

Factors Affecting the Academic Performance of Students: A Reality of Higher Education Level in Bangladesh

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Abstract

Bangladesh is one of the developing countries having impenetrable population, though still trying to achieve sustainable goal through the development of education. There were many factors that affected the academic performance of students and these included students' personal attributes, socio-economic and institutional characteristics, family background, gender and other demographic factors (Imran, 2017). The study is an attempt to understand how to determine the factors that affecting academic performance of the students of Social Science School of Khulna University, Bangladesh. The study was both exploratory and explanatory in nature and simple random sampling method was applied. Chi-square test and bivariate correlation were executed to sort out the relation between socioeconomic factors and academic performance. The study also extensively tried to make a comparative picture and illuminate that engagement in part time job, teacher student relationship, academic participation, participation in co-curricular activities, academic skill, time spent for academic study, plan about own subject, preparing academic lessons regularly all were statistically associated with their academic performance ($p < .01$ & $< .05$ significantly). The study findings showed that student's sex, place of residence and family provided educational resources were significantly associated with their academic performance ($p < .01$ & $< .05$). Considering the reality and outcomes of this study, the students need to improve their academic skill through their self-effort, increasing more academic involvement the teacher student relationship in academic spheres and should be interactive vice-versa.

Key Words: Factors, Academic Performance, Students, Higher Study, Reality

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1. Introduction

Bangladesh is a developing country with a massive population, even though it is trying to make overall development particularly harmonizing and set out for sustainability through education (Ahsan & Burnip, 2007). Education plays a vital role in developing human capital and is linked with an individual's well-being and better living opportunities (Battle & Lewis, 2002). It was found that economic status, parental education, and educational facilities played a critically important role in academic performance (Farooq & Chaudhry, 2011). The highly prominent success factors were regular study, regular attendance, and assignment completion, which were regarded as hard work, commitment, and dedication (Sibanda, Iwu, & Benedict, 2015). Along with the teaching method, time management, attendance of students, and sleep positively influenced tertiary education students (Tangaraju, 2013). Parents' education could affect academic achievement motivation in academic areas (Acharya & Joshi, 2009). Student's motivation and individual characteristics, social, economic, cultural, community characteristics, family background, institutional characteristics, gender, and other demographic factors also affected their academic performance (Betts & Morell, 1999).

Familial factors such as parental education and occupational level, family background and environment, parental support and aspiration, socio-economic status (SES) of the family were the critical factors determining students' academic performance (Engin-Demir, 2009). The factors like gender relations, study at college, preadmission high school grade, level of attendance, probation status, time spent in research, father's education, parental support, and involvement had a significant influence on academic achievement (Islam, 2014). Evidently students' academic performance in higher education is affected by various socio-economic, psychological, environmental factors (Hijazi & Naqvi, 2006).

Killen, 1994 concluded that some of the most significant factors in students' academic success at university interested in the course, motivation, self-discipline, and effort (none of which could be predicted directly from matriculation results). Student effort was also prominent in students' explanations of success and failure in a study (Schmelzer, 1987). Most of the experts argue that the low socio-economic status hurts students' academic performance because the basic needs of students remain unfulfilled. Hence, they do not perform better academically (Adams, 1996). Students having good communication skills expand the students' performance (Abdullah, 2011). Past academic performance, age, gender, work is done at home, time spent reading in the library, and students' behavior toward school were significant factors for determining students' performance (Sithole & Dlamini, 1997).

Significant factors as parental education, dual education facilities, and financial support were mostly needed for students (Farooq et al., 2011). Further, studies are recommended to explore the students' perceptions of the learning environment (Khursheed & Baig, 2014). Under the circumstances, the present study attempted to identify the most intervening socio-economic and academic factors they had missed in the previous studies.

