

Investigation on the Status Quo of Academic Lectures in Colleges and Universities in Ethnic Minority Areas—Taking Youjiang Medical University for Nationalities as an Example

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Abstract

Purpose: This paper investigates the status quo of academic lectures in colleges and universities in ethnic minority areas and explores the positive impact of academic lectures on the cultivation of postgraduates. This will assist colleges and universities in paying attention to academic lectures and enriching their content and formats. Furthermore, it serves as a theoretical guide for colleges and universities in China seeking to improve the quality of academic lectures and cultivate postgraduates with high academic level in ethnic minority areas. **Methods:** Taking the postgraduates of Youjiang Medical University for Nationalities as the research objects, a questionnaire survey was conducted to understand the status quo of postgraduates participating in academic lectures, to examine the evaluation of postgraduates on academic lectures, and to analyze the impact of academic lectures on the ability training of postgraduates. **Results:** It is found that there is a gap between academic lectures in ethnic areas and non-ethnic areas. For example, the university's organization and publicity of academic lectures is not perfect; the development of academic lectures lacks democracy. Postgraduates believe that academic lectures play an important role in promoting the cultivation of their scientific research ability in all aspects. **Conclusions:** After investigation and analysis, it is necessary to take active measures in the development of academic lectures, and improve relevant publicity and management. It is suggested that the arrangement of academic lectures should fully consider the actual needs of the postgraduate education, arrange the content and frequency of the lectures scientifically and reasonably, mobilize the students' enthusiasm, and maximize its academic lectures for the cultivation of graduate students. In the meanwhile, ethnic colleges and universities should try their best

to reduce the level gap between academic lectures in non-ethnic areas, so that postgraduates in ethnic areas can enjoy the same level of academic lectures.

Keywords

Postgraduate Education, Academic Lecture, Lectures Organization and Management, Ethnic Areas

1. Introduction

Postgraduate education is the highest level of education and an important part of China's strategy on developing a quality workforce and technology powers. As a carrier for the development of academic culture in colleges and universities, academic lectures can have a positive impact on the cultivation of postgraduates' academic ability. It allows students to understand the cutting-edge research in the scientific field and the scientific research results of experts in a limited time, and it is an important way to help postgraduates form good research habits and research thinking. Academic lectures with rich contents and diversified forms can not only help break through the inherent thinking framework and improve the innovative ability of postgraduates, but also create a good academic atmosphere for colleges and universities and promote the academic development of postgraduates (Tian, 2019). In recent years, the number of academic lectures held in domestic colleges and universities has grown strongly, which has played an indispensable role in cultivating innovative postgraduate talents (Kong, Liu, & Chen, 2021). However, due to the limitation of local economic level and the influence of geographical location, colleges and universities in ethnic areas hold fewer academic exchange activities under the condition of relatively insufficient teachers, students, funds, equipment, and other aspects (Lin, He, & Luo, 2016), which leads to most postgraduates in ethnic areas having low enthusiasm for scientific research and a low sense of academic atmosphere (Julaiti et al., 2017). At present, China is vigorously implementing the innovation-driven development strategy, and the social development urgently needs to cultivate numerous high-level innovative talents. For ethnic colleges and universities shouldering the important task of cultivating high-level talents for ethnic minorities and ethnic areas, increasing the cultivation of graduate students' scientific research and academic ability has become an important goal of the reform of the postgraduate education model in ethnic colleges and universities (Li, 2019). The quality and quantity of academic lectures will help to improve the quality of postgraduate education.

Based on the fact that academic lectures in colleges and universities are an important educational platform to enhance the academic ability of graduate students, this paper will discuss the status quo of postgraduates' participation in academic lectures in colleges and universities in ethnic areas and the impact of academic lectures on the academic development of postgraduates. Taking the

postgraduates of Youjiang Medical University for Nationalities as the subjects of investigation in analysis and discussion, suggestions are put forward for colleges and universities in ethnic minority areas to better carry out academic lectures.

2. Research Objects and Methods

2.1. Research Objects and Contents

A total of 35 questionnaires were distributed to postgraduates in the Youjiang Medical University for Nationalities, and 32 were effectively received, with an effective rate of 91.43%. Among the postgraduates surveyed, 56% are male and 44% are female. In terms of grade distribution, the first-year postgraduates account for 34%, the second-year of 44%, and the third-year of 22%. The questionnaire mainly includes the status quo of academic lectures, the publicity and organization of academic lectures, the impact of academic lectures on postgraduate education, and the gap between academic lectures in colleges and universities in ethnic areas and non-ethnic areas.

