



Academic Motivation in Open versus Traditional Education in India

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ABSTRACT :

Higher education today is being viewed as a tool to achieve prosperity and high living standards. It is thus looked upon as a service to the society and a powerful weapon to change the society for its betterment. Motivation plays a crucial role in learning. Motivation energizes the behavior of the individual. It also directs the behavior towards specific goals. It helps in acquisition of knowledge, develops social qualities, increases initiation of persistence in activities, lead to improved performance and develops a sense of discipline in the individual. This paper aims to compare Open Education System and Traditional Education System with respect to Academic Motivation of students towards the two types of education system. It has been found in this paper that there is significant different in Academic Motivation among students of the two types of education system.

1. INTRODUCTION :

Education is an organic entity which evolves to meet emerging societal needs. It is a pre-requisite for the regeneration of society, empowerment of people, national integration and international understanding. It infuses knowledge, skills and attitudes in individuals and makes them ready for their responsibilities. The Education Commission (1964-66) has accepted education as the instrument of social change as “If this change on a grand scale to be achieved without violent revolution, there is one instrument only, that can be used – EDUCATION” (Education Commission Report, 1964-66, p.4).

Education plays a very crucial role in human as well as national development. By improving people’s ability to acquire and use information, education deepens their understanding of themselves and the world. It enriches the minds of the people by broadening their experiences and enables them to make their choices as consumers,

producers and citizens. Education strengthens their ability to meet their requirements and those of their family by increasing their productivity, confidence and ability to create and innovate. It multiplies opportunities for personal and social achievement. As it provides employment opportunities in various sectors, education has come to be recognized as the main instrument of socio-economic change.

Higher education today is being viewed as a tool to achieve prosperity and high living standards. It is thus looked upon as a service to the society and a powerful weapon to change the society for its betterment. Higher education improves productivity and growth through several channels. A better-educated person absorbs new information faster and applies new inputs and new processes more effectively. So, the quality in higher education assumes utmost importance since the system of higher education provides human resources to all those areas that are crucial for national

development. Assuming the importance of education, different types of education systems have evolved to impart it to students. Traditional Education System and Open Education System are the two main types prevalent in the field of education system fulfilling the needs of diverse population as per their needs and aspirations.

Open Education may be defined as a system of education where the student gets the support of learning, remaining at a distance from the teacher and the teaching organization. This is a flexible, need-based, cost-effective, and learner-based system of education. In this system of learning there is an absence of regular face-to-face interaction unlike that in Traditional Education System, in place of which the multiple media is used to the optimum level. Counseling and face-to-face contact programmes are arranged, multi-media methods are adopted with printed course material, use of audio-video lessons, and a strong administrative network is created to link together student support and record functions. Continuous evaluation forms the core of the programmes. Open Education can also be defined as a system of education that does not operate through traditional conventions which are essentially restrictive in nature like admission restrictions, attendance restrictions, restrictions on the candidature for examinations, restrictions on subject-combinations for examinations, restrictions on subject combinations for a particular degree etc. Open education is a term that has been used interchangeably with distance education. It has been described as “arrangements to enable people to learn at the time, place and space which satisfy their circumstances and requirements” (Manpower Service Commission, 1984). The definition given by Council for Educational Technology (1980) is : “an open education system is one which enables individuals to take part in programmes of studies of their choice, no matter where they live or whatever their circumstances”. Webberley and Haffenden (1987) defined Open Education System as - “Study wherever it is convenient at home or work ... [and] Enroll at any time without

having to worry about previous qualifications...Study at a place which suits the learner...Have access of his or her own discretion to tutorial support and guidance”. The following four characteristics are commonly identified with the Open Universities (Ferguson, 1975) :- Openness with regard to (1) people ; (2) places ; (3) methods ; and (4) ideas.

By making use of new technologies, the Open University and distance institutions are now in a position to meet the demand for higher education.

Motivation is typically defined as the forces that account for the arousal, selection, direction, and continuation of behaviour. Motivation means the desire and willingness to do something. It is a drive that compels an individual to act towards the attainment of some goal. Motivation is intrinsic (internal) that comes from within. It is based on personal interests, desires, and needs for fulfillment. However, extrinsic (external) factors such as rewards, praises, and promotions also influence motivation. As defined by Daft (1977), “motivation refers to the forces either within or external to a person that arouse enthusiasm and persistence to pursue a certain course of action”. Motivation plays a crucial role in learning. It not only sets in motion the activity resulting in learning but also sustains and directs it. It is “the central factor in the effective management of the process of learning”, (Kelley, 2002 - as cited in Aggarwal, 2004).) Thus in the process of motivation, the learner’s internal energies are directed towards the goal. Motivation energizes the behavior of the individual; it also directs the behavior towards specific goals. It helps in acquisition of knowledge, develops social qualities, increases initiation of persistence in activities, lead to improved performance and develops a sense of discipline in the individual.

