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STUDY OF THE INDIVIDUAL FACTORS AFFECTING SCHOOL WASTAGE AND PROBATION AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF SHAHID BEHESHTI UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

The present study entitled "investigating the factors affecting undergraduate student probation in Shahid Beheshti University of Tehran". In this study, causal-comparative and questionnaire method has been used as information gathering tool. The researcher-made questionnaire has been devised for being aware of students' opinions concerning personal, educational, social and economic factors affecting probation. To determine the reliability and validity of this questionnaire, Cranach's alpha has been used in that the results obtained from analyzing Cranach's alpha was achieved by SPSS software in organized categories. The sample group consists of 366 people of probated and non-probated students studying in the academic year 2002-2003 who were selected with cluster random method. To test and analyze the research questions, the statistical techniques of correlation coefficients of summers, Kruskal, Goodman & Kramer, Eta, Espiraman and Chi-square tests as well as independent t-test has been used. There is a significant difference between probated and non-probated students in terms of gender, admission quotas and the base of course selection; however, this difference was not significant according to marital status. There is a significant difference between probated and non-probated students in terms of the amount of course content compliance and student needs, the attractiveness of the subject and course content. This difference was not significant in terms of other educational variables.

Key Words: *Undergraduate, Psychology, Shahid Beheshti University*

INTRODUCTION

The social, economic, cultural and political development of each country depends on the educational system of that country. A part of this activity is done by high education. High education, as a key institute, is specially considered by the nations and governments with a history dating back over more than eight centuries. Achieving to new technologies and advanced knowledge can be done through enhancing high education and the planning for quality and quantity promotion which can have a key role in the realization and acceleration of social and economic progress among the nations.

A total of 250/015 students were accepted and registered in the academic year 2002-2003 at the public universities and institutes. Also, a number of 888/889 students are studying in public centers and high education institutes. The comparison of the total students in this year than the last year indicates that the number of students in the public high education centers were about 64% at the undergraduate level (Ghiyasi, 2004).

Taking into consideration the above figures, 36% students of the total country are declined in the academic year 2002-2003. School wastage includes being probated, not achieving accepting grade, making the academic course longer, dropout, dismissal, etc. Having 18/7 million students, 4/368 million examinee behind entrance examination and 8/2 million of the children who have not entered school, our country is considered as one of the youngest countries needing education, and considering the low portion of high education out of the government's public budget (3%) and also high percentage of academic failure, the consideration and identification of the factors causing school wastage seems necessary.

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31% of undergraduate Shahid Beheshti students are probated at least once, and given that probation is one of the manifestations of academic failure, this study hereby aims to investigate the causes and factors related to this educational problem in order to identify the personal, economic, social and educational factors through getting feedback from students.

Educationally speaking, school wastage is the total years that are wasted away by basic repeats and dropouts. Probation is one of the forms of school wastage in high education.

The budget in high education in 2004 has been decreased compared to 2002 and 2003.

According to the bill of the year 2003, the season 12 budget (high education) and season 13 (research) had been 849 billion and 569 billion Tomans which consecrates only 11.7% of social fee funds, and worse 3%, of public budget of the government (Omidi, 2004).

According to the statistical information of Iran's high education issued in 2003, the number of students in the academic year 1995-96 was 579070 people. The alumnae students in the academic year 2001-2002 were 127117 people which 22% were graduated after a 6-year course (which is the required maximum duration to get BA). The comparison of students at the academic year 1969-1970 (67268 people) until the academic year 2002-2003 (809567 people) shows that this number has been increased to 7.83 people during the last 33 years.

According to the statistics obtained from Research Department of Shahid Beheshti University in 2004, 221 undergraduate night students and 7418 undergraduate day students are studying. The number of graduate students until the end of this year is 161 people. According to the present statistics, during the years 1987-81 and 1987-1994, 10448 and 8792 Students were studying. Therefore, the students who were probated once at the graduate level are reached from 77 people to 211 ones. In the statistical community of this research in the year 2002-2003, 766 ones were studying which the total numbers of probated students are 1998 ones. According to the statistics and rules mentioned and given the low portion of high education out of government's fees and gross production as well as the increasing demand of high education, the necessity for optimal use and the efforts to tackle the problems of school wastage are more and more increased.

Students are the best and most active forces in the political, social and cultural developments in a country. Although the failure caused by school wastage is first for the students, this in fact causes by institutes, parents and the society they are live in.