2.2. Research Methods

In order to make the questionnaire design more scientific, the investigation team consulted numerous literature, and tried to achieve logical and relative independence among the questions. The unified self-made questionnaires were used for anonymous survey. The content of the questionnaire is in the form of a Likert scale. We randomly selected the respondents and distributed the paper version of the questionnaire. The corresponding scores are given by the postgraduates, and the analysis is carried out according to the average value of each score. Statistical analysis of the data was carried out after the questionnaire was collected. SPSS.21. statistical software was used for data processing, count data were described by frequency, and difference test analysis was performed using independent sample t test, one-way ANOVA and rank sum test according to specific conditions. $P < 0.05$ is of statistical significance.

3. Analysis and Results of Survey

Here, the status quo of academic lectures in Youjiang Medical College For Nationalities, the publicity and organization of academic lectures, the impact of academic lectures on the cultivation of postgraduates, and the gap between academic lectures in universities in ethnic areas and non-ethnic areas were analyzed in detail.

3.1. Analysis of the Status Quo of Academic Lectures

3.1.1. Postgraduates' Participation in Academic Lectures

According to the questionnaire investigation, the number of postgraduates' participation in academic lectures is known. All the students surveyed have participated in academic lectures, among which 56% postgraduates have attended lectures only 1 - 4 times, 25% have attended lectures 5 - 9 times, and only 19% have

attended lectures more than 10 times. We also learned about postgraduates' participation in academic lectures at different levels. Up to 84% of postgraduates have not participated in national academic lectures, and 56% have not participated in provincial academic lectures. However, the number of postgraduates participating in academic lectures at school level is 1 - 2, accounting for 56%, 3 - 5, accounting for 31%, and only 13% more than 5. See **Table 1** for details. A survey was conducted on the frequency of academic lectures organized by the school to meet the needs of postgraduates for their own academic learning development. 53% of postgraduates believe that 2 - 3 times per month can meet their own learning needs, and even 9% of postgraduates want to carry out academic lectures as often as possible without affecting their normal learning tasks.

3.1.2. Academic Lectures' Relevant Evaluation and Analysis

Through the questionnaire, we found that in the overall satisfaction evaluation of the academic lectures held by the school, the postgraduates were "very satisfied" and "satisfied" were only 9% and 28%, respectively, "general", "dissatisfied", or even "very dissatisfied" were rated by 47%, 13%, and 3% respectively. See **Figure 1** for details. Scores are based on the degree of satisfaction. "Very satisfied = 5", "Satisfied = 4", "General = 3", and "Dissatisfied = 2" and "Very dissatisfied = 1", the statistical result score is 3.28. We also investigated whether the lectures currently arranged by the school meet the study needs of postgraduates, and 53% of the students feel that they cannot meet their needs for scientific research and study.

Table 1. Status of postgraduates participating in academic lectures at different levels.

Category	0	1 - 2	3 - 5	More than 5
National Level Lectures	27 (84%)	5 (16%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Provincial Level Lectures	18 (56%)	12 (38%)	2 (6%)	0 (0%)
School Level Lectures	0 (0%)	18 (56%)	10 (31%)	4 (13%)

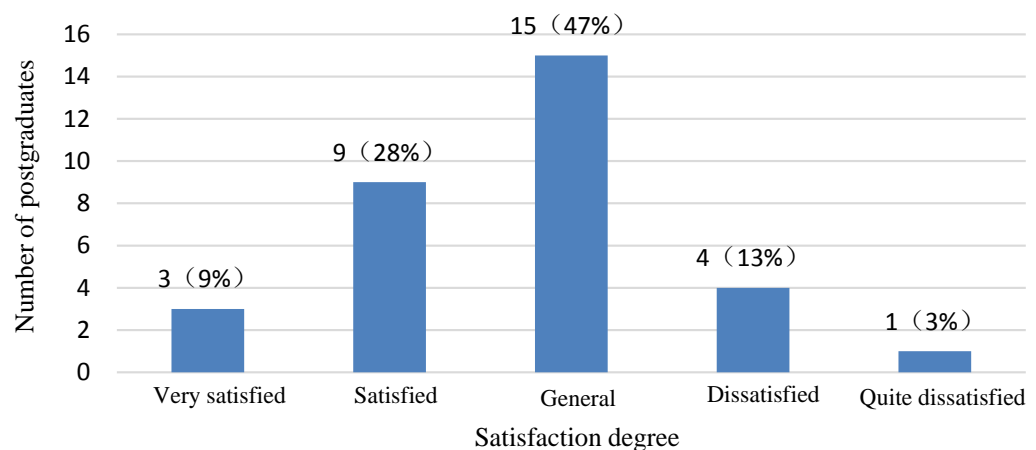


Figure 1. Postgraduates' satisfaction evaluation of academic lectures held by the school.

