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IMPACT OF DEMOGRAPHIC ON BUSINESS STUDENTS' LEARNING APPROACHES

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ABSTRACT

This research article attempted to find out effects of demographic factors on the effectiveness of students learning approaches. Two hundred (86 female and 114 male) business students from public and private sector universities of Khyber Paktunkhawa (Pakistan) participated in the study. The participants responded Revised Approaches of Studying Inventory (RASI). By using descriptive statistic, chi square, and regression procedures it was found that the demographic factors are associated with learning approaches and also have impact on learning approaches. Findings confirmed that age, gender, prior education, socio-economic factors, program of study and levels of education have significant effect on the student learning approaches. Results showed that gender has statistically significant relationship with deep learning approach whereas no significant relationship with strategic and surface learning approaches. Age has significant relationship with deep and strategic learning approaches. Prior education has significant relationship with deep and strategic learning approaches while has no relationship with surface approach. Socio-economic factor has significant relationship with deep and strategic learning whereas no relationship with surface approaches. Managerial implications, limitations and future directions are also discussed.

1.1. Introduction

Students' approaches towards learning are of great importance in their academic pursuit. Due to its significance this phenomenon is being researched since long (Duff, Boyle, Dunleavy & Ferguson 2004). The pursuit for analysis of learning approaches started by Marton and Saljo (1976) is still in progress. Educationists, psychologists and researchers of organizational behavior are equally interested in studying the learning approaches of the students. Various factors influences the learning approaches (Deuff et al.,2004). Those include the information processing style (Messick, 1984), personality traits (Bustao, Prins, Elshout & Hamker, 1999) demographics like age and prior education (Duff, 1999; Richardson, 1995), and gender (Wilson, Smart & Watson, 1996).

It is important to consider learning approaches of the business students who are most likely future executives. Student's abilities, skills and learning during their academic training are likely to enhance their organization performance in future. As stated above, there are various factors that affect the students' learning, but the impact of demographic on learning approaches is relatively less studied as suggested by Duff et al (2004). Their study emphasized on more research on the relationship of demographic factors and learning approaches using different methods, and settings. Therefore, this study will analyze the impact of demographic factors namely age, gender, and prior education on the learning approaches namely, strategic, deep and surface approaches of learning (Marton & Saljo, 1976). Although studies exist in literature on this subject about students studying in various academic disciplines, but no study has been conducted on learning approaches of the students in Pakistan, especially in the business discipline (management sciences).

There are three students learning approaches (Duff et al., 2004). These include deep, surface and strategic approaches. The students with a deep approach want to find out the deeper meaning in the text. They are critical, logical and relate what they learn to their previous knowledge (Baeten, M. K., 2010). Their motivation is intrinsic and they look for a personal comprehension independent of the syllabus (Entwistle, 1988). Students tend to develop a deeper approach to their studies over the course of time (Entwistle & Ramsden 1983; Svensson, 1977). The students with a surface approach concentrate on memorizing without any strain to find a deeper meaning or understanding of the material. They are most concerned about passing the exams and are not really interested in the topic itself (Entwistle & Tait, 1996). Their motivation is extrinsic and they take on a syllabus-bound approach to studying (Entwistle, 1988). Students who use the strategic approach are efficient at organizing their work, managing their time and work hard in their studies. They care about their working conditions and have clear goals for their studies (Entwistle & Tait, 1996). The students with a strategic approach aim at achieving the highest possible marks (Entwistle & Ramsden, 1983). They have an intrinsic motivation and a positive study attitude (Entwistle, 1988).

Although studies exist in literature on this subject about students studying in various academic disciplines, but no study has been conducted on learning approaches of the students in Pakistan, especially in the business discipline (management sciences). In the developed world many studies are carried out to see the impact of many factors (for example thinking styles, cultural value, personality dimension and learning context and environment and many more). But there is a dearth of such studies in the developing countries. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the impact of demographic factors on student learning approaches. In the study, business students have been chosen because, after completion of their studies they have to enter in the corporate world and will lead the organization. Therefore, it is prime concern to study these approaches to facilitate students learning during their education and later on their professional life.

