

Factors Affecting Higher Education Students' Success

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Abstract - Study was designed to investigate factors those are facilitating success among higher education students. It was quantitative in nature, in which scientific methodology was used to measure the research objectives. Students' success scale was developed in this study through a standardized procedure which was based on 56 items and five subscales, named as, Students' Personal Characteristics, Factors related with Institutional Support, Factors related with Family Support, Students' Awareness and Access to Resource. Developed scale was administered on a stratified random sample of 100 Master level students (50 male and 50 female) studying at Quaid-i- Azam university, National University of Modern Language and International Islamic University. With the help of a statistical package of social sciences collected data was analyzed with statistical procedure i.e., SD, correlation and analysis of variance. Results revealed that in the acquisition of students' success their personal characteristics, factors related with institutional support, family support, their awareness and access to learning resource are playing a very important role. Male university students are showing more strong academic related characteristics as compared to female university students. Those students whose fathers are teaching professionals are exhibiting higher scores on students' success questionnaire and those whose fathers are business men scored lower. Higher education management and teachers can play a significant role in the determination of students' success if they devise management practices in collaboration with the factors that are promoting success among learners and by providing conducive learning environment with maximum learning resources.

Keywords – Factors, Students' Success & Higher Education.

I. INTRODUCTION

While giving a strategy for daily living Kiev stated that a successful life does not result from chance; nor is it determined by fate or good fortune, but rather through

a succession of successful days therefore, societies plan education for their inhabitants. Education is even more important for youth because through it institutions are preparing and grooming them for their future role in the development of their societies and acquisition of success of life. In the educational system a student's success is not due to one particular factor. Instead, those students who succeed tend to benefit from state of affairs that sustain their journey from numerous angles. The more of these factors that are there, the improved the likelihood is that a given student will do fine in educational institutions.

Somehow, today most of the students those enrolled in higher education institutions are without clear purpose and when they ask to, "what you want to become in future or what is your intent or purpose of getting higher education? Why do you select this subject? Normally, they don't have a well thought-out answer, or what they do say is often very based on an immediate need, such as to get a job or to pass time. Of the reasons of this flat answer is fuzzy goals, Goals are in fact fundamental link to how you translate great ideas into actionable impacts in your life and in ones academic, personal or even professional relationships.

The notion of goal setting in academics is not a standalone concept. It's an enabler not just toward achieving academic goals, but also help individual to maximize their efforts in right directions. Without concise, measurable, goals, many of our investments in the field of academics creation will be lost in the nurturing, development, and ultimate capitalization of ultimate success in life. Today learners spend a lot of time and effort on unproductive activities like coffee shop or lunch visits to the restaurant, and have little to show for that investment of time, effort, or resources. Most of the student have no idea that moving which directions can be helpful for the in the attainment of success and help them to accelerate or maximize their ability to achieve success academic goals.

Life is full of challenges, in order to meet with life challenges, need of success is vital one need to be well equipped with all desired knowledge, abilities and

skills which can be acquired with proper socialization. Here teachers, parents and peer are playing very important role. Success is such an attractive condition for human being that every human starts struggling to achieve this destiny, no doubt success has always been a prime goal for learners' to accomplish their educational voyage. For this they required to be facilitated by their teachers, parents and fellows. This is true that teachers and educational administrators have always been trying to explore and designs such strategies that can be helpful for achievement of students' success. This is also true that rate and extent of success of students vary from student to student.

In order to determine learners' success at higher education level different cognitive and environmental factors are playing very vital role among them motivation is key factor which can be defined as an internal force that help learners in completion of academic task. Being an important factor of learners' success, motivation is most researched topic in educational psychology. But in order to attain success along with motivation others factors are also equally important which includes learners' intellectual abilities, personality patterns, quality parenting, quality of institution, quality of teaching education family' social economic background, family participation, successful peer group and siblings. for the determination of a mature attitude towards the acquisition of success learners must have awareness of their goals, awareness about existing trend in the subject, awareness about the job market and awareness about all possible resources that can be used to attain success of educational endeavor.

Education is an intellectual activity which requires learners' intellectual abilities. Although every person is endowed with intellectual qualities but learners vary in terms of their intelligences which allow individuals in performing uniquely in their educational pursuits. Being sum total of an individual's thoughts, beliefs and effects of environment and family relationships personality patterns are also important for determining students' success. Students with higher consciousness and openness to experience may be more enthusiastic for success. In developing personality home environment is playing important which is reflected in behaviors such as self concept, self confidence and self esteem. Organized home environment may lead individuals towards higher self concept, positive self esteem and confident personality. Beside this environment provided in the educational institutions

also affects personality of the learners therefore, it should be supportive and learning friendly.

