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STUDY ENGAGEMENT DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC: FACTORS INFLUENCING ON HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS IN INDIA

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Abstract

This study is associated with analysis and evaluation of the study engagement in the higher study students in India. This study has been done on then Indian higher study students in order to find the impact on the motivation. In such a case, this study has recognized two particular factors that need to be evaluated on the basis of impact. These factors are family engagement and personal resources. The personal resources have been the health and the resilience. Here, result suggesting that there is strong correlation between the dependent and independent variables. This study has demonstrated the relationship between the family environment and the personal resources.

Keywords: Pandemic, Higher education, India, Students.

INTRODUCTION

Higher education in India has been one of the critical societal determinants that affect human perception. Education above the high school level is considered higher education. Students desire higher education to find rewarding jobs, earn higher income and live a healthy life than others. In such a case, several factors impact a student's engagement during a pandemic environment. In this study, a critical analysis on the factors like 'family environment' and 'personal resources' have been done in order to learn about their impact on the Indian higher education student's engagement.

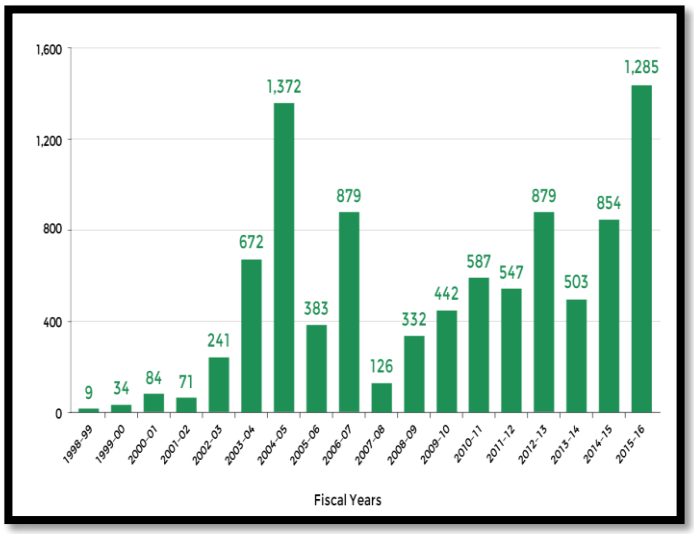

Figure 1: *Indian higher education dynamics*

(Source: WENR 2018)

Aims and objective

Aim

The study has been aimed towards the identification of factors that have affected Indian higher education students' engagement during the pandemic.

Objectives

RO1. To examine factors like a family environment, personal resources and their association with student's individual engagement with higher study.

RO2. To find whether pandemic environments have influenced the family environment and personal resources of the higher study students.

RO3. To use primary quantitative research along with regression, correlation analysis to find out research variables are interrelated or not.

RO4. To critically analyze impacts, challenges and provide recommendations for the improvements.

Research hypothesis

1. Family environment (IV)

H1: There is a significant relationship between family environment and study engagement (DV), and both are dependent on each other

H0: There is a significant relationship between family environment and study engagement, and they are mutually exclusive events

2. Personal resources (IV)

H2: There is a significant relationship between personal resources and study engagement (DV), and both have a dependency on each other.

H0: There is no relationship between personal resources and study engagement, and they are mutually exclusive events.

Literature review

Critical analysis on the family environment affecting study engagement in Indian higher education students

Prior to Covid 19, pandemic higher education students were exposed to multiple stressors like academic pressure, deadlines and financial constraints. After the Covid 19 pandemic, such stressors have been further supported with online education and change of education modes. As mentioned by O'Shea (2016), changes in the teaching and learning mode have been a critical determinant for the student's motivation to study. Students' motivation and engagement are correlated with each other. An increase in motivation improves behavioural aspects, thus increasing engagement and participation rates. One of the factors that affect a student's motivation to study in a pandemic environment is the family environment. Bashir & Kaur (2017) mentioned that a positive family environment triggers the psychological process of a student and affects their responses during crisis situations. Having a family environment that is chaotic and lack orders can negatively contribute to a student's motivational aspect.

On the other hand, The Family Relationships Index suggests that there are three subscales of relationships such as 'cohesiveness', 'expressiveness' and 'conflict'. Bonnaire & Phan (2017) mentioned that this theory measures the overall quality of a family environment. Indian families' cohesiveness and expressiveness depend on economic freedom and socio-economic dynamics. Likewise, conflicts among family members affect the student's motivation towards the study. In this regard, higher education students pursuing online education during a pandemic can get affected in terms of motivation through family conflicts and lack of cohesiveness.

