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Student's cognizance about parental participation in their subject selection at graduate level

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Abstract

The study aimed to explore the student's cognizance about parental participation in their subject selection at Graduate level. Major objectives of the study were to find out students views about the importance of parents' participation in their subject selection at graduate level and to find out the parents pressure on subject selection of graduation students. 80 male and 80 female students were selected as well as 40 students out of 160 were selected randomly for the interview. Quantitative data were analysed using SPSS 20.0 for statistical analysis and qualitative data were encoded, described, classified and identified by subject and interpretation that are explained by the meaning provided by the analysis. Findings of the study revealed that majority of the students' were not in the favour of their parents' involvement in their subject selection at graduate level and there is allot of pressure from parents' in subject selection of graduation students.

Keywords: Students' cognizance, Parents' Participation, Subject Selection, Graduate Level

Introduction

Education is much more important for a society to become developed and successful. A well-organized civilized society is the result of educated people. The home has a huge accountability system to socialize their children to educate, nurture and make them fruitful members of their society (Gelfer, 1991). As more parents participate in the education process, more children may stand out in the academic career and become socially responsible members. Today's parents see themselves accountable for guidance and counselling of their children by keeping in mind their interests and future needs of the market. Parents also acknowledge that they may have had their own self-worth achievements in their children's experiences (Hunt, 2008).

Stewart (2008) sets the stage for defining families and communities in which parents participate in activities that play an active role in creating a caring educational environment, such as those who are educated to educate their children. He also claims that parents who are educated with their children are those who continue to communicate with teachers, regularly collaborate with the education community, show good parenting skills volunteer time, play an active role in educational institutions and participate in decision-making. Parental involvement in learning activities, while not only entirely at home but at educational institutes also.

The problem under review is to explore the student's cognizance about parental participation in their subject selection at graduate level. The major objectives of the study were to find out students views about the importance of parents' participation in their subject selection at graduate level and to find out the parents pressure on subject selection of graduation students.

The involvement of parents in child's learning enhances the student's ethical, attitudinal and academic performance in all subject areas, promoting behavioural and social adjustment in different cultural and social modifications. In all these aspects of the educational set-up, family participation helps learners grow into socially productive and responsible members. Student achievement is the most special predictor of economic or social status, but to the extent that the student's family can get involved, take interest in creating a family environment conducive to learner learning, become involved in the study of children and learning institutions and communities (Henderson & Berla, 1994).

Parents play an indispensable role in supporting children's learning and encouraged to

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actively participate in the academic life of their children's. Parents are all partners in the education of children and include discretionary advice and sometimes act like advisory committees in their children's education in different situations to provide help. The fact shows that the family participates in student academic development can result in a very neat and powerful productive personality (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001).

In addition to educational achievement, parental involvement is an indicator of alignment and student development, including better social skills, behaviour improvement, confidence, increased social capital, personal competence, increased trust, accountability, effectiveness and the belief in the importance of education (Drake, 2000). Higher educational institutions not only provide new experiences for learners to explore, but also provide students with access to new ways of thinking that are critical to understanding the world and adjusting in different situations. The experience of providing and collaborating on a course in a classroom gives students exposure to different perspectives and issues that have been shown to affect the student's social and cultural attention. However, research has yet to address the role of parents in promoting students' personal and socio-political understanding of the experiences. Parental involvement is not necessarily unhealthy or unacceptable. There are many benefits including the experience of parents and families in colleges and universities. There are parents who feel like a partner in a child's education can be a great advantage to both the student and the institution (Gurin, Day, Hurtado & Gurin, 2002).

Methodology

Present study was descriptive in nature; descriptive research is known as a suitable method that keeps in sight the nature of the problem and demand of the study. The main purpose of a descriptive study is to present to the researcher the contours or aspects related to the purpose of the phenomenon from a personal, organizational, industrial or any other stereoscopic interpretation (Sekaran, 2003). In this study, the researchers developed a questionnaire to understand the views of students, as well as interviews were conducted to understand the opinion of students. The population of the study comprised of all students of two public sector universities of Islamabad. Convenient sampling technique was used for the collection of data. 80 male and 80 female students were selected as well as 40 students out of 160 were selected randomly for the interview. After completion of data collection, quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS 20.0 for statistical analysis. On the other hand, qualitative data are encoded, described, classified and identified by identifying themes and interpretation was done by providing meaning through explanations.

Quantitative Analysis of Data

Table 1: Course – wise distribution of respondents

Departments	Frequency	Percentage
Education	16	10
Engineering	08	5
Mass. Communication	22	13.75
Management Science	08	5
Economics	20	12.5
Information	24	15

Technology		
International Relations	24	15
Arabic	08	5
English Studies	14	8.75
Psychology	16	10
Total	160	100

Table No. 1 shows the courses of the respondent's of the study. 10% (n=16) were students of Education department whereas 5% (n=08) were students of Engineering department, 13.75% (n=22) were students from the department of Mass. Communication whereas 5% (n=08) students were from Management science department. 12.5% (n=20) were students of Economics, 15% (n=24) were students of Information Technology department whereas 15% (n=24) were students from the department of International Relation. 5% (n=08) were students of Arabic department whereas 8.75% (n=14) were students of English Studies and 10% (n=16) respondents were from Psychology department.