Reynolds (1998) conducted a research on factors that can enhance learners achievement in education institutions, as a result five factors were explored those are affecting the learners' performance such as, teaching of basic skills to the learners, positive expectations from every student, formative assessment activities, safe institutional environment and dynamic institutional leadership. At education level teachers are expected to exercise professionalism in their practices as they can bring change in learners' behaviour through model, moreover they can use different strategies to motivate learners towards attainment of successfulness in life.

Hart (2013) conducted a study on effects of socio-economic status on student's achievement and concluded that learners who belong to lower socio-economic background perform often lower than the students belonging to higher socio-economic background, as they are unable to utilize all the facilities having by the learners of higher socio-economic background. He further stated that learners from low socio-economic background have to face more challenging situations like lack of resources, part time job responsibilities, and in result high level of tension that can result in negative effects on their academic motivation. Hart also commented that families with low socio-economic status cannot provide their children with extra educational material, facilities and part time tutors that affect their child's performance negatively.

Shonk and Cicchetti (2001) suggested that the behavior and treatment of family towards children affects their academic performance. If, due to any reason children are not handled with care or are not supported positively by their family it causes the slowing down of the performance of student in his educational field. Hossler, Schmit and Vesper (1999) stated that parent's level of education and support provided to the student is also an important factor in increasing the achievement of students at Post secondary level. Along with the family, peer group involvement can also play a vital role in enhancing the academic achievement of the students. Many psychologists have suggested the use of peer support for enhancing student understanding and also supporting the teacher in using his teaching strategies. A research conducted by Hossler and Schmit and Vesper (1999) that student's selection process for institution is effected by many factors including student ability, sibling's

educational status and level. Along with the selection of college the students are also inspired by their elder siblings. Ceja (2001, 2004) has presented the view that siblings provide feel much closeness to their siblings that's why they trust them and also make them the source of inspiration for them in their educational careers.

Education is a complex process which cannot be planned or arranged without formulating goals. Formulation of future goals for students and also communication of these goals to the student is a source of motivation for the students. But this is the function that has to be performed on institution's behalf. But the other side of the same coin requires the awareness about the future goals is also very important. Braten and Stromso (2004) stated that awareness of the achievement goals provides students a purposeful activity to move towards a specific direction.

For students success at higher education level students' personal characteristics such as their motivation, intellectual abilities and personality brought up are acting like catalytic forces. Students' awareness about academic goals, about existing trend in the subject and knowledge about job market can determine their degree of success. Along with this institutional support in the form of institutional environment, effective teachers and peer group can boost learners' motivation in studies. In this context role of family is vital, here family social economic background, its participation and siblings are playing important role. Different types of resources are important for the learners' success, which include access to scholarship and access to academic resources. If learners of luck enough to have an excess to supportive environment then it may not only show them the way towards academic success but also towards successful in life behaviour being well mannered, having intelligent/ IQ / EQ, being disciplined, observing rules, exercising life

skills, having a positive framework of mind and ability of manage their self in a more sophisticated manners. Based on above mentioned behaviors, a research instrument was developed and administered on master level university students in order to learn about them.

II. OBJECTIVES

This study aimed to identify various factors those are success indicators for learners at higher education level; to measure the impact of students' demographic variation in determining their level of success; and to develop a quality model for students' success at higher education level.

III. METHOD

A scale was developed for the measurement of students success which was based on 56 items and five subscales, named as, Students' Personal Characteristics, Factors related with Institutional Support, Factors related with Family Support, Students' Awareness and Access to Resource. It was administered on a stratified random sample of 100 Master level students including 50 male and 50 female studying at Quaid-i- Azam University, National University of Modern Language and International Islamic University. Collected data carefully analyzed with the help of a statistical package of social sciences collected data was analyzed with statistical procedure i.e., SD, correlation and analysis of variance. Detailed description of the results is as under:

IV. RESULTS

For the determination of Reliability test was divided into two parts 28 items in each part. Reliability of part 1 was .835, while reliability of part two was .835 between form reliability yielded an index of .76. For the determination of construct validity item total and inter- scales correlations were calculated. Items total correlations ranged from .67 to .89.