3.1.3. Academic Lectures' Organization and Management

In terms of the information publicity of academic lectures, 19% and 44% postgraduates can “know every time” and “most of them know” respectively, but there are still 38% who only know part of the information of lectures, or even know less about the information of lectures. Understand the main ways for postgraduates to obtain information about academic lectures. 55% of them mainly get information through QQ group or WeChat group, 26% of postgraduates are mainly informed by their supervisors and classmates, only 8% of them are mainly informed of the information from the school bulletin board, and 11% of them are informed of the information from the school's network platform. We also investigated the main reasons why postgraduates did not attend the academic lectures they were interested in but did not attend. 38% of the students responded that there were not enough places to participate, followed by 34% who said they did not know the information in time and missed the participation. 25% said they could not participate because of their scientific research assignments. Regarding whether the academic lectures held by the school will collect opinions from postgraduates, a whopping 91% of students said that their suggestions or opinions have never been solicited. When asked if they have participated in mandatory academic lectures, 34% of students responded that they were coerced to attend lectures 1 - 2 times, 56% of students were coerced to participate in lectures 3 - 4 times, and 6% had been forced to attend lectures more than 5 times.

3.2. Impact Analysis of Academic Lectures on Postgraduate Development Training

The evaluation of the impact of academic lectures on the academic development of postgraduates was investigated, as shown in **Figure 2**. According to the degree of impact, “very impact = 5”, “major impact = 4”, “general impact = 3”, “minor impact = 2” and “no impact = 1”, the statistical result score is 4.16. When the survey asked postgraduates which content of academic lectures is more helpful

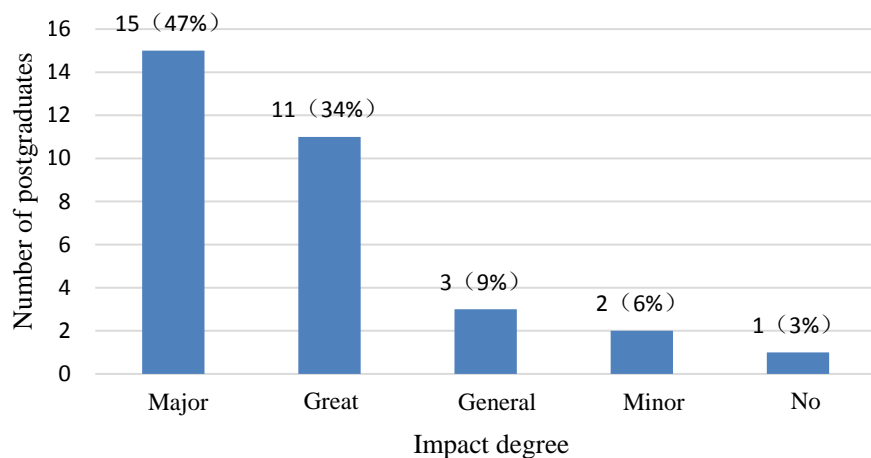


Figure 2. Impact degree of academic lectures on postgraduate academic training.

to their own academic development, the most helpful responses of postgraduates are lectures on academic discipline innovation, cutting-edge knowledge (38%), and instructional lectures to solve practical academic problems such as project application and paper writing skills (38%) are more helpful. Followed by lectures related to academic research results and theoretical summaries (16%), and lectures related to academic norm guidance and practical skills training (9%). The questionnaire also found that academic lectures in the form of interactive communication (50%) were more conducive to the academic development of postgraduates, followed by discussion (25%) and comment (16%), and the academic lectures with the traditional teaching mode (9%) had the least impact on postgraduates.