In order to investigate such relationship the

current study will examine the relation between demographic factors and students learning approaches in academia of Pakistan. For this a sample 200 business students enrolled in BBA(HON), MBA, MS, and Phd programs was taken from two universities of Pakistan including two public and private sector university and data was collected through Self Administered Questionnaire. Relationship was found between demographic factors and students learning approaches. It has been concluded that the Higher Education Institutions in Pakistan should focus on demographic factors and student approaches these finding which will provide help to academic and educational department in designing business courses. In this way they will better cope with learning approaches demographic factors and boost up their performance. In this way the Higher Education Institutions in Pakistan develop themselves for the betterment of society as whole.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. Student Approaches to Learning

2.1.1. Introduction

Researchers have long been interested in how students go about learning, what strategies they use, and why they choose particular approaches (Vermunt, 2007). Approaches to learning are conceived as the individual differences in intentions a student has when faced with a learning task (Diseth, 2003). Initially Marton (1976) argued that there are two student approaches to learning, which reflects the strategies an individual uses to achieve a particular learning goal. Those two approaches are surface and deep learning approaches. Later research by Biggs (1978) and Ramsden (1979) added to these descriptions of students' approaches to studying by including an achieving or strategic approach to studying.

A surface approach involves investing little time in the academic task and merely memorizing information with rote-learning. A strategic approach involves being guided by the assessment criteria and enhancing self-esteem through competition. Strategic approach is derived from an intention to obtain the highest possible grades, and relied on organized studying and an awareness of assessment demands (Marton, 1976; Biggs,1997; &Diseth, 2003) A deep approach involves finding meaning in what is being studied to maximize understanding. Strategic approach derived from an intention to obtain the highest possible grades, and relied on organized studying and an awareness of assessment demands. The strategic approach is reflected in organized study habits and time management (Biggs, 1993; Ramsden,1979,1984) researchers (Biggs1979; Ramsden,1979,1984) work also suggested that each of these three approaches was related to a distinctive form of motivation – intrinsic (deep), extrinsic and fear of failure (surface) and need for achievement (strategic).

Student can exhibit different approaches to studying in different situations. In general, the choice of one approach to studying rather than other appeared to be depending upon the content, the context, experience, individual personality traits, age, gender and the demands of particular tasks (Laurillard, 1979; Marton, 1976; Ramsden, 1979; Biggs, 1987; Richardson; 2000, 2005).

2.2 Definitions of Students Approaches to Learning

2.2.1 Surface Approach

Students with a surface approach concentrate on memorizing without any concern to find a deeper meaning or understanding of the material. They are most concerned about passing the exams and are not really interested in the topic itself (Entwistle & Tait, 1996). Their motivation is extrinsic and they take on a syllabus-bound approach to studying (Entwistle, 1988).

2.2.2 Deep Approach

Students with a deep approach want to find out the deeper meaning in the text. They are critical, logical and try to relate what they learn from their previous knowledge (Entwistle & Tait, 1996). Their motivation is intrinsic and they look for a personal comprehension, and are independent of the syllabus (Entwistle, 1988). Students tend to develop a deeper approach to their studies over the course of time (Entwistle & Ramsden 1983; Svensson, 1977).

2.2.3 Strategic Approach

Biggs (1979) and Ramsden (1979) added to these descriptions of students' approaches to learning by including an achieving or strategic approach to learning. This approach is derived from an intention to obtain the highest possible grades, and relies on organized studying with an awareness of assessment demands. Students who use the strategic approach are efficient at organizing their work, managing their time and work hard in their studies. They care about their working conditions and have clear goals for their studies (Entwistle &Tait, 1996). The students with a strategic approach aim at achieving the highest possible marks (Entwistle & Ramsden, 1983). They have an intrinsic motivation and a positive study attitude (Entwistle,1988).

2.3. Development of Student Learning Approaches

Marton and Saljo (1976) initially described the distinction, which they found among students reading academic articles, are surface and deep level processing. But later this amended approach to learning (Marton and Saljao 1984) both to avoid confusion1 with same term used in relation with to memory process and make clear that approach include processes, and also intension. The term was used initially to describe only specific form of study activity provoked by student's perception of task instruction on the particular situations. The large portion of student learning research and conceptualization mainly focused cognitive processing strategies and motivation. For example Pask (1988) identified serialist and holist strategies that learner may adopt in achieving understanding. Marton and Saljo (1976) interviewed students about their approaches to learning and identified surface and deep approaches.

