

Exploring the Internal Expectations of Newly Enrolled Undergraduate Students at University of the Punjab, Lahore

Muhammad Saeed* and Nimmi Abid**

Abstract

This survey-based research paper addresses the internal expectations of newly enrolled undergraduate students (NEUS) at University of the Punjab, Lahore. Out of seven faculties, 13 departments and 630 students were selected as a sample. The researchers developed rating scale for students which contained closed-ended format questions. This scale was validated through experts' opinions and piloting. The reliability of students' rating scale was Cronbach Alpha 0.816. Data were analyzed using independent sample t-test and one-way ANOVA. Results revealed that an internal expectation of NEUS has significant difference on the basis of age. Furthermore, sub-factors of internal expectations such as personal & social development (PSD) and career & economic expectations (CEE) have significant difference regarding age and socio-economic status. However, experience has no difference with internal expectations and its sub-factors such as academic expectations (AE), PSD and CEE. The study recommends that there is a need to understand students' internal expectations which will be helpful for them to be able to take their responsibility in future. For this purpose, information sessions and workshops held by the institution to divert the attention of family and personnel towards children's internal expectations.

Keywords: Academic expectations, Career and Economic Expectations, Students' Personal and Social Development

* Associate Professor, Institute of Education and Research, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.
Email: drsaeed1961@hotmail.com

** PhD Scholar, IER, University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan.

Introduction

In today's fast growing and competitive world, people mostly are not satisfied with their basic education and enter for higher education. Higher educational institutions have the capacity to give quick responses to different societal problems. At the same time sustainable development through higher education provides a pivotal role in nations building (Calder & Clugston, 2003). After graduation the students become leaders of tomorrow and get dispersed from the world of higher education into their specific career. Higher education can lead to economic prosperity. So, it is beneficial for students to get higher education (Toor, 2003).

Expectations are powerful predictors of future behavior and they are derive from past experiences (Howard, 2005). Tinto (1987) identified a model which represents that students have various expectations and goals when they enter into the institutions. These expectations and goals are relevant to their personal and academic experiences. Researchers have suggested that newly enrolled students are coming to institution with more “unrealistic or unrealized expectations” (Kreig, 2013, p. 635). If the students’ expectations are unmet, students can experience disappointment and regret for the institutional choice (Tinto, 1993).

Students have positive perceptions of higher education, but they have also apparent expectations regarding institutional support to provide them chances to enhance learning and also help them in career building. So, it is the foremost responsibility of the institution to make them responsible citizens of the society (Beringer, Malone & Wright, 2006). More recently, students tend to enter their institutions of higher education with optimistic expectations of their social and academic aspirations, while having more pessimistic views of how they will handle stressors (Jackson, Pancer, Pratt, & Hunsberger, 2000). Why should educational institutions care about students’ expectations?

Although there has been significant investigation of the newly enrolled students’ experiences, fewer researches have conducted on expectations which emphasized students to take admission in universities to get higher education (Miller, Bender & Schuh, 2005). Kahlenberg (2004) and Kirst and Venezia (2004) recommended six elements that influence high school students encourage to get

higher education: socio-economic status, social and educational capital, family and home influences, financial concerns, high school organization, and access to higher education. Researches on students of higher education identified that their expectations are dependent on a number of factors. When students enter into the institution will give administrators better insights into what internal expectations are influencing students. These include culture, gender (Shank, Walker & Hayes, 1995); age (Levine, 1993); ability to get expected grades, academic goals relevant to higher education, achieve a higher grade (Kuh, 2007) personal and social development (Twale, Shannon & Moore, 1997). Camevale and Rose (2003) and Louie (2007) stated that higher education can become the cause of economic prosperity. Therefore, it is beneficial for students to gain a college degree.

Kuh, Gonyea and Williams (2005) found various factors which influence the expectations of newly enrolled students and concluded that the strongest were personal and social development. They also found that Socioeconomic differences accounted for little variance in expectations. The family socioeconomic status (SES) is the most powerful predictor of school performance. In other words, if socio-economic status is high of a student's family then the ratio of his academic achievement is also high. From one viewpoint, parents of a higher socioeconomic status expect their children to advance further in their educational career and these higher expectations result in a significant effect on student achievement and their own perceptions of academic success (Benner & Mistry, 2007).

