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Academic Adaptation and Autonomy in Learning Environments: Investigating Challenges, Support Systems, and Effective Teaching Approaches for International University Students at Bucheon University in Tashkent

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Abstract: ***It was investigated the successful transition and learning experiences of students at Bucheon International University. The researchers explored which factors contribute to Bucheon University students' academic adjustment, classroom experiences, and perception of autonomy support within their learning environments, a qualitative research approach was employed to delve deeper into how Bucheon University students view their classroom learning settings and learning experiences. Follow-up interviews were used in the qualitative phase to investigate the empirical relationships between autonomy-supportive environments and the classroom's affective (language, anxiety), behavioral (discussion participation), and cognitive (adaptive beliefs about classroom assessments) learning components. Findings showed that students at Bucheon University appeared to be satisfied by autonomy-supportive environments, which reduced language anxiety and boosted classroom engagement and adaptive perspectives on evaluation. By using selective codes (theme), the main themes involving multiple meanings were elicited. The five common themes below were found from the interview data. First theme indicated that instructors and peer groups provide support and it helps adapt in international university. Second theme indicated that main barrier is a foreign language. Third theme indicated that openness and willingness of instructors help to adapt to the new environment. Fourth theme indicated that students showed willingness to participate in group discussion during classes. Fifth theme indicated that students appreciate the flexibility and the choice of choosing the tasks and assignment by themselves. The discussion focuses on how the findings from the qualitative research can be used in theory and in the classroom. This research adds to the body of knowledge by offering a sound theoretical framework to facilitate successful academic transition among Uzbekistan international university students.***

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Keywords: International University Students, Learning Environment, Autonomy Support, Adjustment

1. INTRODUCTION

When enrolling Bucheon University, students must adjust to a strange social and educational atmosphere (Olivas & Li, 2006). International university students encounter certain demands and difficulties that have been recognized via research and have an impact on their ability to succeed academically, make adjustments, and feel well. These students may also have academic and psychological difficulties such English language limitations, cultural ignorance, a lack of connections with advisers and professors, unfamiliarity with teaching styles and curricular discrepancies, loneliness, and anxiety (Andrade, 2006; Parks & Raymond, 2004; Poyrazli & Grahame, 2007). One of the most significant of these transition challenges has been identified as the reduced level of class involvement among overseas students. The difficulties that international university students have engaging in discussions are caused by a variety of factors, including their perceived inadequacies in English, their anxiety of making errors while speaking English, and their fear of possible scorn from their peers and professor (Andrade, 2006). Since they were unfamiliar with this structure, international university students found it challenging to meet the standards for participation in class. Participation was hindered, particularly, by issues with linguistic anxiety and lack of confidence (Andrade, 2006; Robertson, Line, Jones, & Thomas, 2000). As a result, these students have more difficulty adjusting, more stress, and anxiety in academic settings. (Andrade, 2006). Existing research offers empirical recommendations to assist overseas students with these particular issues and demands, such as offering social support, peer group support, and language acquisition assistance for their academic requirements. A thorough theoretical framework to explain how foreign students are able to successfully acclimatize to higher education is, however, lacking in the research. The researcher contends that the sub-theory of fundamental psychological needs and organismic development within self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000) broadly and inside self-determination theory may give such a framework. This study's goal is to provide a thorough theoretical framework to explain how overseas students are able to learn well and adapt to their new environment. This framework is based on a humanistic theory called self-determination theory that has undergone 40 years of development and study (Deci & Ryan, 1985). This research investigated how classroom learning experiences and academic adjustment of foreign students are related to their fundamental psychological needs and surroundings that facilitate autonomy. I also looked qualitatively at how overseas students adjust to the learning environments at Bucheon University in Tashkent. This research adds to the body of knowledge by offering a sound theoretical framework to promote successful foreign students' academic adaptation.
The purposes of the currect study are summrized as mentioned below;

Research objectives:

- To know the elements of the academic adaptation of international university students.
- To explore the aspects which influence on learning atmosphere that fosters autonomy of international university students.

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- To illstruate the primary challenges which faced with international university students for academic adaptation.
- To help international university students adapt to academic life in Bucheon University in Tashkent

Research questions:

- What elements play a role in the academic adaptation of international university students?
- What aspects influence the viewpoint of international university students regarding a learning atmosphere that fosters autonomy?
- What are the primary challenges faced by international university students when it comes to academic adaptation?
- What kind of support can universities provide to help international university students adapt to academic life in Bucheon University in Tashkent?

