

Study on Student Satisfaction of Sino-foreign Cooperative Project and Its Enlightenment

A Case Study of Guilin University of Electronic Technology, China

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Abstract—This article analyzes student satisfaction in GUET sino-foreign cooperative project via the theory of student satisfaction by survey, the low rate of students' transferring, the vagaries of studying motivation, learning process feeling, future career planning, IELTS learning experience in included, and puts forward corresponding views proposed after analyzing the results of the research survey, suggesting policy changes, some advice for consultation, so as to promote the smooth development of school sino-foreign cooperative projects.

Keywords—*student satisfaction; Sino-foreign cooperation projects; survey*

I. INTRODUCTION

The concept of student satisfaction mainly comes from the concept of customer satisfaction.

Customer satisfaction refers to the feeling of pleasure or disappointment formed by the customer's perceived effect on the product or service compared with the previous expectation.

Influenced by the theory of customer satisfaction, the student satisfaction theory formed. Student education is the product of student consumers and student satisfaction refers to students' perception of the effect to the school after comparing with the expectations in the process of teaching service consumption, for the school psychological feeling satisfied or unsatisfied.

At present, the survey of student satisfaction is often used by universities around the world as the main tool for the management of "students-school relations".

Universities in developed countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom have already formed relevant investigations which are widely used in the quality evaluation of education research institutions.

The survey of student satisfaction in China has been carried out later, but some schools have been implemented, and the "student satisfaction" index has been added in the new round of Undergraduate Teaching Evaluation System of the Ministry of Education China.

However, there are few studies on student satisfaction in Chinese-foreign cooperative education programs.

The internationalization of higher education, constantly improve both the Chinese and foreign universities to start and run the 2+2 cooperation projects in which student satisfaction investigation and analysis is beneficial for improving the quality of Chinese-foreign cooperation in running schools, promote the sustainability, remain rapid and healthy development of the Sino-foreign cooperation in running schools.

II. ANALYSIS OF THE STUDENTS IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

A. Information of Questionnaire Respondents

The participants were all students of the IELTS class of year 2014, with 66 students. The reasons for selecting the students as the main objects of the survey were as follows.

First, the students of IELTS are the core students of the International College. They were identified as the "core group", because they have a firm willingness to go abroad after the first two years in GUET. The setting of Sino-foreign cooperative projects is to enable students to make full use of this special international exchange program to continue studying abroad.

Project recruiting, however, will inevitably encounter all sorts of students background or different reasons to be enrolled into the Sino-foreign project. For example, students at the time of application, with "extra plan or plan B", that is personal intention, because of their unsatisfactory performance in Gaokao, lower score in university entrance exam, could not be admitted to a better university or his/her ideal majors. Going to a Sino-foreign cooperative projects in Guangxi, with a lower score at the beginning compared with those non sino-foreign project students, they can also be rewarded a bachelor degree in four years' time from a same university. Some students even had an early plan, thinking that after they finished the first two years in the country, they would definitely not go abroad.

These complex and variable students psychological factors, is an uncontrollable challenge for the educators.

Therefore, it is difficult to manage the Sino-foreign cooperative projects, and the relevant policies of the school have great practical difficulties too.

For example, where or which school to relocate the students who do not go abroad for last 2 years of Sino-foreign program? First choice is to distribute them into different Engineering Faculties relating to their original majors? Second choice is to resettle them to a certain School like Marine Engineering School which is on a branch campus? Third choice is to have them all remain in International School. The change and alternation of the policy of university has a great influence on student satisfaction.

B. IELTS Classes and Students Desire of International Transferring

Students who enter the Chinese-foreign cooperative project in September 2014 will be free to attend the IELTS. This English course is designed for those who have a strong desire of entering the cooperative international institutes for study abroad as IELTS score is one of the requirements for exchanged international students from non-native English speaking countries. The course students number is the number of "strong desired students to be exchanged abroad" while the rest part of the total 300 students in the project are "marginalized students" who are still swinging from going abroad or not. School runners are aware that the sooner these specific groups are identified, the sooner targeted foreign language reinforcement will be developed to help them prepare for the required English language test.

