The Impact of Employment Progression on Students Towards Higher Education

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ABSTRACT : *The aim of this study is to describe the impact of employment progression towards higher education. This study is based on previous studies which had looked into the involvement between the employment sequence and higher education sector. About 625 questionnaires had been distributed to under graduate students in arts and science colleges in Coimbatore district. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS software. The analysis showed that there is a significant relationship between the personal variables and employment progression of the respondents. Results of this study demonstrate that the students drift from the under graduation to post graduation for the purpose of employment opportunities.*
Key words: *Students, Employment progression, Higher education*

I. INTRODUCTION

Social and Economic background emerged out as an important factor in the students' desire toward higher education. Their interest in higher education may be unenthusiastic because of social, cultural and economic barriers. Higher education provides opportunities for lifelong learning, allowing people to upgrade their knowledge and skills from time to time based on societal needs. The University Grants Commission (UGC), All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), Distance Education Council (DEC), Indian Council for Agriculture Research (ICAR), Bar Council of India (BCI), National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and such other regulatory bodies from time to time accommodate the developments and yet maintain quality students in higher education. The 12th Five year plan focuses on utilizing the opportunity of expansion for deepening excellence and achieving equal access to quality higher education. A target of 30 percent Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) by 2017 from 15 percent in 2012 is set for the 12th five year plan.

There is always a disparity between higher education and job openings. It is seen that many graduates in India tend to accept lower paid jobs which are incompatible with their qualifications. Currently 14.6 million (86%) students are enrolled in under graduate courses compared to 2 million (12%) in post graduate courses[1]. In September 2014, making their first bilateral summit, Indian Prime Minister Mr.Narendra Modi and American President Mr.Barack Obama committed the strategic partnership between the two countries, to serve as a guide to boost cooperation between the two countries in various sectors, including higher education and improve employment opportunities, over the next decade. The Government has launched new education scheme named as Madan Mohan Malaviya National Mission on Teachers and Teaching in December 2014 for the purpose of improving education sector. Parental involvement was directly associated with students aspirations towards higher education. It is found that under graduate students who planned to leave education where mostly from agriculture based and middle income level families. Social Identity Theory is based on the assumption that part of an individual's self-concept comes from the groups to which he or she belongs to. There are a few important elements like family background, peer influences, own expectations, own capabilities, individual beliefs that give some impact on the students employment progression so that they are unable to continue their higher education.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Gautam Chandra Deb (2014) has explained that higher education is becoming a marketing commodity. National and global competition may create problems of survival of weaker universities and colleges. He suggested that many colleges and universities were started in India for removing regional imbalances and for supporting education of weaker and disadvantaged classes, particularly women. But it is creating frustration among graduates when they find that education is not so useful in employment and in work situations[2]. Powar (2012) argues that the co-relation between higher education and employment is complex in the Indian context as a number of socio-economic and technological variables are involved. The Indian economy boasts unprecedented growth and is one of the highest growth rates in the world. The researcher

concluded that there are socio economic factors that severely affect the link between employment and higher education sector[3]. The Boston consulting group (2010) stated that the employability is the key for bridging the skills gaps in general and in facilitating migration of the highly skilled in particular, as employers are suspicious of the qualifications of immigrants. There are three main reasons to explain the relatively low employability of many graduates. First, the quality of educational systems, second, the educational systems do not often meet the needs of economies and do not prepare the highly skilled for positions with global companies, and third, the skills development cycle is not aligned with the fast-changing market conditions. As a result, in developing countries, global companies have difficulties in finding graduate students who are directly employable[4]. Marie Glenn (2008) said in today's technology-enabled knowledge economy, many universities find themselves facing a new challenge now not only to equip students with an adequate education in their field of study, but also to arm them with the skills and knowledge required to leverage technology effectively in the workplace[5]. Brown and Hesketh (2004) have shown, that there are still inequalities among graduates in their labour market outcomes. They show that many graduates are not utilizing their knowledge and skills from higher education, that not all are able to 'cash in' on their investment in higher education, and that there are still positional differences between graduates on the basis of social class, gender and ethnicity[6]. Archer et al (2001) have researched that the higher education has been seen almost solely as a route to higher salary. Many have made no connection between the skills gained on a higher education course[7]. Much of the students research work conducted have tended to focus on either in quality of higher education or motivation towards higher education. From the above review of the related literature, it may be stated that global competition, socio-economic and technological changes, skill gap of employees, psychological barriers affecting the employment progression are investigated related to the field of higher education. There has been very little recent empirical work exploring the way in which students and graduates are beginning to understand and manage their employment in the context of recent higher education. The main focus of this paper is to study how students higher education can influence their employment progress.

