

## Factors affecting Part-time students performance in Pakistan

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### Abstract

This research is concerned about part-time student performance within higher educational institutions in Pakistan. Part-time students contain a significant share of the student population. In the perspective of working students as part-time studying, there are some significant factors that should be considered seriously to perform well. This research was examined to find the relationship of soft skills (motivation to learn, stress, time management) among part time-students' performance in south Punjab of Pakistan. Primary data was collected from a sample of 140 part-time enrolled students. Correlation and regression analysis were tested in this research. The result showed that time management was the most significant factor of student performance. Same as stress has significant but negative correlation with student performance. The study concluded that these soft skills have significant importance with the part-time working student performance.

**Key words:** Motivation to learn, Stress, Time management, Student performance, Higher education.

### Introduction

All the proof confirms that education holds significant advantage to individuals, to the public and to society in general. For last three decades, education sector in Pakistan is rising profitably with the aim of providing knowledgeable and skillful professionals in the market. Pakistan higher education commission (HEC) is solely responsible to provide education opportunities to one and all either as a part-timer or full-timer students. There is sharp increasing of students' enrollment every year in Pakistan (Faisal et al., 2017). Most of the master degree (MA or MS) and PhD degree students are part-time students as they are working class. They have to work for maintaining their life and furthermore themselves and family. In the present day, there are numerous opportunities that are given by Pakistan government and HEC for those who want to continue their study as part time. Therefore, many public and private institutions now offering part time study programs all over the country. It brings to the enthusiasm for working individuals to proceed with their higher study.

Although part-time students are considered a very significant contribution in higher education (Callender et al., 2009), yet, the opportunity that is given to the working students for proceed the study is effected to their daily routine. A study report that part-time students face serious effects in their study for example, low attendance, lack of concentration, and low grades (Curtis et al., 2002). In any case, they have to balance their life, work, and study. Several problems arise when they cannot adapt flexible time or cope with stress. They need to adjust among education and career to accomplish their objectives without exasperating the implementation on study and job. Better student performance can help policy makers to build effectiveness of education as it expands individual efficiency and additionally economic development (Abbasi et al., 2012). Consequently students worth that they are being offered an opportunity to study and put all their vitality and work

more hours to finish assignment (Kraft & Singhapakdi, 1991). Exceptionally limited studies are available which consider major issues that affect the performance of part-time students in Pakistan. Therefore, this study fills the gaps in current literature by suggesting the affects of motivation to learn, stress, and time management on part-time students' performance that have not yet been studied within context of south Punjab.

## **Literature**

### ***Part-time student performance***

Performance refers to how better the student has grasped the material to present and ready for and performed in the class. Student performance defined as the capacity of the student to perform well in education and able to fulfill the criteria in job market (Alfan et al., 2005). But, this study concentrates on part-time student's dealing commitment with job and study to perform better in learning process. A part-time student who follows higher education, particularly after getting physical maturity, and owning responsibilities connected to family or job (Wikipedia, 2017). It is generally adapted for those who want to carry on work at the same time as studying, and usually study an afternoon or an evening every week to take classes. A study reports that part-time students' engagement in higher education increases self-worth, motivation to learn, and job performance (Shannon et al., 2017). Part-time study in higher education is not a new trend. Therefore today in UK alone more than 24% students of higher education are studying on a part-time basis (Wikipedia, 2017). Similarly in US the strength of part-time students had risen 16% since 2004 to 2014 (NCES, 2016). A study found that students from part-time study in full-time job receive higher on average than parallel students from full-time study. Therefore, 84% of part-time students earn more than £20K as compare to 73% of full-time students (Callender et al., 2011).

### ***Relationship between Motivation to learn and Part-time student Performance***

Motivation is a basic recipe for student academic performance (Gbollie & Keamu, 2017). It plays a significant role in learning as it deeply describes student performance (Gasco et al., 2014). A research proved that motivations and tactic that students use have impact on student performance (Al Khatib, 2010). Many part-time students are engaged in work full-time and their key motivations for study are to progress their careers (Callender et al, 2010a). Though there is no difference in the possibility of students from part-time and full-time study being in a job in line with their motivations to study (Callender et al., 2011). Motivation is a positive feel to learn because if student belief lack on its ability or away from learning target, will not perform well. For example, study can automatically presume a lower concern than family or job commitments, mostly when unexpected events interfere (Evans, 1994). Therefore, motivational beliefs are crucial to the students' academic performance because they help to resolve the level to which students will consider, put an effort, and confirm interest in the task (Mousoulides et al., 2005).

