

Intellectual Security and Academic Progress at the English Language Department at Mutah University

Eissa Hamid Al Khotaba*

,Mutah University, Jordan
issaalkhotaba@mutah.edu.jo

Abstract

This paper explored intellectual security and academic progress at the English Language Department at Mutah University. 50 respondents, mainly males, contributed to this study. The sample of the study was chosen using purposive sampling. This research is based on the Cognitive theory (Piaget, 1950) and Behavioural theory (Pavlov, 1936). The researcher collected the data using two research instruments; the intellectual security scale (ISS) and the academic progress scale (APS). Results indicated that the EFL department should support AP and IS satisfactory levels and ethical values to heighten academic and social responsibility to be protected from the threats of intellectual eccentricity and radicalism and how to decrease it. This paper recommends that future research be conducted in this field with a larger sample and different disciplines.

Keywords: intellectual security, academic progress, English Department, Mutah University.

1. Introduction

College life means a lot for many graduates as it is a turning point stage in their lives. It is the stage where they can develop their personal and communication skills (Ashby, 2010). During academic life, undergraduates connect with people of different cultures and thoughts. These connections include distinctive achievements and motivation, both at the academic and social levels. Undergraduates view this as a challenging and demanding opportunity (Rahamneh & Al-Qudah, 2016).

Such stage make undergraduates experience different academic, social, and even psychological shifts that go side by side with goals they intend to achieve and achievements they wish to fulfill. Intellectual security, thus, is a contemporary concept. It has developed lately in the information uprising, the subsequent affluence of cultural shift, and its effect on one another (Al-Aklabi & Ahmed, 2010). It has appeared obvious that in Middle Eastern communities the term of intellectual security has developed to be connected with intellectual deviation. The term targets mainly to reinforce social members and not be deceived by cultural and ideological threats. Scholars have defined intellectual security differently. On one hand, it is described as keeping human beings away from risks and hazards, irrespective of their risk level; individually, collectively, directly or indirectly (Al-Maliki, 2008).

2. Review of Literature

Intellectually security (IS, hereafter) emphasizes the aspect of individual and social protection and safety from risks threatening their stability (Attia, 2008).

It can be described as maintaining the freedom and liberty of individuals' mindsets and thoughts from all types of fallacy that might endanger the maintenance of social and individual stability in all folks of life. IS refers to people's security and deviation from norms and moderation in reflection of their acceptance of political, economic, spiritual, and public issues. It, therefore, upholds social security and achievement in varied fields of life as well as involves standards that defend communities from deviation forces (Chaldan, 2013). IS provides people with thoughts of reassurance and comfort by being away from risks.

Therefore, one of the key issues amongst social members is thought disturbance that encounters society members through generations. However, research interest in investigating IS to handle and decrease social, academic,

and psychological issues is rising. Intellectual security research centers on the development of constructive links between politics, culture, and religion. The main goal is to offer individuals inclusive social security through the liberty of thoughts, spirit, and soul in addition to experiencing a sense of democracy in their lives (Mubarak, 2016).

The achievement of security in its maximum volume is a target whose intention is maintaining social stability, young people protection, keeping away the influence of inessential and damaging thoughts, and stopping them from submitting and conforming to influencers that would convince them to change their beliefs. For undergraduates, IS permits individuals to think spontaneously (Williams, 2009), letting the undergraduates have the autonomy to take places that conflict with the common social setting without being downsized, but to explain those approaches and thoughts amenably.

In this manner, undergraduates develop academically and start innovating to discover and construct understanding. IS is of great significance in maintaining security in that it is an incessant procedure of extending the intellect of responsibility concerning people, increasing the feelings of affection and collaboration between social members. This method shapes individuals who are aware of their accountabilities and privileges (Zbaidat, 2015). One of the pointers of intellectual insecurity is the undesirable influence of mass media vents, as mass media contributes greatly to influencing individuals' attitudes, ethics, thoughts, and principles. The feeble part of social establishments is an additional issue, laidback with underprivileged child-rearing, as proven by negligence, lack of a role model, absence of caring, and nonexistence of concern for the individualities attending development with their determined desires (Al-Hoshan, 2005). IS results in deviations and violence. It possesses many undesirable effects on social members, which involve psychological and social consequences such as fear, tension, strife, poverty, disintegration, etc. These consequences affect the academic progress of undergraduates since achievement requires the students to feel secure and stable (Williams, 2009).