III. OBJECTIVES

1. To identify the association between students employment progression and higher education programmes.
2. To find out the influence of student personal variables on the preference of higher education.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The respondents of this study comprised under graduate students of arts and science colleges in Coimbatore district. In this study, the researcher has used random sampling method. Questionnaire method is used to obtain the data from the respondents. Five point Likert type scale facilitated the researcher in implementing the data collection and analysis. A total of 625 questionnaires were distributed to the final year under graduate students. The samples were selected using simple random sampling method to answer the questionnaire. The respondents were selected from different courses, habitat, family background, occupation, gender and age groups. They were required to answer the questionnaire based on their study experience. An Analysis of Variance [ANOVA] was conducted to examine any difference in mean responses between the personal variables and employee progression. T-test is also used for independent samples. Multiple regression was also used to relate the respondent's capabilities and beliefs. In this study, the statistical analysis investigates the respondent's personal variables (like gender, course discipline, first graduate in the family, selection of additional courses and family background) influencing the employment sequence which affect the under graduate to post graduate programmes.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the results of multiple regressions are analyzed between the dependent variable (personal variables) and the independent variable as employment progression of the respondents. The results of Multiple Regression Analysis in terms of independent variables, coefficient of correlation (R), coefficient of determination (R^2), incremental value in R^2, p – value and its significance are analyzed. One independent variable is introduced at each stage to assess the incremental values in the value of R^2, which provide the percentage of explanation on the dependent variable.

TABLE - 1
Gender and employment progression of the respondents

Description	Gender (%)		R	R^2	Incremental value	p-value	Significance
Employment Progression	**Male**	48	0.088	0.008	0.001	0.565	NS
	Female	52					

(Source: Primary data)

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In the above Table no 1, the researcher considered gender as dependent variable to relate the respondent's attitude of employment progression. In this study, the researcher used multiple regression test and got a p-value of 0.565. The level of significance at 5% and the degree of freedom was also calculated. The result indicated that there is no significant influence on the dependent variable gender. It is concluded that majority of the female respondent's give more importance to employment opportunities, occupation of their family, doing own business, self-employment, etc. So, they are not interested to continue the higher education programmes.

TABLE - 2
Family occupation and employment progression of the respondents

Description	Family Occupation (%)		R	R^2	Incremental value	p-value	Significance
Employment Progression	**Employment**	34	0.092	0.009	0.002	0.506	NS
	Business	14					
	Agriculture	37					
	Self employed	11					
	Professionals	4					

(Source: Primary data)

The above Table no 2 shows that family occupation considered as main factor plays a crucial role to the respondents employment progression and unable to continue their higher education programmes. In this table, the researcher obtained the p-value 0.506 which is calculated using multiple regressions. The level of significance at 5% is calculated. Those indicate that the variables, family occupation and employment progression did not have significant influence on respondents in the selection of higher studies. Majority of the respondents came from agricultural based families. Basically, the respondents are interested to continuing their family business, going to start own business etc., It is concluded that the respondents are not interested to continue post-graduation programmes for the purpose of their career progression.

TABLE - 3
First graduation in family and employment progression of the respondents

Description	First Graduation (%)		R	R^2	Incremental value	p-value	Significance
Employment Progression	**Yes**	76	0.102	0.010	0.002	0.373	NS
	No	24					

(Source: Primary data)

Table no 3 represents the first graduate in family and employment progression of the respondents. In this study, majority of the respondents are first graduate in family. Using the multiple regression method, the researcher finds the p-value as 0.373. The level of significance at 5% and degrees of freedom was also calculated. The above table shows that, first graduation and employment progression, had statistically no significant influence to continue their higher studies. The researcher found that the majority of the respondents were the first graduate in their family. So the respondents did not continue their post-graduation because of lack of support from family and peer influence.

