

## Research Article

### Classical Studies around the World: An Overview of its Courses and Programs in Occidental Region

<sup>1</sup>Ahmad Rizal Mohd Yusof, <sup>2</sup>Muhammad Asri Mohd Ali, <sup>3</sup>Zuliskandar Ramli,

<sup>4</sup>Mohammad Fauzi Sukimi and <sup>5</sup>Mohamed Abu Bakar Kassim

<sup>1</sup>Institute of Occidental Studies, National Universiti of Malaysia, Malaysia

<sup>2</sup>Department of Administrative Studies and Politics, Faculty of Economics and Administration, Universiti of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

<sup>3</sup>Institute of Malay World and Civilization,

<sup>4</sup>Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, School of Social, Development and Environmental Studies, National Universiti of Malaysia, Malaysia

<sup>5</sup>E-MAM Group and Digital Daya Perkasa Sdn. Bhd., Malaysia Technology, Universiti of Malaysia, Malaysia

**Abstract:** Classical studies have been taught around the world as an approach to introduce the great civilization of Greek and Roman. Both civilizations have become models for knowledge construction and nation building. In order to explore the classical studies, this study aims to examine courses and programs which have been provided by colleges and universities in Western Countries i.e., Occidental Region. Courses and programs will be discussed as a main focus in this study. This study was conducted online over a period of three months. About 240 classical departments have been analyzed particularly and every batch of information provided by classical department is presented in the results. It is observed that two courses and programs are offered by colleges and universities according to their mission and vision of the university, region and also the needs of students and education policy. The analyses show that courses and programs in classics offered by departments depend on the needs of such departments to sustain classical studies as a catalyst for knowledge construction and nation building.

**Keywords:** Classical studies, Greek, occidental, roman

## INTRODUCTION

Classical study is the branch of knowledge which lies under the discipline of humanities. It comprises the fields of languages, literature, philosophy, history, art, archaeology and other cultures of the ancient Mediterranean world. From the period of 600 B.C. until 600 AD, Ancient Greek and Ancient Rome have emerged throughout the Mediterranean Sea. Both civilizations are known as Greco-Roman World. Currently, colleges and universities in America, Canada, Europe, Australia, New Zealand and other occidental region offer classical studies in their undergraduate and postgraduate programs in their attempts to be more creative in teaching classical studies to undergraduate students. Several institutions have provided classical studies to the postgraduate students for widen the scope of classical to the new dimension of knowledge thus developed more findings in classical studies. There have been no efforts from any academic institutions to evaluate the classical studies which are taught and learned by students in

college and university. The need to look at all the elements in classical studies is crucial as it can broaden and deepen the understanding towards the expansion of its courses and programs in college and university. This study intends to examine the classical studies which have been taught in college and university all over the Western countries i.e., Occidental Region. It encompasses the scope of courses and programs which have been provided by colleges and universities all over America, Canada, Europe, Australia and New Zealand, South Africa and Brazil.

Classical studies have been constructed through elements in classical antiquity. The Ancient Greek and Rome Civilization have contributed its contents and both civilizations have endeavored the essence of Western culture. It has become the fundamental aspect of Western development. Ancient Greek for instance was a civilization that existed during the Archaic Period from 8<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> centuries BC to the end of antiquity (ca. 600 AD). This civilization started within a decade until the rise of Christianity through the Greek Dark Ages around 1100 BC and the invasion of Greece by Rome

Civilization on 146 BC. The Greek culture evolved over thousands of years. It was constructed through the lifestyle of Greek during the ancient times beginning from the Mycenaean Greece, following into Classical Greece, the Roman Empire and Byzantine Empire. During this period of time, the Greek has pioneered in architecture, cinema, dance, education, language, literature, arts, philosophy, science and mathematics, politics and religion. In the context of knowledge construction, the Greek has contributed so much effort to the academic realm. Philosophy, Law, history and other fields in humanities and social science discipline has been developed and expanded throughout the civilization. Scholars and intellectuals have put forth a new paradigm in teaching and learning process to the society. Socrates, Aristotle, Plato, Pythagoras and Heraclites were famous names during this period. The Ancient Greek language was so popular at that time and it has been used as a language for delivering knowledge.

