	25.0%	21.9%

Based on the table shown above, more than half of the students strongly agreed (57.9%) that academic advisees should be able to provide accurate information on issues discussed with academic advisors. 15.2% were neutral about it. On the other hand, 28% disagreed with the item. Besides, 58.5% students also agreed and were aware that they should be able to appreciate time and efforts given by their academic advisors. 15.2% of them were neutral about it, and 26.2% disagreed. Next, 53.0% of the students agreed that they should be able to contact and schedule regular appointments with their advisors each semester as required, or when they are in need of assistance. 25.6% of them were neutral. However, 21.3% of them disagreed. Finally, 53.0% of the students agreed that they should be able to clarify personal values, abilities, interests and goals for academics and life. Another 25.0% of them were neutral about it while 21.9% of them however disagreed. It has also been addressed that developing a professional relationship with one's faculty or academic advisor has significant benefits on not only student development, but overall students' satisfaction with college as well [4].

Table 9

The Effects of Academic Advising

The Effects of Academic Advising	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Gain clear and accurate information regarding academic regulations and requirements	59.1%	13.4%	27.4%
Feel motivated to perform better in the studies	53.0%	21.9%	25.0%
Develop self confidence	51.8%	26.2%	21.9%

The table above shows the students' opinions on academic advising. Firstly, 59.1% of the students agreed that through academic advising, they are able to gain clear and accurate information regarding academic regulations and requirements, while 13.4% of them felt neutral. However, 27.4% of them disagreed. Secondly, 53.0% students agreed that they feel motivated to perform better in their studies through academic advising and 21.9% of them were neutral about it. On the other hand, there were 25.0% of them disagreed on this. Lastly, 51.8% students also agreed that they can develop self confidence through academic advising sessions. 26.2% of them were neutral about it and another 21.9% disagreed. The results showed that positive effects can be obtained through academic advising. Academic advising can support all students towards success especially for most at-risk students because the long-term effect of one-time intrusive advising interventions has a significant positive relationship to student grades and persistence outcomes [10,15,20].

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, academic advising among UTMSPACE foundation students plays an important role in various aspects such as academic development, personal development, personal well-being and career development. These aspects are crucial for students in order to gain understanding in making decisions regarding their studies, which is also important for their performance in university later. Both academic advisor and advisee must complement each other's need in order to maintain a good relationship that may help in the effectiveness of the academic advising.

References

- [1] Afshar, Tahmoures, and Satinder Dhiman. "Assessment of the excellence of academic advising: Lessons learned." *Journal of College Teaching & Learning (TLC)* 5, no. 3 (2008).
- [2] Awadh, Maryam. "The Relationship Between the Quality of Academic Advising and the Perception of Academic Outcomes of First-year Saudi College Students." PhD diss., Edgewood College, 2019.
- [3] Crockett, David S. "Academic Advising: A Resource Document." (1978).
- [4] Pargett, Kelly K. "The effects of academic advising on college student development in higher education." (2011).
- [5] Van, Nguyen Thuy, and Hamdan Said. "ACADEMIC ADVISORS' PERCEPTIONS OF ACADEMIC ADVISING IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES OF MALAYSIA." *International Journal of Educational Best Practices* 2, no. 2: 34-47.
- [6] Young-Jones, Adena D., Tracie D. Burt, Stephanie Dixon, and Melissa J. Hawthorne. "Academic advising: does it really impact student success?." *Quality Assurance in Education* (2013).
- [7] Vander Schee, Brian A. "Adding insight to intrusive advising and its effectiveness with students on probation." *Nacada Journal* 27, no. 2 (2007): 50-59.
- [8] Muola, James, and Jonathan M. Mwanja. "Emerging Need for Academic Advising in Schools, Colleges and Universities in Kenya." (2013).
- [9] Jaradat, Maram S., and Mohammad B. Mustafa. "Academic Advising and Maintaining Major: Is There a Relation?." *Social Sciences* 6, no. 4 (2017): 151.
- [10] Fricker, Tim. "The Relationship between Academic Advising and Student Success in Canadian Colleges: A Review of the Literature." *College Quarterly* 18, no. 4 (2015): n4.
- [11] Tinto, Vincent. *Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition*. University of Chicago Press, 5801 S. Ellis Avenue, Chicago, IL 60637, 1987.

- [12] Mu, Lanlan, and Kevin Fosnacht. "Effective advising: How academic advising influences student learning outcomes in different institutional contexts." *The Review of Higher Education* 42, no. 4 (2019): 1283-1307.
- [13] Tinto, V. "Taking Retention Seriously: Rethinking the First Year of University." In *Keynote address at ALTC FYE Curriculum Design Symposium, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia, February*, vol. 5. 2009.
- [14] Ellis, Kyle. "Academic advising experiences of first-year undecided students at a public Southeastern high research activity institution." (2011).
- [15] Loucif, Samia, Laila Gassoumi, and Joao Negreiros. "Considering students' abilities in the academic advising process." *Education Sciences* 10, no. 9 (2020): 254.
- [16] Cuseo, Joe. (2015). Effective Delivery of Academic Advising Programs.10.13140/RG.2.1.1395.9848.
- [17] McGill, Craig M., Mehvash Ali, and Dionne Barton. "Skills and competencies for effective academic advising and personal tutoring." In *Frontiers in Education*, vol. 5, p. 135. Frontiers, 2020.
- [18] Mottarella, Karen E., Barbara A. Fritzsche, and Kara C. Cerabino. "What do students want in advising? A policy capturing study." *NACADA Journal* 24, no. 1-2 (2004): 48-61.
- [19] Anderson, Whitney, Justin S. Motto, and Renee Bourdeaux. "Getting what they want: Aligning student expectations of advising with perceived advisor behaviors." *Mid-Western Educational Researcher* 26, no. 1 (2014): 27-51.
- [20] Noaman, Amin Y., and Fekry Fouad Ahmed. "A new framework for e academic advising." *Procedia Computer Science* 65 (2015): 358-367.
- [21] Smith, Joshua S. "First-year student perceptions of academic advisement: A qualitative study and reality check." *NACADA Journal* 22, no. 2 (2002): 39-49.
- [22] McFarlane, Brett Leland. "Academic advising structures that support first-year student success and retention." PhD diss., Portland State University, 2013.