At that time, there were 66 people, accounting for only 22 percent of whole the program students of that academic year.

Students who selected the IELTS courses were divided into two classes, take eight IELTS English lessons a week, IELTS listening, reading, writing, speaking, four test part modules, taught by three International College full-time English teachers and a Native English teacher from Britain named Neil Jenkins.

The other 78 percent of those who do not intend to study abroad are enrolled in a regular College English courses, and continue to study in the university after completing the domestic courses according to university teaching arrangement.

In fact, the majority of students in the 2+2 program are poorer in the university entrance exam scores, impossible to be admitted to the ordinary undergraduate degree programs, but can be recruited into higher-tuition cooperation projects with lower admission score. Second, some students' families do have a limited ability to pay the expenses of study abroad. It is hard to bear the high cost of it. Thirdly, some students will take the Sino-foreign cooperative projects as a springboard, to dronish the days in university. After all, even they don't go abroad, they can still continue to the third and fourth year in GUET. That is what "the marginalized students" planned already.

Marginalized students satisfaction evaluation can be "controversial", with elusive opinions on the Sino-foreign project. Therefore, these students are not the focus of this research.

C. Questionnaire Time-setting and Self-perception on the Sino-cooperative Project

Moreover, the questionnaire survey respondents, this particular batch of International College students with desire and motivation of studying abroad" has completed four semesters, 2 + 2 domestic section of learning, and is about to study abroad or remain the GUET. This is their unique 2 + 2 "small graduation season", when the project students make the big choices in life, going their own parted way.

This survey includes the 2 + 2 project individual self-perception on learning, taken at the "small graduation season" period, reveals the students voice and feedback on the Chinese-foreign cooperative projects of satisfaction by "their" intimate feelings, makes a greater voice, or rather, their voice have great reference for project further research.

III. DESIGN AND PRELIMINARY THINKING OF QUESTIONNAIRE

A. No More "Beacon", Why

The Sino-foreign dual degree project was successful before. In September 2006, GUET started to recruit the first Sino-foreign cooperative project students body, so far, there have been hundreds of program students been abroad, in Britain, Ireland and France. Many were admitted by foreign universities for postgraduate study after graduation and some went to top university of the world such as Cambridge. They are also welcome at job market with excellent English plus professional education background abroad, with starting salary much higher than the ordinary domestic university graduates.

Due to all factors, however, the Sino- foreign cooperative projects is no longer a "beacon" as it was in the early birth. In 2006 the first entering Sino- foreign cooperation projects was supervised by Faculty of Applied Science and Technology GUET. According to students' entry score, students' proficiency level are generally good and English much better than normal undergraduate students. Their family economic condition is good to support their oversea study. Two years later, when they have finished the first and second year in GUET, in September 2008, the first group of 2 + 2 students went overseas, according to the statistics, rate above 80% abroad. However, the scale of student mobility to transfer dropped slowly each year and since 2011, it plunged quickly. Among the last five years, 2012-2016, it was stagnant around 15%.

School policy on the "marginalized students" ,remaining project students, changed a lot and quite frequently which results in uncertain students' career. As for those who don't go abroad, their resettlement became a big headache. At the very beginning, the students who stayed in GUET were distributed to a certain college that provides the major they are in. For example, a Sino-foreign project student majoring

in Mechanical Engineering had finished the first and second year of the joint program and didn't transfer to Coventry University for next 2 years was rearranged in School of Mechanical Engineering. And he or she will study with other normal students. But years later, the policy changed. Remaining students can choose only 3 majors courses, namely, Business Administration, Electronic Technology and Industrial Design, this leads to a dead end for the Mechanical and Computer students, they had to retake many courses to get enough background for Electric Technology. Policy changed another time after that. All students quit transferring abroad went to the Institute of Marine, at GUET Beihai Vocational College, as the college had a problem of insufficient enrollment those years. Then, only 2 years later, the Marine Institute moved to Guilin Campus, the main campus, intending to attract more students. No wonder why students starting as a freshman would experience a variety of policy adjustments and the students also "can't tell the future", then "never imagine what the next step is".

