

Anna Grigoreva / English Language Institute – Summer 2021

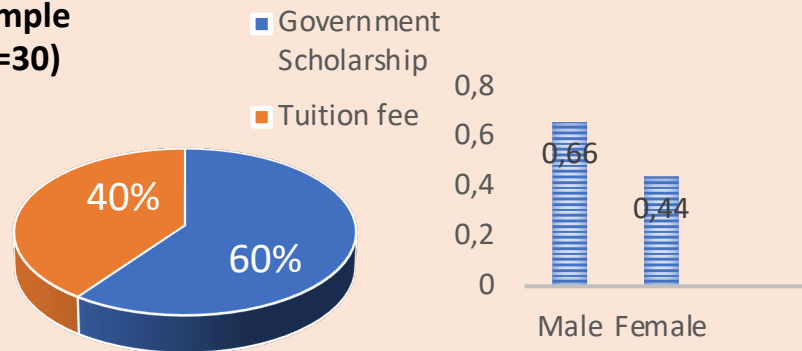
Objective of study

To show what factors impact the academic integration and well-being of international doctoral students during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Introduction

Disruptive changes that COVID pandemic caused has shifted for the whole higher education system worldwide. Many graduate students were put in the condition of online learning mode. Doctoral students are traditionally a vulnerable group of students due to the big rely on the self-motivation, personal time-management, self-goal-orienting and general social isolation. Research on PhD experience shows the generally high level of anxiety and depression among PhD students comparing to the other groups of students. At the same time international students are traditionally more vulnerable for social changes than the rest of the students which makes this group of a special interest for this research. Therefore, in this study we focus on the general barriers that international doctoral students faced during the pandemics.

Sample (N=30)



Citizenships
Taiwan
Pakistan
Italy
China
Union of Myanmar
Syrian Arab Republic
Mexican United States
Syrian Arab Republic
Federal Republic of Nigeria
Republic of Croatia
Republic of Indonesia
Kingdom of Thailand
Tunisian Republic
Turkey

Methodology

- Qualitative methods – Case studies approach
- Interview analyses (N=30 with international doctoral students)

Thesis statement

The more types of support are involved in the doctoral students' work during COVID pandemic, the more different types of support communication resources (including social and psychological) are provided, the better is the academic outcome and time-to-defense among doctoral candidates.

Findings

Working types of support

1. Departmental support
2. Peer-support
3. Student Office support
4. International Office support
5. External scholarship support
6. Local international community support
7. Family support
8. Mental health service support

Types of problems and barriers of doctoral students (Top-10)

- 1 Distracting home environment
- 2 Inability to conduct research
- 3 Problems in conferences attendance
- 4 Anxiety and depression
- 5 Lack of funding opportunities

References

Chirikov I., Soria K. M., Horgos B., Jones-White D. (2020) Undergraduate and Graduate Students' Mental Health During the COVID-19 Pandemic. UC Berkeley: Center for Studies in Higher Education. <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/80k5d5hw>

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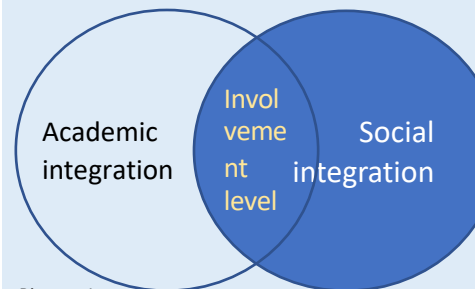
Bal, I.A., Arslan, O., Budhrani, K. *et al.* (2020) The Balance of Roles: Graduate Student Perspectives during the COVID-19 Pandemic. *TechTrends* 64, 796–798 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11528-020-00534-z>

Picture 1. Visualizing of types of academic integration among doctoral students.

Picture 2. © Peggy und Marco Lachmann-Anke, URL: www.pixabay.com

- 6 Less communication to peers
- 7 Fewer mobility opportunities
- 8 Problems with data collection
- 9 Poor economic circumstances
- 10 Health problems

Conclusions



1. Academic supervisors are the main gatekeepers for international doctoral students
2. During pandemic local international students' communities provide peer-support and psychological help.
3. Being involved in academic work on campus increases crises sustainability.



Picture 2. © Peggy und Marco Lachmann-Anke, Pixabay