Student expectations for academic and social development appear to be influenced by the students' ability to select an institution that is congruent with their institutional expectations, both academic and social development. The expectations formed prior to enrollment "become the standard against which individuals evaluate their early experiences within the institution" (Tinto, 1993, p. 54). If the student's expectations are consistent with what they experience, the student is more likely to continue to degree completion. When expectations are unmet, students can experience disillusionment and regret for the institutional choice. Smith and Wertlieb (2005) found that students with unrealistic academic expectations tended to have lower grades of newly enrolled compared to those students with average or low expectations of their academic ability.

Urquhart and Pooley (2007) stated that students identify the need for social, emotional, and practical information support them through their university career, thus it is important that universities understand the various students' needs, together with their motivations for attending university in order to plan their transition and assistance programmes accordingly. McInnis (2001) stated that the internal expectations related to personal development, educational aspirations, and transitional support are not met by the university, it is then that the student may be at risk of withdrawing from study. Internal expectations formed by the student of their own ability to cope with the academic and social pressures that study will entail.

The above literature shows that expectations are the most powerful elements to determine students' future behavior about what they expect from higher education. The researchers believed that students have several expectations when they decide to get admission at university level for getting higher education. In this article, internal expectations and its sub-factors (i.e. academic expectations (AE), personal and social development (PSD), and career & economic expectations (CEE) have been discussed. Now, there is a need for universities as well as institutions to consider students' preferences and internal expectations in order to satisfy students, leading to increased success, competitiveness of the programme in the future, improve educational productivity and control educational wastage such as increasing the number of those students who enrolled but did not complete their degree due to unmet their expectations.

Therefore, the purpose of the present study was to investigate the internal expectations of newly enrolled undergraduate students (NEUS) of University of the Punjab located in Lahore. the study may be helpful for the university academicians and management to look into reasons of students' attraction towards admission in different programmes which may be helpful in increasing students' admission in different departments.

Objectives of the Study

The study was based on following objectives:

1. To identify the internal expectations (IE) of newly enrolled undergraduate students (NEUS) regarding demographic variables (gender, age, experience and socio-economic status)
2. To identify the IE by factor academic expectations (AE) of NEUS regarding demographic variables
3. To identify the IE by factor personal and social development (PSD) of NEUS regarding demographic variables
4. To identify the IE by factor career & economic expectations (CEE) of NEUS regarding demographic variables
5. To investigate the difference and variation of newly entrants' internal expectations (IE) on the basis of experience and salary status

Hypotheses of the study

- H₀₁: There is no significant difference in newly enrolled undergraduate students' internal expectations (IE) by gender and age
- H₀₂: There is no significant difference among newly enrolled undergraduate students' internal expectations by factors (AE, PSD & CEE) regarding gender.
- H₀₃: There is no significant difference among newly enrolled undergraduate students' internal expectations by factors (AE, PSD & CEE) regarding age.
- H₀₄: There is no significant mean difference and variation in enrolled undergraduate students' internal expectations (IE) regarding experience and socio-economic status (SES).
- H₀₅: There is no significant difference among newly enrolled undergraduate students' internal expectations by factors (AE, PSD & CEE) regarding experience.
- H₀₆: There is no significant difference among newly enrolled undergraduate students' internal expectations by factors (AE, PSD & CEE) regarding socio-economic status (SES).

Methodology

Population and Sample

The aim of the study was to investigate internal expectations (IE) of newly enrolled undergraduate students (NEUS) at University of the Punjab (PU), Lahore. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select faculties, departments and students from PU of district Lahore. There were 13 faculties in PU. At the first stage, the researchers used simple random sampling technique to select faculties from PU. At the second stage, seven faculties were selected out of 13. At third stage, two departments were selected using simple random sampling technique from each of the seven faculties, except one faculty from where only one department was taken. At fourth stage, about 50 students at undergraduate level were selected from each of the 13 departments covering both morning and self-supporting programmes, as per availability of the respective category. In this way, the total sample size of students was 630, as shown in table 1.

