

FAMILY IMPACT ON STUDENTS' MOTIVATION¹

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ABSTRACT:

This study tries to identify the impact of some family important variable on students' motivation and their GPA in King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals. Several studies had stressed the importance of studying students' motivation as an approach to improve their academic performance and enhance the corporation image. The family and society changing values and cultures have a great impact on the students' motivation and their academic integration and performance.

This study based on a survey method for collecting data. A questionnaire was distributed to a sample of 727 KFUPM students representing the three largest colleges in the university. The questionnaire consisted of several items. The items are related to some students and family demographic characteristics in addition to items about students GPA and their desire to study. The original questionnaire was translated Arabic and from Arabic back to English by a professional translator in the university and reviewed by the researcher.

Results showed that students tend to attribute their academic success to internal factors such as hard working while they attribute their failure to external factors such as family problems.

INTRODUCTION:

Motivation was an important subject in management, organizational behavior and psychology in general. Motivation was defined by Greenberg and Baron (2003) as: "The set of processes that arouse, direct, and maintain human behavior toward attaining some goal." (P. 190). The same researchers maintained that *motivation was a multifaceted* subject. This implies that people may have several different motives operating at once (Greenberg & Brown, 2003).

Operationally, motivation refers in this study, to students' desire to study and achieve high grades as measured by their Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA). Cumulative GPA refers to the total quality points the student had achieved in all courses he had taken since his enrollment at the university, divided by the total number of credit hours assigned for these courses. Thus, family impact on students' motivation refers to any positive or negative impression or effect that Saudi families exercise on their children while studying in the university.

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The grades a student earns in each course are calculated as follows:

Percentage	Grade	Grade Code	GPA (Out of 4.00)
95-100	Exceptional	A+	4.00
90 – less than 95	Excellent	A	3.75
85 – less than 90	Superior	B+	3.50
80 – less than 85	Very Good	B	3.00
75 – less than 80	Above average	C+	2.50
70 – less than 75	Good	C	2.00
65 – less than 70	High Pass	D+	1.50
60 – less than 65	Pass	D	1.00
Less than 60	Fail	F	0.00

Motivation consisted of intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions. However, the new trend in organizational behavior was to emphasize the importance of intrinsic factors or intrinsic motivation within a cultural perspective (Lyengar & Lepper, 1999, Venkatesh, 1999). Ryan & Deci (2003), for example, defined intrinsic motivation as “the inherent tendency to seek novelty and challenges, to extend and exercise one’s capacities, to explore, and to learn” (P.51). However, as the same researchers insist, maintenance and enhancement of intrinsic motivation requires supportive conditions, as it can be fairly disrupted by various unsupportive conditions. While intrinsic motivation implies doing an activity for its inherent satisfaction, external motivation refers to the performance of an activity in order to attain some separable outcome and compliance with an external regulation, control or any social agent influence (Ryan & Deci, 2003).

LITERATURE REVIEW:

No doubt, that it was important to investigate the different aspects of motivation within a specific organizational culture. However, the organizational culture was not detached from the general culture (e, g., societal values, traditions, attitudes and home environment). Accordingly, one applied aspects of this topic was university students’ motivation as influenced by family structure, functions, values and other psychological dimensions such as self-confidence. Lumsden (1994), for example, stated the role of the significant others (parents and home environment) in students’ motivation as a main factor which shapes the initial constellation of students’ attitudes they develop toward learning. He stressed that “When children are raised in a home that nurtures a sense of self-worth, competence, autonomy, and self-efficacy, they will be more apt to accept the risks inherent in learning.” (P.2). Gottfried, Fleming and Gottfried (1994) supported this trend and emphasized that their study “strongly suggest that parental motivational practices are causal influences on children’s academic intrinsic motivation and school achievement” (P.110). Accordingly, there was

a need to instruct parents on motivational practices such as encouragement of persistence, effort, mastery of subject area, curiosity and exploration (Gottfried et al., 1994).

In fact, the impact of family on students' motivation and school achievement was an old issue that was stressed by McClelland, for example, since 1953. He emphasized the influence of the family on learning the achievement need. Recent studies in Australia, for example, had pinpointed the role of social integration in academic integration (McInnes, Hartley, Polesel & Teese, 2000). Some of these studies showed that experiences with peers and family members do influence social and academic integration in complex ways. The demands, for example, of family and friends outside the academic institution can limit opportunities for social integration (Chrwastie and Dinham, 1991). Ryan & Deci (2000 in Porter, Bigley & Steers, 2003) stress that "despite the fact that humans are liberally endowed with intrinsic motivational tendencies, the evidence was now clear that the maintenance and enhancement of this inherent propensity requires supportive conditions, as it can be fairly disrupted by various unsupportive conditions" (P.51). Ryan and Deci (2000) maintained that research had revealed that external negative impacts such as threats, deadlines, directives, pressured evaluations, and imposed goals diminish intrinsic motivation. Consequently, the same researchers have for example, reported that studies showed that autonomy-supportive parents, relative to controlling parents, have children who are more intrinsically motivated.