Brenstein, Schmeck & Hetherington (1996) find out five types of cognitive learning strategies:(i) elaborative processing, (ii) deep learning, (iii) methodical learning, (iv) Agnatic learning and (v) literal memorization. Biggs (1979) came with three types of learning strategies: surface, deep and achieving (strategic), each corresponding to particular study motivation: extrinsic, intrinsic and achieving motivation respectively. Tait and Entwistle (1996) work on strategies inventory and developed it which contains items in domain of cognitive processes (that is surface approach, deep approach strategic approach and apathetic approach) and study motivation and affection for example active interest, intension of excel, fear of failure and lack of direction. The inventory of Weinstein (1988) contains items not only in the domain of cognitive processing and motivation, but also on some aspects of meta cognitive regulation. Student learning approaches have relation with many phenomena for example depend upon the content, the context, experience, individual personality traits, age, gender, environments and the demands of particular tasks (Laurillard, 1979; Marton, 1976; Ramsden, 1979; Biggs, 1987; Richardson; 2000, 2005).

The idea that the way an individual learns is related to their personality in not new. For example, Messick (1984, p. 61) suggests an individual's learning style can be thought of as a ''characteristic self-consistency in information processing that develop in congenial ways around underlying personality trends''. Recent empirical work has found support for the hypothesis that an individual_s learning orientation is related to their personality (Busato, Prins, Elshout, & Hamaker, 1999, 2000). These findings suggest SAL research

may be complemented by considering the role an individual_s personality may play in the learning process. Other research using other descriptions of learning orientation (style) such as Kolb_s experiential learning model (Kolb, 1984) measured using Honey and Mumford_s Learning Styles Questionnaire (LSQ), indicate learning style is simply a subset of personality (Jackson & Lawty-Jones, 1996) or a learnt component of personality (Furnham, Jackson, & Miller, 1999). SAL researchers however have paid more attention to the role demographic variables such as the age and gender of an individual might play in determining their approach to learning. In part, this could be attributed to changes in the nature of higher education (HE) in the UK. HE in the UK has undergone a process of rapid expansion in the past 10 years to create a more heterogeneous student population, with many older students now pursuing tertiary education. Consequently, age has become an important variable for SAL researchers to consider. Those studies considering the relationship between age and approach to learning have consistently shown age is positively related to scores on deep approach and negatively correlated with surface approach scores (Duff, 1999; Richardson, 1995; Richardson, Morgan, & Woodley, 1999; Sadler-Smith, 1996; Sadler-Smith & Tsang, 1998). The findings concerning gender differences in approaches to learning are less clear. Wilson, Smart, and Watson (1996) reviewed work using either the ASI or the SPQ. Investigations utilizing the SPQ ‘‘offer a far from definitive picture on gender difference’’ (Wilson et al., 1996, p. 60). By comparison, research using versions of the RASI identifies males scoring higher on Deep Approach and females scoring higher on surface approach (Duff, 1999, 2002; Sadler-Smith, 1996Sadler-Smith & Tsang, 1998). Therefore to modify Ramsdens (1992) contextual model of student learning by including age, gender and personality, in addition to prior educational experience, as variables which influence an individual’s learning orientation. Despite the vigorous research activity in the fields of personality and individual differences and students_ approaches to learning, work considering the relation personality may play in determining an individual’s approach to learning is still in its infancy.

2.3.1. Factors Influencing Study Approaches

What factors influence approaches to studying? In an investigation regarding approaches to studying among Greek university students, E. Andreou, Vlachos, and G. Andreou (2006) noted that factors such as gender, age, academic discipline, and prior education may all influence approaches to studying. These researchers found that more mature students tended to utilize deep approaches to studying, but that study approaches more often involved an interaction between multiple factors such as age and gender and male tended to deep while female tended towards surface approach to learning.

3. DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Study Design and Research Questions

The current study has utilized cross-sectional survey design. Researchers often prefer a cross-sectional over longitudinal designs because of time and cost considerations (Yammamoto, 2007). Within a cross sectional Design a quantitative approach has been applied, because use of Self Administered Questionnaires as data Collection is one of the most frequently applied quantitative research technique in social sciences (Bryman, 2006).

To achieve objective of the study following two research questions are developed

Q1: What is overall personality orientation and student learning approaches preferences of all respondents?

Q2: How demographics are associated with student learning approaches?