According to the theory of cognitive evaluation Deci & Ryan, (as cited in Karsenti, 1999), “an individual’s motivation is mainly determined by his needs for self-determination and competence”. The authors emphasize that there also exists in the individuals an important need for some

affiliation. This need complements the need for autonomy, and thus is necessary for the development of self-determined motivation. In fact, according to Deci & Ryan, everything, which is likely to influence these three factors, i.e. the feelings of self-determination, competence and affiliation, would thus have an impact on student motivation. The primary factors that encourage motivation and development are autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

Kaplan & Midgley (as cited in Nagel, 2004) have tried to establish goal orientation theory in an attempt to understand the psychological processes which accompany motivational patterns, particularly the role of mastery and performance goals. Mastery goals according to Pintrich, et al. (as cited in Nagel, 2004) have been related to higher levels of self-efficacy, or perception of competence, interest, achievement, and other outcomes. Ames (as cited in Nagel, 2004) argues that students with mastery goal orientations believe that effort leads to a positive outcome and their self-efficacy is based upon this belief. Ames (as cited in Nagel, 2004) further concludes that students with mastery goals are willing to learn and are focused on developing new skills and understanding and mastering content. Ames (as cited in Nagel, 2004) while characterizing students with performance goals suggests that such students focus on self-worth and ability, judging ability by how well they perform in relation to others or how easily they achieve success with minimal effort. For them public recognition of performance is important, they may refrain from challenging tasks, use superficial or short-term learning strategies such as rehearsal or memorization, and base beliefs in personal academic ability on their successes and failures.

Students with mastery goals are likely to maintain achievement, while students with performance goals may settle into a pattern of failure avoidance. However, in some situations, performance goals can result in superior achievement and performance, with mastery goals connected to great intrinsic preoccupation with the task.

Entwistle (1968) has defined academic

motivation as the student's "determination to succeed in academic studies". So, from the above discussion it is evident that academic motivation is an important factor in student's performance. Student's success and achievement depends upon his self-determination, feeling of competence and desire to attain academic goals. Therefore, academic motivation has been chosen as one of the important factors to be measured in the present study.

After literature review and discussing with the different experts from the field of Education studies and Psychology, the following four dimensions of academic motivation are taken in this study :-

(A) Personal Aspiration :

This is an intrinsic motivation that energizes the student to study. This is the main driving force that guides a student through the process of study, continuously. Greater the personal aspiration to achieve success, greater will be the motivation of student to perform, irrespective of results.

(B) Study Habits :

Habit is a customary behavior or something that a person does naturally and enjoys doing that thing. If a student develops healthy habits of study, then he/she starts enjoying the process of education. A student is able to study on regular basis if he/she has good study habits. And if study habits are not developed, then in spite of all facilities the student will not like to study. So, study habit is a crucial factor in achieving academic success and it motivates the student to pursue higher education.

(C) Socio-Economic Factors :

This is also an important factor that motivates a student to pursue higher education and succeed in studies. As in this materialistic world, everybody wants to gain good social and economic status.

(D) Attitude to College/ Study Centre :

Attitude is a learned tendency or predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner to some concept, situation or object. In this present

study, attitude towards college/study center refers to the tendency on the part of a student about the opinion or general feeling he has towards his college/study centre. It can also be stated as the attitude towards the overall academic activities going on in a university, college or any education system.

Thus, academic motivation, as used in the present study, can operationally be considered as amalgamation of one's personal aspiration, study habits, socio-economic factors and attitude towards college.

This study aims to find out the learning motivation of students taking education from Open Education System (OES) and Traditional Education System (TES). The study tries to compare Academic Motivation between the two education systems. The various dimensions that have some influence on the motivation level of students have also been discussed in the present study. To achieve the above stated objectives and after reviewing the related literature the following hypothesis has been framed and tested in the present study :

“There is no significant difference in the Academic Motivation of students studying in two systems of education”.