Critical analysis on the impacts of personal resources on the Student's engagement in education

The personal resources of an individual have a direct impact on the psychological dynamics of an individual, as per the views of Irfan et al. (2020) personal resources of a student can be referred to as the resilience and state of health. Saravanakumar AR., & Padmini Devi K.R.(2020) also viewed personal resources usually denote positive self-evaluation on certain environmental parameters and help an individual to control them. Al-Samarraie et al. (2018) observed that there is a positive relationship between personal resources and study engagement. Mahalakshmi,K., & Radha,R. (2020) the more positive a student's self-regard, the more goal-oriented he or she should be with academic performance. Personal

resources like health and resilience improve an individual's motivation to pursue goals and objectives.

The Demand resource- theory suggests that increasing demands impacts stressors. According to Sarwar et al. (2021), resources are the predictors of the work environment. Having adequate resources improves engagement and motivation towards a particular job or work. Radha R. et al. (2020) the same can be applied with the academic environment, and students having sufficient personal resources like health and resilience can improve motivational aspects. Social and personal development demands are highly impactful towards the engagement behaviour of students. Rouhani et al. (2018) mentioned that having health benefits is always supportive towards a positive motivation approach. Therefore, it is evident that health and motivation are interrelated. Palanisamy P. et al. (2020) as the motivation towards study is related, therefore, engagement within higher education, students should be dedicated to the personal resource factor.

Methodology

In this study, a primary research framework has been adopted. The aim is to conduct a primary survey with the help of a 10 question-based questionnaire. Here, close-ended survey questionnaires have been used. Mohajan (2018) mentioned that a close-ended questionnaire-based should be supported with Likert scale-based and multiple-choice questions. Therefore, Likert-scale based questions are adopted within the instrument design. It should be mentioned that the primary data collection through survey data collection has been significantly helpful in terms of time management and resource maintenance. Moreover, questionnaires have been distributed among the Indian higher study students along with teachers. The total sample size was 50, including teachers and the students.

It is important to mention that the analysis of this study is based on cross-sectional quantitative analysis. There has been the use of software like SPSS in order to analyze the data set and find interrelationships between the dependent and independent variables. Analysis of this study has been on the basis of regression and correlation analysis. Both of these hypothesis testing's have been on the basis of SPSS quantitative data. Dźwigoł (2018) suggested that the benefits of regression testing are that it identifies the relationship between two variables. This has been used in this study in order to predict the behaviour of each factor on the basis of variables. Contextually, dependency dependent variables in the independent variables are confirmed with the help of correlation and regression tests. The behaviour of the dependent variable defines study engagement and whether they are related to the family environment and personal resources.

Therefore, in this study, a primary quantitative structure has been adopted, and this is supported with the help of a descriptive design. Kothari (2019) mentioned that primary quantitative studies are significant in terms of analyzing the concept and establishing relations on the basis of empirical findings. Therefore, empirical findings through primary data have been significant in terms of evaluating the results.

Results

Descriptive test

Table 1: *Descriptive statistics"*

"Statistics

		How old are you?	What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed?	How many members does your family have?	What is your gender?	Are you married?
N	Valid	50	50	50	50	50
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		2.16	2.36	3.66	1.56	1.60
Median		2.00	3.00	4.00	1.00	2.00
Mode		3	3	5	1	1
Std. Deviation		.866	.749	1.334	.675	.639

This table depicts the descriptive statistics of the data set. It can be seen that the mean value for the age is 2.16. It suggests that the majority of the participants belong to the age group of 22-25 years. At the same time, in terms of higher education level, the mean value and median value are 2.36 and 3. Therefore, it can be said that the majority of the participants are either pursuing masters or Ph D. 3.66 mean value for the family members denotes that they have more than 3. At the same time, 1.60 means values determine that the majority of the participants are unmarried. The standard deviation values for each question have been .866, .749 1.334, .675 and .639. Based on the study of Purwanto et al. (2021), descriptive statistics summarizes the whole data sets and provides a comprehensive impression of the data. Here, the mean median and standard deviation values suggesting that the data set has a significant variance level and data are valid.