The Roman Civilization had begun as early as 8<sup>th</sup> century BC. According to the founding myth of Rome, the city was founded on 21 April 753 BC by twin brothers Romulus and Remus. Roman Civilization was so popular with its culture and tradition. The Greek had contributed so much culture and identity to the Roman Civilization. When Greece was invaded by the Romans, the culture and tradition have been pluralized and assimilated into Roman Civilization. As with the Ancient Greece, Roman Civilization was also popular through its arts, music, architecture, literature, philosophy law and its form of the government. This civilization had made a major contribution to the world and in academic realm. The birth of Latin Language had given immediate impact to the expansion of Roman Empire. This had turned the Roman Civilization as the strongest empire throughout Europe, North Africa and Central Asia. Latin for instance had become a language for knowledge construction (Ostler, 2007). Literature, philosophy and other fields of humanities had been written through Classical Latin. The Romans are still being remembered today, including names such as Julius Caesar, Cicero, Augustus, etc. Ancient Roman society contributed greatly to government, law, politics, engineering, art, literature, architecture, technology, warfare, religion, language, society and more in the Western world. A civilization highly developed for its time, Rome professionalized and greatly expanded its military and created system of government called *res publica*, the inspiration for modern republics.

Contribution made from Ancient Greek and Roman Civilization is the major contents of Classical Studies. Both civilizations had pioneered the construction of knowledge in Western Civilization i.e., Occidental region. It had expanded into branches of knowledge until it becomes more relevant to the history of the world especially in constructing new knowledge in classical studies. Science, social science and humanities

had enriched its contents due to the research and studies by scholars and researcher in order to explore and deepen the understanding of Greek and Latin language, its literature, philosophy, history, civilization and other fields of knowledge. For instance, Frankopan (2013) examined the relationship between one of the most famous Byzantine sources, the *Alexiad* of Anna Komnene and the *Gesta Roberti Wiscardi*, written by William of Apulia at the end of the eleventh century. In this study, Frankopan found that Anna not only accessed material of Normans in Southern Italy but she has also drawn extensively on William of Apulia's account of the attacks of Robert Guiscard on Epirus in 1081-5. As a conclusion for his study, Frankopan (2013) suggested that the contribution of William of Apulia is surreptitiously acknowledged by the Byzantine author. Buchanan (2013) has also made an exploration in Greek and Latin terms in the discipline of nursing philosophy. He investigates the philology of austerity and found two subtly similar yet importantly different derivations from the Latin and the Greek. The *Latinausterus* is an abstract term meaning dry, harsh, sour; whereas the Greek *austeros* has a more embodied and literal meaning of making the tongue dry. He also argued within this grammar that forces itself upon European, the game of capital is played out through what the author terms an austerity bargain that is leveled by the financial elites: healthy capitalism equals a healthy society. He then examined six elements of the social determinants of health and what actually contributes to a healthy society. Kruschwitz (2012) has examined the discourse about female speech in Latin sources. Through consideration of social and hierarchical networks, he starts his starting point by looking at the Roman women who involved and negotiate their respective interests by linguistic means. He concluded his study by saying the female speech in Latin must be considered a genuinely *diastatic* variety, not a mere register. With regards to all of this study, the process of knowledge construction in classical studies is still ongoing and will be much more interesting throughout discipline and fields in academic realms.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This study focuses on four subject methods which have been taught by college and university lecturer to the student. There are Latin and Greek Course, Roman and Greek Course, Undergraduate Program and Postgraduate Program. Latin and Greek course is referring to the teaching of both languages as a basic requirement in classical studies. The course of both languages is the fundamental aspect of classical studies which will be examined through every college and university. Roman and Greek course mainly related to

the subject of history and civilization, literature, arts, philosophy, politics, economics and archaeology. All of these subjects are categorized under the course of Roman and Greek lesson. Two categories being used to observe lesson in classical studies provided to the student, the undergraduate program and postgraduate program. Both programs will determine the strength of classical studies in college and university.

A list of classics department in colleges and universities from the University of Notre Dame was used as to aid this study. The list has already divided all departments into each region i.e., America, Canada, Europe (United Kingdom, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland), Australia and New Zealand, South Africa and Brazil. There are 240 departments of classics from all of the countries. This entire department used English as a medium for delivering knowledge excluded France, Spain and one university in Germany. But this would not be affected as it gains more information towards understanding the nature of its classics program. Every college and university websites will be examined particularly based on the four subject method which has been mentioned earlier. Information displayed on the websites is sometimes not very helpful and may cause further confusion. To overcome this problem, this study has made several contacts through email and within this strategy; collection of data appears more efficient. Data collection was based on the names of colleges and universities of classics from all of the countries. In America, there are 160 classics department, 34 in College and another 120 in university. Canada has 17 departments of classics and there is no college offered classics program to the student. In Europe, United Kingdom has 15 classics department, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland has only one classics department. Germany has eight while Italy has five departments in classics. Ireland and the Netherlands have two classics

department while Spain has seven classics department. For the region of Oceania, Australia has 10 classics department and New Zealand has three departments in classic. South Africa owns three classics department and Brazil has only one classics department. Results will be displayed in the next section of this study.