Therefore, it was very important to study the family impact on students' motivation within a specific culture, which was in this study, the Saudi culture. Several researchers such as Bank, Slavings and Biddle (1990) had called for more research and studies in order to investigate the impact of family and peers on students' motivation and academic persistence. Other studies in several countries such as Greece and Great Britain had shown the importance of studying and understanding the family's functions, structures, values and their impact on children behavior in different ages.

Cross-cultural studies, however, showed differences in the above variables and on how they influence the students' academic performance. Chen & Lan (1998), for example, stressed that cultural background not only influences family beliefs about the value of education, but may affect how academic expectations are communicated by parents and perceived by their children. In a study, which examined the differences in willingness to conform to parents' expectations of academic achievement as perceived by American, Chinese-American, and Chinese high school students the researchers found that Chinese students were more willing to accept their parents' advice and cared more about fulfilling academic expectations than did American students. Students in all three groups had similar feelings of independence.

The views of Chinese-American students reflected the influence of both their Chinese heritage and the American culture in which they resided. Consequently, the two researchers concluded that parents' expectations have a powerful effect on children's academic performance and that high achieving children tend to come from families which have high expectations for them, and who consequently are likely to 'set standards' and to make greater demands at an earlier age. In addition, the two researchers had quoted Vollmer (1986), who concluded that there was a strong correlation between parental expectations and children's school performance: "Many empirical studies have found positive linear relationships between expectancy and subsequent academic achievement" (p. 15). Henderson (1988) found that this held true across all social, economic, and ethnic

backgrounds. Parental expectations, however, will have little effect unless communicated to their children, and this process may reflect cultural differences. On the other hand, Gonzalez-Pianda; Nunez; Gonzalez-Pumariaga; Alvarez; Rocas and Garcia (2002) concluded that:

(a) Academic self-concept was the variable that most positively affected by parental involvement; this was relevant because students' self-concept had a powerful effect on academic achievement and

(b) The relationship between parental involvement and causal attribution coincides, to some extent, with that obtained by Hokoda and Fincham (1995).

In both studies, parents' expectations about their children's capacity were congruent with the kind of causal attributions children make about their own achievements (i.e., the higher the capacity expectations are, the greater was the students' tendency to make internal attributions about success, and fewer internal ones about failure).

However, Kim (2002) had emphasized that to study parents' involvement in education was to identify one aspect of the process by which family background makes a difference in a child's academic success. Kim had quoted Coleman (1988), who suggested that family background might be analytically separated into at least three distinct components: financial (physical) capital (family income or wealth), human capital (parent education), and social capital (relationship among actors). With respect to children's educational achievement, Kim (2002) maintained that, there was a direct relationship between parental financial and human capital and the successful learning experience of their children. However, he stressed that while both of these factors are important determinants of children educational success, there remains a substantial proportion of variation in educational success, which was unaccounted for by these variables alone. Kim explained this variance by what he called the "social capital" which mediates the relationship between parents' financial and human capital, on the one hand, and the development of the human capital of their children on the other.

On the same line, Iverson & Walberg (1982) had revised 18 studies of 5,831 school-aged students on a systematic research of educational, psychological, and sociological literature. Accordingly, they had concluded that students' ability and achievement are more closely linked to the socio-psychological environment and intellectual stimulation in the home than they are to parental socio-economic status indicators such as occupation and amount of education.

In Saudi Arabia, Kritam, Abou Rakbah & Al-Awassawi (1981), reported that students' parents had a significant impact on their children's, who were university students, decision making. The researchers mentioned, for example, that 100% of the sample consulted with their parents before taking a decision regarding their marriage, 70% consulted with their parents before taking a decision to travel and 12% consulted their parents before choosing their majors in the university. Accordingly, the Saudi parents' involvement in their children education at the university level was less influencing than in other issues such as marriage and traveling. The parents' impact on their children graduate education was the core issue investigated in this empirical study.

In another pilot study, which was based on a random stratified sampling which included final years students in KFUPM (70 participants), I found that about 15.71% of the students had joined the university because their families' forced them to do so. Furthermore, in another pilot studies done

in KFUPM by my senior students as a part of their course work, we found that family problems are blamed by students as a second cause for their low academic performance and/or dismissal.

This observation had led the researcher to explore this issue especially if we know that the influence of the Saudi family on its children, even when they reach university level, was relatively strong especially in social issues such as marriage, divorce, education and traveling. Thus, a more comprehensive study was needed in order to investigate the impact of the Saudi family on students' desire to study (motivation) and on their GPA.