The present study has the following limitations : (1) The present study is confined to the undergraduate students only. (2) The present study is confined to two faculties only, namely students of arts and science faculties. (3) The population of the present study is limited to the municipal limits of Allahabad Municipal Area (Uttar Pradesh, India) only. (4) The sample size of the present study is limited to 351 students only. (5) The present study is limited to its design, method, measuring devices and statistical techniques.

2. METHODS :

The present study is closely connected with the normative survey method of research. The population for the present study has been defined as all the B.A. and B.Sc. students in the session 2009-2010 studying in the degree colleges affiliated to Allahabad University and Allahabad study

centre of U.P. Rajarshi Tandon Open University. In the present study stratified random sampling method has been used as Miller (1977, p.52) pointed out that "the essential requirement of any sample is that it is as representative as possible of the population or the universe from which it has been drawn." Table 1 presents the characteristics of sample.

Table 1 : Actual Sample Design

Students		TES	OES	Total
Arts	Male	50	50	100
	Female	50	50	100
Sciences	Male	50	37	87
	Female	50	14	64
Total		200	151	351

In the present research study a Likert type five-points rating self-developed Academic Motivation Scale (AMS) tool was used for data collection with alternatives as strongly agree, agree, uncertain, disagree, and strongly disagree. The scale consists of the following dimensions :

- (a) Personal Aspiration
- (b) Study Habits
- (c) Socio-Economic Factors
- (d) Attitude toCollege/ Study Centre.

In order to achieve the objectives of the study and testing the hypothesis, t-test statistical technique was used. t-value is computed by the following formula (Garrett, 1981, 243-245) as given below :

$$t = \frac{M_1 - M_2}{\sqrt{\frac{\sigma_1^2}{N_1} + \frac{\sigma_2^2}{N_2}}}$$

- Where t = t value
- M₁ = Mean of the first group
- M₂ = Mean of the second group
- σ₁ = Standard deviation of the first group
- σ₂ = Standard dev of the second group
- N₁ = Size of the first group
- N₂ = Size of the second group

3. RESULTS :

To test this hypothesis, the Academic Motivation Scale was administered to 200 students of Traditional Education System and 151 students of Open Education System. Then, Means and Standard Deviations (SD) for Academic Motivation of students studying in two systems were calculated separately and t-test has been used for comparison of the two means. The details of the data are shown in Table 2 (t critical two tail : 1.97, and at 0.05 significance level)

Table 2 : Motivation in TES and OES

Education System	Mean	Std. Dev.	Degrees of freedom	t Value
Traditional N=200	153.30	24.91	349	6.07
Open N=151	138.13	21.79		

The value of t was found to be 6.07 which is significant. Thus the hypothesis is rejected and can be said that there is significant difference in the academic motivation of students studying in the two systems of education.

Figure 1 is plotted for the comparison of mean values of academic motivation of students studying under the two systems.

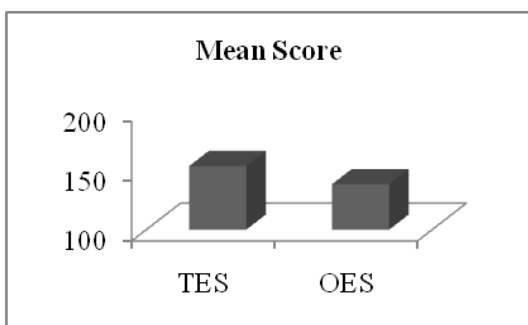


Figure 1 : Comparison of the Academic Motivation of Students under TES and under OES

The testing of the hypothesis has revealed that there is significant difference between the Academic Motivation of those students

studying in Traditional Education System (TES) and Open Education System (OES). In the results, it is seen that students of TES have got higher mean of scores as compared to the mean of scores of OES. Greater difference in their means suggest that students of Traditional Education System are more motivated as compared to students of Open Education System. Dimension-wise analysis of the data is shown below in Table 3 and presented in Figure 2.