## RESULTS

Results are presented in Fig. 1. This study has made some changes based on the data from Oceania region, South Africa and Brazil. To be more realistic, we combined Australia and New Zealand, South Africa and Brazil into one category. This is due to the fact that data from all said countries were less than 15 and it will be easier to analyze within one category from each region. All data has been analyzed based on the course which is provided by such institutions in five regions.

America has the largest number of departments and only one department in Brazil provided classical studies

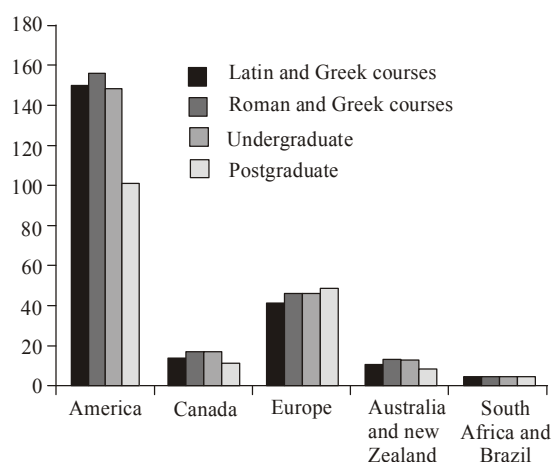


Fig. 1: Courses and programs in classical studies provided by classical departments

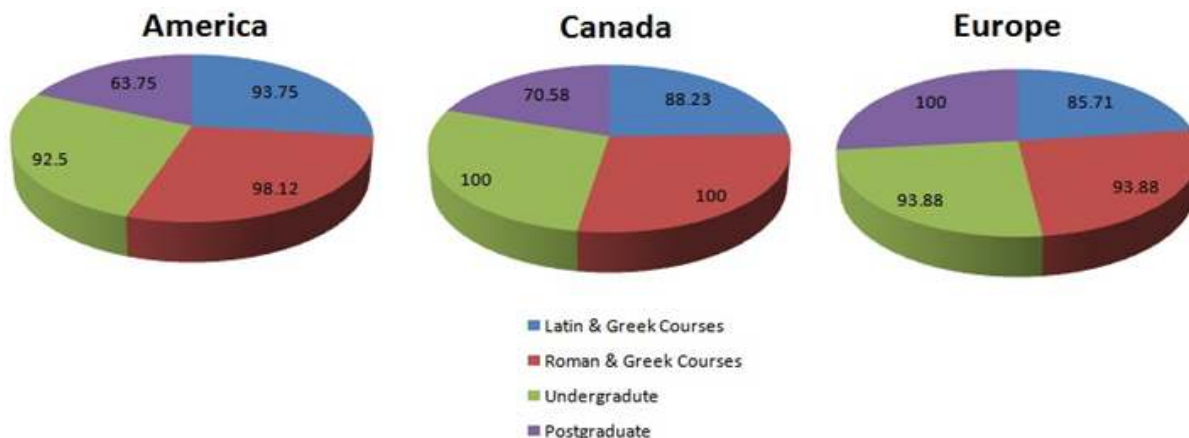


Fig. 2: Percentage of courses and programs of classical studies provided by classical departments in America, Canada and Europe

with all courses including undergraduate and postgraduate programs. Classical department in South Africa does provide all courses with undergraduate and postgraduate programs too. For Latin and Greek course, there are 157 departments in America, 15 in Canada, 42 in Europe, 11 in Australia and 3 in New Zealand provided this course to the students. The Roman and Greek Courses showed a greater result than Latin and Greek Courses. There are 157 departments in America, 17 in Canada, 46 in Europe, 13 in Australia and 3 in New Zealand. For undergraduate programs, 148 departments in America have provided it to the students; Canada provides 17, Europe 46, Australia 13 and New Zealand 3. Postgraduate programs have a less result compared to undergraduate. There are 102 departments provide this program in America, 12 in Canada, 49 in Europe, 8 in Australia and 3 in New Zealand.