OBJECTIVES of the Study:

- 1- To investigate the Saudi family impact on students' desire to study.
- 2- To investigate the Saudi family impact on students' GPA.
- 3- To investigate the relationship between the family impact on students' desire to study and some parents and students' demographic characteristics.
- 4- To prepare a data bank for more studies and research in the area of KFUPM students' academic development aspect.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM AND PROPOSED APPROACH FOR ITS SOLUTION:

Clearly, the topic of students' motivation was still a mean concern for several academic institutions. Improving students' motivation and abilities would enhance these institutions' academic performance and corporation image in a competitive environment.

Low motivation and deficiency in academic performance might be considered as only symptoms to more complicated problems. These problems are, in fact, rooted in the family structure, functions and values. Thus, understanding the impact of family values and culture in general on students' motivation would lead, partially indeed, to improve students' motivation and hence their performance. Nevertheless, this did not mean to minimize the impact of other external factors such as: Peers influence, academic orientation programs, academic policy, administrative policy, rewarding and punishment's methods nor to neglect the impact of the internal factors.

This study will focus on extrinsic motivational factors, mainly family impact on students desire to study.

Attribution Theory and students' motivation:

Attribution refers to attempts to understand the causes of others' behavior. Therefore, it was a highly rational process in, which individuals try to identify the causes of others' behavior following orderly cognitive steps. However, attribution was also subjected to several forms of errors-tendencies that can lead people into serious misjudgments concerning the causes of others' behavior (Baron & Byrne, 1997).

While counseling students in KFUPM Guidance and Counseling Center, I found that some students attribute their failure in their study to external factors more than to internal factors. Accordingly,

this implies that some students commit, what was known as, the actor self-serving error. This error was a biased tendency since we attribute our own behavior mainly to situational factors when we fail and to internal factors when we succeed. However, we tend to do the opposite when we try to explain the others' behavior.

To investigate this bias, I usually ask students during counseling sessions, whether the family attributed excuses (causes) they present to me in order to justify dropping a semester for example, are real causes or just rationalization! In responding to this question, most students tend to come to reality and tell the truth. Thus, they blame firstly themselves (behavior) as the main cause for their failure. However, this did not imply that some students do not face real family problems and other external problems, which hinder their abilities and motivation.

Questions of the study:

This study was a descriptive-exploratory study, which attempts to answer the following questions:

- 1- What was the relationship between students' demographics characteristics (e.g., educational levels, age, regions, residence) and their GPA?
- 2- Was there any relationship between parents' demographic characteristics (e.g., education, religiosity, family status) and their siblings (students) GPA?
- 3- Was there any relationship between the way that the students were reared and their GPA?
- 4- Do students face family problems?
- 5- Was there any relationship between polygamy and students' GPA?
- 6- What types of family problems the students face and how these problems are related to their GPA?
- 7- What was the relationship between students' family problems and their GPA?
- 8- What was the relationship between students' family problems and dropping a course or a semester?
- 9- What are the parents' expectations about their siblings' success? And,
What was the relationship between family expectations and students' GPA?
- 10- What are the tribes' expectations about the students' success?
- 11- What was the relationship between students' tribal expectations and their GPA?
- 12- Do Saudi families encourage their children (students) to succeed?
- 13- Do Saudi parents follow up their siblings (students) educational status in the university?
- 14- What was the father impact on students' desire to study and its relationship with students' GPA?
- 15- What was the mother impact on students' desire to study and its relationship with students' GPA?
- 16- What was the family financial status impact on students' desire to study and its relationship with students' GPA?
- 17- What was the traditional values impact on students' desire to study and its relationship with students' GPA?
- 18- What was the modern values impact on students' desire to study and its relationship with students' GPA?
- 19- What was the parents' expectations impact on students' desire to study and its relationship with students' GPA?

- 20- What was the family conditions impact on students' desire to study and its relationship with students' GPA?
- 21- What was the peers' impact on students' desire to study and its relationship with students' GPA?
- 22- What was the labor market impact on students' desire to study and its relationship with students' GPA?
- 23- What was the academic policy impact on students' desire to study and its relationship with students' GPA?
- 24- What was the teaching method impact on students' desire to study and its relationship with students' GPA?

These questions could lead to generating hypotheses, which could be tested in other studies. Furthermore, related factors to students' motivation such as parents' impact, market and peers impact, would be analyzed and explained by using the attribution perspective (Weiner, 1986). Generally, students' motivation looked at in this study as a combination of an emotional aspect (desire) and a cognitive aspect (ability).

Sampling:

A random stratified clustered sample was drawn from the three largest Colleges of the university (KFUPM). These colleges are:

- 1- College of Industrial Management (CIM)
- 2- College of Computer Sciences & Engineering (COE)
- 3- College of Applied Engineering (CAE).