"Age"

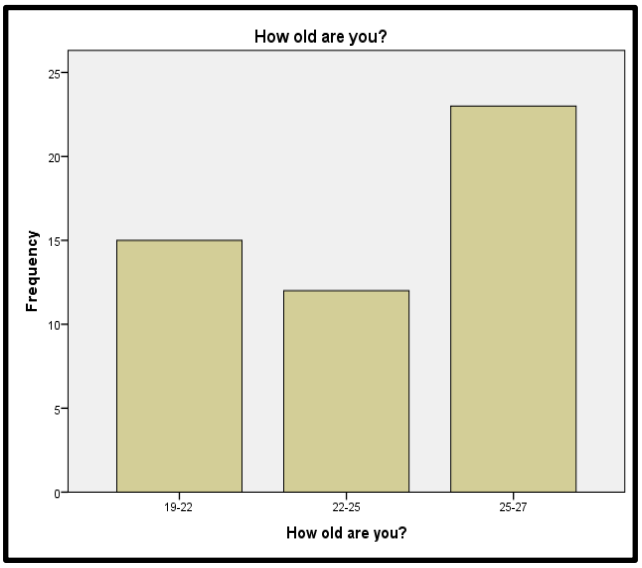

Figure 2: *Age*

(Source: SPSS File)

The above graph shows that the majority of the participants belong to the 25-27 groups.

Education

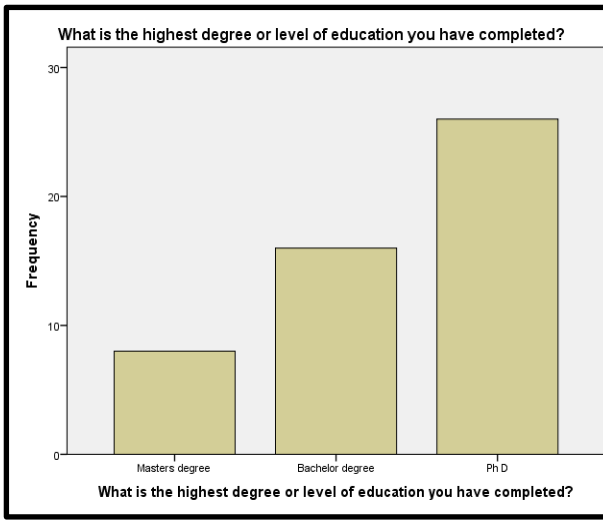

Figure 3: *Education*

(Source: SPSS File)

It can be seen that the maximum number of participants have completed or are pursuing PhD degrees.

Family

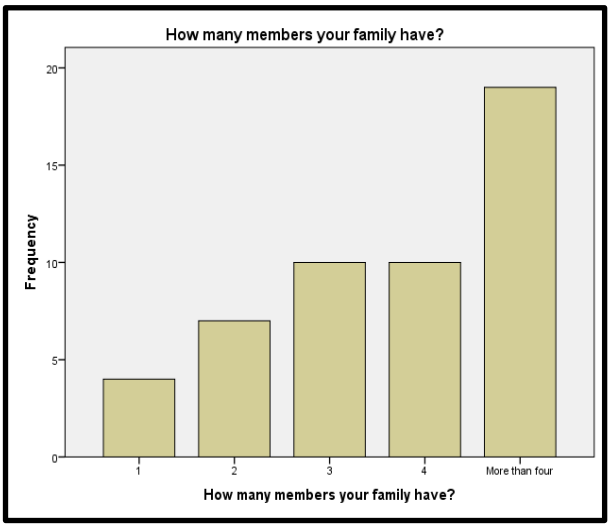

Figure 4: *Family*

(Source: SPSS File)

It is evident that the majority of the participants have more than four family members.

Gender

Figure 5: *Gender*

(Source: SPSS File)

It is evident that the female participants are higher in numbers in terms of pursuing higher education degrees.

Marital status

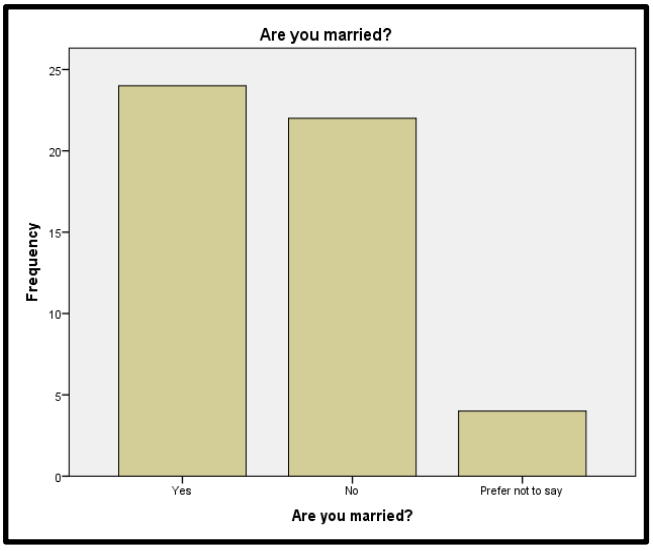

Figure 6: *Marital status*

(Source: SPSS File)

There are both married and unmarried students that are partitioning in higher education degrees in India.