H<sub>1</sub>: Motivation to learn has significant and positive relationship with part-time student performance.

### ***Relationship between Stress and Part-time student Performance***

When a part-time student takes the responsibility of studying while doing job, there's naturally going to be an added level of stress. Part-time higher study courses take longer time to complete and can increase pressure on top of other workload. It can be stressful running a career and perform in the study. It is not just a degree to complete, but many other things in life like, cooking, children look after, cleaning, shopping, and other essential assignments. This is a key part of concern for adult students studying part-time. A study on part-time students reported that they professed the part-time study to be stressful. Therefore, many researchers suggest that part-time

students should overcome social responsibilities and engagements in different parts of life so as to focus more on their study and employments (Taylor et al., 2010). A part-time study stated that the cost of stress consist of negative study performance, fall in cognitive ability, and incompleteness of higher studies (Brown et al., 2016). There is perception among students that their educational understandings are highly stressful and have constantly scored above average on stress scales (Faro, 2013). Though limited stress is useful that can lead to better student performance but uncontrolled stress can escort to fatigue, sadness and numerous other diseases (Owusu et al., 2017). Therefore, it is essential to find the perceived level of study-related stress in the part-time student population in order to assist students in the implementation of strategies to eliminate the perceived stressors.

H<sub>2</sub>: Stress has significant and negative relationship with Part-time student performance.

#### ***Relationship between Time management and Part-time student Performance***

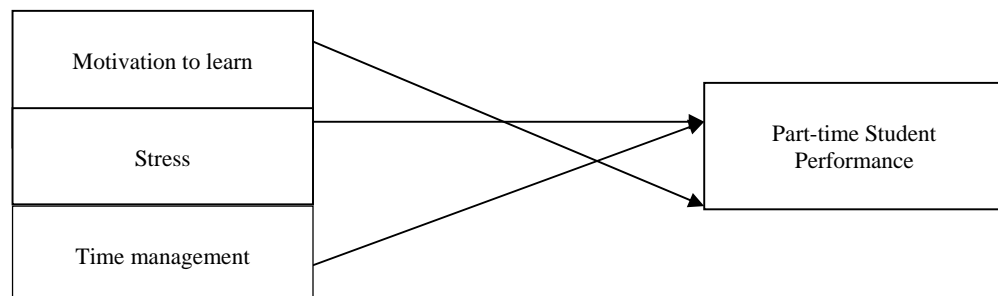
The fundamental challenge of adult students' life and performance at part-time learning is time management. They have to deal with their time well and efficiently because these may influence their productivity, scholarly performance, and furthermore sense of commitment with their organization (Irfan et. al, 2014). Better balance in life helps employees to manage their work and life and improve performance in learning. A study on part-time students shows that 62% students' opinion that they have less time to study and 78% describes that they fight with study and other responsibilities (Callender, 2006). In addition to (Callender et al., 2006) reported that time deficiency distressed a higher ratio of part-time students than financial shortage. As time managing is seen as a remarkable issue both for the students and institutions, as a result, successful part-time students are those who can manage their time in the limits of what is accessible to them, and additionally what is essential from their study (Medhurst, 2008). Part-time studying students while working full time can lead to better market result through development of soft skill of time management (Darolia, 2014).

H<sub>3</sub>: Time management has significant and positive relationship with Part-time student performance.

#### **Foundation Theory**

In this study, the underpinning theory of *Mezirow (1981)* on adult learning is used. This theory provides insights for understanding students' experience of self-directed learning and adult education. While explores the Part-time students perception that affect their study.

#### **Research Framework**



### Methodology

This was a quantitative and descriptive study to see the influence of soft skill factors (motivation to learn, stress, time management) towards part-time student performance. The population of this study focused on part-time students studying in higher educational institutions of south Punjab, Pakistan. Judgmental sampling technique was used to select the sample of 140 part-time students to attain data. Structured questionnaire was used to collect the primary data. Both correlation and regression analysis were tested to estimate the relationship and significance of variables. Five point Likert scale such as strongly disagree = (1), disagree = (2), Uncertainty = (3), Agree = (4) and Strongly Agree = (5) was used to rate their answers.