2. Methods and Materials

This study is both descriptive and explanatory and conducted through a survey method, which was carried out in the Social Science School of Khulna University, Bangladesh. The study areas were purposively selected based on a considerable number of undergraduate students who had at

least two terms' result and the study areas were in Sociology, Economics, Mass Communication and Journalism, and development studies disciplines. The study aimed to determine the determinant factors that affected their academic performance and achieve the objective; two criteria were followed: 1 –students at the undergraduate level in a social science school. 2. Who had at least two academic terms' of results. The number target population was 647. A simple random sampling method was applied to select a representative sample from a wider population size, where every individual had an equal probability of being selected. Using the following sample size determination formula, a sample size 242 was chosen randomly, considering a confidence interval of 5 and a confidence level of 95 percent. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using computer software such as SPSS-20, MS Excel, and MS Word. On the other hand, secondary data were collected from BBS (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics), different Books, Journals and daily newspapers, etc.

3. Results Discussion

Place of origin

Figure 1 shows that most (54.5 percent) of the students were from rural areas, and the rest, 45.5 percent of students, were from urban areas. So the majority of the students' place of origin is rural.

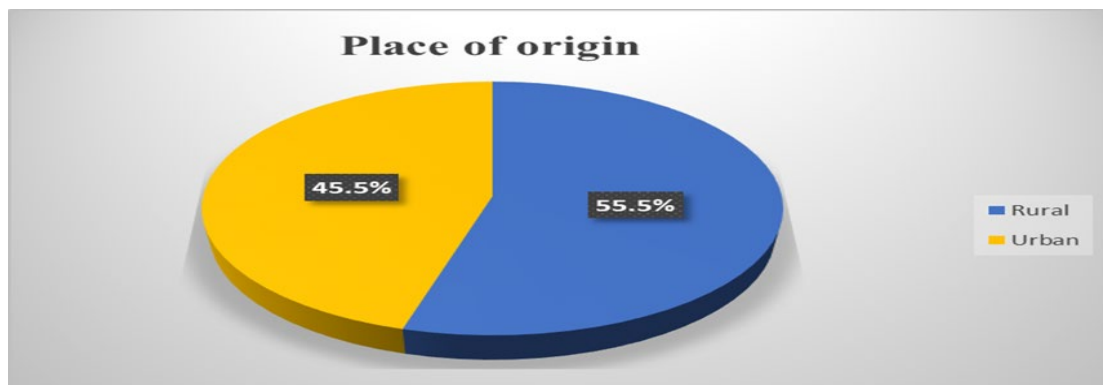


Figure: 1

Teacher-student relationship

The teacher-students' relationship is the most critical factor which can positively affect students' academic performance. Figure 2 shows that most of the students had high and or good teacher-student relationships with their teachers. Data showed that the majority (42.6 percent) of the students had a high teacher-student relationship. But only 11.2 percent of students had low or bad teacher-student relationship. And the rest, 46.3 percent of students, had a medium teacher-student relationship.

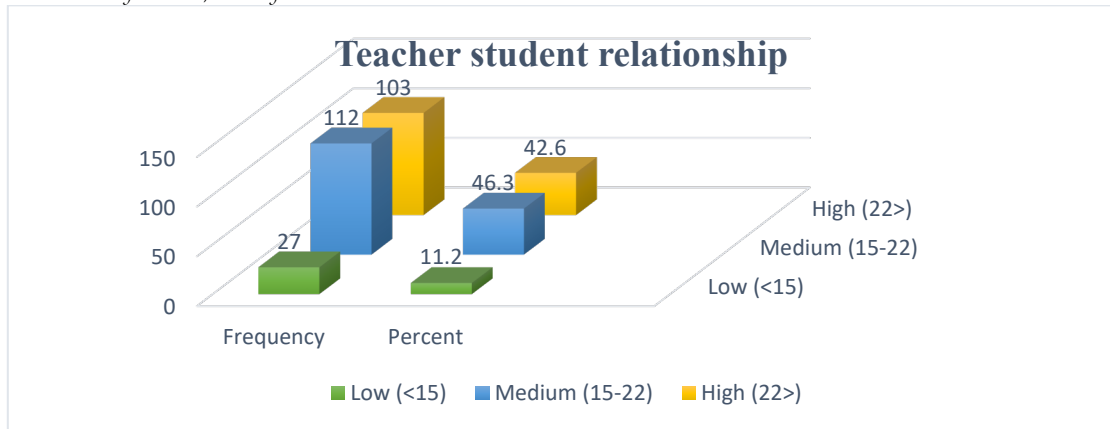


Figure: 2

Figure 3: Academic participation

Academic participation is also a critical factor in affecting the academic performance of the students. Figure 4 shows that most of the students had medium educational participation. Data showed that most (47.9 percent) of the students had medium academic involvement, and only 12 percent had low academic involvement. On the other hand, 40.1 percent of students had high educational participation.