The real changes in personal and social changes focused their attention on the role of high education over the knowledge and special manpower is not merely training experts, but creating an atmosphere of intellectual values for scientific training.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

According to the statistics extracted from statistical bank of Shahid Beheshti University, the total numbers of students studying at undergraduate level at the academic year 2002-2003 are 6375 people.

Although no society can be totally the wastages caused by school wastage, considering the status quo of the factors creating it are very important. In this study, the factors affecting school wastage are considered based on students' attitudes. The objective of this study is to be informed of students' opinions concerning the factors affecting probation and answering to this question what effects have the social, economic, educational and personal factors over probation?

Research Question

Is there any difference between probated and non-probated students in terms of personal factors such as gender, marital status, and acceptance quota and course selection?

Probation

According to Article 27 of training regulations in low-undergraduate students and undergraduate students, the mean score of each student in each semester should not be lower than 12; otherwise, the regarded student is considered probate and he/she will be registered as a probate student (gaining the maximum 14 course units).

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In this study, the student who is probated at least once will be involved in the statistical community.

School Wastage and its Definitions

The term school decline or wastage is originated from the economists' terminology, in that educational system will be similar to an industry which the part of investment and initial material that is ought to be transferred to final product will be wasted and the expected and desired context will not be achieved (Aminfar, 1985, P. 75).

School wastage means not to be succeeded in achieving goals and educational purposes; in other words, every factor which reduces the output of educational, family or society system in achieving to educational purposes.

The shortages and shortcomings in planning, executive methods and guidelines, lack of competence of educational staff, shortage of facilities and lack of cooperation among educational staff (society, family) are the most important bases of school wastage (Moayeri, 1984, P. 25).

In considering the meaning of school wastage in educational system, this system is like a factory that gross materials are inserted into and disposable materials are presented to the society after making the required changes. Three main parts of this system are input, process and output, respectively. That is to say, the materials inserted to this system as input are presented to society as an output after making the required changes (Sanaie Bagher and Pashs Sharifi, Hassan, 1996, PP. 45-56).

According to what has been mentioned in chapter 1 (research problems), the factors affecting probation are considered based on personal category in this study. After collecting probated and non-probated students' opinions out of a questionnaire, the objectives, research questions, data and obtained information are analyzed using statistical descriptive methods (frequency table, figures, frequency percentage and correlation coefficients) and inferential statistics (Chi-square 2, T test) were analyzed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research question is comprised of many questions that are separately described and then its approval, rejection and significance will be studied (its generalizability in the statistical community).

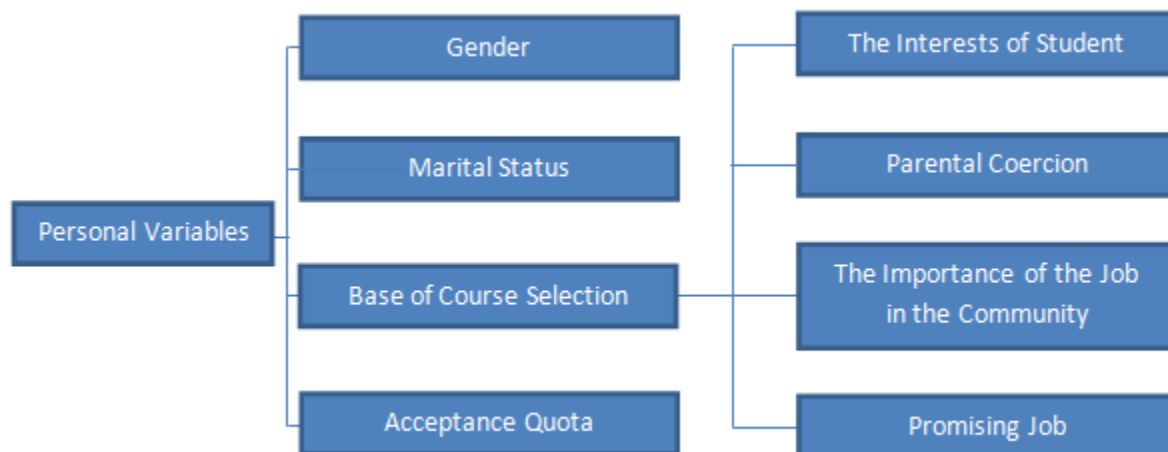
Table 1: Frequency distribution of probated and non-probated students separated by gender by mentioning the number of probations