Table 1

Population and Sample of the Study

<i>Category</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Sample</i>
Faculties of PU	13	7
Departments	71	13
Students	20,745	630

Table 1 represents that University of the Punjab has 13 faculties, out of which 7 were selected in the sampled faculties. There were 20,745 students at Quaid-e-Azam (New Campus) University of the Punjab at the time of the study, out of which 630 students (441 girls & 189 boys) were selected using convenient sampling technique.

Instrumentation and Data Collection

For the collection of relevant data, a questionnaire was developed for the students. The questionnaire contained two sections: The first section contained items on demographic variables and second section consisted of 28 closed-ended questions ranging for strongly agree (SA) to strongly disagree (DA) on three main factors of Internal Expectations: a) academic expectations (items: 8), b) personal and social development (items: 9), and c) career and economic expectations

(items: 11) which were drawn after reviewing the related literature. The researchers personally visited the sampled departments. Ethical considerations were kept in mind prior to administer the questionnaires by seeking permission from the sampled heads of departments.

For validation purpose, the questionnaire was discussed with three experts and in the light of their comments; it was improved in terms of language, format and style. In order to ensure the reliability of the instrument, it was pilot tested on 70 students. Cronbach's alpha coefficient of reliability was established. Overall reliability of the instrument was at 0.896 but factor-wise reliability values vary from each other such as: a) Academic Expectations was at .757; b) Personal & Social Development was at .726; and c) Career and Economic Expectations was at .778. Descriptive statistics was used to find the mean scores of the respondents. Inferential statistics (independent sample t-test and one-way ANOVA) were used to explore the expectations of NEUS of University of the Punjab, Lahore.

Findings

The results of students' questionnaire were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The analysis is presented according to the null hypotheses of the study.

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in newly enrolled undergraduate students' internal expectations (IE) by gender and age.

Table 2

Comparison of IE of NEUS in terms of gender and age

<i>Measures</i>	<i>DV</i>		<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Sig (2-tailed)</i>
Internal Expectation (IE)	Gender	Male	189	106.74	13.82	-1.264	628	.207
		Female	441	108.31	14.45			
	Age	20 or Less	560	108.37	13.91	2.348	628	.021
		21-25	70	103.57	16.38			

An independent-samples t-test was applied to compare the internal expectations (IE) of newly enrolled undergraduate students (NEUS) in terms of gender. There was no statistically significant difference found in IE at $p \leq 0.05$ level of significance in the scores of male and female. Therefore, null hypothesis was accepted. Hence, it is concluded that there was statistically no significant difference between male and female NEUS in IE towards getting admission at University of the Punjab.

There was statistically significant difference found in IE at $p \geq 0.05$ level of significance in the scores of both age groups. Therefore, null hypothesis was rejected. Hence, it is concluded that there was statistically significant difference between two age groups (20 or less and 21-25) NEUS in IE towards getting admission at PU.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference between newly enrolled undergraduate students' internal expectations by factors (AE, PSD & CEE) regarding gender.

Table 3

Comparison of IE by factors of NEUS in terms of gender

<i>Measures</i>	<i>DV</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Sig (2- tailed)</i>
AE	Male	189	30.58	4.834	-.753	628	.452
	Female	441	30.89	4.626			
PSD	Male	189	34.37	4.808	-.123	628	.902
	Female	441	34.42	4.929			
CEE	Male	189	41.79	6.008	-2.207	628	.028
	Female	441	43.00	6.419			

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the academic expectations (AE), personal & social development (PSD) and career & economic expectations (CEE) of male and female newly enrolled undergraduate students (NEUS). There was statistically significant difference in CEE at $p \geq 0.05$ level of significance in the scores of male and female. Therefore, null hypotheses was rejected except CEE. Hence, it is concluded that there was statistically significant difference between male and female students but no significant difference was found on other two factors.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference between newly enrolled undergraduate students' internal expectations by factors (AE, PSD & CEE) regarding age.