The size of the total sample was 1114 students. This sample size may represent about 10% of the total population of the university. The distribution of the total sample based on colleges was as follows:

Table 2: Distribution of the students according to the three colleges:

Colleges	Sample size	%	Total
C.I.M.	455	41.2	
C.O.E.	346	31.3	
Applied Eng.	304	27.5	
		100%	1114

Students' demographic characteristics:

The students' demographic characteristics refer to the description of variable related to the questions of this empirical study. Accordingly, characteristics such as academic status (educational levels), age, housing and region are taken into consideration.

Data analysis and results

- Family impact on students' academic (educational) success:

The results showed that the Saudi family impact on students' academic success was not decisive. Accordingly, 17.76% of the students said that their families' impact (influence) on their success was "very high", while 32.6% said that this influence was "high". However, 5.3% said that this impact was "very low" and 32.6% said that this impact was "low". Interestingly, 32.6% said that this impact was "normal". I must mention that this item measures students' belief (attitude) towards this issue (family impact). The next item deals also with students' belief about the Saudi family encouragement to students' as a factor in their educational success.

- Family encouragement to students:

The majority of the students said that their families' encouragement to succeed in their education was either very high (17.5%) or high (33.1%). However, 10.9% said that the family encouragement was "low" and 3.9% said that it was "very low". On the other hand, 34.5% said that their families' encouragement was just "normal". In fact, students' study and success both influenced by several other factors besides family impact. The following item (question) addresses some of these other factors.

- Do you believe that your actual academic status was attributed to:

- 1) Family encouragement.
- 2) Family frustration.
- 3) Family problems.
- 4) Self-desire to succeed regardless of family impact.
- 5) Family pressure to succeed.
- 6) Other factors.

Among the above stated factors, number 4 (Self-desire to succeed) was the most selected factor 44.0% followed by factor number 1 (Family encouragement) (38%). These two factors followed by factor number 5 (Family pressure to succeed) with a relatively low percentage 6.9%. However, family problems' impact was no higher than 3.9% besides family frustration 2.5%.

These results indicate that the students attribute their success mainly to self-desire (internal factor) and than to their families encouragement and pressure (external factors). However, the family impact was positive since 38% of the respondents attributed their success to their family encouragement.

- Do parents follow up their children's education at the university level?

This question aimed to find out if the students' parents or at least one of them follows up their children's education in the university. Interestingly, the majority (54%) of the respondents responded to this question positively while (46%) responded negatively.

I should note that some parents do not follow up their children education at the university level because of their low level of literacy. Another reason, might be attributed to some parents' belief that students at the university level are mature enough to be independent and responsible for their education.

- Family impact on dropping a semester:

Did some students have to drop a whole semester because of their family conditions (circumstances)? The majority of the respondents said no. However, 10.9% said yes. This result indicates that the family impact on students' failure (dropping a whole semester) was around 11%.

The next item, was a question to the students who had dropped a semester because of their families' problems, whether they have dropped it once, twice or more than twice?

The results showed the distribution of the students, who dropped a semester, as follows:

- 1- 79.9% dropped one semester.
- 2- 14.9% dropped two semesters and,
- 3- 5.2% dropped more than two semesters.

-Family impact on students' desire to study:

In addition to the previous items, the students were asked to rate several factors which possibly influence their motivation (desire to study) according to the following scale:

Positive = 1, No impact = 2, Negative = 3

These factors as stated in the questionnaire are:

- The fathers' impact:

The majority of the students (77.8%) said that their fathers' impact on their desire to study was positive and 3.8% only said that their fathers' impact was negative. Yet, 18.4% said that their fathers did not have any impact on their desire to study.

- The mothers' impact:

The majority of the students (81.3%) said that their mothers' impact on their desire to study was positive and 1.3% only said that their mothers' impact was negative while 17.4% said that their mothers did not have any impact on their desire to study. Interestingly, the mother's positive impact on students' desire to study was higher than their father's positive impact (81.3% VS 77.8%). This result may lead us to assume (hypothesize) that the mother's positive impact on students' motivation was higher than their fathers' positive impact in the Saudi family.

- The family financial situation impact:

The majority of the respondents said that the impact of their family financial situation was positive while 8.7% said that this factor did not have any impact. In fact, I had met some students during

counseling sessions in the KFUPM Center of Counseling & guidance who face educational problems because of their family financial problems. Some of those students had been obliged by certain financial circumstances to work because of their families' poverty and/or financial problems.

- The family traditional values impact:

Slightly more than half of the respondents (50.7%) reported that their family traditional values had a positive impact on their desire to study while 45.8% reported that these values did not have any impact. Only 3.4% reported that these values had a negative impact on their desire to study.

- The family modern values impact:

Unlike family traditional values impact, family modern values had a more positive impact on the respondents' desire to study. Accordingly, 54.9% of the respondents reported that their families' modern values had a positive impact and only 2.4% reported a negative impact for these values. Nevertheless, 42.7% reported that their families' modern values did not have any impact on their desire to study. However, one may argue to what extent the students' had understood the differences between traditional and modern family values?