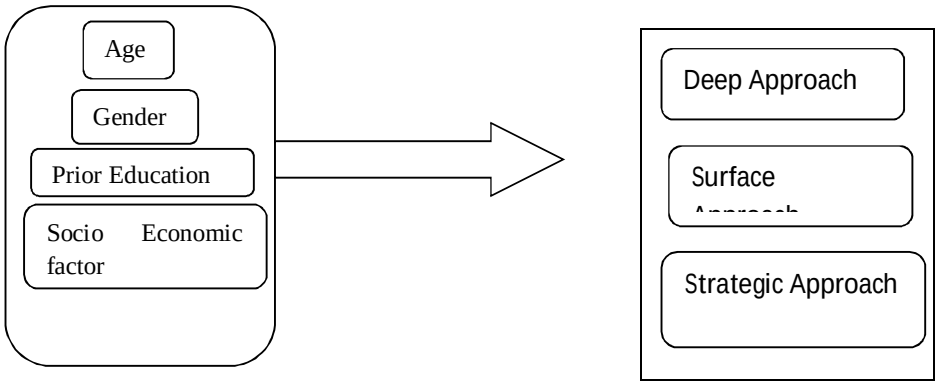
Q3 What are the predictors of students learning approaches preferences?

H1: There is significant difference in Deep approach of student learning between genders, age, Prior Education, Socio Economic factor among the business graduate students.

H2: There is significant difference in surface approach of student learning between genders, age, Prior Education, Socio Economic factor among the business graduate students.

H3: There is significant difference in strategic approach of student learning between genders, age, Prior Education, Socio Economic factor among the business graduate students.

Demographic & Student learning approaches Conceptual Model



Demographic **Students Approaches to Learning**

3.2 Sampling procedure

For study sample is drawn in two stages. In first stage using simple random sampling to select four universities out of 26 universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Pakistan). In second stage using convenient sampling were select three hundred business students from two public and two private sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Sample of the main study is drawn from four universities. In the main study, 300 questionnaires were distributed in public and privates sector universities of KPK in which 200 were returned (response rate of 66.67%). The participants in this study were business students of public sector and private sector university of Khyber Paktunkhawa (KPK) and participants were enrolled in BBA, MBA, MS/MBA (3.5) and PhD in last semester of their course. In this study questionnaire is adopted as data collection tool. For this study respondent are selected from public sector universities such as (Institute of Management Studies Peshawar, University of Peshawar) while in private sector universities (Quartaba University, Peshawar and Northern University, Nowshera).

3.2.1 Instruments

Questionnaire of this study was comprised of three sections along with a covering page which describes the basic purpose of introduction the study. First section was demographics. In second section three were questions about personality trait and third section items about students' approaches to learning.

3.2.2. Demographics

Demographic influences student learning approaches for examples Age, Gender, prior education academic discipline and socio economic factor. (Andreou, Vlachose & Androueo; 2006, Duff 2003).

3.2.3. Student Approach to Learning

For this study revised approach of studying inventory (RASI) (duff, 2003) is used. RASI has 30 items with likert scale from 1 to 5 (1 for strongly Disagree and 5 for strongly Agree) measuring three distinct learning approaches. The instrument has 10 items to measure Deep approach,10 items for surface approach and 10 items for strategic approach.

3.3 Procedures

Heads of the departments of management sciences of different universities were approached. They were briefed about the study and permission was taken from them in written form. The total 300 questionnaires were distributed personally. The respondents were also briefed about the study of and its objectives. They were also ensured and that the data will be used the confidentially of the data will be ensured and that the data will be used only for research purpose. The questionnaires were collect after one day so that respondent filled the questionnaire with ease. They were also asked their feedback that's was the questionnaire was easy to understand and comprehend or not? If which item need to changes/corrections. The gathered the data were entered in excel sheet than transfer to SPSS file. And feedbacks of pilot study were also recorded in Ms World documents. A code book was developed for the ease in analysis. After coding, variable were defined, calculated and coded as per the code book.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1. Main Study Reliability Analysis of the Measures

This study, one constructs with three sub-constructs respectively were used. First the reliability of the instrument was analyzed using Cronbach alpha coefficient of reliability (Cronbach, 1951). According to George & Mallery (2003), the value of Cronbach alfa in the range $0.8>\alpha>0.7$ is desirable and show that instrument is internally consistent and is reliable for measuring the concepts. The cronbach alpha (α) values ranged from 0.68 to 0.85, which showed that constructs used were reliable. Cronbach alpha for students learning approaches are: deep approach is 0.84, surface approach0.73, strategic approach 0.86. (See table 4.1)

Table No. 4.1: Cronbach Alpha Values of the Instrument

Instrument/ Variable	No. of item	Cronbach Alpha
Deep Approach	**10**	**0.84**
Surface Approach	**10**	**0.73**
Strategic Approach	**10**	**0.86**

4.2 Normality

For normality is assumed for the distribution of each of the five scales since the significance level of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of variables is greater than 0.05 (Zang, 2003).