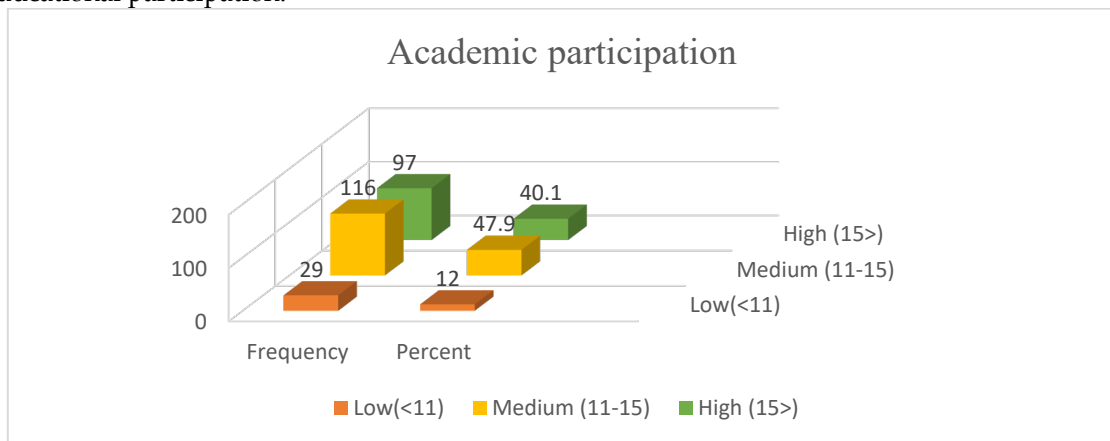


Figure: 3

Participation in co-curricular activities

High or low academic performance is mostly dependent on this factor. It was found that most of the students had medium participation in co-curricular activities. Data showed that the majority (43.4 percent) of the students had medium involvement in co-curricular activities, and only 19 percent of students had high participation in co-curricular activities. On the other hand, 37.2 percent of students had low participation in co-curricular activities.

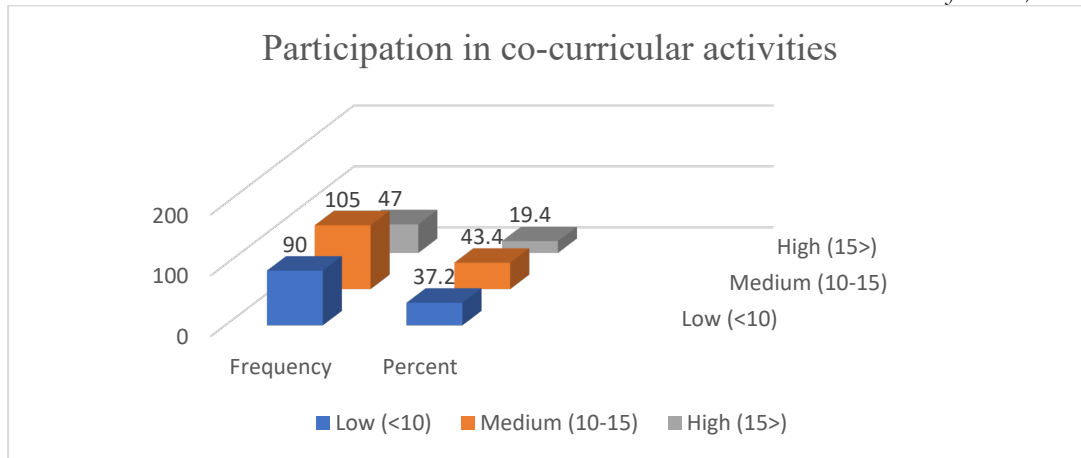


Figure: 4

Academic skill

An excellent academic skill is needed for good academic performance. Figure 5 revealed that an essential factor that can affect academic performance. Findings showed that most of the students had medium academic skills. Data showed that the majority (71.9 percent) of the students had medium academic skills, and only 4.5 percent had low academic skills. On the other hand, the rest 23.6 percent of students had high academic skills.