### Analysis

**Table 1 Respondents' Demographic Profile**

Demographic	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	111	79
	Female	29	21
Age	Less than 21	2	
	21-31	26	
	32-42	104	
	Greater than 42	8	
Program	Doctorate	46	33
	MA/MS/Mphil	94	67

**Table 2 Reliability, Descriptive statistics, and Pearson Correlation of Variables**

Variable	$\alpha$	Mean	Standard Deviation	1	2	3	4
1.Part-time student performance	.798	3.52	.68	1			
2. Motivation to learn	.737	3.45	.73	.582**	1		
3. Stress	.816	3.61	.63	-.639**	.318**	1	
4.Time Management	.811	3.77	.47	.669**	.413**	.540**	1

\*\* Significant Correlation at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Table 3 Multiple Regression Analysis**

Variables	Beta	Sig.
Motivation to learn	.134	.033
Stress	-.372	.000
Time management	.380	.000
R <sup>2</sup>	.420	
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.407	
F value	32.725	
P value	.000	

\*p < .05, \*\*p < .01

## Results and Discussion

Table 1 describes the most contribution in this study are males 111 (79%) and then females 29 (21%) who are part-time students. The maximum participation of age group (32-42) is 104 (74%), followed by age group of (21-31) shows 26 (19%) participants. While part-time students who are doing masters degree are 94 (67%) and PhDs are 46 (33%) participated in this study. Table 2 states the reliability of all the variables above 0.7 which means variables are reliable and sufficient for this study. Descriptive test shows the highest mean of time management ( $M=3.77$ ,  $S.D=.47$ ) and the least mean of motivation to learn with ( $M=3.45$ ,  $S.D=.73$ ). Next, correlation analysis between motivation to learn and student performance is ( $r=.582$ ) medium positive correlation. Correlation between stress and student performance is ( $r=-.639$ ) medium negative correlation. The highest correlation between time management and student performance is ( $r=.669$ ) also medium positive correlation. Table 3 indicates R square .420 (42.0%) variation in part-time student performance is due to variation in independent variables. In other words it explains that there are more factors needed to explain 58% of part-time student performance. The P value is .000 which shows that model is fit with F value of 32.725. Regression analysis of motivation to learn has ( $\beta = .134$ ) and significant, so our first hypothesis is accepted. The next stress has ( $\beta = -.372$ ) and less than .05 also significant. Therefore our second hypothesis is also accepted. Finally, time management has ( $\beta = .380$ ) and significant. Therefore this study conclude that hypotheses all three hypotheses ( $H_1, H_2, H_3$ ) are accepted for this study research.

The result concluded that there is significant relationship of motivation to learn with part-time student performance. The result shows that how many part-time students are motivated to learn. Similar study on part-time and full study supports this finding (Callender et al., 2011). Another study shows the strong and steady relationship of employment motivations to learn and has worth practicing in further research (Jamieson et al., 2009). After that stress has significant but negative relative relationship with dependent variable. This study also in line with previous study that stress can create low performance and enhance (Delargy et al., 2005). In this study mostly part time students tell that they try their best to balance their responsibility at job and as a student. If students reach at the fatigue level then their performance starts to decline. Finally time management gives significant influence on part-time student performance. Today time management is most important element to balance students' life. This research showed that par-time students have good skill of time management to organized their work and study. This is also in line with past study that time management technique helps people to perform better (Wu & Passerini, 2013). As a result it can affect the productivity and performance of part-time students.

## Limitation

The researcher examined the part-time student performance in higher educational institutions of south Punjab. This study was only limited to south Punjab of Pakistan. There was much difficulty to engage the students in data collection as students were not serious to respond timely.

## Conclusion

This study concludes that if part-time students are being motivated in learning then they will be more expected to defeat any challenges during their studies and likely to complete study successfully. This study has also shown that part-time students demonstrated plenty of stress. Evidence denotes that students commonly have to cope with stress in challenging demands of study, relations and other work related issues. Finally, a booming part-time student is one who can manage

time with limited resources, in addition to what is necessary from course of study. Similar more study is suggested, taking into concern part-time students from other part of the country.

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