B. Problems and Purpose of the Research

- What is the reason for the low rate of transferring?
- Is it a simple answer, just because of their poor English?
- Is improving English exactly the key to increase the rate of transferring?

Introduced in September 2015, the HELP University Malaysia sent a teaching team to International College GUET for conducting EAP teaching, claiming "the rate" can be a rapid boom. We will wait to see the final result.

Therefore, as researchers, we should not circumvent the actual situation of the project and student satisfaction research should not be limited to assess campus environment, library, student management, and other traditional factors, but to highlight management practices, and carefully rethink about education phenomenon behind serious management problems, such as low rate of transferring, taking studying purpose, enrolling motivations, future planning, IELTS English learning experience, and so on, and put forward corresponding views, proposed after the analysis of the results of the survey, give some advice or policy adjustment, in order to promote the smooth development of school Sino-foreign cooperation projects.

IV. ANALYSIS OF SURVEY RESULTS

A. No Differences on Gender or One-child Only

First, the number of only child (54.7%) is slightly more than that of non-only child. Due to the small number of female students majoring in engineering, it is easy to lead to gender differences. But the survey found no significant gender difference.

B. There is Great Uncertainty about Whether or When to Study Abroad

56% of the students couldn't decide if they go abroad when applying to the Sino-cooperative project after the

university entrance exams and they just want to have a buffer. While strong desire to go abroad students only accounted for 35%.

This fully reflected, the project are more and more similar to the trend of "fusion of ordinary undergraduate programs", another alternative enrollment of an ordinary undergraduate program, and this deviated from the purpose of the joint projects, namely, letting more students go abroad.

These students, with the intention of studying abroad, make up less than half of the total students and become the "hard-to find" among the project students.

What's more, project students who insist on studying abroad after 2 years accounted for 32%, even students be admitted into the cooperation projects, and have taken classes for the IELTS, still have great uncertainty of motivation and learning goals, which caused the difficulty of students' career planning. They swing from side to side, affecting the style of study, learning attitude and the academic performance.

This shouldn't be ignored that 28% had planned originally to go abroad, but because of various reasons, they quit. 26% decided not to go abroad, remaining to continue to study in GUET at 2 + 2 graduation season.

Project managers need to analysis on the results, why the willingness vanished, especially as a beneficiary of education, students have given up their rights and interests, and as a project, education service provider, International College, has lost potential buyers, students.

Is it because the buyer is not satisfied or unable to pay for the purchase of education service? Why?

As for the reasons for not studying abroad, 85% are dissatisfied with the ranking and major of the cooperative program, and want to go to a more ideal foreign university. 71% want to apply for postgraduate study abroad after graduating from the senior years. Only 26% think their IELTS or academic performance lags behind.

Only 3.7% said the family purse doesn't allow. This number is very low. It shows that the respondents families are actually have a family economic ability to pay, but students generally believe that ranking and professional teaching are most important factors to decide go or not.

Survey shows that there is understanding from students on cooperative partner universities, even from the perspective of project managers, sort of "critical". They formed their own judgment, some decided to go abroad by DIY applications or study in GUET until graduate with a domestic degree. In fact, each year, there is no lack of such students, such as Luo Jie, entering in 2014, passed the IELTS 6.0 after one semester, went to University in Melbourne, Australia. Mao Sisi, a 2012 student, at the third term, with the IELTS 5.5, went to University of Brighton UK.

Project defectors are quite beyond the expectation of the project manager. Only a quarter believe that failure to pass IELTS or major courses will make them unable to go abroad. Thus, the assumption that the low rate of transferring is

actually derived from the IELTS score or family economic conditions rather than students' dissatisfaction with the project cooperation is a false.