Table 4*Comparison of IE by factors of NEUS in terms of Age*

<i>Measures</i>	<i>DV</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig (2- tailed)</i>
AE	20 or Less	560	30.93	4.501	1.689	79.34	.095
	21-25	70	29.70	5.903			
PSD	20 or Less	560	34.56	4.729	1.998	80.460	.049
	21-25	70	33.10	5.900			
CEE	20 or Less	560	42.87	6.201	2.636	628	.009
	21-25	70	40.77	6.954			

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the academic expectations (AE), personal & social development (PSD) and career & economic expectations (CEE) of two age groups newly enrolled undergraduate students (NEUS). There was statistically significant difference in PSD and CEE except of AE at $p \geq 0.05$ level of significance in the scores of both age groups. Therefore, null hypotheses were rejected. Hence, it is concluded that there was statistically significant difference between two age groups students in PSD and CEE except of AE towards getting admission at University of the Punjab.

H₀₄: There is no significant mean difference and variation in enrolled undergraduate students' internal expectations (IE) regarding experience and socio-economic status (SES).

Table 5 (a)*Mean and standard deviation of IE of NEUS in terms of experience and SES*

<i>Measures</i>	<i>Demographic Variables</i>		<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Internal Expectation (IE)	Experience	1 to 5	16	102.31	13.34
		6 to 10	5	101.40	16.22
		Inexperienced	609	108.04	14.26
		Total	630	107.84	14.27
	SES	25,000 or less	163	110.57	13.04
		26,000 to 55,000	223	108.57	13.69
		56,000 to 85,000	148	106.16	15.22
		86,000 or more than	96	104.07	15.14
Total	630	107.84	14.27		

Table 5 (a) represents the overall mean values of students' responses show that inexperienced students (108.04) in IE were relatively better than other different job experienced students (i.e. 1 to 5 and 6 to 10). The standard deviation value shows that there seems little variation in students' responses who has 1 to 5 years job experienced (13.34) in IE were relatively lower than other experienced students (i.e. 6 to 10 and Inexperienced).

Table 5 (a) represents the overall mean values of students' responses show that the students who belong to 25000 or less SES (110.57) in IE were relatively better than other different students who belong to other SES (i.e. 26,000 to 55,000, 56,000 to 85,000 and 86,000 or more than). The standard deviation value shows that there seems little variation of those students who belong to 25000 or less SES (13.04) in IE were relatively lower than other students who belong to other SES (i.e. 26,000 to 55,000, 56,000 to 85,000 and 86,000 or more than).

H₀₅: There is no significant mean difference and variation among newly enrolled undergraduate students' internal expectations by factors (AE, PSD & CEE) regarding experience.

Table 4 (b)

One- way ANOVA summary table for NEUS about IE by factors in terms of experience

<i>Measures</i>	<i>Sub-factors</i>	<i>Groups</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig</i>
Experience	AE	Between	2	2.349	.096
		Within	627		
		Total	629		
	PSD	Between	2	2.138	.119
		Within	627		
		Total	629		
	CEE	Between	2	.736	.480
		Within	627		
		Total	629		

One-way ANOVA was applied to find out the expectations of NEUS, as measured by AE, PSD and CEE towards getting admission at PU. There was statistically no significant difference in AE, PSD and CEE at $p \geq 0.05$ level of significance regarding experience. Therefore, null hypotheses were accepted. Hence, it was concluded that there was statistically no significant difference in AE, PSD and CEE of NEUS in terms of experience.

H₀₆: There is no significant mean difference and variation among newly enrolled undergraduate students' internal expectations by factor (AE, PSD & CEE) regarding socio-economic status (SES).

Table 5 (b)

One- way ANOVA summary table for NEUS about IE by factors in terms of Experience

<i>Measures</i>	<i>Sub-factors</i>	<i>Groups</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig</i>	
SES	AE	Total	629			
		Between	3	2.138	.094	
		Within	626			
	PSD	PSD	Total	629		
			Between	3	4.759	.003
			Within	626		
		CEE	Total	629		
			Between	3	5.847	.001
			Within	626		
Total	629					

One-way ANOVA was applied to find out the expectations of NEUS, as measured by AE, PSD and CEE towards getting admission at PU. There was statistically significant difference found in PSD and CEE at $p \geq 0.05$ level of significance regarding experience. on the other hand no significance difference was found in AE at $p \geq 0.05$ level of significance regarding experience. Hence, it was concluded that there was statistically significant difference in PSD and CEE except AE of NEUS in terms of SES.