The trend was in general more positive towards modern values than towards traditional values. However, this issue needs more clarification and further investigation.

- The family expectations impact:

Again, it was interesting to notice that the family expectations' impact on students' desire to study was highly positive 82.2% while only 4% reported that this factor had a negative impact on their desire to study. The percentage of the students who believe that this factor did not have any impact (neutral) on their desire to study was 13.8%.

- The emotional stability impact:

Most of the respondents (69.7%) reported that emotional stability had a positive impact on their desire to study while 12.3% reported that this factor had a negative impact. On the other hand, 18% reported that this factor did not have any impact on their desire to study. One may argue to what extent the students had understood this item, too.

- The peers' Impact:

The peers' impact on students desire to study was according to the majority of the respondents (54.7%) positive. However, some peers' impact was negative while 37.8% said that their peers did not have any impact on their desire to study. Again, some students had revealed during counseling sessions, hat their peers had influenced them negatively.

- The market impact:

The majority of the respondents (59.7%) affirmed that the market impact on their desire to study was positive while 11.9% said that the market impact was negative. However, 21.4% believed that the market did not have any impact on their desire to study.

- The university academic policy impact:

There was a split opinion about the academic impact on students' desire to study. Therefore, 39.5% of the respondents reported that the university academic system impact on their desire to study was negative while 35.8% mentioned that this system had a positive impact. However, 24.7% mentioned that this system did not have any impact.

- The teaching methods impact:

Apparently, most of the students 40.4% perceive that the teaching methods have a negative impact on students' desire to study while 31.7% mentioned that teaching methods had a positive impact. Still, 27.9% reported that this factor did not have any impact. It was noted, that the above results showed that both the university academic policy and the teaching methods, are perceived and evaluated negatively by KFUPM's students. This conclusion may draw the university policy makers for introducing positive changes on these two important issues.

- The family conditions' impact on students' achievement:

The students' school achievement in this study, was defined and measured by their GPA. The majority of the respondents 48.6% reported that their "families' conditions" have a positive impact on their school achievement while 15.2% reported that their families' conditions" have a negative impact. Nevertheless, 35.7% said that their "families' conditions" did not have any impact on their school achievement. This result, however, was partially explained by the following facts:

- (1) The majority of the students in KFUPM are residents in the university campus.
- (2) Some parents have low educational level.
- (3) Students' GPA distribution.

The majority of the students (63.9%) had a GPA that ranges between 2 and 2.99.

The University policy regarding GPA was that the students must maintain a GPA of 2 and above.

- What was the relationship between students' demographic characteristics (e.g., academic status or levels, age, regions, housing) and their GPA?

To study the relationship between students GPA and certain students' characteristics, one-tailed Spearman Correlation was applied. In addition, one-way analysis of variance was conducted in order to study the significance of variance among different variables. The results of the analysis are reported bellow:

1- GPA and Colleges: Significant correlation between GPA and colleges was found ($r = .086$, $P = .003$). The analysis of variance showed a significant difference among the colleges. The

significance of correlation in this case and other coming cases might be attributed to the sample large size.

Scheffe test showed that GPA in the Industrial Management College was significantly lower than in the College of Computer and Engineering. It was also lower than in the Applied Engineering College but the difference was insignificant. There was no significant difference between GPA in the College of Computer Engineering and the Applied Engineering College.

2- GPA and academic status (levels):

There was no relationship between students' GPA and their academic status. However, one-way analysis of variance showed that the difference between the four academic levels (First year, second, third and fourth was significant.

3- GPA and age:

The students' age distribution was according to four categories as mentioned above. There was a negative significant relationship between GPA and the students' categories of age ($r = -.198$, $P=.000$). The analysis of variance showed also a significant difference:

4- GPA and housing (residence):

The students who live in the university campus score in their GPA higher than the students who live outside the campus ($r = .073$, $P= .01$). Chi-square analysis showed a significant difference in the GPA's of the students who leave in and outside the campus.

5- GPA and regions:

There was no significant correlation between the students' regions and their GPA. In Addition, there was no significant correlation between the students' place of residency (city, rural areas and Bedouin) and their GPA. However, one-way analysis of variance showed significant differences in the students GPA according to their regions. However, Schfee test did not showed significant differences among the regions except between region one (Eastern region) and region 2 (Western region). This difference might be attributed to the sample large size of the Eastern region.

6- GPA and family status:

There was no significant correlation between students' family status and their GPA. The analysis of variance showed no difference among students' GPA based on their family status, too. The students' GPA did not differ regardless whether the students are married or not and live alone or with their families.

7- GPA and family richness:

There was no significant relationship between family richness and students GPA in KFUPM. The analysis of variance did not showed any students' GPA difference based on family richness.

8- GPA and family religiosity:

There was no significant relationship between family religiosity and students' GPA. The analysis of variance did not show any significant difference among students' GPA based on their family religiosity.