It is not easy to do anything in the short period, however, greatly change or innovation, new dual degree project are all impossible.

At present, students' personalized and diversified needs are not that easy to satisfy personally.

C. Good Reviews on Course Experience

The questionnaire involved domestic section of curriculum design, curriculum, class hour, teaching staffs, overall evaluation of the teaching management, 45% think generally medium, 30% very satisfied, 19% feels not so good, 3.7% thinks "very bad, awful".

In this way, more than 20 percent of respondents have an unsatisfactory experience in the teaching of the domestic segment, and what are the detailed reasons will be not be discussed until we found out later. After being fully clarified, we can make targeted improvement work and create a satisfactory teaching service for students.

In addition, the questionnaire also includes IELTS courses, one of the core courses. 75% thought the course is useful, 37% think commercial off-campus training on IELTS and school IELTS course have each merit and advantages.

The survey results show that the majority of students affirm the school IELTS courses and make reasonable comparisons with commercial off-campus training, and the results are satisfactory.

Thanks to IELTS teaching team's long-time effort. 350 students took the English placement level test in the first week of university, but the result was not ideal, with average score between IELTS 3.5 ~ 4.0, while foreign language level for studying abroad is far minimum IELTS 5.5.

Foreign language teachers have a long way to go.

In spite of limited teaching hours, students' weak English levels, teachers work hard to improve the English. 10% got IELTS 6.0 in the end of the courses. As a result, three quarters of the courses are considered "useful" by respondents. The course quality and teaching effect are widely recognized by students.

About the training of cross-cultural adaptation, the teachers also help students if they study abroad, to be able to adapt to study abroad life smoothly.

In the questionnaire, 51 % believe they understood foreign schools and the British and Irish cultural and social customs.

Even after two years of "indoctrination" of "internationalization", 81% of respondents said they would consider going abroad after graduation with domestic degree, even if they did not go abroad right now at small graduation season.

D. The Overall Evaluation of the Study Period

About the overall evaluation, which is the overall satisfaction index, 45% said "basically satisfactory", but 37.7% said "not very satisfied".

Indicators involved in the personal feelings and experiences of students, there is a hard to quantify, but such "basically satisfied" judgment is at least based on the students' psychological judgment, therefore, the student satisfaction research needs to follow up by redesigning of the questionnaire, more professional research, such as the combination of qualitative and quantitative research, through interviews, open-ended questionnaire design, to gather more information, to help managers providing effective suggestions, and improve their working skills and strategies.

V. CONCLUSION

According to the satisfaction survey of the joint program students, it is necessary to analyze the results, make better use of these research results to improve university management and to adjust school policy. Research to the satisfaction degree of the Sino-foreign cooperative project in International School has a certain historical significance, i.e., with key management bottleneck "low rate" going abroad, to analyze the focus, trying to straighten out the complex psychological reasons of students', revise the school related management system, the change of education service quality evaluation and so on.

For administrative managers, deans or faculty directors, there are a lot to do to keep the Sino-cooperative program in a good condition.

It is suggested that more positive publicity of Sino-foreign cooperative projects, better career, well-paid job prospects, bridging the world famous universities with the development of international vision, etc.

Secondly, make efforts to eliminate or reduce admissions bottleneck, low grade to participate in the program but not go abroad "diploma slackers".

Thirdly, give priority to strengthen the IELTS English teaching with own school-based teachers; avoid completely relying on Malaysian university, which will lead to the loss of the larger operating capability and the future vast space of developing.

Fourthly, seek chance to work with higher world ranking foreign cooperation schools or institutes as partners.

Lastly, to strengthen project management and care of the student, no more cold heartless to buyers of education service, remembering customer is the God, an important social evaluation index, therefore, Sino-cooperative project training target, training plan, the qualified teachers should meet the needs of students, in order to create a good learning experience, to promote the student satisfaction, thus make the healthy and stable development of the project in school.

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