Intellectual security has a significant contribution in overcoming tourism amongst undergraduates at university levels. In addition, Williams (2009) discussed how the quality of education and academic progress influence intellectual security levels in different fields of life. The conclusion of past studies (e.g. Muhammad & Alsyed, 2016) showed that undergraduates are in favor of implementing modern education techniques

(blended learning) in comparison to conventional learning methods (e.g. face-to-face interaction). This indicates that undergraduates encountered issues that undermined IS. The concept of academic progress refers to the rate at which an individual's achievement is measured through a course. That is, it reflects the satisfactory academic or appropriate level of academic standing or quality that an undergraduate must keep to continue to receive honorary achievement. Academic progress involves factors such as teachers' support, department setting, classroom atmosphere, student motivation, economic status, language competency, and language programs. The concept of academic progress (AP, hereafter) relates to the process of maintaining effective interaction with teachers and peers inside the classroom, managing time stress, and use of learning techniques and study plans. All of these factors help in advancing student's skills and ability to support themselves and accelerate academically.

It is a wide concept that is influenced by academic connections, social links, economic ties, physical settings, and individual differences within which they experience (Al-Jawarneh, 2011). According to Abu Arad (2010), academic progress is the drive toward effective accomplishment of the educational requirements of an undergraduate's study program which affects his/her profession, attitudes, achievements, and addressing situations. It is associated with his/her satisfactory recognition of all aspects of academic advancement. Academic progress refers to the knowledge-grounded acceleration in which an undergraduate supports his/her educational levels and development in the light of his/ her acceptance and evaluation of the situations based on personal values (Jebran et al., 2014). Academic progress results from the progressive and developmental solutions to varied academic and social difficulties that an undergraduate encounters throughout his/her college and campus life. It illustrates the rate at which the undergraduate acts proud of a specific honorary achievement that reflects his social status with pride and dignity (Abu Hamidi, 2014).

Academic progress as a term, is a very significant pointer to constructive academic achievement. It has been described as a cognitive valuation of the field of academia in common or the necessities of academic advancement and college in particular. Al-Sharifain et al. (2014) stated that using contemporary or modern educational techniques affects undergraduates' academic progress and can develop it spectacularly, in addition, educational quality influences academic progress satisfaction level

(Al-Zaboun, & Al-Anzi, 2015). The findings of Cenaseven-Onder (2012) showed that undergraduates chose modern learning techniques compared to conventional methods as they saw modern teaching as practical and useful. However, undergraduates faced some problems with the new learning style and academic satisfaction, which affected their social and personal behavior and academic progress.

One of the concepts that infers academic production or progress is the theory of educational production (Walberg, 1981) which proposed that learners' academic achievement be determined by learner characteristics and the instant setting. Although undergraduates have varied goals and different interests, undergraduates who are aware of their objectives and ambitions and thrive in reaching them will delight in a greater level of academic progress than those who are unacquainted with the representativeness of their aims. The most significant of these standards rests on the undergraduates' prevailing values, nature, and conditions adjacent to them, all of which mark their sense of academic progress satisfaction.

3. Research Problem

Education at the higher education level, in Jordan, has lately faced many challenges in which the academic progress of undergraduates has become the focus of researchers and decision-makers. Academic progress serves as a significant indicator of undergraduates' learning quality. It protects their educational values and keeps them away from intellectual deviations. Many factors have contributed to undermining this base that appeared in the consecutive academic difficulties, honesty, cultural assault, and digitalization of the educational process. These variations have activated departments at universities to raise students' awareness concerning the connection between academic progress and intellectual security. This is conducted to confirm maintaining undergraduates' academic progress and intellectual constancy, building a better understanding in differentiating between opposing intellectual streams, and choosing models that suit their academic achievement and the standards of their schooling practices. For undergraduates studying foreign languages, the need to experience a stable and safe educational setting is an essential condition, and the requirement for intellectual security is, therefore, a necessity nowadays because of the manifold weights on undergraduates to accept the type of deviation in the course materials and particular learning habits from which undergraduates suffered (Chaldan, 2013). Therefore, this research intends to examine

intellectual security and academic progress at the English Language Department at Mutah University for the academic year 2016-2017.