Table 5 (c)

Post- hoc test of difference among sub-factors of IE in terms of socio-economic status (SES)

<i>SES</i>	<i>SES (a)</i>	<i>SES (b)</i>	<i>Mean Difference</i>	<i>P</i>
PSD	25,000 or less	56,000 to 85,000	2.13024*	.015
		86,000 or more than	3.05451*	.001
CEE	26,000 to 55,000	86,000 or more than	1.99220*	.045

Post- hoc test (Tukey HSD) (see table 5 (c)) was conducted to find out the mean difference in PSD and CEE of NEUS towards getting admission at PU regarding socio-economic status. Hence, it is concluded that a significant difference among students was found who belong to different socio-economic status in AE. Furthermore, the students who fall into 25,000 or less and 26,000 to

55,000 earning amount has statistically significant difference with the students who fall into 86,000 or more than in PSD and CEE but the students who fall into 25,000 or less has also statistically significant difference with the 56,000 to 85,000 in PSD at value $p \leq 0.05$ level of significance.

Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that internal expectations of NEUS and sub-factors of internal expectation such as personal & social development (PSD) and career & economic expectations (CEE) have significant difference regarding age. Furthermore, it is also revealed that internal expectations of NEUS and sub-factors of internal expectation has no difference regarding socio-economic status, however, sub-factors of internal expectations such as personal & social development (PSD) and career & economic expectations (CEE) has difference regarding socio-economic status but experience has no difference with IE and its factors such as AE, PSD and CEE. The study recommends that there is a need to understand students' internal expectations which will be helpful for them to be able to take their responsibility in future. For this purpose, information sessions and workshops held by the institution to divert the attention of family and personnel towards children's internal expectations.

The study shows that various factors such as academic aspirations and career expectations influence students to get higher education in university. The findings of the present study support the findings to the studies of Chapman (1981), Carpenter and Fleishman (1987) and Ariffin, Ahmad, Ahmad and Ibrahim (2008). The present study defines that economic and career expectations influence students to get higher education in university. This study also supports the findings of the studies of Litten (1982), Manski (1983) and Jackson (1986). Paulson (1981) examined that career opportunity influence students to take decision of enrollment and get education.

It is also evident that internal expectations motivate student intrinsically and drive them towards higher education, such as "Academic Aspiration" the students' desires and personal interests, his aptitude & abilities induce them to attain higher education. The findings of the present study support the findings to the study of Mehboob, Shah and Bhutto (1981). Bajsh and Hoyt (2001), and Bradshaw, Espinoza and Hausman (2001) highlighted that economic considerations of students influence their decision of enrollment and get

education. The present study supports the findings of the previous studies which show that higher education could increase their probability of earning more income.

Bloom (2007) and Louie (2007) indicated that the students who belong to low-socio-economic status are more eager to get admission for education to earn advanced degrees. On the other hand, it could increase their probability of earning more income. Chapman (1984) and Jackson (1982) specify a variety of internal factors such as educational and economical aspirations influence students' decision to enroll. According to Adelman (2006), students' socio-economic status influence students to enter into college/university for the completion of degree requirements. The students who belong to high socio-economic status attended college more frequently than those of lower socio-economic status.

Colleges and universities helps in ensuring economic security for many students (Camevale & Rose, 2003; Gladieux & Swail, 1998; Louie, 2007) and differences in socio-economic status factors are prevalent when students decide to get admission at college/university level (Kablenberg, 2004; McDonough, 1997).

It is suggested that the same study may be conducted in more universities. It may be conducted in private sector universities. The current study consists of some of the demographic variables such as gender, age, experience and socio-economic status. In future, the same research study may be conducted on other demographic variables.

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