Further analysis is made on whether there are significant differences in the degree of influence of academic lectures in ethnic colleges and universities on the academic development of postgraduates of different grades and different times of attending academic lectures. The analysis results show that there are significant differences in the degree of influence of academic lectures in colleges and universities on the academic development of postgraduates of different grades ($H = 8.340, P = 0.015$). Further comparison shows that academic lectures have a higher impact on the academic development of postgraduates in the second and third year of postgraduate school than in the first year of postgraduate school, and there is no obvious difference between other grades, as shown in **Table 2**. There are significant differences in the impact degree of academic lectures on the postgraduates' academic development with different attendance times ($F = 4.263, P = 0.024$). Since the number of participants in 0 academic lectures is 0, the variance analysis does not consider 0 times. For further comparison, postgraduates who participated in 5 - 9 lectures and 10 or more lectures have a higher impact degree of their academic development than those who participated in 1 - 4 academic lectures. See **Table 3** for details.

3.3. Gap Analysis of Academic Lectures of Colleges and Universities in Ethnic Minority Areas and Non-Ethnic Areas

We investigated the evaluation of the gap between academic lectures of colleges and universities in ethnic minority areas and non-ethnic areas, showing that postgraduates believe that there is a certain gap. The higher the score of postgraduates on the gap evaluation, the larger the gap. The "gap" here indicates that the level of academic lectures in colleges and universities in ethnic minority areas

Table 2. Variance analysis of the impact degree of academic lectures on postgraduates' academic development with different grades in ethnic minority areas.

Grade	N	H	P	Post Hoc
(1) First-year postgraduate	11			
(2) Second-year postgraduate	14	8.340	0.015	(2) > (1) (3) > (1)
(3) Third-year postgraduate	7			

Table 3. Variance analysis of the impact degree of academic lectures on postgraduates' academic development with different attendance times in ethnic minority areas.

Number of participation	N	F	p	Post Hoc
(1) 1 - 4	18			
(2) 5 - 9	8	4.263	0.024	(2) > (1) (3) > (1)
(3) ≥10	6			

Table 4. Scale score of the gap between academic lectures organized by colleges and universities in ethnic minority areas and non-ethnic areas.

Content	Score
Academic atmosphere	3.88
Lecture quality	3.88
Number of lectures	3.13
Speaker qualifications	4.19
Overall gap	3.77

is lower than that in non-ethnic areas. “Extremely large = 5”, “very large = 4”, “general = 3”, “no gap = 2” and “better = 1”. See **Table 4** for details. The overall gap score is 3.77, specifically including academic atmosphere (3.88), lecture quality (3.88), number of lectures (3.13), and speaker qualifications (4.19) with the largest gap.

4. Discussion and Suggestions

4.1. Focus on the Role of Academic Lectures in Postgraduate Education

As an important educational platform to enhance postgraduates' academic ability, academic lectures in colleges and universities have a far-reaching impact on the development of postgraduates. This research investigates the status quo of academic lectures in colleges and universities in ethnic minority areas and finds some problems. First, the number of postgraduates attending academic lectures is relatively low. The frequency of academic lectures is not enough, and the academic lectures arranged by the university cannot meet the academic development needs of postgraduates. The needs of postgraduates for academic lectures indicate that their enthusiasm for attending academic lectures is still very high. Especially for postgraduates who are still in a relatively confused stage of their own scientific research development.

In the cognition of postgraduates, academic lectures have a great impact on their academic development, and the impact degree of second-year or third-year postgraduates is higher than that of first-year postgraduates. Academic lectures have different impact on the academic development of postgraduates with different attendance times, and those with more attendance times are obviously affected, indicating that academic lectures have a positive role in promoting the

academic development of postgraduates. It is found that the academic lectures on innovation and cutting-edge knowledge and those on solving practical application problems in academics are more influential. However, due to the different scientific research foundations, disciplines and research directions of postgraduates of different grades and majors, unified classroom-style academic lecture cannot meet the training requirements of all postgraduates at the same time. It is recommended that the content and frequency of academic lectures in colleges and universities should be adjusted to local conditions.

As for the forms of communication, the postgraduates believe that lectures in the form of interactive communication are more helpful to them, allowing postgraduates to participate in a higher degree and open their minds for academic exchanges with speakers. Good academic lectures should highlight the role of communication, and interaction is an effective way to enhance the attractiveness of lectures. Interaction with postgraduates should not be ignored, which is beneficial to the inheritance and innovation of scientific research thinking. It is hoped that the university can pay attention to the practical needs of postgraduates in attending the academic lectures, and increase the opportunities for them to learn and communicate with experts. Postgraduates themselves should also attach importance to the impact of academic lectures, and participate more in lectures to lead the direction of scientific research and broaden their horizons.