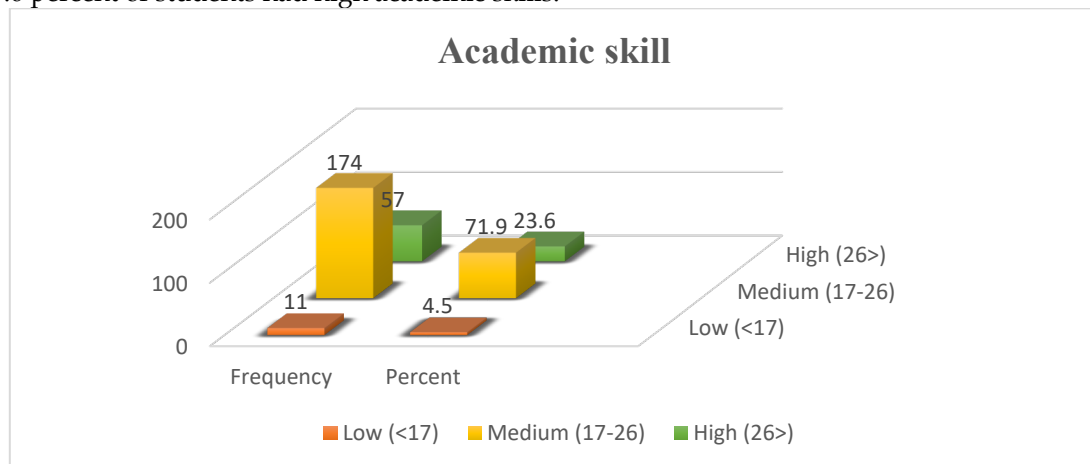


Figure: 5

Plan about own subject

The excellent academic performance of the students is mostly dependent on the plan for their subject. It was found that most of the students had a high goal of their issue. Data showed that the majority (48.3 percent) of the students had a high plan about their subject, and only 7.4 percent had low plans about their issues. On the other hand, the rest 44.2 percent of students, had a medium plan about their subject.

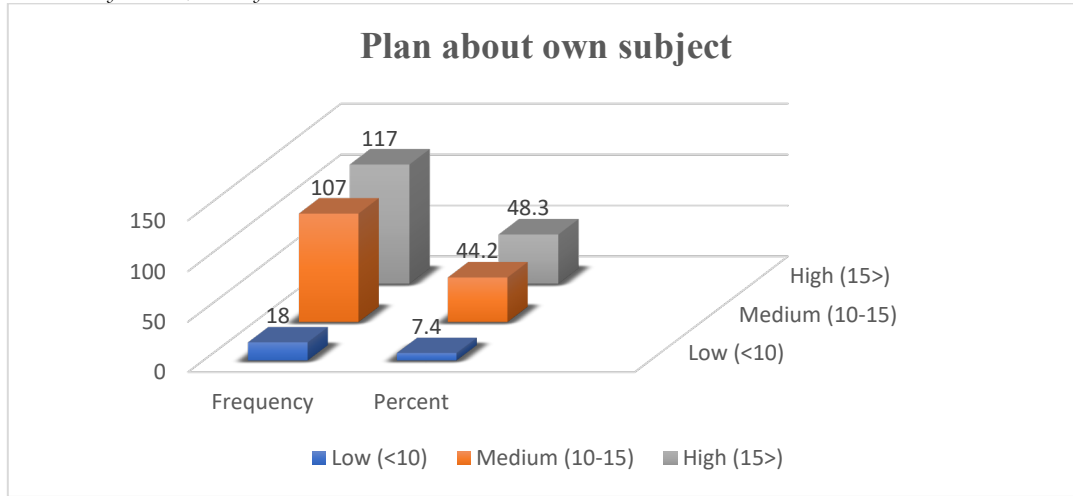


Figure: 6

Socio-economic factors

Table 1. Academic Performance and its Covariates (Chi-Square Test)