Table No.4.2: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristic	Number and Percentage
Gender	
Male	**114 (57%)**
Female	**86(43%)**
Age	
20 – 25 years	**102 (51%)**
26 - 30 years	**71(35.5%)**
31 -35 years	**16(8%)**
36 and above years	**11(5.5%)**
Program	
Ms/MBA3.5	**79(39.5%)**
BBA (Hon) MBA1.5	**61(30.5%)**
Others	**60(30%)**
Prior education	
B.com	**42(21%)**
BBA	**60(30%)**
Bsc /BA	**48(24%)**
Other	**50(25%)**

4.3 Descriptive Statistics of the Sample

Two hundred subjects participant in the study.57% were male (114 respondents) while 43 %(86) were female. The age distributions of the respondents were as: 102 (51%) were age between 20 to 25years, 71(35.5%) between 26 to30, 16(8%) between 31 to 35 and 11(5.5%) above 36years. Prior education of respondents were 42(21%) did B.com,60(30%), BBA60(30%), Bsc/B.A 48(24%) and 50(25%)other and there were79(39.5%) MS/MBA(3.5), 61(30.5%)BBA(HON)/MBA and 60(30%) other. (See table 4.2)

4.4 Demographics and students approaches to learning: Overall Respondents and Orientation

Data analysis showed that respondents were high on conscientiousness i.e. its mean (M) is given by (M= 3.70) followed by agreeableness (M=3.60), extraversion (M=3.46), openness (M= 3.35) and neuroticism (M= 3.31).The most adopted students learning approach is strategic approach (M= 3.39),deep approach(M=3.36) and surface approach (M=3.17) (See table 4.3).

4.3.2 Influence of Demographic on Students Learning Approach

Gender

The gender analyses of the data revealed that male are high on conscientiousness (M=3.7661) followed by agreeableness (M=3.7027), extraversion (M=3.5515), openness to experience (M=3.4871) and less neuroticism (M=3.3289). While female are high on conscientiousness (M=3.7050) followed by agreeableness(M=3.5961),extraversion(M=3.4631),openness to experiences (M=3.3508) and less neuroticism(M=3.3075).While in case of students approaches to learning both the gender mostly prefer strategic approach(M=3.5219and M= 3.3965 respectively) followed by deep approach(M=3.5018,and M= 3.18955) respectively and less prefer surface approach (M=3.2202 and M= 3.1735) (See table 4.4 & 4.5).

Table No. 4.3: Means & Standard Deviation for Students Approach to Learning

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Deep Approach	**3.3675**	**.78988**
Strategic Approach	**3.3965**	**.75731**
Surface Approach	**3.1735**	**.73713**

Table No.4.4: Means & Standard Deviation for Students Approach to Learning for Male

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Deep Approach	**3.5018**	**.72953**
Strategic Approach	**3.5209**	**.74198**
Surface Approach	**3.2202**	**.64796**

Table No. 4.5: Means & Standard Deviation for Students Approach to Learning for Female

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Deep Approach	**3.18955**	**.78988**
Strategic Approach	**3.3965**	**.75731**
Surface Approach	**3.1735**	**.73713**

Table No. 4.7: Means & Standard Deviation for Students Approach to Learning for Age				
Age		Deep Approach	Strategic Approach	Surface Approach
20 to 25	M	3.4549	3.4615	3.2529
	SD	.72065	.72572	.69135
26 to 30	M	3.1732	3.2113	3.0225
	SD	.89490	.78149	.79358
31 to 35	M	3.5625	3.5451	3.3188
	SD	.73018	.72132	.75738
36 and above	M	3.5273	3.7727	3.2000
	SD	.57461	.74845	.67528

Prior education

Respondents who studied B.Com and BBA (HON) in prior education both prefer strategic approach learning (M= 3.0672 and M=3.3298 respectively). In case of personality traits high on conscientiousness (M=3.7804 and M=3.6704 respectively). While student who studied B.Sc. /BA in there prior education prefer deep approach to learning (M=3.5063).While high on agreeableness (M=3.8426). In average all respondents prefer strategic approach to learning (M=3.3965).While high on Conscientiousness (M=3.7050). (See table 4.6)