Table 2: Importance of parents' involvement in academic activities

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	20	12.5
Neutral	08	5
No	132	82.5
Total	160	100

Table No. 2 describes the opinion of students about the importance of parent's involvement at graduate level in their curricular and co-curricular academic activities. 12.5% (n=20) students were of the opinion that parents involvement at graduate level is essential, 5% (n=08) student's remained neutral whereas 82.5% (n=132) students were not in the favour of parent's involvement in their studies and academic activities at graduate level.

Table 3: Academic issues students want their parents to get involved in

	Frequency	Percentage
Involve Parents	40	25
No Issues	76	47.5
Don't Involve parents	44	27.5
Total	160	100

Table No 3. describes the opinion of students about the involvement of parents to discuss issues they are facing in their institute regarding teachers, studies, exams, classmates, bullying and subjects. 25% (n=40) students respondent that they will involve parents to solve issues they are facing at their institute, whereas 47.5% (n=76) respondent that they don't have any issues and 27.5% (n=44) respondent that they will not involve their parents and try to solve their problems at their own and with the help of their friends.

Table 4: Parents visit to educational institute for some specific occasion

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	116	72.5
Neutral	12	7.5
No	32	20.5
Total	160	100

Table No 4 describes the opinion of students about the importance of parent's visit to their institute on different occasions such as parents-teachers meeting, annual day, result day, seminars etc. 72.5% (n=116) students agreed that parents should visit on different occasions, 7.5% (n=12) student's remained neutral whereas 20% (n=32) students were of the opinion that parents should not visit their educational institutes.

Table 5: Role of parents in subject selection

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	44	27.5
No	116	72.5
Total	160	100

Table No 5 describes the opinion of students about the role of parent's in their subject selection. 27.5% (n=44) students agreed that there is role of parent's in their subject selection whereas 72.5% (n=116) student's said that there is no role of parents in their subject selection and they choose their subjects independently according to their own area of interest.

Qualitative Analysis of Data

Theme 1: Necessity of Parents' Involvement: One student said, because "we've matured enough to take our decisions," so the parent's involvement is not indispensable at this stage. Some of the students think that parental involvement is very much necessary at this level to keep check and balance on the child. One of the interviewees said, "Our adults are not too mature to handle everything so parent's involvement is necessary." Engineering students responded to the question, "Parents spend money on us, we are answerable to them." A female interviewee said, "In particular, female students need the participation of parents." The overall response shows that, the majority of students were not in too much favour of the participation of parents in their academic life.

Theme 2: Pressure from Parents in College/University Selection: One student replied, "I choose my institute and my parents were ok with that" another student responded the same way, "I was free to choose any university there was no pressure from my parents". Student of Management Science said that my parents suggested getting admission in this institute'. Some students said they were confused at the time of admission so their parents help them to choose suitable institute for them and they are happy with their parent's choice. A female student said, "I wanted to be a part of another university but my father force me to join this university". Majority of students responded that they face no pressure from their parents in the selection of university for admission.

Theme 3: Parents' pressure for high grades: Most of the students responded that they feel stress regarding their achievements in exams because their parents have high expectations from them. One respondent said that his parents have given him targets to achieve 'A' grade. Some students are unhappy because they feel helpless sometimes to achieve high grades. Some students responded that they have no pressure from their parents, one of the responded said 'I study for getting knowledge not for getting high grades and my parents want same for me'.

Theme 4: Parents role in subject selection: Many of the students responded that their parents did not have the effect in their choice of subjects, and they chose as independent seekers the subject better for them. One student said that his parents did not have much education and they do not know about subjects, so he made his own choice. Some students responded that their parents choose their subject and they are satisfied with their parents' choice. The overall results suggest that most of the students' subject selection were not influenced by their parents and that their parents gave them free choice.

Conclusion

In keeping with the student's point of view, it concludes that graduate students are not in favour of parental involvement at this level. Most students do not face serious problems to discuss with parents in their academic life. Parents do not have too much impact on the subject selection of the majority of students. Most of the students had not regular conversations with their parents about their university activities. When we talk about the involvement of parents in their child's academic life, we refer parents to their day-to-day interest about academic life by asking them questions about their level of interest in different subjects and the degree to which they perform their tasks including exams, and programs to communicate regularly with teachers and participate in academic activities through educational institutions participating in events, meetings and conferences. When learners suddenly move from higher secondary school to university, there is a great change in learning style, environment, freedom, teachers, and discipline.

This study is the type of survey, and the results indicate that graduate level students don't feel the need for parents to participate in their academic life including their subject selection, exams, progress and co-curricular activities. Parents must visit universities and it is recommended that the university should arrange such occasions as the day that parents can visit the university; on the other hand some students responded that there is no such need of parents-teachers meetings at this level but parents can visit university for other purposes. Overall quantitative and qualitative results of the study revealed that there is a very less amount of pressure from parents in subject selection at graduate level; students are free to select their area of interest.

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