4. Study Questions

This study addresses the following questions.

1. What are the Factors that Affect the Connection between IS Level with AP Level among EFL Undergraduates at Mutah University?
2. Is there a correlation between Intellectual Security and the Academic Progress of EFL Undergraduates?
3. Are there statistically significant differences at the level of significance ($\alpha=0.05$) in the levels of intellectual security and academic progress of EFL undergraduates based on academic years?

5. Study Methods & Design

This correlational quantitative design study examined the intellectual security and academic progress at the English Language Department at Mutah University, and the potential affiliation of the study variables. Besides, to examine the differences in them according to academic years (Gay et al., 2011). Intellectual security and academic progress scales were used for undergraduates who are studying English as a foreign language at Mutah University during the academic year of (2016-2017). The study sample included 100 EFL undergraduates (males only) from the Department of English at Mutah University in Jordan in their 3rd and 4th years of study (during the second semester). The participants of the study were selected through purposive sampling procedures. Ethical considerations were taken into account by securing a consent form and permission from the presidency of the university. Table 1 depicts the demographic information of the participants.

Table 1:Demographic Information of the Participants (N=100)

Variables		Number	Percentage
Gender	Males	100	100%
Academic Year	3 rd Year	50	50%
	4 th year	50	50%

5.1 Study Instruments

The study included two variables are; the independent variable IS composing 17 items and the dependent variable AP involving 6 items with their subdivisions. The researcher used two study instruments or scales to elicit data from participants.

5.1.1 Intellectual Security Scale (ISS Scale)

The researcher carried out the study by building an IS Scale, adapted from Al Asmari (2014) and Al Taani (2015), a questionnaire with one dimension consisting of 6 items based on a five-point Likert scale (5: Always) to (1: Never). Greater scores represented a greater level of IS.

5.1.2 Academic Progress Scale (APS Scale)

The researchers adapted the Subjective Academic Achievement Scale (APS, hereafter). The APS included four items including 17 items (teaching, administration, scholarly activities & seminars, and undergraduate meetings) that respondents addressed on a rating scale ranging from 1 (Low) to 5 (High) as a satisfactory academic achievement. The study was piloted on N = 100 undergraduates from the English language department and undergraduates did not face any problems in accepting the items after two weeks.

5.1.3 Data Collection

The researcher used a questionnaire including the ISS and APS measures. The responses to the questionnaires were tested to confirm their analysis. The researcher applied SPSS to analyze the data and conclude the findings. Descriptive statistics (involving arithmetic averages and standard deviations) were used to address the first research question and the second research question was discussed using the Pearson correlation test to the linear correlation between the two groups of data. The third research question was illustrated by applying the independent t-test to study the differences between the averages of intellectual security and academic progress of EFL undergraduates based on the academic year. The independent t-test was conducted to investigate the statistical differences between the means of two groups of undergraduates.

6. Results

This section of the study discusses the findings of the study.

6.1 Classic Assumption Test (CAT)

The Classical Assumption Test (CAT, hereafter) was applied to find out whether there are deviations in the assumptions before regression since the equation must not diverge from the BLUE (Best Linear Unbiased Estimator) standards. The classical assumption test involved the results of the normality test (NT) and Homogeneity test (HT). The NT and HT implemented Levene's test for the IS and AP, and the findings indicate that there is a normality distribution (Ghasemi & Zahediasl, 2012) and there was a homogeneity conferring to Nahm (2016).

6.2 Multicollinearity Test

This test supports the presence of the independent variables grounded on the VIF and tolerance values. The data are multicollinearity-free if the tolerance is higher than 0.10 and the VIF value is less than 10 (Nahm, 2016).

6.2.1 The Factors that Affect the Connection between IS Level with AP Level among EFL Undergraduates at Mutah University.

Standard Deviations and Arithmetic Averages for IS and AP scales including the latter's sub-dimensions are displayed in Table 2.