9- GPA and students' religiosity:

There was a significant positive correlation between students' religiosity and their GPA at .05 level of significance. However, the analysis of variance did not show any significant difference on students' GPA based on their religiosity.

10- GPA and students' rearing:

This item tries to find out if there is any relationship between students' GPA and the way in which they had been brought up: by both parents, mother only, father only, grandparents, other relatives and other people. There was no relationship between the way the students were brought up and their GPA.

11- GPA and father educational status (level):

There was a significant positive correlation between fathers' status of education and the students' GPA. The analysis of variance showed a significant difference between the different categories of fathers' educational status (level) as follows. Interestingly, Scheffe test showed that the only difference between students' GPA based on their fathers' educational status was between category 5 (university level) and category 4 (high school level). In all other categories, there are no significant differences.

12- GPA and mothers' education status (level):

There was no significant correlation between mothers' educational status and students' GPA. The analysis of variance did not show any significant variance on this issue. This result might raise a question about the role of mothers and their impact on their children's high education.

13- GPA and parent family status: There was no significant correlation between parents' family status (parents live together, divorced, one of them was dead and both parents are dead) and the students' GPA. However, the analysis of variance showed a significant variation among parents' family status categories and students' GPA.

14- GPA and polygamy:

There was no significant relationship between polygamy and students' GPA. However, Chi-square showed significant difference on the students' GPA based on their fathers' polygamy.

15- GPA and protection:

This item tries to find out if there was any relationship between students' GPA and protection versus maltreatment during their childhood. The students asked to respond according to the following scale:

1 = extreme protection. 2 = not extreme protection. 3 = normal treatment
4 = not severe maltreatment 5 = severe maltreatment.

(See item number 19 in the questionnaire).

There was no significant correlation between the way the students had been treated during their childhood and their GPA. The analysis of variance did not show any significant difference, too.

16- GPA and family problems:

The students asked to respond whether they are actually suffering from family problem or not (item number 20 in the questionnaire). There was a significant correlation between students' GPA and having (suffering) a family problem.

This result would lead to formulate a hypothesis about the existence of a "negative relationship between students' GPA and family problems". The analysis of variance showed a significant difference on students' GPA based on having family problems or not.

17- GPA and other family problems:

This item (number 21 in the questionnaire) investigates the family problems that a student might face while in the university. The list of these problems included:

- 1- Parents divorce.
- 2- A parent sickness.
- 3- A parent death.
- 4- Both parents death.
- 5- A relative sickness.
- 6- A relative death.
- 7- A big dispute between parents.
- 8- A big dispute among family members.
- 9- A student dispute with a parent or with both parents.
- 10- Bearing life cost.

The analysis of variance did not showed any significant difference on the students' GPA based on the stated problems.

18- GPA and parents' expectations:

Was there any relationship between students' GPA and their parents' expectations?

To answer this question, the students asked to respond according to a five-point scale whether their parents' expectations are high and low. The results showed a significant positive correlation

between students' GPA and their parents expectations ($r = .27$, $P = .01$). The analysis of variance showed significant differences between students' GPA and their parents' expectations.

20- Tribe (large family) expectations and students academic success:

Since we assumed that the students live in a collectivist society, we asked whether there was any relationship between the tribe (large family) expectations and the students' success in their studies? There was a significant positive correlation between the tribe's expectations and the students' academic success ($r = .17$, $P = .01$). The analysis of variance showed significant differences among students' academic success (means) based on tribe's expectations.

22- Family impact on students' academic success:

The students asked if they think that the impact of the Saudi family on the students' academic success was very high, high, normal, low, or very low. First, there was no significant correlation between students' academic success and the degree of the family impact. The analysis of variance did not show any significant difference between the different degrees of the family impact and the students' academic success according to the students' belief.

Interestingly, one might note that "family problems", as indicated above in item number 16, have a negative impact on students' GPA, but the impact of the Saudi family on students' academic success in the university (KFUPM) was insignificant. Consequently, one may argue that the actor-observer error plays a significant effect in this result.

23- Family encouragement and students' academic success:

The students asked to respond, according to their belief, whether the Saudi family encouragement to the students to succeed in their studies was very high, high, average, low or very low. The results showed insignificant correlation between family encouragement and the students' success in their study.

24- Academic status and other factors:

The students asked to indicate the determinant factor among the bellow stated factors (item number 26 in the questionnaire) for their actual academic status:

- 1- Family encouragement.
- 2- Frustration caused by the family.
- 3- Family problems.
- 4- Self-desire to succeed regardless of the family impact.
- 5- Family pressure to succeed.
- 6- Other variables.