Literature Review

Academic adjustment and learning techniques of international university students

When adjusting to the academic surroundings at Bucheon University, international university students face particular adjustment obstacles. Academic difficulties brought on by language obstacles or a lack of English competence, difficulties forming friendships with peers or faculty, and getting used to new teaching methods and curricular variances are some of the difficulties that these students typically cite (Banjong 2015; Poyrazli et al. 2002; Poyrazli and Grahame 2007; Wu et al. 2015). Lack of language and communication skills may be the most significant barrier to kids' academic adjustment among the various issues that do so (Chen 1999; Olivas and Li). These issues might have an influence on students' social and academic success. (2021). Language proficiency and academic integration are linked to the academic success of overseas students (Andrade 2006; Martirosyan et al. 2015; Olivas and Li 2006; Ramburuth 2001; Rienties et al. 2012).

The recent research, however, indicates that although difficulties brought on by linguistic hurdles might influence academic learning, they are not the main impediment to academic achievement (Macgregor and Folinazzo 2018). Academic integration of overseas students has been shown to be significantly impacted by aspects such as motivation, academic self-efficacy, social engagement, and the use of adaptive learning strategies, according to research (Andrade 2006; Martirosyan et al. 2015; Poyrazli et al. 2002). The factors that most significantly affect pupils' academic achievement are motivation, self-control, and linguistic ability (Phakiti et al. 2013). Particularly, the learning styles of overseas students may demonstrate their interest in the subject matter, which results in academic achievement (Sakurai et al. 2014). In the available literature, many learning strategies, such as surface learning and deep learning, have been extensively investigated (Biggs et al. 2001; Entwistle and McCune 2004; Hay 2007). According to Dolmans et al. (2016) and Garca et al. (2015), rote learning or a surface learning strategy refers to students' efforts to remember and replicate informative items without in-depth comprehension or elaboration. Alternatively, a deep learning strategy entails comprehending the material learnt and developing an in-depth grasp of it (Entwistle et al. 2003). Deep learning students make an effort to comprehend the material being studied, integrate it with their prior knowledge, organize and connect concepts, and assess their comprehension (Biggs et al. 2001;

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Entwistle and McCune 2004; Dolmans et al. 2016). Deep learning approaches have been linked to positive cognitive and regulatory strategies, as well as higher academic grades than shallow approaches (Everaert et al. 2017; Heikkila and Lonka 2006; Platow et al. 2013; Sakurai et al. 2014). In particular, the application of metacognitive strategies by students results in a profound learning process. When students employ metacognitive learning strategies, they have less difficulty comprehending concepts than when they focused on memorization; therefore, deep learning strategies enhance student performance and motivation. (Cook et al. 2013).understanding what is being examined, integrating new information with prior knowledge, structuring ideas, and evaluating their understanding (Biggs et al. 2001; Entwistle and McCune 2004; Dolmans et al. 2016).

In addition, little is known about the self-regulated learning strategies of international university students that contribute to the profound learning processes and the learning approaches associated with international university students' academic adaptation. There are numerous factors that can cause variation in learning strategies across a variety of disciplines, and the characteristics of various student groups may contribute to this variation (Nijhuis et al. 2008). Based on the self-determination theory tenet that suggests supportive learning environments promote students' self-determined motivation, this study focuses on the variability in the learning processes of international university students, which includes motivation to learn, perception of assessment, and self-regulated learning strategies. This study seeks to investigate how the motivational beliefs and cognitive learning strategies of international university students influence their academic performance.

Autonomy-Supportive Learning Environments

Basic needs theory suggests that sociocultural conditions, such as classroom environments, can either support and cultivate students' fundamental psychological needs (autonomy support) or thwart these needs (external control) (Ryan & Deci, 2017). In other words, environments that support an individual's autonomy enhance the gratification of all three needs, which leads to the development of self-determined behaviors, such as intrinsic motivation, the archetype of self-determination. In contrast, environments that fail to satisfy these requirements foster the development of non-self-determined behaviors, such as the promotion of extrinsic motivation by external factors, academic apathy, and amotivating behaviors, including extrinsic motivation (Faye & Sharpe, 2008). Autonomy support is a reciprocal behavior in which one individual promotes the intentions and psychological requirements of another (Reeve & Jang, 2006). When a person in a position of authority considers another person's viewpoint, acknowledges that person's emotions, and provides him or her with the opportunity to solve a task in his or her own manner, that person fosters an environment that is conducive to autonomy support (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Reeve, 2006; Reeve & Jang, 2006). Such an environment supports and encourages students' autonomy over classroom activities and can help them meet their fundamental psychological requirements (Deci & Ryan, 2016).