Regression test

"Hypothesis 1

Table 2: *Summary"*

Model Summary									
Model	**R**	**R Square**	**Adjusted R Square**	**Std. Error of the Estimate**	**Change Statistics**				
					R Square Change	**F Change**	**df1**	**df2**	**Sig. F Change**
1	.397[a]	.158	.140	1.232	.158	8.991	1	48	.004
a. Predictors: (Constant), How many members does your family have?									

The above table depicts the model summary of the first hypothesis. It can be seen that the sig F. change value has been observed as 0.004. The R-value of dependent and independent variables within this is observed as 0.397. At the same time R square value can be noticed as 0.158. The adjusted R square is 0.140 whereas the R square change value is 0.158. As per the views Pallant (2020) the R square value should be above 0.5 in order to be having a strong relationship between both variables. Here, the R square value is 0.158 therefore the relationship between the two variables is strong.

Table 3: *ANOVA"*

"ANOVA						
Model		**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
1	**Regression**	13.647	1	13.647	8.991	.004[b]
	Residual	72.853	48	1.518		
	Total	86.500	49			
a. Dependent Variable: Do you think family environment is important for motivation and engagement?						
b. Predictors: (Constant), How many members does your family have?						

The above table only depicts the ANOVA of the data set. It can be seen that the sum of squares and mean squares 13.647 and Mean square value 13.647. The Sig value for the data set can be seen as 0.004. Purwanto et al. (2021) mentioned that the sig value should be less than 0.05 ,in order to accept the alternative hypothesis. Here, the sig value is lower than 0.05 therefore alternative hypotheses "There is significant relation between family environment and study engagement (DV) and both are dependent on each other" is accepted.

Table 4: *Coefficients"*

"Coefficients						
Model		**UnstandardizedUnstandardizedUnstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Standardized Standardized Coefficients**	**t**	**Sig.**
		B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
1	(Constant)	2.052	.513		3.998	.000
	How many members does your family have?	.396	.132	.397	2.999	.004
a. Dependent Variable: Do you think family environment is important for motivation and engagement?						

The coefficient table shows that the B value is .396. Therefore, it can be said that change in the independent variable must be affecting the dependent variables .396 times. Therefore, independent variables family environment and dependent variable study engagement are correlated with others. Any change in the family environment must be affecting study engagement of the students.

Hypothesis 2

Table 5: *Summary"*

"Model Summary									
Model	**R**	**R Square**	**Adjusted R Square**	**Std. Error of the Estimate**	**Change Statistics**				
					R Square Change	**F Change**	**df1**	**df2**	**Sig. F Change**
1	.481[a]	.231	.215	.902	.231	14.451	1	48	.000
a. Predictors: (Constant), Do you think personal resources like health have impacted your study potentials?									

This section provides analysis on the second hypothesis and measures whether there is a relationship between personal resources and study engagement. The above table denoting that the R square value is .231 and adjusted R square value is .215. Darlington & Hayes (2017) mentioned that the R square value must be less than 0.05 in order to suggest a strong relationship between the two variables. Here, the R square value is 0.231 which is less than the 0.5, thus referring to the fact that both variables are interrelated with each other.

Table 6: *ANOVA"*

"ANOVA						
Model		**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
1	Regression	11.760	1	11.760	14.451	.000[b]
	Residual	39.060	48	.814		
	Total	50.820	49			
a. Dependent Variable: Do you think better performance in higher studies can be achieved by higher motivation?						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Do you think personal resources like health have impacted your study potentials?						

Here, in this table, Anova is being represented. It can be seen that the Sig value is 0.000. Purwanto et al. (2021) opined that sig value must be less than 0.005 in order to accept the alternative hypothesis. Here the sig value only depicts that the alternative hypothesis "There is significant relation between personal resources and study engagement (DV) and both have dependency on each other" must be accepted.