The analysis of variance showed significant differences on the students' responses to these factors. Scheffe's test showed how these factors are interrelated. Interestingly, the majority of the students had attributed their actual academic status firstly to the factor number four (self-desire to succeed

regardless of the family impact) and then to the factor number 1 (family encouragement). In fact, this was the attitude of the majority of the students in the university. Consequently, the following observations were derived from the Scheffe test results:

- 1- Family encouragement was stronger than frustration caused by the family.
- 2- Family encouragement was stronger than family problems.
- 3- Family encouragement was stronger than family pressure for success.
- 4- Self-desire to succeed was stronger than frustration caused by the family.
- 5- Self-desire to succeed was stronger than family problems.
- 6- Self-desire to succeed was stronger than family pressure for success.

25- Parents' follow up:

There was a split in the students' response to this question. However, was there any relationship between students' GPA and their parents' follow up to their education?

The results showed insignificant correlation between the two variables. However, Chi-square showed that there was a significant difference in the GPA of the students based on their parents follow up on their academic status in the university.

26- GPA and dropping semesters because of family problems (conditions):

The majority of the sampled students did not drop any semester. However, the students who dropped at least one semester represented about 11%. There was a significant negative correlation between dropping a semester "because of family problems" and students' GPA ($r = -.232$, $P = .01$). The analysis of variance showed a significant difference between the means of the students who dropped one semester and the students who did not drop a semester. Chi-square analysis showed a significant difference in the students' GPA based on dropping a semester because of family problems or not ($P = .01$).

27- GPA and the number of dropped semesters:

There was a significant negative correlation between the students' GPAs and the number of the dropped semesters by the students. The analysis of variance showed differences in the GPA means based on the number of the semesters dropped (1, 2, 3 semesters). Scheffe's test showed that group 1 which dropped only one semester performs better than other groups especially better than the second group, which dropped 2 semesters. However, there was no significant difference between the mean of group number 2 and the mean of group number 3 because the size of the group three was less than 20 students. It was very seldom to allow a student readmission in KFUPM if he dropped more than two semesters without any serious excuse.

Parents and other factors' impact on students' desire to study and their GPA:

- **The fathers' impact on students' desire to study and GPA:** This item and the following items deal with the students' belief about the impact of their family, family members and other factors on their desire to study (items from number 30 to 42 in the questionnaire). The students asked to rate the impact according to a three-point scale:

Positive impact = 1 No impact = 2 Negative impact = 3

The results showed a significant positive correlation between students' GPA and their fathers' positive impact on their desire to study ($r = .090$, $P = .02$). The analysis of variance showed significant differences among the three categories of the fathers' impact on the students' desire to study and their GPA. Scheffe test showed that the first group (students with fathers' positive impact) got higher GPA than the other two groups (no impact and negative impact).

- **The mothers' impact on students' desire to study and GPA:** Unlike the relationship between fathers' positive impact and students' GPA and their desire to study, there was insignificant correlation between mothers' impact on students' desire to study and their GPA. This implies that the mothers' impact on their children academic status in the university neutral even the majority of the students stated that their mothers impact on their desire to study is positive.

- **The family conditions' impact on students' GPA :** Do family conditions have an impact on students' GPA? The results showed a significant positive correlation between family conditions and students' GPA ($r = .16$, $P = .01$). The analysis of a variance showed significant differences among the students' GPA based on the type of family conditions impact (positive, no impact, negative). This result is supported by Scheffe analysis. Category one represented students who subjected to family positive impact had higher GPA than students who had been subjected to negative family conditions' impact (number 3) or no impact (number2).

- **The family expectations' impact on students' desire to study and GPA:** There was a significant positive correlation between family expectations impact and students GPA ($r = .098$, $P = .01$). This result supports the previous finding in this issue. The analysis of variance showed significant differences among the students subjected to positive family expectation impact and students subjected to negative family expectations' impact or no impact. Scheffe's test supported this result and showed the direction of the impact.

- **The family financial impact on students' desire to study and GPA:** There was a positive significant correlation between family financial impact and students' desire to study. The impact, thus, was positive ($r = .055$, $P = .047$). However, the difference among groups as the analysis of variance showed was not significant but Scheffe tests showed significant differences among the different categories (1, 2, 3).

- **The emotional stability impact on students' desire to study and GPA:** There was a significant positive correlation between students' emotional stability and their GPA ($r = .155$, $P = .01$). The analysis of variance showed significant differences among the three categories of the impact (positive, no impact and negative impact). Several students had to drop the whole semester or at least some courses because of experiencing emotional problems such as failed love affairs, failed engagements, disputing with parents or relatives. These observations collected from the Guidance and Counseling Center of KFUPM.