Variables	Honors Average CGPA			Test Statistics	p-value
	Low ≤3.00	Medium 3.00-3.49	High ≥3.49		
Age of the respondent					
19-21	14 (12.7%)	58 (52.7%)	38 (34.5%)	1.032 ^a	.597
22-24	15 (11.4%)	63 (47.7%)	54 (40.9%)		
Sex					
Female	9 (7.3%)	45 (36.6%)	69 (56.1%)	35.058 ^a	.000 ^{**}
Male	20 (16.8%)	76 (63.9%)	23 (19.3%)		
Place of origin					
Rural	19 (14.4%)	71 (53.8%)	42 (31.8%)	5.176 ^a	.075
Urban	10 (9.1%)	50 (45.5%)	50 (45.5%)		
Place of residence					
Hall	12 (10.7%)	59 (52.7%)	41 (36.6%)	13.548 ^b	.007 ^{**}
Mess	9 (25.7%)	20 (57.1%)	6 (17.1%)		
Home	8 (8.4%)	42 (44.2%)	45 (47.4%)		
Nature of study room					
Shared	17 (11.3%)	82 (54.7%)	51 (34.0%)	3.532 ^a	.171
Single	12 (13.0%)	39 (42.4%)	41 (44.6%)		
Nature of family					
Nuclear	25 (12.1%)	103 (49.8%)	79 (38.2%)	.060 ^b	.982
Extended	4 (11.4%)	18 (51.4%)	13 (37.1%)		

The family provided educational resources					
No	5 (33.3%)	6 (40.0%)	4 (26.7%)	5.607 ^b	.031*
Yes	24 (10.6%)	115 (50.7%)	88 (38.8%)		
Monthly household income					
10000-39999	18 (14.5%)	68 (54.8%)	38 (30.6%)	6.417 ^b	.174
40000-69999	9 (8.9%)	46 (45.5%)	46 (45.5%)		
Above 69999	2 (11.8%)	7 (41.2%)	8 (47.1%)		

*P ≤ 0.05; **P ≤ 0.01, Fishers exact test reported (expected cell less than 5), a=chi-square value, b= Fisher exact test value.

The table-1 reveals the relationship between the socio-economic factors and the academic performance of the students. The chi-square tests' findings clarify that students sex, place of residence, and family provided educational resources were significantly associated with their academic performance (p<.01&<.05). But age, place of origin, nature of the study room, the heart of the family, and monthly household income were not statistically significant with the students' academic performance.

Academic factors

Table 2. Academic Performance and its Covariates (Chi-Square Test)

Variables	Honors Average CGPA			Test Statistics	p-value
	Low ≤3.00	Medium 3.00-3.49	High ≥3.49		
Engagement in a part-time job					
private tuition	25 (19.1%)	86 (65.6%)	20 (15.3%)	64.884 ^a	.000**
nothing	4 (3.6%)	35 (31.5%)	72 (64.9%)		
Teacher-student relationship					
Low	12 (44.4%)	13 (48.1%)	2 (7.4%)	80.891 ^b	.000**
Medium	16 (14.3%)	74 (66.1%)	22 (19.6%)		
High	1 (1.0%)	34 (33.0%)	68 (66.0%)		
Academic participation					
Low	16 (55.2%)	11 (37.9%)	2 (6.9%)	65.964 ^b	.000**
Medium	10 (8.6%)	74 (63.8%)	32 (27.6%)		
High	3 (3.1%)	36 (37.1%)	58 (59.8%)		
Participation in Co-curricular activities					
Low	5 (5.6%)	30 (33.3%)	55 (61.1%)	50.115 ^a	.000**
Medium	10 (9.5%)	61 (58.1%)	34 (32.4%)		