Classes	Female		Male		Total	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Never	131	75	71	63	202	71
Once	29	17	21	19	50	17.5
Twice	10	6	14	12.5	24	8
Thrice	4	2	6	5	10	3.5
Total	174	100	112	100	286	100
Mean	1.35		1.60		1.45	
Standard Deviation	0.695		0.905		0.791	

As mentioned in Table 1, 286 students respond to the questions out of 287 ones, 202 ones were non-probated which 131 people (75%) were female and 71 ones (63%) were male, In female group, 290 ones (17%) were probated once, 10 people (6%) were probated twice and 4 people (2%) were thrice probated. In male group, 21 people (19%) were probated once and 14 people (12.5%) were probated twice and 6 people (5%) were probated thrice.

Is there any significant difference between probated and non-probated students in terms of personal factors such as gender, marital status, and acceptance quota and course selection bases?

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Model 1: Personal Variables

As mentioned in sampling discussion and the hypothesis to consider the differences between the two groups of students were those of were probated one and those who were probated twice were considered and also the comparison of research hypotheses in these two groups were the research objectives and samples selection were made based on this method, this issue were considered in the investigation and analysis of the data collected so that each research question is the result of research analysis based on the number of being probated (at the level of ordinal measurement) and once at the level of numeral measurement between the two groups of probated students (i.e. the students who experience of being probated just once) and non-probated students (those who were not probated).

1. Is there any significant difference between probated and non-probated students in terms of gender?

Table 2: frequency distribution of probated and non-probated students separated by gender

	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Probated	43	25	41	37	84	29
Non-Probated	131	75	71	63	202	71
Total	174	100	112	100	286	10

After the respondents are separated between probated and non-probated students and given the contents of table contents (of 287 people sample, 286 people responded in which non-probated students were 131 ones (71%). 25.13% of the probated group were female and 44 people (37%) were male.

According to Chi correlation coefficient, Kruskal and Goodman, gender and probation is $T_x=0.016$, significance level is $\text{sig}=0.03$ are related to each other and the capability to generalize this conclusion out of sample community to statistical community (research community is not significant).

Table 3: Studying the relationship between significance and difference between probated and non-probated students according to population

N	Sig	df	X ²
286	1	0.031	286

Chi square 2 shows that there is a significant difference between probated and non-probated students and their gender and Chi-square 2 ($X^2=0.617$) and degree of freedom ($df=1$) and significance level ($\text{sig}=0.03$). When the relationship between gender and being probated (without making the respondents divided into probated and non-probated groups), these two variables are related to each other as $E=0.153$ which were

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significant at the level of $\text{sig}=0.01$. According to the mean of probation of men ($M=1.60$) and women ($M=1.35$), the number of probation in men are more than those of women. 3. Is there a significant difference between probated and non-probated students in terms of their marital status?

Table 4: Frequency distribution of probated and non-probated students according to their celibacy and non-celibacy

	Celibacy		Non-Celibacy		Total	
	Percentage	N	Percentage	N	Percentage	N
Probated	5	21	79	20	261	8
Non-Probated	19	79	182	67	24	92
Total	24	100	261	100	285	100

According to table 4, of 287 samples, 285 students responded to the questions in which 5 students in married group (21%) were probated and 19 ones (79%) were non-probated, and 79 people (30%) were probated and 186 ones (67%) were non-probated in female group. In other words, the percentage of single students was more than those of married ones in probated group than non-probated group.

The correlation coefficients of Kraskal and Goodman were $T_x=0.03$ and the significance level was $\text{sig}=0.23$. There was a weak correlation between these two variables which cannot be generalized to statistical community regarding to its significance level.

Also, when the students' probation was observed at the ordinal assessment level which is $E=0.028$, there is a weak relationship between being married and the number of probation, but it is not significant at the level of $\text{dig}=0.6$

Table 5: Studying the significance of the difference between probated and non-probated students according to marital status

X²	df	sig	N
0.941	1	0.33	285

Chi-square 2 shows that there is no significant difference between probated and non-probated students regarding the non-celibacy variable and Chi 2 value ($X^2=0.91$) and degree of freedom ($df=1$) and also significance level ($\text{sig}=0.34$).