- **The family traditional values' impact on students' desire to study and GPA:** There was no significant correlation between family traditional values impact and students' GPA. The analysis of variance did not show any significant difference, too.
- **The family modern values' impact on students' desire to study and GPA:** There was no significant correlation between family modern values and students' GPA. Both traditional and modern values' concepts are undefined in this study. The understanding of these two concepts was up to the students' interpretations.
- **The peer's impact on students' desire to study and GPA:** There was no significant correlation between peer's impact and students' GPA. The analysis of variance did not show any significant differences among the means of the different categories.
- **The labor market impact on students' desire to study and GPA:** There was no significant correlation between students' GPA and market impact on students' desire to study.
- **The university academic policy impact on students' desire to study and GPA:** There was a significant positive correlation between the university academic policy and the students' desire to study ($r = .185$, $P = .01$). The analysis of variance and Sheffe test supported this result.
- **The teaching methods' impact on students' desire to study and GPA:** There was a significant positive correlation between teaching methods' (followed by instructors) impact and students' GPA in KFUPM ($r = .090$, $P = .05$). The analysis of variance showed significant differences among the students' GPA based on the teaching methods impact on their desire to study.

Discussion

The results of this study showed that the most important factors, which have strong positive impact on KFUPM students' desire to, are as follows:

- 1- The father impact:** The father impact on the students' desire to study and on their GPA was very clear. Most of the fathers in the Saudi society care about their children education at all levels and they do interfere in their children education. This impact was partially, attributed to the fact that most of the fathers of KFUPM students have high levels of education relatively. Furthermore, the parents especially the fathers, in the Arab culture, have a great impact on their children's, regardless of their age, decision making.
- 2- The family financial status impact:** When the students' family financial status was high, the students do not experience any pressure to help their families financially. Therefore, they dedicate more time for studying. It was worthwhile to note that the father was in the Arab family usually the breed winner. Therefore, he was the finance provider.
- 3- The family expectations impact:** The family high expectations exercise a desirable level of stress, which pressures (motivates) students to study and to pay more attention to their education and future. This result was supported by other empirical studies, which have found, as indicated in

the review of literature, positive linear relationships between expectancy and subsequent academic achievement.

4- The family conditions impact: This item was a very general concept, which might include any negative aspect or any family related problem regardless of its nature. The family context and impact are in the Arab culture very important for the students' desire to study and succeed. If the family context was not favorable, the student was usually disturbed. This was a negative factor, which may lead to the students' failure in their study as noticed in several cases, which consulted the University Guidance and Counseling Center (GCC).

5- The emotional stability impact: The students' emotional stability was a very important factor, which motivates them to study. Some students who had to drop and counseled in GCC found to suffer from emotional disturbances.

The common observed emotional disturbances among the students, which related to depression because of love failure, lost of a parent, a relative, a friend and failure to meet parents' high expectations.

6- KFUPM academic policy impact: While counseling students in GCC, I had noticed that some students do complain about the university academic policies. Therefore, I wanted to find out if this factor had any significant impact on students' desire to study. In fact, the impact was significant.

7- The teaching methods impact: This was another factor, which was unrelated to family but it influences students' motivation. Teaching methods influence students' attention, comprehension and achievement. Therefore, it had a strong impact on students' desire to study.

The factors, which did not have any significant impact on students' desire to study are:

1- The mothers: The mother in the Saudi culture did not have a significant impact on the students' desire to study because of the mothers' low educational level. The majority of the students' mothers in the sample have less than college educational level. Therefore, they are unable to influence their children education significantly.

2- The peers: while I noticed during counseling sessions that some students complain about their peers' negative impact, the results of this study did not showed any significant peers' impact on the students' desire to study. Thus, peers' impact was not a major issue in students' motivation. However, this factor's impact should not be ignored during counseling sessions at the individual level.

3- The family traditional values: The family traditional values did not have any significant impact on the students' desire to study. This result, might be attributed to, the ambiguity of this concept because it was not "operationalized".

4- The family modern values: The same stated "rationalization" applies for the findings related to modern values' impact.

5- The labor market: The labor market insignificant impact might be attributed to the fact of less competition that KFUPM students' face in the market. They were given priority in recruitment and selection because of their abilities and skills as compared with other universities' graduates in the country.

Conclusion

This study showed that the family may have a positive and/or a negative impact on students' motivation (desire to study). However, the students tend to attribute their success, firstly, to their self-desire (internal factors) then to their family support and encouragement. The family financial support, encouragement and following up have positive impact on students' performance as measured by their GPA. Nevertheless, the Saudi fathers' impact was more evident than the Saudi mothers' impact because the former have higher education than the latter. In addition, the Saudi fathers tend to interfere in their children education more than the Saudi mothers do as a cultural pattern and as this study showed.

This study showed that both parents and tribes' high expectations, had positive impacts on students' GPA. These findings demonstrate that the Saudi students' education is still influenced by their small, extended families and tribes (*Aiyilah, Osrah and Kabilah*). Interestingly, the study showed that the university policy and the teaching methods had a significant negative impact on the students' desire to study. Consequently, the students' motivation (desire) was in reality influenced by internal and external factors. These factors are mainly: self-desire, parents' impact, tribe impact, university academic policy and teaching methods.

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