High	14 (29.8%)	30 (63.8%)	3 (6.4%)		
Academic skill					
Low	9 (81.8)	2 (18.2%)	0 (0.0%)	82.944 ^b	.000**
Medium	18 (10.3%)	110 (63.2%)	46 (26.4%)		
High	2 (3.5%)	9 (15.8%)	46 (80.7%)		
Time spent on academic study					
1-3 hours	28 (16.1%)	115 (66.1%)	31 (17.8%)	5.607 ^b	.000**
4-6 hours	1 (1.5%)	6 (8.8%)	61 (89.7%)		
Plan about own subject					
Low	11 (61.1%)	5 (27.8%)	2 (11.1%)	71.265 ^b	.000**
Medium	17 (15.9%)	68 (63.6%)	22 (20.6%)		
High	1 (0.9%)	48 (41.0%)	68 (58.1%)		
Preparing academic lesson					
No	23 (26.4%)	54 (62.1%)	10 (11.5%)	52.769 ^a	.000**
Yes	6 (3.9%)	67 (43.2%)	82 (52.9%)		

*P ≤ 0.05; **P ≤ 0.01, Fishers exact test reported (expected cell less than 5), a=chi-square value, b= Fisher exact test value.

The table-2represents the relationship between the academic factors and the academic performance of the students. The findings of chi-square tests clarify that engagement in a part-time job, teacher-student association, educational participation, participation in co-curricular activities, academic skill, time spent for academic study, plan about own subject, preparing academic lessons regularly all were statistically associated with their academic performance(p<.01&<.05).

Bivariate Correlation

Table 3: Bivariate Co-relation between Dependent and Independent Variables

Variables	Correlations												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Academic Achievement (GPA)													
2. Age	.064												
3. Total completed semesters	.093	.775**											
4. Year of schooling of father	.167**	.000	.004										
5. Year of schooling of mother	.211**	.037	.036	.726**									
6. Hours of tuition	-.558**	-.075	-.138*	-.178**	.219**								
7. Hours of academic study	.766**	.020	.073	.234**	.227**	.631**							
8. Hours of non-academic study	-.116	.317**	.318**	-.038	-.071	.184**	-.158*						
9. Teacher student relationship	.602**	.041	.029	.201**	.163*	-.518**	.628**	-.073					
10. Academic participation	.548**	.056	.057	.142*	.115	-.468**	.544**	-.106	.595**				
11. Co-curricular Participation	-.405**	.022	-.061	-.155*	-.126	.476**	-.404**	.208**	-.321**	-.273**			
12. Academic skill	.719**	.062	.110	.241**	.214**	-.520**	.700**	-.031	.702**	.569**	-.342**		
13. Plan about own subject	.586**	.053	.006	.111	.117	-.435**	.471**	-.139*	.657**	.554**	-.268**	.570**	

* $P \leq 0.05$; ** $P \leq 0.01$

Table 3 relating to Bivariate Co-relation between Dependent and Independent Variables indicates as follows: Among the variables, academic skill of the students ($r=.719^{**}$) was positively related to the academic performance. Similarly, year of schooling of father ($r= .167^{**}$), year of schooling of mother ($r= .726^{**}$), hours of academic study ($r= .766^{**}$), total completed semesters ($r= .775^{**}$),

teacher student relationship ($r = .602^{**}$), academic participation ($r = .595^{**}$) and plan about own subject ($r = .657^{**}$) had positive relation with academic performance. But hours of tuition ($r = -.558^{**}$), hours of non-academic study ($r = -.158^*$), co-curricular participation ($r = -.405^{**}$) were negatively co-related with academic performance. Moreover, age were not co-related with academic performance.

