Qualitative Exploration Of The Experience Of Becoming A University Student

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Denzin and Lincoln (1994) characterize qualitative research: Qualitative research is multi-strategy in center, including an interpretive, naturalistic way to deal with its topic. This implies qualitative researchers ponder things in their normal settings, endeavoring to comprehend or translate marvels regarding the implications individuals convey to them. Qualitative research includes the examined utilization and gathering of an assortment of experimental materials, contextual analysis, individual experience, thoughtful, biography, observational, verifiable, interactional, and visual writings that depict normal and tricky minutes and importance in people's lives.

Cresswell (1994) characterizes Qualitative research as a request procedure of understanding in view of unmistakable methodological conventions of request that investigate a social or human issue. The researcher fabricates an intricate, all-encompassing picture, breaks down words, reports point-by-point perspectives of witnesses, and leads the examination in a characteristic setting.

I picked thematic analysis (Meier, Boivin, and Meier, 2006) for this research examination as I will consider the lived encounters of the understudies. Thematic analysis has been broadly utilized as an inexactly characterized research technique in sociologies. There are late endeavors to create it all the more deliberately and improve its power for brain science, psychotherapy and guiding research. In a couple of special cases, the strategy is connected to exact data picked up from meeting research members transposed to talk with transcripts (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Joffe, 2012; McLeod, 2011; Meier et al., 2006; Pollio and Ursiak, 2006; Rennie, 2012; Ward, House, and Hamer, 2009).

For this investigation, I am adjusting this technique to break down information assembled from the semi-organized meetings. Braun and Clarke (2006) gave clear standards and pragmatic advances associated with the thematic analysis. They commended the technique as "adaptable" yet "methodologically stable" on the off chance that it is connected vigorously (2006, p. 78). This novel examination concentrated on the individual encounters of college understudies and the impact of being a college understudy on their lives.

Methodology

Research Question

The study explored the effect of being a university student on the lives of students and their experiences as students.

Description Of Sample

The sample for the study was collected from the University of East London. The first participant was Roima, who is a British Bangladeshi female, 20 years old, currently in the second year of BSC Psychology at the University of East London (UEL). The second participant was Nayim, who is an Arab British male, 23 years old, currently in the Third year of LLB (Hons) law at Queen Mary University.

Description Of Data Collection Method

Data were collected by using semi-structured face-to-face interviews from Roima Khanom and Nayim Khan. The interviews were conducted in the university library. Both participants were contacted through telephone conversation, and the time was fixed for the interview.

Analytic Procedure

Thematic analysis was used in the research project. The interviews were transcribed in a document file. Vivo coding was used as reading the transcripts again and again was done to avoid missing any important theme or pattern. For example, ambitious, personal goals, cultural differences etc.

Ethical Considerations

Brief information about the research was provided to the participants, and they were asked to sign a consent form before conducting the interview. Confidentiality of data was ensured. It was ensured that data would be used only for research purposes.

Coding

Labeling the chunk in the transcription helped in summarizing the data. I arranged the codes to make sense of these codes. Then again I refined these codes, for example, by merging the codes with similar meanings or outcomes. Then, themes were established from the codes after coding was completed. I found the difference between the expectations from the university and the reality that both interviewees have faced, their personal goals and ambitions etc. I found the story of their lived experiences about the university life and elements which have an effect on their lives with regards to

their educational achievements. Firstly, I found out the chunks of importance and then I coded them. After coding, I rearranged the codes to make them build a proper sense, and these sense and flow-making codes were then converted into themes by understanding what they were depicting.

Data Analysis

From the transcribed interviews, after rigorous readings, three major themes were found, which were cultural aspects, motivational factors and experiences of dissatisfaction.

It is a fact that culture has a specific, major and important effect on the upbringing of individuals. Some people have the tendency to move along the cultural aspects, and some feel better about leaving the cultural aspects and moving along the majority of the world. The same effects were found in the interviewees of the study. But one case was from the category of moving along the cultural aspects, and the other was from the category of moving with the world while leaving the cultural aspects. The first interviewee was from Bangladesh, and she reported that in her culture, girls are not educated, and they spend their lives on their husband's income. But she said that her father wanted her to study and compete with the world as education is necessary for survival. That is why she was studying.

Umm…in my culture, it is traditional that girls get married and become housewives and not pursue a career, but my parents didn't want that for their kids, so they encouraged us… to work hard and go study until we were happy with ourselves and have achieved what we want.

She reported no change in her life related to her family time, as she used to go to university without any gap in education.