Table 1. Inter-Scales Correlation between subscales of Research Questionnaire

Subscales	1	2	3	4	5
Students' Personal Characteristics					
Factors related with Institutional Support	.553				
Factors related with Family Support	.358	.413			
Students' Awareness	.484	.574	.58		
Access to Resource	.342	.520	.399	.70	
Total	.764	.806	.679	.734	

Table 1 describes the inter-scales correlations between total scale and subscale of research questionnaire. From this table it appears that all subscales have positive correlation with each other. Subscale of Institutional

Factors has higher correlation with total scale, whereas, subscale of Access to Resource has lower correlation with total scale. Higher inter-scales correlation exists between access to resource and Students' Awareness.

Table 2. Percentile Ranks Scores on Subscales and total Scale of Students Success (N=100)

Percentile Ranks	SPC	FRIS	FRFS	SA	AR	Total
5	34	26	22	28	19	159
10	48	32	28	29	22	174
15	49	36	29	30	25	180
20	51	39	30	33	26	182
25	52	40	31	34	27	186
30	53	41	32	35	28	190
35	54	42	33	35	28	193
40	55	42	34	37	29	196
45	56	42	35	37	30	198
50	57	43	35	38	30	201
55	59	43	35	38	31	203
60	59	44	36	39	31	206
65	60	45	37	40	32	207
70	61	45	37	40	33	210
75	63	46	38	41	35	212
80	64	46	39	42	36	217
85	64	48	40	43	36	217
90	66	49	41	44	37	226
95	71	51	46	46	38	234

Table 2 describes the percentile ranks of university students' scores on students success scale. From this table it appears that on the subscale of Students' Personal Characteristics, score of 52 falls on 25 percentile characterizing least supportive personal characteristics towards success, score of 57 fall on 50th percentile illustrating moderately supportive characteristics towards success and score of 63 fall on 75th percentile demonstrating supportive students personal characteristics towards success. As far as second subscale Factors related with Institutional Support is concerned, scores of 40, 43 and 46 falls on 25th 50th and 75th percentile respectively. Third

subscale is labeled as Factors related with Family Support, on this subscale scores of 31, 35 and 38 fall on 25th 50th and 75th percentile correspondingly. On subscale Students 'Awareness score of 34, 38 and 41 fall on 25th 50th and 75th percentile in that order. On the subscale access to resource scores of 27, 30, 35 fall on 25th, 50th and 75th percentile. On total scale of percentile ranks are calculated and found that score of 186 falls on 25th percentile, score of 201 fall on 50th percentile and score of 212 fall on 75th percentile illustrating mild moderate and highly supportive factors towards academic success.

Table 3. Gender Wise Differences of University Students Scores (N=100)

Subscales	Male		Female	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Students' Personal Characteristics	58	11	55	9
Factors Related with Institutional Support	43	4	41	7
Factors Related with Family Support	36	5	34	6
Awareness	38	6	34	6
Access to Resource	30	4	29	7
Total	205	30	193	35

Table 3 provides information regarding gender differences in relation with scores of the students on students success questionnaire, from this table it appears that overall male university students have

higher scores nearly on all subscale and total scale of students success questionnaire. Male university students are showing more strong academic related characteristics as compared to female university students. Male university students have higher institutional and familial support towards their academic as compared to female university students. Male students have more awareness towards various latest trends in their field of studies; moreover they have access to resource more than female university students.

Table 4. Medium of Instructions Wise Differences of University Students Scores

Subscales	English		Urdu	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Students' Personal Characteristics	56	9	52	8
Factors related with Institutional Support	42	7	43	5
Factors related with Family Support	38	6	32	4
Awareness	36	6	30	4
Access to Resource	29	6	30	3
Total	201	34	187	24

Table 4 demonstrates medium of instructions wise difference of university students scores on students success questionnaire, from this table it can be seen that students who were studied in English medium schools were more they achievement oriented than students of Urdu medium schools. Students who came from English medium schools have more supportive family, they are exhibiting more awareness. Students came from Urdu Medium schools have slightly higher access to academic resources.

Table 5. Differences in the Scores of University Students due to Professional Experiences (N=100)

Subscales	Experience		No Experience	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Students' Personal Characteristics	59	6	35	9
Factors Related with Institutional Support	44	4	26	7
Factors Related with Family Support	30	5	35	6
Awareness	38	5	28	6
Access to Resource	31	4	29	7
Total	202	24	153	35

Table 5 shows the differences in the scores of respondents due the variable work experience, results shows those students who have professional experiences considerable scores higher nearly on all subscales of students' success questionnaire. Working students (professional experience) are having more relevant personality characteristics that are producing success. Similarly they are also having more intuitional support as compared to those who do not have work experience. Inexperienced students have more familial support as compared to experienced one.