4. Is there any significance difference between probated and non-probated students in terms of their acceptance quota?

Table 6: Frequency distribution of probated and non-probated students in terms of their acceptance quota

Acceptance Quota	Probated		Non-Probated		Total	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Region 1	-	11	-	17	-	16
Region 2	18	22.5	19	30	17	14
Region 3	11	11	24	14	31	14
Shahhed Quota	16	14	9	8	20	7
Selfless People Quota	4	1	8	1	16	1
Teachers	1	1	0	0	0	0.1
Total	80	100	991	100	376	100

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According to table 6, of 287 people sample, 276 ones were respondents, in which 35 ones were probated at the quota of region 1 and 93 ones (47%) were non-probated.

18 ones (22.5%) were probated at the quota of region 2 and 59 ones (30%) were non-probated, and 11 ones (14%) were probated and 28 ones (14 %) were non-probated in the quota of region 3; 11 ones (14%) were probated and 9 ones (5%) were non-probated according to Shahed quota; and 4 ones (5%) were probated and 8 ones (4%) were non-probated according to Selfless quota.

To consider each of the mentioned quotas of being probated given the small number of respondents in Shahed Selfless quotas in the institutes, this quota has been incorporated. In other words, to study the region 1 quota with group's probation with two groups of region 1 and region 2, they are incorporated to just one group and then a significant test was performed.

To specify the relationship of each mentioned quota with probation, regarding the small amount of respondents in the Shahed, Selfless quotas and teachers, this quota has been incorporated

Table 7: Correlation coefficient and T test in probated and non-probated students in terms of acceptance quota

Acceptance Quota	Probated and Non-Probated				
	V	X1	Df2	Sig	N
Region 1	0.029	0.323	1	0.630	127
Region 2	0.007	1.132	1	0.659	072
Region 3	0.007	0.013	1	0.205	031
Shahed, Selfless and Teachers	0.158	0.625	1	0.009	033
Total					276

According to above table, regions 1, 2 and 3 are not related to probation; however, the quota of Shahed and Selfless people is related to correlation coefficient of $V=0.158$. That is to say, given the value of Chi 2 ($X^2=6.224$) and degree of freedom ($df=1$) and significance level of ($sig=0.009$), there is a significant difference between probation, Shahed and Selfless quotas and teachers. Also, the correlation relation of the type of quota and being probated (at the level of ordinal assessment) was also considered which equals $E=0.22$ and can be generalized at $sig=0.013$ and has the most relationship with the number of probation with the mean of $M=2.05$. The quota of region 1 with the mean of $M=0.12$ and Selfless quota with the mean of 0.71 are the most and least related, respectively.

5. Is there a significant difference between probated and non-probated students in terms of the bases of course selection?

One of the reasons which can be effective in student's academic achievement is how they choose their course. To consider these factors, questions with ordered assessment level regarding the student's interests, parental awareness, assurance or non-assurance or providing the job of selected course and the significance of this job in the society as well as the significance given to it by the regarded community and the future jib of student are will be discussed.

As mentioned in Table 8 regarding the comparison of the mean of course selection based on student's interest between the two probated and non-probated groups, the students who chose their course according their own interests are less declined, for the mean of this variable in non-probated group is $M=3.08$ and this figure in the probated group is $M=3.15$. Also, the students who stated that have less confidence towards their future job while choosing their course, for the mean of non-probated group is $M=2.83$ and this figure in the probated group will be reached to $M=3.21$.

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Table 8: Frequency distribution of probated and non-probated students according to their bases of course selection

Variable		Un-Probated					Sum	Mean	SD
		Very Much	Very	Medium	Low	Very Low			
Student's Interest	N	12	13	33	57	79	194	2/08	1/184
	P	6	7	17	29	41	100		
Parental Coercion	N	122	25	17	9	2	175	4/46	0/945
	P	67	14	7	5	1	100		
Career	N	32	20	48	49	33	182	2/83	1/337
	P	18	11	26	27	18	100		
The Attention a Society Pays to that Job	N	43	26	47	46	15	177	3/20	1/298
	P	24	15	27	26	8/5	100		

Variable		Probated					Sum	Mean	SD
		Very Much	Very	Medium	Low	Very Low			
Student's Interest	N	5	3	20	16	30	74	2/15	1/201
	P	7	4	27	22	40/5	100		
Parental Coercion	N	38	8	14	1	0	61	4/36	0/895
	P	62	13	23	2	0	100		
Career	N	17	8	20	16	6	67	3/21	1/309
	P	25	12	30	24	9	100		
The Attention a Society Pays to that Job	N	15	10	19	12	9	65	3/15	1/349
	P	23	15	29	18/5	14	100		

There is a very low difference between probated and non-probated students according to their course selection based on the significance every job in their community as well as parental coercion.