4.2. Improve the Organization and Management of Academic Lectures in Colleges and Universities

As the organizers of academic lectures, colleges and universities play a major responsibility for improving the promotion of academic lectures on postgraduate education. This questionnaire survey found that the overall satisfaction of postgraduates with lectures held by the university is “general”. Currently, the promotional effect of academic lectures in colleges and universities is poor, and some postgraduates fail to receive the information of lectures in time; the publicity ways are relatively limited, postgraduates mainly obtain academic lecture information through relatively traditional ways, including WeChat groups and QQ class groups, and postgraduates mainly receive information passively. Students did not take the initiative to pay attention to the information of lectures. In view of the lag of lecture publicity means, colleges and universities should enrich publicity methods and channels. It is recommended that universities push information on the academic lectures on online platforms such as WeChat official account and Mini Programs, and postgraduates should also take the initiative to pay attention to the information of academic lectures.

Most postgraduates have been forced to attend academic lectures for many times, which has many drawbacks. For those who are not interested in the contents of lectures or even whose personal scientific research plans are disrupted due to compulsory participation in the lectures, the effect of attending lectures is counterproductive, which is easy to arouse postgraduates’ aversion and discourage their enthusiasm and interest. It is far from the academic training value of

academic lectures, and even wastes educational resources. And postgraduates may miss the academic lectures they are interested in due to insufficient quota and lack of timely access to lecture information. In addition, a majority of postgraduates said that the university never solicited opinions on the lectures. All these problems reflect the deficiencies in the organization and management of academic lectures in the university, which do not fully consider the requirements of postgraduates.

Colleges and universities in ethnic minority areas should pay more attention to the participation of postgraduates in academic lectures. Colleges and universities should hold student-centered academic lectures based on postgraduates' actual learning and training needs, solicit their opinions and respect their willingness for participation. Educational resources need to be allocated reasonably. Universities should do a good job in the pre-investigation and post-feedback of academic lectures, understand the needs of postgraduates in real time, and adjust the speakers, themes, content and quantity of lectures in time, and ultimately achieve the purpose of improving the academic ability and training quality of postgraduates. Meanwhile, postgraduates should also enhance their awareness of active learning, attend lectures actively, participate in academic lectures that are helpful to their own development and interesting in a purposeful and planned way, and broaden their scientific research thinking and promote their own academic development.

4.3. Improve the Quality of Academic Lectures in Colleges and Universities in Ethnic Minority Areas

As a medical university in ethnic minority areas, Youjiang Medical University for Nationalities has been rooted in the old western revolutionary area for many years, and remained true to the original aspiration of cultivating medical talents in the west. However, due to the impact of geographical location in ethnic minority areas, there is a lack of educational resources, and postgraduates attend high-level academic lectures less often. Meanwhile, postgraduates believe that there is a big gap in academic atmosphere, lecture quality, number of lectures and speaker qualifications of academic lectures between colleges and universities in ethnic minority areas and non-ethnic areas, especially the speaker qualifications.

The development of ethnic minority areas is quite different from that of other areas, thus they must accelerate the pace of development. Cultivating the academic ability of ethnic minority postgraduates is closely related to the development of ethnic minority areas (Li, 2019). And academic lectures play an irreplaceable role in cultivating postgraduates' academic ability. Therefore, for colleges and universities that shoulder the heavy responsibility of cultivating high-level talents for ethnic minorities and ethnic minority areas, in order to increase the training of postgraduates' scientific research and academic ability, it is necessary to overcome the disadvantages in resources and geography, rely on various available resources in ethnic minority areas, strive for policies and strengthen exchanges externally, and deepen reforms internally (Liu & Gong, 2014). Col-

leges and universities in ethnic minority areas should be committed to improving the quality, quantity and academic atmosphere of academic lectures, which will help to improve the enthusiasm of postgraduates for scientific research and enhance their academic comprehensive ability.

5. Conclusion

This questionnaire survey took Youjiang Medical College for Nationalities as an example to verify that academic lectures in colleges and universities have a significant impact on the academic development of graduate students. However, due to related reasons such as ethnic minority areas' remote locations and limited educational resources, the postgraduates in ethnic minority areas were only generally satisfied with academic lectures. The academic lecture level, the organization and management of ethnic minority areas' colleges and universities also need to be improved. Relevant departments must highlight the educational platform of academic lectures in colleges and universities in ethnic areas. Meanwhile, colleges and universities in ethnic minority areas should attract more experts with high academic level to conduct academic exchanges, ensuring that postgraduates in these areas can enjoy academic lectures at the same level.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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