Table 7: *Coefficients"*

"Coefficients						
Model		**UnstandardizedUnstandardizedUnstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Standardized Standardized Coefficients**	**t**	**Sig.**
		B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
1	**(Constant)**	**2.355**	**.466**		**5.052**	**.000**
	Do you think personal resources like health have impacted your study potential?	.433	.114	.481	3.801	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Do you think better performance in higher studies can be achieved by higher motivation?						

This table refers to the interrelationship between the both variables and whether changing one would be affecting others. Here B value is 0.433. Pallant (2020) suggested that change in the dependent variable can be predicted through the B value. Therefore, any change in the independent variable personal resource must be changing the dependent variable. Hence, it is evident that change impact on personal health would be affecting the behavioural intent to study.

Correlation

The Pearson correlation value for the data can be seen as 0.659; this denotes that there is a strong correlation between the independent and dependent variables. [Refer To the appendix]

Discussion

The primary data analysis with the help of correlation and regression tests has been

evaluated in the previous section. The regression analysis has suggested that the study environment and motivation towards higher study has strong relation with. As per the views of Karki (2021) the education environment is important for the effective pursuing of higher studies. In such a case, having a proper family environment only improves the study motivation among the students. Thus, it is important to have a less chaotic environment in terms of having better study motivation. Therefore, students with a highly supportive family environment should be increasing their engagement dynamics.

At the same time, personal resources have been another factor that has been quite critical during the pandemic environment. Iran et al. (2020) opined that personal resources like health and resilience have a direct impact on an individual's work performance. The data analysis identified that the majority of the participants have perceived that personal resources have been one of the predictors in high engagement with higher studies. The result and the findings have been significantly supportive with the positive correlation between the personal resource and study engagement. Therefore, it can be said in order to achieve high engagement it is necessary that students have health and resistance.

Conclusion

Therefore, Indian students have been affected by the pandemic environment. The higher study students require a significant engagement level in terms of aching success in academic as well as future professional fields. Therefore, it can be said that higher study student's engagement and motivation levels get dictated by the family environment and personal resources. The studies have analyzed the dependency of the two variables and identified that there is a strong positive correlation. Therefore, a change in the family environment or personal resources would be chasing the engagement and behavioural intent of the higher study students. It is recommended that the higher study students must ensure that a positive environment is available in order to increase their engagement with academic activities.

Future scope

This study is critically dependent on the primary data and regression and correlation analysis are done for the analysis of the data. However, in future, a mixed-method study should be done in order to evaluate the relationship among students' engagement in higher studies and associated factors. There is a need for qualitative analysis with the help of country-based secondary data. Thus, in future study, mixed data analysis would be helping better result and issue identification.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Correlation

Correlations

		Do you think family environment is important for motivation and engagement?	Do you think that you get distracted in your study due to family issues and problems?	Do you think personal resource like health has impacted your study potentials?	Do you think that healthy life made you study better?	Do you think better performance in higher studies can be achieved by higher motivation?
Do you think family environment is important for motivation and engagement?	Pearson Correlation	1	.659**	.183	.193	.098
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.203	.180	.498
	N	50	50	50	50	50
Do you think that you get distracted in your study due to	Pearson Correlation	.659**	1	.433**	.381**	.196
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.002	.006	.173

family issues and problems?	N	50	50	50	50	50
Do you think personal resource like health has impacted your study potentials?	Pearson Correlation	.183	.433**	1	.747**	.481**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.203	.002		.000	.000
	N	50	50	50	50	50
Do you think that healthy life made you study better?	Pearson Correlation	.193	.381**	.747**	1	.415**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.180	.006	.000		.003
	N	50	50	50	50	50
Do you think better performance in higher studies can be achieved by higher motivation?	Pearson Correlation	.098	.196	.481**	.415**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.498	.173	.000	.003	
	N	50	50	50	50	50

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Appendix 2: Survey question

Demographic questions

How old are you?

19-22

22-25

25-27

More than 27

What is your gender?

Male

Female

Others

What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed?

Bachelor degree

Masters degree

Ph D.

Others

Are you married?

Yes

No

Prefer not to say

How many members your family have?" H1 I

1

2

3

4

More than four

Variables

Do you think family environment is important for motivation and engagement? H1 D

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly agree

Do you think that you get distracted in your study due to family issues and problems?

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly agree

Do you think personal resource like health has impacted your study potentials? H2 I

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly agree

Do you think that healthy life made you study better?

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly agree

Do you think better performance in higher studies can be achieved by higher motivation? H2 D

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neutral

Agree

Strongly agree