In an educational setting, autonomy-supportive instruction satisfies students' needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness and enhances students' autonomous motivation and academic performance and engagement-related learning behaviors (Reeve, 2006; Ryan & Deci, 2000). An autonomy-supportive instructor creates a classroom environment conducive to meeting students' fundamental requirements and tries to foster their intrinsic motivation so that

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they feel more respected, acknowledged, and accountable in the learning environment (Deci & Ryan, 2016; Reeve, 2006, 2009). For instance, when introducing classroom tasks, instructors are more likely to use informational and non-authoritative language, to attempt to communicate the value of tasks, and to provide informative feedback to support students' progress and learning mastery (Conklin, 2013; Reeve, 2006, 2009). In addition, they demonstrate greater empathy by attempting to place themselves in the footsteps of their students and by identifying potential obstacles for students, thereby contributing to the internalization process of students and ultimately fostering their intrinsic motivation (Reeve, 2009; Reeve & Jang, 2006).

Several studies have supported the theory that students' perceptions of teachers' autonomy support are positively related to the satisfaction of students' psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which in turn promotes positive academic outcomes (Deci, Koestner, et al., 2001; Deci, Ryan, et al., 2001; Jang et al., 2009; Vallerand et al., 1997). Extensive research indicates that autonomy-supportive learning environments are associated with positive learning experiences, including increased intrinsic motivation (Leroy et al., 2007), adjustments, and perceived competence gains.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

Individual follow-up interviews were conducted with Bucheon University college students who volunteered to participate in the interview. In the introduction of the interview, participants were oriented to choose one class that they were currently taking and perceived to be most important to them that semester. During the interview, the participants shared their own experiences based on the interview questions associated with the class that they chose. The researchers transcribed the audiotaped interviews and checked whether each script was transcribed correctly. So transcribed interview data was checked at least twice. This procedure ensured understanding the participants' perspectives and increased the trustworthiness of our interpretation of the interview data. Transcribed narratives were compared to the original recordings for accuracy. Qualitative content analysis was used to identify common themes regarding students' academic adjustment and autonomy-supportive learning environments from students' experiences in the classroom. Finally, by using selective codes (theme), the main themes involving multiple meanings were elicited

Participants

Semi-interview was implemented with total 16 students. This study focused on Korean university in Uzbekistan, namely: Bucheon University in Tashkent for the 2nd level. The interview consisted of 10 participants from 6 different nationalities, with a balanced representation of gender.The Scholastic year is (2021- 2022). Contents of 11 questions Autonomy Supportive Environment (related to an English class) and Academic Adjustment (in general) to measure the factors influencing in the learning environment contribute to international university students' perception of autonomy supportive environment and academic adjustment. The researcher was excluded six interviewees due to the shortcomings in their responses and were not enough to be included in the final analysis.

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Instrument

Individual follow-up interviews were conducted with Bucheon University college students who volunteered to participate in the interview. In the introduction of the interview, participants were oriented to choose one class that they were currently taking and perceived to be most important to them that semester. During the interview, the participants shared their own experiences based on the interview questions associated with the class that they chose. These interviews were audiotaped and lasted approximately 30-40 minutes. The researchers transcribed the audiotaped interviews and checked whether each script was transcribed correctly. So transcribed interview data was checked at least twice. This procedure ensured understanding the participants' perspectives and increased the trustworthiness of our interpretation of the interview data. (Cho et al, 2022)

Data Collection

The students met at their university during the months of April, and May of 2021. Prior to meeting, preparations were made and requests sent to the Ministry of Higher Education and to the principal of Bucheon University in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. The consent letter was granted to both organizations. Semi-interview was implemented with total 16 students. Contents of 11 questions Autonomy Supportive Environment (related to an English class) and Academic Adjustment (in general) to measure the factors influencing in the learning environment contribute to international university students' perception of autonomy supportive environment and academic adjustment. The researcher was excluded six interviewees due to the shortcomings in their responses and were not enough to be included in the final analysis.