Table 6. Father Profession Wise Differences of University Students Scores

Subscales	Govt. Service		Business Men	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Students' Personal Characteristics	59	10	54	9
Factors related with Institutional Support	48	3	43	7
Factors related with Family Support	28	4	32	5
Awareness	40	5	29	3
Access to Resource	26	3	22	2
Total	201	25	180	26

Table 6 (cont). Father Profession Wise Differences of University Students Scores

Subscales	Teachers		Professionals	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Students' Personal Characteristics	65	12	57	8
Factors related with Institutional Support	51	5	40	6
Factors related with Family Support	35	4	36	5
Awareness	35	3	29	3
Access to Resource	28	3	29	3
Total	214	27	191	25

Table no 6 illustrates the differences in the scores of students due to variable father profession, from this table it appears that students whose fathers are teaching professionals are exhibiting higher scores on students success questionnaire. Students whose fathers are business men scored lower on students' success questionnaire. They have less awareness of new trend in their field of studies. Children of business persons are also having less access towards academic resources.

Table 7. Mother Profession Wise Differences of University Students Scores Subscales

Subscales	House Wife		Working	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Students' Personal Characteristics	58	8	68	7
Factors related with Institutional Support	42	6	45	5
Factors related with Family Support	34	3	33	4
Awareness	37	4	42	4
Access to Resource	30	4	38	3
Total	201	25	226	23

Table 7 provides the difference in the scores of university students due to variable mother profession. From this table it is evident that students whose mothers are professional are having higher scores on nearly all subscale and total scale of students' success questionnaire, except on the subscale factors related with family support.

Table 8 . Family Socio economic status Wise Differences of University Students Scores (N=100)

Subscales	less than 50000		51000-75000	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Students' Personal Characteristics	56	11	56	10
Factors related with Institutional Support	42	7	41	8
Factors related with Family Support	25	7	35	6
Awareness	37	6	35	5
Access to Resource	30	6	28	4
Total	190	37	195	33
Subscales	76000-100000		100000 and above	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Students' Personal Characteristics	56	5	54	6
Factors related with Institutional Support	41	5	40	4
Factors related with Family Support	35	4	28	3
Awareness	37	3	36	4
Access to Resource	31	3	30	3
Total	200	20	188	20

Table 8 describes the differences in the scores of university students belonging to various socioeconomic backgrounds. Table tells that students who belong to higher income families have higher score on students' success questionnaire, while families with less income students score lower on this questionnaire. On the subscale awareness students belonging to all subgroups have somewhat equal scores. This table also

providing us interesting students from higher and lower income families have less family support.

Proposed Model for Higher Education Students'

Success

Independent Variables

Students' Personal Characteristics

1. Students Motivation
2. Intellectual Abilities
3. Personality brought up

Factors Related with Institutional Support

1. Institutional Environment
2. Effective Teachers
3. Peer group

Factors Related with Family Support

1. Social Economic background
2. Family participation
3. Siblings

Students' Awareness

1. Awareness about academic goals
2. Awareness about existing trend in the subject
3. Knowledge about job market

Access to Resource

1. Financial Aspects
2. Access of scholarship
3. Access of Academic Resources

Dependent Variables

1. Success in Academic

- 1) Higher Grades

2. Success in Behaviour

- 1) Well mannered
- 2) Intelligent/ IQ / EQ
- 3) Disciplined
- 4) Following rules

3. Successful in learning of life skills

- 1) Positive framework of mind
- 2) Decision making Power
- 3) Self -management

V. DISCUSSION

Higher education students' success is important not only for students but also for community. For successful completion of education many factors are important,

such as institutional environment, professional faculty who is responsive to students needs, supportive family. Along with above mentioned factors student characteristics are playing very vital role. Students' access to various learning resources are is also important for their successful completion of courses in which they are enrolled.

If we discuss above mentioned factors one by one with reference to their importance in successful acquisition of learning experiences we may realize the importance of students' personal characteristics. Students' predisposition of cognitive abilities, aptitude, attitude, personality patterns are of course important. When we look at the antecedent of previously said behaviour we realized that support at various corners including, institutional policies, quality faculty, family participation, and peer group is imperative to determine students' predisposition. Therefore, it can say with confidence that if parents and other authorities aspiring to produce successful graduates then that ought to device some appropriate strategy.

Subscale wise percentile analysis of students scores reveled that on subscale of Students' personal characteristics, score of 52 falls on 25 percentile characterizing least supportive personal characteristics towards success, score of 57 fall on 50th percentile illustrating moderately supportive characteristics towards success and score of 63 fall on 75th percentile demonstrating supportive students personal characteristics towards success.