Table.2: Standard Deviations and Arithmetic Mean for IS and AP Scales

Variable	Dimension	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level	Dimension Rank
	IS Total	3.3633	.78438	Moderate	
AP	Teaching	3.3375	.72333	Moderate	4
	Scholarly Activity & Seminars	3.3660	.72644	Moderate	3
	Administration	3.4525	.78552	Moderate	2
	Undergraduates Meeting	3.4975	.77484	Moderate	1
	Total Academic Progress	34134	.61108	Moderate	

Table 2 displays that EFL undergraduates at the Department of English Language and Literature at Mutah University secured moderate levels of IS with an arithmetic mean of 3.3633 and a standard deviation of .78438. In addition, undergraduates attained a moderate level of academic progress with an arithmetic average of 34134 and a standard deviation of .61108. The varied measurements of academic progress also reached moderate levels, with arithmetic averages varying from 3.3375 and 3.4975.

6.2.2 The Correlation between Intellectual Security and Academic Progress of EFL Undergraduates

To address this study question, the researcher conducted a Pearson correlation coefficient. The results of the study showed that the correlation coefficients for personal and AP with IS were statistically significant with positive correlation coefficients, the teaching effects 33.3% on IS, while the personal AP effects 34.1% on IS, while there was no statistical significance

at the level of significance (0.05) between the scholarly activity & seminars and department Administration or between total AP and IS.

6.2.3 The Differences between Undergraduates according to Academic Year in the Level of IS and AP IS and AP

To address the third study question, the researcher applied a test (Test-Retest) to investigate differences between undergraduates concerning performance averages and the statistical significance of IS and AP as exhibited in Table 4. The results of the study show that there are no differences in either IS or AP between undergraduates' academic years, with T values of 2.671. These are statistically significant values, which shows that the existing state of undergraduates, although their academic weakness, does not diverge according to academic year.

Table. 4: Findings, according to Academic Year, of Average Performance on IS and AP scales by Undergraduates.

Factor	N	Academic Year	Arithmetic Average	St. Deviation	DF	T	Sig.
IS	50	3 rd Year	3.3633	.78438	96	2.671	.009
AP	50	4 th Year	3.4134	.061108	98	2.671	.009

7. Discussion

The study results showed moderate levels of intellectual security and life satisfaction among the students, and that there is a relationship between intellectual security with social-life satisfaction and personal-life satisfaction. Intellectual security did not differ between genders, and the life satisfaction of the females was better than that of the males. Intellectual security and life satisfaction did not differ by academic year.

7.1 The Connection Between IS Level with AP Level among EFL Undergraduates at Mutah University

The findings of the first study question indicate that EFL undergraduates at Mutah University have secured a moderate level of IS. It is proposed that this is because of the learning programs prepared by the Department of English and the seminars, workshops, and meetings provided by the lecturers. These targeted engaging them in the academic process and advanced seminars and conferences for them. The findings can be illustrated as the department is a stable and safe environment for undergraduates to progress educationally, achieve honorary records, and participate in all designated learning activities. The department and lecturers, in addition, support them conduct scientific research spontaneously and reconsider what

they are practicing in the classroom. Further, if undergraduates deviate from academic norms, administration, and lecturers would work out on correcting and rehabilitating their behaviors and attitudes sensibly and reasonably (Chaldan, 2013). Much research has shown the risk of IS eccentricity, which may appear due to the absence of IS levels amongst undergraduates. Departments should secure IS for their undergraduates to regulate their intellectual paths (Al-Zaboun, & Al-Anzi, 2015). The conclusion of the present research differs from previous studies, such as those conducted by Zbaidat (2015) that show a high level of IS in different dimensions among employees University employees.

The findings reveal that EFL undergraduates have secured a moderate level of AP, in all aspects, and this conclusion can be related to the seminars, workshops, meetings, and classroom delivery, academic and social support provided to undergraduates by both the department staff and society that is constructively revealed in the undergraduates' academic performance and stability. This also may be associated with the difficulties shown by undergraduates at the Department of English Language and Literature that affect their academic connection with teachers and peers. Undergraduates' academic progress appeared in the next to last position because of the undergraduates' low academic performance and low marks that were below 60%. The conclusions of the existing research vary from the results of previous research by Hamdan-Mansour et al. (2012), and Anye (2013) that revealed high levels of satisfaction by all entities, both in total score and in all its aspects.