Table 9: Studying the relationship between probation and the base of course selection

Base of Course Selection	Probated and Non-Probated	
Student's Interest	0.024	0.651
Parental Coercion	0.095	0.301
Career	0.108	0.031
The Attention a Society Pays to that Job	0.009	0.281

According to the correlation coefficient in Table 9, there is a significant relationship between the bases of course selection based on the promising of the job and probation, which its results can be generalized to the statistical community.

Also, the relationship between the variables of the base of course selection and the number of probation (level of ordinal assessment) was investigated. It has been observed that there is a significant relationship between lack of assurance of the job promising and being probated and there is also a significant relationship in $\text{sig}=0.2$. However, the importance a society given to a job has the most effect on the number of probation, though this relationship was not significant and could not be generalized.

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Table 10: Study of the relationship of the difference between probated and non-probated students in terms of their course selection

Base of Course Selection	Probated and Non-Probated			
	T	df	Sig	N
Student's Interest	-0/407	266	0/6	268
Parental Coercion	0/737	234	0/462	236
Career	-1/996	247	0/04	249
The Attention a Society Pays to that Job	0/26	240	0/795	242

According to table 10, there is no significant difference between probated and non-probated students regarding the base of course selection based on student's interest, parental coercion and the importance given to that job by the regarded society. However, having better career according to the student's field of study with the amount of 0.999 and degree of freedom (df=2.7) and the significance level (sig=0.04). There is a significant difference between probation and non-probation. In other words, regarding the probation group mean (M=3.21) and non-probation mean group (M=2.83), it can be said that the more a student be sure about the career of his/her course, he/she will be less probated.

Table 11: Studying the relationship the number of probation (level of ordinal assessment) and personal variables

Personal Variables	Number		Mean of Being Probated	Value of F	Significance	E
Gender	Female	172	1/35	6/100	0/010	0/153
	Male	112	1/60			
Being Married	Single	261	1/46	0/228	0/600	0/028
	Married	024	1/38			
Quota	Region 1	127	1/45			
	Region 2	077	1/32			
	Region 3	039	1/36	2/950	0/013	0/028
	Shahed	020	2/05			
	Selfless	012	1/42			
	Teachers	001	002			

Table 12: Studying the relationship between the number of probation (level of ordinal assessment) and personal variable

Personal Variable	Variable Components	Rs	Sig
Base of Course Selection	Student's Interest	0/027	0/661
	Parental Coercion	-0/066	0/300
	Lack of Assurance of the Future Career	0/144	0/020
	The Importance Given to that Job by the Society	0/012	0/800

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DISCUSSION

This question is about personal factors such as gender, being married, acceptance quota and the base of course selection which will be as follows:

The results of this study show that there is a significant difference between probated and non-probated students based on their gender and men are more probated than women.

This result is compatible with the one obtained by Fateme Gashti entitled "the calculation and analysis of the rate of academic decline and the factors affecting on the men's probation percentage (37.5%) than women's (28.6%) which is compatible with the thesis results of Abdolreza Mohyedini entitled the factors affecting MA student's school wastage studying in Shahid Chamran University of Ahwaz in which men are declined than women.

There was no significant difference between probated and non-probated students in terms of being married or celibacy and married students (with 21% probation) is less than single ones (30%).

In the study performed by Fateme Gashti, the amount of probation in married students is 52% and in single students is 31%.

The results of this study show that there is a significant difference between probated and non-probated students in terms of their acceptance quota, and the Shahed and Selfless quotas are more declined, which is compatible with the study performed by Gashti, in which the most percentage of probation goes to Ashayer and Razmandegan quotas (55%). In this study, the students who are entered university as Region 1 quota after the Shahed quota have the highest probation.

The results of this study showed that there is a significant difference between probated and non-probated students in terms of their future course selection and probation; that is to say, the more a student be sure of his/her future career, he/she will be less declined, which is compatible with the study performed by Mostafa Asgarian entitled "the study of economic and educational issues in the undergraduate level of Tehran public universities, and is based on the research statistical data of Asgarian, in which the career promising of the course is the foundation of educational problems. In the study performed by Fateme Gashti, cited by Bile, it has been pointed out in 1999 that mental pressure in course selection is considered one of the basic problems in student's authority which is led to school wastage.

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