4. Discussion

In the relevance, considine and Zappalà (2002) and Akiri (2013) whose findings showed that school environment and teachers' attributes from their students also have a strong influence on student performance. This is consistent with the present study's findings whereby it was found that teacher-student relationship, academic participation, and participation in co-curricular activities, academic skill, plan about own subject had a strong positive influence on the academic performance of the students. Imran et al. (2017) found a significant relationship between socio-economic statuses like age, income, and academic performance ($P = .000$) and no relationship between gender and academic performance of the students. On the contrary, the present study revealed that age, income and academic were not significantly associated, and gender positively influenced academic performance ($P = .000$). The results represented that socio-economic status; parental education had a positive relationship with academic performance. Still, the parental occupation was not significantly associated with the students' academic performance (Farooq et al., 2011). On the other hand, the present study results showed no significant relationship between parental education, economic status, and students' academic performance. Dev (2016), in his study, showed that the home environment and subject interest were positively correlated with academic performance. On the contrary, the present study mostly found a non-significant relationship between home environment and academic performance but found a consistently strong positive relationship between the students' subject interest and academic performance. ($P = .000$). Adeyemi and Adeyemi (2014) found that several personal factors (students' interest, home environment, parental support, and study habit) were significant predictors of academic achievement in the Colleges of Education. The findings regarding students' interest were similar to those of Olufunke (2012), Hock, Pulvers, Deshler, and Schumaker (2001). The present study showed the similar findings regarding students' interests but non-consistent with the home environment.

5. Recommendations

Taking into consideration of the study findings and reality, there were some factors which affected the academic performance of the students and some remedies which help the students to get the academic performance, and it will be effective with that contemplation the following recommendations are to be put forward:

1. It was found that the students who had a low or horrific teacher-student relationship their academic affairs were terrible, so in this regard, both teachers and students should be co-operative. The students should be active listeners of teachers' lectures and communicate with teachers to improve teacher-student relationships, which would help them gain an excellent academic result.
2. The study also found that their theoretical result is ultimately good for the students whose academic participation is high. The research suggests that the students should

- regularly participate in every class, every continuous assessment, and regularly visit the library and computer lab. It would help them to increase their CGPA.
3. The study also identified that students who had high participation in co-curricular activities had a bad academic performance. So in this regard, the research suggests that the students should reduce their involvement in sports, cultural programs, social work, or any youth organization and increase concentration on academic studies.
 4. The study also suggests that the students must increase academic skills such as PowerPoint presentations, assignment and report preparation, time management, citations, and suitable examples in answer sheets through self-effort and practice.
 5. It was also found that the students who were engaged in tuition, their academic result was not good. So the study suggests that if the students reduce more time on tuition, it will help them upgrade their academic performance.
 6. The students would be more interested in academic study if the government increases job opportunities for their academic subject and, ultimately, improves their academic results.

6. Conclusion

Let me confess at the very outset that the present study does not include a large proportion of the students and academic institutions in Bangladesh in relevance to the task. Though by and large, the research is very much relevant and has immense potentials for the student-teachers' relationships and performance over the academic institution. The study also to have a more significant impact and scope on any relevant futuristic research and its execution. The students' academic performance of any educational institution is mostly dependent on some socio-cultural, economic, and literary factors. The study was reliant on some findings that positively affected the academic performance of the students. From the data analysis, the students who had a high or good teacher-student relationship, their academic performance was ultimately right. Still, their academic performance was terrible, whose teacher-student relationship was awful.

Similarly the students who had high academic participation their academic performance was good. On the contrary, it was found that the students who had low participation in co-curricular activities their academic performance was good. The academic skill was a challenge for their excellent academic performance. For the students who had high academic skills, their academic performance was good. On the other hand, their academic performance was bad whose academic skill was low. It was also found that most of the students spent massive time on social media for entertainment, and it's an excellent barrier to satisfactory academic performance. And the students who had a high plan for their subject, their academic performance was good. Still, their academic performance was terrible, who had a low plan about their topic or were not satisfied with their issue. If the students want to improve their academic performance, they have to improve teacher student relationships, increase academic participation and literary skill, and reduce co-curricular participation. This research would help in the improvement of the students and teachers alike. This study might benefit the students by understanding better and the factors that can affect their academic performance. Based on findings, the present study might perk up their academic performance and create a window of future research scope in relevance to the research study.

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