Chapter 12
Examining Social, Personal, and Technological Factors Influencing Student's ICT Usage

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ABSTRACT

The study examines the influence various social, psychological, and technological factors on student ICT usage motives in general and in particular e-learning using a Kashmiri university student sample (n=704). Based on the correlation analysis, it was revealed that three components of digital access (physical access, autonomy and support, and use efficacy) are positively correlated with ICT usage. Moreover, student alienation was negatively correlated with educational and capital enhancing use of ICT. Influence of gender, socio-economic status, and residential background was also analysed. The findings highlight that student ICT usage motives are significantly influenced by underlying social, personal, and technological factors. The chapter highlights that various forms of digital divides need to be seriously mitigated for successful implementation of e-learning framework in the context of higher education.

INTRODUCTION

The current generation of students have witnessed the extension of ICT into every aspect of their life. Other condition kept constant, various ICT-based communication and learning tools, such as social media and e-learning platforms are enabling students to engage with academic and social activities associated with classroom much differently and effectively (Huang, Teo & Schere, 2020). Given the ongoing political scenario in Kashmir valley, there have been frequent disruption in the educational activities in higher educational institutes. With intermittent periods of Hartal and curfew educational institutions

have remained closed for long periods of time leading to disinterest and distrust among youth towards their educational activities (Sing, 2017; Bhat, 2018). ICT has been deemed as the best antidote to deal with such situations. ICT can be used by students to remotely access educational materials and maintain social relations with fellow students and teachers, thereby facilitating behavioural, affective and cognitive student engagement (Bond et al., 2020). However, Usage of ICT and positive and negative consequences accruing of it, are largely contingent on many underlying factors. These factors are the differential motivations for ICT usage and unequal access to ICT (Hargittai & Hinnant, 2008). In this context this study tries to analyse the influence of personal factors such as motive for ICT usage and access to individually accessible digital platforms such as mobile phones and laptops on Student Alienation. While a number of studies have analysed nexus of student engagement and alienation with ICT in digitally enabled classrooms (Bond et al., 2020; Henrie, Halverson, & Graham, 2015; Li, et al., 2017), an analysis is required to elucidate such a relationship in conventional classroom settings, particularly in developing countries (Bond et al., 2020). The study offers perspective on how underlying conditions of ICT adoption among student population and psychosocial consequences following it need critical consideration for successful implementation of ICT based learning framework in higher education. It also suggests the need for the universities to consider not just the student ICT related infrastructural facilitation services, but also the psychological and social characteristics of target population.

STUDENT ALIENATION

The origin of the theory of alienation lies in politico-economic theories of Marx's and his associates. Classical theories of alienation focus heavily on economic causes, ignoring influence of socially embedded communication networks. Within the field of psychology and education, alienation has been conceptualised primarily as individual's affective and cognitive characteristic (Hascher & Hadjar, 2018). Seeman (1959, 1972, and 1975) generated renewed interest in the concept of alienation by operationalizing it as an umbrella concept, including a cluster of feelings, such as powerlessness, meaninglessness, guidelessness, role estrangement and cultural estrangement. Many scholars have used alienation as a possible link between a number of negative student experiences, such as powerlessness and senselessness of learning, dissatisfaction with education, procrastination, dishonesty and absenteeism (Osin, 2017; Mann, 2005). Student alienation can be described as lack of sense of belonging to classmates, to the teaching staff, to the department and to the university (Kember et al., 2001; Tinto, 1997). Student alienation refers to a feeling of social estrangement, lack of proper social support and meaningful social connection within an educational institution (Mau, 1992). An alienated student is characterised by disinterest and disengagement in academic and non-academic activities. He/she uncaring or 'turned off' and doesn't enjoy his/her life as a student desirably. He/he doesn't like the way university operates and may holds a relatively more negative opinion about his/her classmates & teachers. These students feel maladjusted in the educational institutes and are unable to find a satisfactory niche in the educational and social environment of the school (Galassi & Galassi, 1973; Bronfrenbenar, 1986). Because of all this, they fail to commit themselves whole heartedly to desired institutional activities (Tinto, 1995).

Alienation has been considered as a fundamental dimension to today's higher educational student experiences. The primary reason cited for this is that, student choices related to a particular course of higher study has often more to do with the demand of the degree in the marketplace, than any kind of individual motivation for it (Mann, 2001; Case, 2008). As alienation emerges from disconnections within

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