Through these results, America, Canada and Europe have shown a great number of differences between all courses in classical studies. Universities in Australia have shown a very small difference between all courses. Only two departments did not provide the Latin and Greek courses while five others have not provided the postgraduate programs. New Zealand, South Africa and Brazil have shown 100% results and it indicates that all departments provide all courses in classical studies with undergraduate and postgraduate programs. We analyzed the results for America, Canada and Europe and present through the Fig. 2 with percentage of each courses as below.

The Latin and Greek courses have shown a highest percentage in America compared with Canada and Europe. This is because the number of colleges and universities in America is the biggest than Canada and Europe and percentage may differ in a large scale. In Canada, only two universities didn't provide this course and seven universities in Europe didn't provide this course to the students. The main reason for this is because of some departments allows the flexibility to the students to take this course from other language departments or from other private colleges which focus on both of the languages. Percentage of Roman and Greek Courses seems to be consistent in three said countries. This is due to the fact that the course is easy to handle by departments in terms of its syllabus and manpower. At the same time, this course can be taught through several disciplines such as history, arts, archeology, civilization, culture, politics, economic and philosophy. Canada has the full percentage of undergraduate program compared to America and Europe. This is because all classics departments are eligible to award students with its bachelor in arts or in classics. America has the biggest number of college in university which provides the undergraduate programs but some of classics departments only provide the minor and major courses and other department's only

focus to postgraduate programs. America and Canada have the lowest percentage in postgraduate programs while all universities in Europe provide postgraduate program. This program requires more cost of setting up the departments in terms of manpower, syllabus and also research fund. It requires certain standards of research and study for the departments to provide this course to the students. All universities in Europe have established classics study through postgraduate program and number of research and students increase every year consistently.

## **DISCUSSION**

Results from previous section have indicated four factors to be discussed in this study, courses, programs, region and country. Courses that we analyzed are actually based on the nature of classical studies provided to the students. The Latin and Greek language is the vital aspect of classical studies to be introduced to the new students. This is the basic part of classical studies which will construct the beginning level of understanding towards the intermediate and advance level of classical studies through courses in Roman and Greek. Once the students completed the language courses, ability to continue to the other courses will be easier. In such colleges and universities, combination of these two courses may produce students with the skill and knowledge to broaden and deepen their thoughts towards classical studies. It will enrich students with the ability to understand the absolute idea of Roman and Greek Civilization.

As for programs, the undergraduate is the best strategy for introducing classical studies to students. In such cases, undergraduate may enhance students with ability to understand and implement the classical studies but it will restrict students to discover more aspects in classical studies. The level of understanding may be limited to some extent and it may take a long time to develop more experts in classical studies. Postgraduate is the best program to widen the scope of understanding in classical studies. Normally the program will be conducted through classes (in advance level), dissertation or thesis writing. Such colleges and universities will award students with masters in arts or classics and philosophy doctorate in classical studies. In general, postgraduate will broaden and deepen the corpus of classical studies through discipline such as history, linguistics, arts, archeology, literature, politics, economics and more. It will then construct more knowledge, findings, approach, conceptual framework and method in classical studies. This will pave more discoveries whilst it will enrich the corpus of knowledge in classics.

The nature of country and region which provide the classics studies will depend on the education policy and rules. In America and Canada for instance, the aim to

increase students in classical studies is the main reason for any departments to provide more undergraduate programs with courses to furnish students with the skill and knowledge in classical studies. Postgraduate program were not so popular and it doesn't attract more students to further their studies. In Europe, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Brazil, postgraduate program are very popular and it shows a very good percentage. Once again it refers back to issues of education policy to the region itself. Europe for instance does provide research fund and scholarship to the students who interested in further their studies in classics. At the same time, the flexibility of postgraduate program in Europe has obtained significant elements for classical studies to be expanded more on postgraduate program. The system of postgraduate program in UK, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa has made the classical studies more relevance to evolve in said countries. The four said countries which is also known as commonwealth countries has assisted the classical studies to be expanded and flourished more in Europe.

### **CONCLUSION**

Classical studies are the most crucial elements in Occidental Region for sustaining its heritage towards knowledge construction and nation building. Courses and programs offered by colleges and universities have shown great impact on developing more research and

study towards classical studies. The gap between country and region has given an indicator for classic departments in college and university to be more creative and innovative in enhancing the process of teaching and learning. The difference of percentage in courses and programs has provided an analysis to provide a clear view of its contents. It helps to understand the nature of classical studies in Occidental Studies. Courses and programs are the main catalyst for broadening and deepening classical studies towards increasing the understanding of Occidental Region. But the nature on how these courses have been offered would depend on the education policy, cost, manpower and financial support to sustain the classical studies in the future.

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