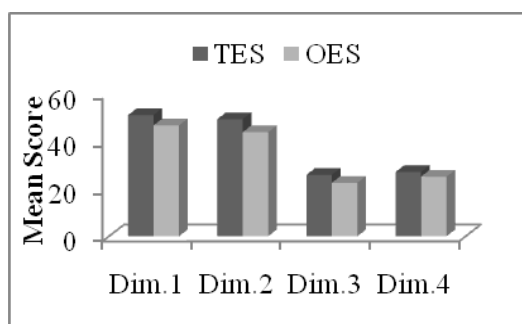


Figure 2 : Dimension-wise Comparison of Academic Motivation of Students under TES and under OES

On all dimensions there is significant difference between students of the two education systems. Regular classroom-teaching and student teacher interactions under TES provide motivation to these students to do better in class. In this process they develop better study habits where progress of the student is monitored closely. Apart from that, expectations of parents, competition faced within college, presence of good job opportunities and recognition etc. encourage students to do better in their studies. Students of TES are found high on Personal Aspiration. They are more influenced by the socio economic conditions as they have many opportunities open to them to build-up their career. These factors result in development of better study habits and attitude towards their college. On the other hand, students of OES are basically studying to upgrade their existing qualifications or to get essential degrees required for their job-in-hand. Merely passing the examination is of prime importance to them. They study merely to

Table 3 : Dimension-wise Comparison of Academic Motivation of Students under TES and under OES

Dimension	TES N=200		OES N=151		t-value	Sig /Insig
	mean	sd	mean	sd		
Personal Aspiration	51.03	7.88	46.68	8.70	4.83	Sig
Study Habits	49.32	8.33	43.83	7.62	6.42	Sig
Socio-Economic Factors	25.87	5.42	22.51	3.96	6.70	Sig
Attitude to College/Study Centre	27.09	5.11	25.11	3.31	4.39	Sig

avoid failures and this result in lower motivation levels. Higher dropout rate in OES also reinforce the above conclusion.

If seen overall, present study concludes that there is significant difference in the Academic Motivation in students of TES and students of OES. Results, further concludes that students of TES are more motivated than the students of OES. On all dimensions, students of TES have scored higher mean as compared to students of OES. Students of OES are found low on Personal Aspiration and Study habits and they are also less motivated because of their socio-economic situations and have little attitude towards their study centres. Difference in the means of the two types of students is greater in case of dimensions viz. Study Habits and Socio-Economic Factors. This suggests that regular classroom studies, regular teacher-students interactions, regular discussions among students, availability of library facilities and feeling of competitiveness help develop better study habits in students of TES. Regular classroom teaching facilitates regular interaction between students and teacher that helps students to solve their problems timely. Regular discussions among students within campus increase the awareness level of students as well as competitive spirit. Further it can also be concluded that due to different social environment of the students there is difference in motivation level. Students of TES are generally dependent upon their parents and thus they find it their duty to fulfill their expectations and thus do hard work. It is also seen that society intervenes

intervene and influences these students, in the form of appraisal from neighborhoods and social circles in which student or his/her family moves. They feel it important and prestigious to attain good position in their studies. They do not want to lose their academic year by becoming careless and becoming mocking stocks in front of family and friends.

On the other hand students of OES are self-dependent and are generally engaged in some other occupation. They do not have such obligation regarding their studies towards family rather they are actually committed for their first priorities that may be job, family or other things. Feeling of competitiveness is less and merely passing the examination is sufficient for them. Moderate and easy admission procedure, less guidance, irregular study habits, other commitments, less involvement in academic system etc coupled with the absence of positive features of TES bring down the motivation level of students of OES. It can be concluded confidently that there is lack of extrinsic motivation, which results in higher dropout rates of OES. Following conclusions can be generalized:

TES students are more committed than students of OES towards study matters.

Academic environment in colleges under TES is more competitive as compared to study centers under OES.

Extrinsic motivation has more effect on motivation level of students studying under TES. Intrinsic motivation is governing factor to achieve accomplishment in OES. Lower intrinsic motivation results in higher dropouts under OES.

TES is the established education system as far as India is concerned and OES is still a growing education system which in the recent years is getting recognition and importance in terms of value of its degrees.

4. CONCLUSIONS :

Thus, we see that students studying under OES are found low in extrinsic motivation that results in even lowering down of intrinsic motivation level. To increase extrinsic motivation level, reward attached to the courses affiliated under OES should be increased. That is, more recognition and worth should be attached to the degrees so as to enhance job opportunities and career prospects. Facilities at the study centers should be increased and involvement of students in the academic process should be increased under OES. Overall if policy makers would be able to increase the competitiveness under OES, motivation level among students will definitely increase. Policy makers now are increasing the worth of degrees procured under OES by making these degrees eligible for various competitive examinations and job opportunities.

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