TABLE - 4
Additional courses and employment progression of the respondents

Description	Additional Courses (%)		R	R^2	Incremental value	p-value	Significance
Employment Progression	**Yes**	38	0.154	0.024	0.001	0.021	S
	No	62					

(Source: Primary data)

Table no 4 shows the calculated values of multiple regression in terms of coefficient of correlation (R), coefficient of determination (R^2), incremental value in R^2 and p–value. The level of significance at 5% and degree of freedom was also calculated. The p-value 0.021 represents the variable that has significant influence on the dependent variable. This study shows that majority of the respondents join the additional courses to catch the job at undergraduate level. The researcher found that the respondents prefer job with training without higher studies. So they are interested to join the additional courses and hence do not to continue their post graduate programmes.

TABLE - 5
Discipline and employment progression of the respondents

Description	Discipline (%)		R	R²	Incremental value	p-value	Significance
Employment Progression	Arts	47	0.148	0.022	0	0.032	S
	Science	53					

(Source: Primary data)

The above table no 5 shows that the relationship of the respondents course discipline and employment progression. The table values are calculated by using multiple regression. The result of p-value is 0.032. This means that respondent's course discipline is correlated to the employment progression. The result has analyzed that the two variables course discipline and employment progression have significant influence on the selection of post graduate programmes.

TABLE - 6
Family income and employment progression of the respondents

Description	Family Income (%)		R	R²	Incremental value	p-value	Significance
Employment Progression	Below Rs.15000	78	0.148	0.022	0	0.320	NS
	Rs.15001-Rs.25000	17					
	Rs.25001-Rs.50000	3					
	Above Rs.50001	2					

(Source: Primary data)

Family income plays a major role in the respondent's decision about pursuing higher education. This table states that more number of respondent's family income level is at below Rs.15000. Based on multiple regression tests, the result of p value is 0.320. The level of significance at 5% and the degrees of freedom was also calculated. The family income and employment progression did not have significant influence on respondents higher studies. It is concluded that economically, the respondent's family income level is very low, so the respondents were pushed to earn money at under graduate level and hence they are not ready to continue their post graduate courses.

VI. FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results, it is found that the students' personal variables could affect the employment string to continue their higher studies. Within this work, it is found that female students are more influenced by employment attitudes than their male counterparts. Another variable stated that the majority of the students from agricultural family did not pursue higher education, because students were not motivated to do higher education from their family members. The researcher found that the majority of the respondents were the first graduates in their family. So the respondents did not continue their post-graduation because of lack of support from their family. Majority of the respondents are interested to join the additional courses because they prefer job with training without higher studies. The respondents were categorized into arts and science discipline. Basically, science discipline respondents influenced to continue higher education and involvement in placement opportunities. An interesting finding was that the family income (below Rs.15000) plays an important role in under graduate students' attitude towards post-graduation. This is a finding that causes worry as the most economically backward students decline to pursue higher education. The predominant one was family income and it is the biggest challenge to students who do not enter the post-graduation programmes.

Higher education at the beginning of the 21st century has never been in greater demand, both from individual students and their families, but recently due to occupational and social status. There is always a disjoint between the higher education opportunities and job openings. This study suggests that education cannot be considered as a panacea to unemployment, though education can improve the chances of individuals in hard competition for available jobs. In this research work, it is found that socio-cultural factors play a crucial role in students learning and behavior.

VII. CONCLUSION

Higher Education is considered throughout the world to be the key to both individual and social aspirations. The government of India has proposed several new ideas for higher education through its Global Initiative of Academic Networks (GIAN-January 2015) program where the MHRD will create a channel for U.S. professors in science, technology, and engineering to teach in Indian academic and research institutions on short term exchanges. University Grants Commission (UGC) is designing programmes and implementing various schemes through academic, administrative and financial support, which will contribute in the growth

and development of Indian higher education. Government of India has launched Rashtriya Uchchar Siksha Abhiyan (RUSA) supporting state higher education with funds which will now get only Rs 397 crore. The government has taken a lot of steps to improve higher education but there is always a mismatch between higher education and employment development. India needs highly educated people who are skilled and who can drive Indian economy forward. It is important to focus on those parts of the workforce that are essential drivers of economic and social development. In India, the education system has to eventually adjust to market needs, the skill development cycle is not aligned with the fast-changing market conditions. India today, requires really a major revolution in higher education.

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