7.2 The Correlation between Intellectual Security and Academic Progress of EFL Undergraduates

The conclusions indicate that the correlation coefficients between IS and AP were statistically and significantly positive. This reveals that undergraduates at the Department of English Language still experience a satisfactory level of academic performance. These conclusions go in line with high levels of IS. This may be related to the point that achieving academic objectives keeps undergraduates stable and allows them to react safely, logically, and moderately. However, there were no statistical differences at the level of significance (0.05) between the dimensions of undergraduates' academic performance satisfaction and department/ staff or teachers' expectancy satisfaction, or between total AP satisfaction and IS. This can be referred to the point that undergraduates' AP satisfaction is

more significant to them than related aspects of AP satisfaction, and in this, the findings of the present research agree with that of Zbaidat (2015).

7.3 The Differences between Undergraduates according to Academic Year in the Level of IS and AP IS and AP

The study concluded no significant differences in the IS and AP amongst undergraduates in both the 3rd and 4th year of study. This may relate to the nonexistence of IS and AP differences associated with the academic year and the merging of undergraduates' ages of study and the academic performance low level is a general difficulty amongst the participants, whether in their 3rd or 4th year. The results vary from those of Zbaidat (2015) who revealed statistically significant differences in the level of life satisfaction because of the academic year in favor of the 3rd year compared to the 1st year, as different from the existing study which was conducted in the 4th and 3rd year undergraduates at the English language department at Mutah University.

8. Conclusion

The findings of the study show that IS is significant for undergraduates and university students in all departments, as they protect themselves against serious involvement and external risks, such as IS eccentricity, and ethical, and political issues. This, particularly, is related to seeing the extent of radicalism and violence, which causes an IS loss and constancy in many extents of academic setting. Through their learning involvement, undergraduates can be thought free from extremist thoughts and philosophies that may lead to pressures to safety and constancy. This IS is related to academic progress and undergraduates' beliefs about their academic performance, and their learning condition. If undergraduates have a high level of IS, he or she will reach a satisfactory level of academic achievement.

Hence, it should be noted that the significance of upholding the IS levels and AP satisfaction amongst undergraduates and operating to develop and increase these levels, mainly amongst undergraduates in their learning experience. Because undergraduates act with worry about their academic progress, these undergraduates can be easy prey for radicalism and violence. The academic performance of undergraduates (males) should be reinforced through particular additional programs and supplementary teaching materials for undergraduates deteriorating in their education in the English language and literature department in Jordanian universities, particularly Mutah University. IS and AP should be integrated into department teaching

materials and additional courses should be carried out with greater samples of university undergraduates.

In addition, the research encourages EFL departments to support AP satisfactory level, IS, and ethical values, heighten academic and social responsibility, embrace learning and curricula preparation to reinforce academic skills in their undergraduates, and conduct, conferences, meetings, workshops, and lectures to be protected from the threats of intellectual eccentricity and radicalism and how to decrease it. In conclusion, one of the restrictions of the study, may, be related to the small sample, gender, and period of the study.

تأثير الأمن الفكري على مستوى التقدم الأكاديمي للطلبة في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة مؤتة عيسى الخطبا مستخلص

تناولت هذه الورقة البحثية دراسة تأثير الأمن الفكري على مستوى التقدم الأكاديمي للطلبة في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة مؤتة. شارك في هذه الدراسة 50 مشاركا، معظمهم من الذكور. اختيرت عينة الدراسة بطريقة العينة القصدية مستنداً على النظرية المعرفية (بياجيه، 1950) والنظرية السلوكية (بافلوف، 1936) كإطار نظري للدراسة. جمع الباحث البيانات باستخدام أداتين بحثيتين: مقياس الأمن الفكري (ISS) ومقياس التقدم الأكاديمي (APS). أشارت النتائج إلى أن مستوى الأمن الفكري للطلبة كان له تأثير إيجابي على مستوى التقدم الأكاديمي للطلبة بشكل متوسط و يجب تعزيز قيم الأمن الفكري لدى الطلبة لتعزيز المسؤولية الأكاديمية والاجتماعية للحمايتهم من تهديدات التطرف الفكري و الوقايه منه. توصي هذه الورقة بإجراء أبحاث مستقبلية في هذا المجال مع عينة أكبر وتخصصات مختلفة للوقوف على نتائج اعم.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الأمن الفكري، التقدم الأكاديمي، قسم اللغة الإنجليزية، جامعة مؤتة.

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