Table No.4.6: Means & Standard Deviation for Students Approach to Learning for Prior Education				
Prior Education		Deep Approach	Strategic Approach	Surface Approach
B.Com	M	3.0548	3.0672	2.9548
	SD	.90909	.77144	.85060
BBA	M	3.3217	3.3298	3.2600
	SD	.82567	.78474	.76184
BSc/BA	M	3.5063	3.4972	3.1979
	SD	.75833	.67210	.66220

Age

Analysis of age shows that three group of age (20-25,26-30,and 36 and above) prefer strategic approach to learning(M=3.4615, M= 3.2113 and M=3.7727 respectively). While all age group are high on Conscientiousness while respondents who age is between (31 to 35) prefer deep approach to learning(M=3.5625).(See table 4.7).

4.3.3. Association between demographic and students learning Approaches (Chi square test)

Gender has statistically significant relationship with deep approach (χ^2 =4.18, df= 32, p<0.050) and while have no relationship with strategic and surface approaches. There is no significant relationship between learning approaches and age. Deep approach has relationship with prior education (χ^2 =127.556, df= 96, p<0.05) and strategic learning approach (χ^2 =126, df=99, p<0.05) has also significant relationship with prior education and surface learning have no relationship. (See table 4.8)

Table 4.8: Chi – Square Tests Results

	Gender	Age	Prior education	Socio Economic
Deep approach	χ^2 =4.18, df=32, p<0.05	χ^2 =84.955, df=96, p=.0.05	χ^2 =127.556, df=96, p<0.05	χ^2 =12.34, df=33, p<0.05
Strategic Approach	χ^2 =3.3932, df = 33, p=.0.05	χ^2 =94.125, df=99, p=.0.05	χ^2 =126 df=99, p<0.05	χ^2 =94.125, df=33, p=0.05
Surface Approach	χ^2=32.544, df = 32, p=.442	χ^2 =87.800, df =96, p=.713	χ^2 =107.179, df =96, p.205	χ^2=38.544, df = 32, p=.442

**P<0.01, *p<0.05

4.9: Regression analysis between demographics and learning approaches.

Dependent variables	**Deep Approach**			**Strategic Approach**			**Surface Approach**			Co linearity Statistics	
Independent variables	**β value**	Standard Error	P value	**β value**	Standard Error	P value	**β value**	Standard Error	P value	Tolerance	VIF
Age	**0.466**	0.071	0.000	**.096**	0.070	0.071	**0.144**	0.077	.062	.859	1.164
Gender	**0.212**	0.068	0.002	**0.359**	0.067	0.000	**.123**	0.073	.094	.824	1.214
Prior education	**0.031**	0.086	0.021	**0.176**	0.084	0.037	**-0.198**	0.092	.033	.915	1.093
Socio economic status	**0.138**	0.059	0.021	**0.270**	0.058	0.804	-0.014	0.063	.000	.973	1.027
F value	**21.854**		0.000	**19.343***		.000	**7.005**		.000		
R^2 Value	**0.360**			**0.333**			**0.153**				

**P<0.01, *p<0.05

4.3.4 Predictors of students learning approaches

Regression analysis revealed that for deep approach, Age (β= .466, p<0.05) and gender (β= .212, p<0.1) , prior education (β= .031, p<0.10) and socio economic (β= .138, p<0.05) are valid predictors (F (5, 196) = 21.854, p<.05). For strategic approach, Age (β= .096, p<0.10) and gender (β= .359, p<0.1) , prior education (β= .0176, p<0.05) are valid predictors (F (5, 196) = 19.33, p<.05). Age (β= .466, p<0.05) and gender (β= .212, p<0.1) , prior education (β= .031, p<0.10) and socio economic (β= .138, p<0.05) are valid predictors (F (5, 196) = 21.854, p<.05) and for surface approach, Age (β= .144, p<0.10) and gender (β= .123, p<0.10) , prior education and (β= -0.198, p<0.10) are valid predictors (F (5, 196) = 7.005, p<.05).(See table 4.9).

V. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

5.1. Discussion

This study investigated the relationship between demographic and student learning approaches which students have adopted during their studies. This study focused on business students who are enrolled in BBA, MBA, MS/MBA (3.5) and PhD in public and private sector universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

5.1.1. Overall Students Learning Approaches

Result of this study found that business students enrolled in public and private sector universities of KPK (Pakistan) were high on conscientiousness. The most adopted student learning approach was strategic approach followed by deep approach while least adopted was surface approach.

5.2 Demographic Factors and Students Learning Approaches

The Chi square analysis revealed that gender has significant relationship with deep and strategic learning approach. But it has no significant relationship surface students learning approaches. In case of age has significant relationship with deep and strategic approach while no relationship surface approach. In case of prior education deep and strategic learning approaches have significant relationship with prior education while surface approach has no significant relationship with prior education.

Our result showed that male students are higher on deep approach than female. These results are in line with previous finding (Duff, (1999), (2002); Tsang, 1998). Our result showed that male students are higher on surface approach than females. While previous research showed that female are high on surface approach than male. One of the possible reason may be that sample was taken from BBA, MBA, MS/MBA (3.5) and PhD final semester students from department of management sciences. While in previous studies, undergraduate students of different disciplines were surveyed. The difference of level and discipline may be the possible explanation for these contradictory results. This is also supported by Dasari (2006), who argued that student adopted learning approaches also vary from discipline to discipline. In this study there is no significant relation of age with learning approaches, which is in line with the previous study findings (Duff et al., 2004). Prior education is significantly correlated with deep and strategic approaches. Significant relationship between prior education and deep and strategic approaches means that students who have prior graduate degrees in business education have mostly adopted deep and strategic approach to learning in their higher education programs. In management studies, case based approach is more common as compared to other disciplines. Case based approach to learning demand in depth understanding of the phenomenon and also focuses on optimal solution. These two (i.e in-depth understanding and research for optimal solution) compel students to adopt deep and strategic approaches to learning.

5.3 Contribution of the Study

It is the first ever study in Pakistan to explain relationship between demographic and student learning approaches of business student. It also provides the information about the most adopted and the least adopted student learning approaches during their academic career. The most preferred student learning approach is strategic approach, and the least preferred approach is surface approach.

5.4 Implications of the Study

The knowledge, skills, and experiences that students bring from university to organization are often crucial to their future success. This means that teachers in today's education sector face the challenge of not only conveying discipline content and practices but also setting path for the students to become self-learners. The challenge is creating an environment which is conducive to learning and caters for the increasing diversity among student population. The difference in students learning styles shows the diversity in their inherent capabilities, and teachers have to adopt

themselves. Accordingly a key way for teachers to make effective adjustments to their curricula by acknowledging the fact that different individual have different learning approaches. Thus they need to adopt themselves to different styles of learning adopted by students. The present findings suggest that the well-established five personality traits measure can be used to inform the learning approaches issue. This will not only help the teachers directly involved in teaching, but also help the educationists in developing course syllabus. Further this research might be helpful for instructors who provide on job trainings to employees. However, result should be interpreted with caution since the amount of variance explained by the personality traits in learning approaches is limited up to 36%, therefore, the personality inventory should not be used alone in the study of students' learning approaches. Since this is the first study of the five personality traits for learning approaches, replications of this study would certainly be valuable in verifying relationship in other disciplines.

In educational settings, teachers may make use of the relationships between personality traits and learning approaches. For example, teachers may teach students about the value of being conscientious and being open-minded about their learning tasks so that students may acquire a deep approach to learning. Additionally, teachers may assign tasks that require a deep approach to learning. Through using the deep approach to learning in the process of completing their learning tasks, students may develop the conscientiousness and openness in personality**.**

5.5 Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations of this study. Firstly, the study used small sample. Larger samples may reveal more information. Secondly, study used convenience sampling due to some constraints/reasons, therefore results of the study lack generalizability. Thirdly self – reported means have been used for data collection which may have resulted in "social desirability bias" and lastly, it is a cross-sectional analysis therefore causal relationship, based on this study, cannot be established.

5.6 Future Directions for Research

This study used self-report measure, which may result in "social desirability bias". Therefore it is suggested that future research qualitative analysis may also be used for better understanding. Future research can also use mixed methods to ensure a holistic view of the phenomenon. As the variation in learning approaches caused by demographic is only 36%, the remaining unexplained variation should be investigated. This can done by taking into consideration some other influencing variable like culture value, education of parents, peer-pressure, institutional leading culture and many more.

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