Table 1. Research Qualitative Samples' Characteristics

No	Name	Age	Gender	Nationality	Study mode	Major	Edu. Level
P1	B.M	18	F	Uzbek	Day	B.A.	Undergraduate
P2	M.N	21	F	Uzbek	Day	B.A.	Undergraduate
P3	N.N	24	M	Tatar	Day	Pres-school	Undergraduate
P4	V.K.	21	M	Korean	Day	B.A.	Undergraduate
P5	S.K.	20	M	Korean	Day	Pre-school	Undergraduate
P6	I.K.	18	F	Korean	Day	B.A.	Undergraduate
P	V.I.	19	F	Russian	Day	B.A	Undergrad

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7							uate
P 8	A.N.	26	F	Uzbek	Day	Pre-school	Undergraduate
P 9	I.M.	31	M	Tajik	Day	Pre-school	Undergraduate
P 10	V.B.	35	F	Armenian	Day	B.A.	Undergraduate
Note: P= Participant; BA= Business Administration							

3. RESULTS

Content analysis of the qualitative data revealed five common themes below were found from the interview data. First theme indicated that instructors and peer groups provide support and it helps adapt in international university. Second theme indicated that main barrier is a foreign language. Third theme indicated that openness and willingness of instructors help to adapt to the new environment. Fourth theme indicated that students showed willingness to participate in group discussion during classes. Fifth theme indicated that students appreciate the flexibility and the choice of choosing the tasks and assignment by themselves. The discussion focuses on how the findings from the qualitative research can be used in theory and in the classroom. This research adds to the body of knowledge by offering a sound theoretical framework to facilitate successful academic transition among Uzbekistan international university students.

Theme 1: The presence of different learning environments and language barriers posed the greatest challenges to foreign students throughout their adjustment to academic life.
Seven out of ten participants found it challenging to adapt to the different learning environments, such as those that included group discussions or hands-on activities, during the process of acclimating to the Bucheon university. Four participants said that language barriers made it difficult for them to understand lectures, interact with classmates, and write in English.

Theme 2: Peer support and additional help from professors in addressing students' academic demands and hurdles were the most helpful resources for international university students to adapt to Bucheon University.
Participants said that extra help from teachers or departments was the most helpful learning resource for their transition to college. Several individuals mentioned asking for support from professors in person or attending teaching assistants' help sessions.
They also took part in the many help programs that their department provided for new students when they first arrived at the university. Students who received individualized help were able to catch up on their studies and ask questions to further their understanding. They thought that extra help was the most beneficial resource as they tried to acclimate to academic life.

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The third theme was that overseas university students were more inclined to participate in class discussions when they felt at ease with the issues and understood the value of speaking with others to learn.

Also, they preferred small-group discussions to class-wide discussions. If they have language barriers and are not comfortable with classroom dialogues, international university students are less likely to participate in class. Participants were questioned about their willingness to participate in class discussions in the absence of incentives or extra credit. Eight participants said that they would be open to having conversations if they believed they would be helpful to their learning or if they felt comfortable discussing the subject. Several students argued that participation points had little bearing on their level of engagement. They said that they would be open to participating in lectures as long as they gained anything educational from them.

Theme 4: The students felt at ease in the learning environment, confident in their capacity to succeed in the course, and able to approach instructors with questions thanks to the accessibility and preparedness of the instructors to handle the academic expectations and challenges of international university students.

Seven out of ten participants who were questioned whether they felt at ease in their classroom settings responded that the professors' candor and respect made them feel at ease. They said that when professors treated them respectfully and openly, students were more likely to feel at ease in the classroom and take part in activities. For instance, N.N. felt that his classroom fostered inclusivity since small-group discussion was encouraged in there. Everyone was invited to engage and ask any questions, according to V.B.'s lecturer.

The fifth theme was that students felt they could select a work they loved based on their interests and apply what they learned from the course to other courses in their major when teachers offered options and choices in class projects or assignments.

Depending on what they found fascinating and pertinent, they may choose a topic. When presented with these options, students thought that the classroom tasks were very flexible and doable.

4. DISCUSSION

The present qualitative study aimed to address two crucial research questions: (a) to determine the factors contributing to the academic adjustment of foreign students, and (b) to examine the elements that influence students' perceptions of autonomy-supportive educational settings. The participants were selected based on their high scores on the measures of learning environment and academic adjustment.

The most difficult components of academic transition for overseas students were differences in learning settings between their home country and the host country and language obstacles. In contrast, the most beneficial tools for foreign students adjusting to Bucheon University were teachers' extra assistance to satisfy students' requirements when they encountered academic obstacles, as well as peer support. Overall, participant answers to learning climates revealed that instructors' treatment of students and delivery of teaching may influence students' perceptions of the autonomy-supportiveness of their surroundings.

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The key finding of this study is that instructors' openness and willingness to address the academic challenges and needs of international university students enable students to feel comfortable in learning environments, to approach instructors with questions, to trust their instructors, and to have confidence in their ability to perform well in the course. Students' transition to the unique academic contexts encountered at Bucheon University is facilitated by instructors' commitment to construct conditions that satisfy the core psychological demands of autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

In other words, instructors' responsiveness to students' academic demands may fulfill students' desire for autonomy in the course, provide them confidence in classroom duties, and allow them to feel linked to others in classrooms. While overseas students have academic hurdles throughout the transition, when they get autonomous support, they build new learning techniques to overcome these obstacles (Wu et al., 2015).