The second interviewee was a male student, and he was from the category of moving with the cultural aspects. He reported that he belongs to an educated family where he has to study and do the job as, without this, there is no respect for a male. It is necessary for him to achieve a specific level of education and a proper job to be respectful in society and among family. That is the main reason for his study. As he said:

In my culture a degree is expected almost compulsory, it's seen as a rite of passage into adulthood and the rest of your life. My family and my parents expected me to go to university, get a good grade and find myself a good job after; in hindsight, an apprenticeship may have been ideal.

The motivational factor is the second theme of this research. There are many motivational factors that help a person to achieve this goal or goals in life. In student life, the major motivational aspects of being a student are studying together, meeting friends, hanging out with friends, receiving knowledge-based learning etc. As a student, the first interviewee reported that she is motivated because she wants to compete with the world and wants to achieve a respectful place in society. She also reported that her family wanted her to not depend on others for her needs. As education is a

necessary part of a respectful and good life, it motivated her to study. From this, it can be assumed that she is motivated to achieve her goals of a respectful life and a healthy source of income, which will give her a strong place in society. She wants to be a positive addition to society as she is realizing the value of being educated.

In this day and age, it's hard to get anywhere without further education.

Furthermore, she needs graduation pictures, too. However, the male interviewee had a different viewpoint that he has to complete his degree to become a solicitor. For this achievement, he has to pass a specific degree, and his intention to achieve his degree was very strong. He seems so serious about his future and has proper planning to achieve his future expectations. The reason for the selection of the university study was due to these motivational factors.

So…I want to become a solicitor, and the only direct way of doing that is a degree; in order to qualify, I require a degree and then a postgrad qualification called the LPC. Through university, I expected to gain lots of opportunities for work experience and unique insight into the legal field through lecturers, as I enjoy learning and doing things to better my chances of a successful career.

The third and the last theme was dissatisfaction. Here, dissatisfaction is related to the experiences of admission to the universities in which they were studying at the time of the interview. Many factors were found, including poor administration, late circulation of information about extra-curricular activities, and exam-related difficulties.

It was reported by the interviewees that university life is harder than expected as more coursework and learning were expected, but the focus on exams was greater than the focus on learning and teaching. It was also found that classmates were of different age groups, which was also not expected. It affected the socialization of the classmates. Socialization among classmates is a necessary element to create a proper learning environment. However, as a university student, the interviewee did not find socialization, which made her dissatisfied.

I just thought that it'd be like the sixth form but on a much larger scale. I expected to see a lot of people my age there's a lot of diversity in our course.

The male interviewee said the communication from the university administration related to different activities was not appropriate, and late intimation was a cause of not participating in the activities. The focus is on the students of the first semester, not the second one, which causes dissatisfaction among students as they feel that they are not important.

The environment wasn't as engaging as I initially expected. I assumed there'd be more support from the beginning from lecturers and tutors as such, but it trailed off after the second semester.

The level of dissatisfaction is different for both the interviewees as one focuses on the studies as the element of dissatisfaction, and the other points out the management issues related to extra-curricular

activities intimations. It is also observed that the level of dissatisfaction of the male interviewee is quite different from that of the female interviewee.

Conclusion

In this research, the focus is on the cultural aspects which affect the behavior of the people. Females of Asia are suppressed at different levels as the society of Asia is a male-dominated society. So, the source of motivation for her is to get an education as she understood her value without education at every level of her life. That is why she is feeling dissatisfaction related to her studies as her focus is to have a degree and become a working part of society.

In contrast, the male interviewee, who also belongs to the Middle East and Asian culture, did not have identity issues. He just wants to get the degree as his family like him to have a specific and respectful source of earning in which he can grow and work well. His culture is also affecting his level of dissatisfaction, as not being informed in a timely manner about extra-curricular activities was his area of concern. He needs attention from the university administration more than the female interviewee. It was also noticed that the female interviewee was having issues related to the learning outcomes and frequent exams, but she is still not dissatisfied with the university management.

From the themes that emerged and discussed above, it was concluded that students of the university have different cultural backgrounds, which makes them think and perceive things differently, and these aspects affect them in relation to their socialization and learning. These cultural aspects also motivate the students to achieve their goals and objectives as well as make them dissatisfied with being a part of that specific university. This further develops the complaining behavior among university students. In university students, complaining behavior is not good learning as it remains with them for a lifetime. The experience of being a university student was good for both the participants as they were highly motivated to achieve their goals, which will help them in their future lives.

The findings of the study are not generalizable, as the study includes the experiences of just two interviewees.

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