

Analysis of College Students' Satisfaction in Convergence Departments

Shin Nam Lee

*Department of Taxes and Accounting, Hyupsung University,
72, Choerubaek-ro, Bongdam-eup, Hwaseong-si, Gyeonggi-do 18330, South Korea.*

Orcid: 0000-0002-1067-9542

Abstract

Convergence is emerging as a new trend in college education as the educational environment changes and science and technology develop, and support for convergence research is increasing in South Korea. Accordingly, colleges and universities are attempting to integrate academic departments based on convergence, but the results of the present study indicate that convergence did not improve satisfaction in academic and general situations, nor did it improve students' social satisfaction. This indicates that universities endeavoring to cultivate students' knowledge in major areas are more important than short-term achievements or following the latest trends.

Keywords: Academic satisfaction, General situation satisfaction, Social satisfaction, Difference analysis, Convergence, University student

INTRODUCTION

For universities, selecting students is becoming an increasingly important task. The educational outcomes of universities are measured by the learning achievements of their students, based on students' career and educational success, and observing their responses to university classes and their learning behaviors [1]. A student's college life is an important period of experiencing life changes, and satisfaction with college life is challenged by social demands and the new environment. Satisfaction means the result or the psychological process of coping with various demands imposed by social life [2].

The topic of the new growth engine in the field of education is "academic convergence." With only standard disciplines, the prospects of creating a new growth engine suitable for the rapidly changing era are limited. Emphasizing academic convergence that blends and dissolves various disciplines beyond state-of-the-art technology is another global trend. The Korean Ministry of Education plans to reorganize the liberal arts curriculum and activate convergence education by linking and integrating departments and majors, through the "2017 Work Plan of the Ministry of Education" announced on January 6, 2017. In detail, the plan is to establish an

organization exclusively for liberal arts education in each university and implement convergence education between basic liberal arts and majors throughout the grades [3,4].

It was found that convergence studies have many advantages but also many problems to resolve [5–7]. There has been no discussion on recognizing academic credits for multiple majors or from other academic departments, the commonalities and the differences in the education methods of dissimilar disciplines, or the situation-dependent majoring method among the converging methods of majoring. In addition, problems may be raised regarding the effectiveness of the convergence because it is still in the initial stage where the concept and definition of interdisciplinary education are still indefinite [5]. Therefore, the purpose of the present study was to examine the selection of convergence majors, and to investigate whether there is a significant difference in satisfaction between convergence majors and non-convergence majors.

The subscales of the college life satisfaction scale comprised academic satisfaction, general situation satisfaction, and social satisfaction [6]. First, academic satisfaction consists of actions concerning the need or motivation to study, time management related to study, and the sense of purpose; it measures a student's achievements in the educational aspects of college life. Second, general situation satisfaction relates to a college student's general college experiences and their satisfaction with the college they attend; it measures satisfaction with the college at which the student is enrolled and their current situation. Third, social satisfaction is a scale that can be measured by the relationship with professors and students in college, satisfaction with the social environment, and the supporting factors of social relationships such as with friends or parents [8].

Experts have highlighted that fundamental competencies may be degraded by the problems of the integrated curriculum of liberal arts and natural sciences that will be introduced in high schools from 2018. This explains why professors of natural sciences and engineering have been highlighting the difficulty of teaching a complex convergence theory to students lacking even a science foundation. Corporations' responses urge the reform of the education system to enable them to secure a competitive edge in the convergence era by hiring talented

people with a solid basic education.

Lee reported 92% percent of the professors of the natural sciences and engineering colleges at major universities responded that the level of basic education of freshmen is worse than before the introduction of the convergence agenda. They stated that this is due to the weakened college entrance system of the integrated liberal arts and natural sciences [9]. Even though pursuing convergence is the trend of the current era, it is not desirable for education to follow the trend or to be offered to students just to enhance the government's performance records.

The present study posited the following hypotheses based on the above discussion:

- 1) Academic satisfaction will differ pre- and post-convergence of academic majors.
- 2) General situation satisfaction will differ pre- and post-convergence of academic majors.
- 3) Social satisfaction will differ pre-and after post-convergence of academic majors.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research design

The present study investigated the difference in academic satisfaction, general situation satisfaction, and social satisfaction of convergence major students before and after the convergence. To measure the satisfaction level of students of convergence departments, the scale developed by Baker and Siryk [8] was modified to fit the situation of South Korea. The modified scale was a five-point Likert scale, ranging from one for "strongly disagree" to five for "strongly agree." For statistical analysis, SPSS 22.0 was used.

Research sample and procedure

Questionnaires were distributed to students in convergence departments (tax accounting and finance, insurance in Seoul and Gyonggi-do from October 2 to December 9, 2016. Of 420 returned questionnaires, 411 (97.86%) were used in the data analysis, excluding nine questionnaires with incomplete responses.

EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS

Analysis method

First, frequency analyses on gender and grade were performed to establish the general characteristics of the participants. Second, factor analyses were performed on the measuring items of academic satisfaction, general situation satisfaction, and social satisfaction of students in convergence departments.

Third, the internal reliability was assessed by Cronbach's α . Fourth, a t-test was performed on the differences in satisfaction.

Variable measures

The measured variables were arranged as shown in Table 1, and the questionnaire items were composed based upon them.

RESULTS OF ANALYSIS

General characteristics of the subjects

The general demographic characteristics of the questionnaire respondents are shown in Table 2.

Analysis of difference in academic satisfaction before and after discipline convergence

As shown in Table 3 below, academic satisfaction was found to be higher before the convergence than after it, and the difference was statistically significant.

Analysis of the difference in the general situation satisfaction before and after discipline convergence

As shown in Table 4 below, general situation satisfaction was also evaluated to be higher before than after the convergence, and the difference was statistically significant.

Analysis of difference in social satisfaction before and after discipline convergence

As shown in Table 5 below, social satisfaction was also found to be higher before than after the convergence, and the difference was statistically significant.

CONCLUSION

Convergence is emerging as a new trend in college education as the educational environment changes and science and technology develop, and support for convergence research is increasing in South Korea [7]. Accordingly, colleges and universities are attempting to integrate academic departments based on convergence. The present study found that for all three types of satisfaction considered—academic satisfaction, general situation satisfaction, and social satisfaction—satisfaction was found to be higher before than after discipline convergence at statistically significant levels. This appears to indicate that universities endeavoring to cultivate students' knowledge in major areas are more important than short-term achievements or following the latest trends. The present study is limited by not including various subjects, and it may be necessary to overcome this limitation in further research by

including subjects from convergence departments nationwide and targeting corporates that have hired students graduating from convergence departments.

Table 1. Operational definition of study

Factors	Variables
Academic satisfaction	Academic motivation
	Academic performance
	Academic achievement
	Academic environment
General situation satisfaction	Current Situation Satisfaction
	Regret over university life
	Plan to transfer
Social satisfaction	Satisfaction with university environment
	Relationship with others
	Longing for home
	Loneliness
	Social environment

Table 2: General characteristics of sample

Classification		frequency	%
Gender	Male	260	63.3
	Female	151	36.7
Grade	Sophomore	174	42.3
	Junior	162	39.4
	Senior	75	18.2

Table 3. Difference analysis of academic satisfaction

Demographic	Category	Mean	SD	t (p)
Academic satisfaction	before	3.16	.69	9.971*** (0.000)
	after	2.45	.61	

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table 4. Difference analysis of general situation satisfaction

Demographic	Category	Mean	SD	t (p)
General situation satisfaction	before	3.72	.71	15.763*** (0.000)
	after	2.71	.59	

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Table 5. Difference analysis of social satisfaction

Demographic	Category	Mean	SD	t (p)
Social satisfaction	before	4.11	.36	35.681*** (0.000)
	after	2.69	.39	

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

REFERENCES

- [1] Greene, H., and Greene, M., 2007, "Admission trends to watch, 2007-2008: how today's admissions policies, procedures, and developments are impacting students, parents, and schools," *University Business*, 11, pp. 26–33.
- [2] Kim, I. Y., 2009, A study on the image formation of accounting principles subject: on the basis of business information high school, Ph.D. thesis, Graduate School of Kong Ju National University, South Korea (2009).
- [3] Lee, D.-H., "[NEXT KOREA] Sham convergence fantasy," February 2, 2016. <http://www.kyosu.net/news/articleView.html?idxno=32079>.
- [4] Choi, S. W., "Government university policy." October 10, 2016. <http://www.kyosu.net/news/articleView.html?idxno=33035>
- [5] Kim, D. H, Kim, A. Y., and Kang, E. W., 2011, "Experiences of interdisciplinary research in Korean higher education," *J. Curric. Stud.*, 29(4), pp. 265–287.
- [6] Baker, R., and McNeil, O., 1985, "Expectation and reality in freshman adjustment to college," *J. Couns. Psychol.*, 32(1), pp. 94–103.
- [7] Sook.Y. H., and Seungho C., 2016, "Technology of creativity improvement using storytelling in college education," *Inf.*, 19(10), 4847–4852.
- [8] Baker, R., and Siryk, B., 1984, "Measuring adjustment to college," *J. Couns. Psychol.*, 31(2), pp. 179–189.
- [9] Lee, D.-H., "Freshman students who do not know integral," June 19, 2009. <http://blog.naver.com/moonjinforum?Redirect=Log&logNo=220314253301>.