Hence, professors' attitudes toward students at Bucheon University in Tashkent assist pupils adapt to their new learning surroundings.

Prior studies acknowledged that teachers have a vital impact in the academic accomplishment of overseas students (Jackson et al., 2013). When international university students confront academic difficulties, instructors may assist them by catering to their academic requirements. Academic success among overseas students is often enhanced by interaction with instructors (Anaya & Cole, 2001).

Furthermore, this finding is consistent with prior findings in the SDT literature indicating that, when instructors demonstrate greater empathy by assuming the students' viewpoint and acknowledging their challenges, such learning environments likely to result in positive learning outcomes (Reeve & Jang, 2006). In addition, by supporting students' needs, teachers may help to the internalization process and ultimately strengthen students' intrinsic drive (Ryan & Deci, 2008).

Students' fundamental requirements for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are satisfied by instructors' attitudes and willingness to assist them in the face of academic difficulties, hence facilitating their adaptation to new learning settings at Bucheon university in Tashkent.

The qualitative results indicate that establishing autonomy-supportive learning settings and structuring discussion assignments around themes that students perceive to be engaging and relevant encourage student engagement in classroom activities. Conversation is used as an educational method to animate the classroom and encourage students to participate in classroom activities and achieve a higher level of comprehension (Parker & Hess, 2001). Yet, based on the experiences of foreign students, the subjects proposed by instructors and the learning settings produced for students seem to impact the quality of classroom conversations. As participants stated in the interviews, students were eager to engage in classroom discussions even in the absence of external incentives or reinforcements if they could connect to the issues and found value in the conversations. This result is consistent with the claim that autonomy-supportive settings promote the internalization of pupils (Ryan & Deci, 2017). The likelihood that students will engage in classroom conversations is proportional to the perceived relevance and perceived value of classroom discussions. These sorts of dialogues generate conducive learning settings that allow students to discover the learning advantages of discussion-based activities. Such learning settings give students with possibilities to integrate into a new

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academic learning community and, in some instances, to discover intrinsic motivation for studying.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the purpose of this qualitative research was to evaluate the variables contributing to the academic adjustment of international university students at Bucheon University in Tashkent and the aspects that form students' views of autonomy-supportive educational environments. The data revealed that international university students faced several obstacles throughout their academic transfer, such as cultural differences and linguistic hurdles. Yet, further academic aid from faculty members and peer support were shown to be the most effective support modalities.

The findings of this study complement prior research stressing the central importance of faculty members in the academic performance of foreign students, highlighting the contribution of sympathetic and responsive instructors to beneficial learning outcomes. By meeting the psychological demands of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, faculty members at Bucheon University can support the adaptation of international university students to new learning situations.

In addition, the research emphasizes the significance of developing interesting learning settings and engaging dialogues in fostering student engagement in classroom activities. Autonomy-supportive environments have been found to foster self-directed and internalized learning among students, highlighting the importance of the Self-Determination Theory's basic psychological need theory and autonomy-supportive model as robust theoretical frameworks for interpreting these findings.

Overall, this research highlights the significance of teacher openness and receptivity in fulfilling the academic demands of international university students at Bucheon University. Faculty members may successfully contribute to the academic adjustment and learning experiences of foreign students in higher education settings by implementing autonomy-supportive teaching techniques.

Limitations

Considering useful insights garnered from this qualitative research, it is important to note its limits. First, the generalizability of the research is constrained by the small and specialized sample of international university students at Bucheon University in Tashkent. To increase the generalizability of the results, future research should include bigger, more varied samples from other universities.

Second, the research relied on self-reported data, which might be susceptible to social desirability bias or faulty recollection. Future study might benefit from the use of diverse data sources, such as firsthand observations of classroom interactions, teacher interviews, and objective academic performance indicators.

Thirdly, the study's cross-sectional methodology limits any inferences on causality or the direction of the observed relationships. To better comprehend the temporal dynamics of the elements contributing to the academic adjustment of international university students and the

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establishment of autonomy-supportive educational environments, longitudinal study methodologies may be used.

Finally, the research focused exclusively on the function of faculty members in the academic adjustment of international university students, perhaps ignoring other aspects like as institutional support, extracurricular activities, and the impact of the larger social milieu. Future study might seek to give a deeper knowledge of the numerous elements that contribute to the academic achievement and well-being of foreign students in higher education settings.

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