As far as second subscale Factors related with institutional support is concerned, scores of 40, 43 and 46 falls on 25th 50th and 75th percentile respectively. Third subscale is labeled as Factors related with Family Support, on this subscale scores of 31, 35 and 38 fall on 25th 50th and 75th percentile correspondingly. On subscale students 'awareness score of 34, 38 and 41 fall on 25th 50th and 75th percentile in that order. On the subscale access to resource scores of 27, 30, 35 fall on 25th, 50th and 75th percentile. On total scale of percentile ranks are calculated and found that score of 186 falls on 25th percentile, score of 201 fall on 50th percentile and score of 212 fall on 75th percentile illustrating mild moderate and highly supportive factors towards academic success.

At higher education level medium of instruction is English; therefore students' familiarity of langue is also one of the factors that could lead students towards failure or success. Through this study it was explored that how university students scores differ in term of basic medium of instructions on students success

questionnaire, result revealed that students who were studied in English medium schools were more achievement oriented than students of Urdu medium schools. Results also revealed that students who came from English medium schools have more supportive family, they are exhibiting more awareness, students came from Urdu Medium schools have slightly higher access to academic resources.

Gender differences in relation with scores of the students on students success questionnaire were explored and found that overall male university students have higher scores nearly on all subscale and total scale of students success questionnaire. Male university students are showing more strong academic related characteristics as compared to female university students. Male university students also have higher institutional and familial support towards their academic as compared to female university students. Male students have also showing more awareness towards various latest trends in their field of studies; moreover they have access to resource more than female university students.

Father profession wise difference were calculated in order to determine role of family demographic variables in students success, results revealed that students whose fathers are teaching professionals are exhibiting higher scores on students success questionnaire. Students whose fathers are business men scored lower on students' success questionnaire. Differences in the scores of university students were calculated due to the variable mother profession. Result make it clear that students whose mothers are professional are having higher scores on nearly all subscale and total scale of students' success questionnaire, except on the subscale factors related with family support.

Difference in the score of university students due to socioeconomic backgrounds were also calculated and discovered that students who belong to higher income families score high on students' success questionnaire, while families with less monthly income students score lower on this questionnaire.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

In the acquisition of Students' success their personal characteristics, factors related with institutional support, family support, their awareness and access to learning resource are playing very important role.

Students who came from English medium school backgrounds have more supportive family, have more

awareness as compared to the students came from Urdu Medium schools background.

Male university students are showing more strong academic related characteristics as compared to female university students.

Male university students have higher institutional and familial support towards their academic as compared to female university students.

Male students have more awareness towards various latest trends in their field of studies; moreover they have access to resource more than female university students. Students whose fathers are teaching professionals are exhibiting higher scores on students' success questionnaire.

Students whose fathers are business men scored lower on students' success questionnaire. Students whose mothers are professional are having higher scores on nearly all subscale and total scale of students' success questionnaire, except on the subscale factors related with family support.

Students who belong to higher income families have higher score on students' success questionnaire as compared to the students belong to less income families.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Higher education management plays significant role in the determination of students' success if they devise management practices in collaboration with teachers and students needs and aspirations. Institutions may provide conducive learning environment with maximum learning resources to each learn. Teachers that a learner has throughout his academic career will play a vital role in his success. Generally those teachers who are encouraging and able to create an open, supportive learning environment hearten success. Moreover teachers who are keen about their subjects arouse students to become interested in it.

Along with above mentioned characteristics it is also expected from the teachers that while teaching do care about the individual difference of the students and care to those who despite of potentialities could not perform well. Teachers can adjust their teaching methods to better support learning for learners who need extra support. Teachers can also play a role to motivate such learners. Teachers can facilitate their institutions in devising extracurricular activities, because such activities are playing vital role in student success and provide them motivation and direction through building of self-esteem and socialization skills.

Higher education teachers can also be helpful in identifying various future prospects of the job market.

Parental involvement is central in predicting a student's success. Higher intuitions can persuade parental involvement through newsletters and websites. They may also hold parent-teacher days and invite discussion on factors that are leading higher education learners towards success.

Significance of the study

No doubt the quality of the education system is depending on students' cognitive abilities, skills, teachers' professionalism, parental support and services being provided by intuitions. Finding of the study will significantly improve the attitude of students towards their academics. As the present era is the era of quality, higher education commission is also emphasizing a lot on imparting quality education to learners at higher education level. Finding of the present study will be beneficial for students and teachers of higher education and to increase quality, worth and capacity building of the learners.

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