

A Comparative Study Of Academic Goals In University Students In Times Of Pandemic.

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Summary

The objective of the research focused on comparing the differences in academic goals in university students from two private universities; the unit of analysis was students from two private universities in Metropolitan Lima in the health career. The methodology used was quantitative approach in the positivist framework, explanatory level, non-experimental, with a purposive sample of 450 students. The results show that there are significant differences between the academic goals of university students of two universities, due to p value is $p=.000 < .05$ Mann Whitney U 36557,000. Likewise, the descriptive results indicate that 48.8% had a low level, 27.8% had a medium level and 23.3% had a high level of academic goals. It is thus that academic goals in times of pandemic are necessary for the fulfillment of their purposes in achieving their learning of the university student, being accompanied by teachers throughout the academic semester.

Key words: academic goals, learning goals, achievement goals, social reinforcement goals.

Introduction

The new virus, COVID - 19, continues to have a great impact, damaging the socioeconomic and educational system, in accordance with the measures that were taken to avoid developing more contagions in the educational field; in the higher education, it was necessary to detect the ideal procedure and continue with the study curriculum, thus maintaining the pedagogy, the teaching provided, although it was necessary to resort to completely new methodologies, both for educators and for those who are in the occupation of student. About higher education, the decision making was formed to change

their study methods from face-to-face to virtual, it is known that there have already been this type of modality for those who find it difficult for various reasons to attend a classroom without disregarding those who did not dictate from this digital platform, with this part we intend to express that no institution was prepared for what is being addressed, by the premeditation of the case creating new techniques of accessibility of a new student approach raising, no doubt, some tension and uncertainty.

The impact on higher education has been dramatic and transformative; a common trend in education systems

around the world has been to respond to the pandemic with emergency e-learning protocols, marking a rapid transition from face-to-face classes to online learning systems. Educational institutions are challenged to adapt to this change and are trying to choose the right technologies and approaches to educate and engage their students (Rashid, 2020). The campus closure and the sudden shift from face-to-face education to remote instruction is just a small experiment in providing online education that offers effective tools for student engagement and teacher training.

Education is a determining process in the formation of citizens and, based on this, the development of societies must be projected; therefore, the scientific community has always been involved in the research of the various factors that have to do with the entire educational process, from the interest in the formulation of educational policies and their consistency with the relevance of each social sector, the characteristics of teachers, their training and the importance of their pedagogical work, to academic strategies and their relationship with the performance and process of teaching and learning in the classroom.

Consequently, the variable that is of interest: "academic goals", has also motivated several works related to the study of it and, likewise, they have been associated with various factors such as motivation (Valle et al., 2015), learning strategies (Suárez & Suárez, 2017), academic performance (Espino & Chávez, 2018) and other variables in the academic field.

Both nationally and internationally, the relevance of the consensus of international organizations with respect to educational policies is recognized, in the perspective that their articulation is a significant advance for the development of all countries in the world (Tiana, 2008). Specifically, in

relation to higher education, the World Declaration on Higher Education states that students, as the protagonists of their learning, must have the conditions that contribute to autonomy in the process of their professional training (Unesco, 1998).

In this regard, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which coordinates global education, has developed the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Education 30 Guide, whereby Goal 4.3 states the need for future professionals in the various fields of knowledge to develop skills such as critical thinking and problem solving. This implies a greater and gradual empowerment of the decisions that students make in the self-regulation of their learning throughout their lives in both intrinsic and extrinsic aspects (Unesco, 2015).

In relation to academic learning, Pintrich, in 1994, 2000b, 2003 (cited by Montero and José de Dios, 2004), indicates that there are three elements to consider: motivational, cognitive and contextual and that, although there is a permanent interaction, he emphasizes the importance of the last of these elements due to its influence on the others mentioned.

Quintana and Royo (2003) point out that self-regulation of learning has three cyclical and permanent phases: planning, performance and self-reflection. On the other hand, considering the theory of self-regulated learning, the elements to consider in this topic are the following: the establishment of educational goals, goal orientation and self-evaluation. In the first of these, it is relevant that they are structured according to their level due to their complexity and organized temporally; the second either learning or results type involves aspects such as motivation and commitment and, finally, the third presupposes frames of reference to establish the relationship

between the goals considered and the results obtained (Quintana and Royo, 2015).

It is worth mentioning that, according to Lamas (2008), self-regulation of learning not only enables the identification of achievements, but also, in a related manner, the selection of cognitive and socioemotional strategies for the attainment of the goals to be achieved. The same author cites Mc Robbie and Tobin (1997), who, in relation to tasks, argue that the practice of strategies and reflection on them facilitate their understanding and better performance. On the other hand, Monereo (2007) points out that, in order for students to have strategic learning, there is a fundamental need to study personal goals because of their unquestionable relationship with self-regulation processes in a more comprehensive and relevant way.

Definition of academic goals

Considering that an academic goal can be a conglomerate of objectives, desires and future beliefs that can be achieved in an educational environment, these can be referred, for example, to the acquisition of knowledge. La Rosa (2015) mentions that, when students have goals linked to the improvement of skills and abilities or the acquisition of knowledge and know-how, the goals to which all their actions are directed are oriented to dimensions linked to learning. This leads to think that, when a student has the firm purpose or goal of acquiring knowledge or skills, it can be interpreted that there is an underlying goal that is to acquire a better quality of life or aspire to have greater qualities that make him/her more productive in what he/she does.

Likewise, Durán and Arias (2015) mention that, when talking about motivation, the concept of whether acquiring knowledge, learning some content or becoming skilled to proficient in some subject, can reaffirm their personality, be recognized or obtain expected achievements in some

context in which they develop, can also be included.

Therefore, a classification of the academic goals that a student can pursue is proposed: learning, performance and personal goals (Valle et al., 1998). A comparison was made with the dimensions that, in competencies, are called cognitive, procedural and attitudinal (Tobón, 2013). Not unrelated to this classification, it also includes one that is related to the achievement of rewards, rewards or antagonistic aspects such as loss or sanctions (Gaeta et al., 2015).

The reasons why a student engages in various activities and the goals behind his or her actions may be varied. More than one may be included in the attainment of some achievement always depending on the interests of the individual.

Importance of academic goals in students.

The internal part of the human being in which he reflects and plans to carry out activities that will lead him to the completion of the tasks, which will require him to consider study strategies that will allow him to assimilate the contents and concepts for a better academic performance (Reyes, 2021). But when the result is adverse to the student, he/she will have to show his/her emotional balance to make the right decisions and recover the projected path. It has been demonstrated that the student who has these positive characteristics has a better achievement throughout his life (Durán and Arias, 2015). With respect to this concept, it is noticed that the student should have interest or predisposition to understand the subject, to develop it and assimilate all the concepts and tasks that are generated throughout its development, thus being some of much interest and pleasure and some others of importance and of much effort, in each of them he will use his control and mastery to conduct himself correctly,

understanding this path as a challenge (Barca et al., 2012).

Adolescents are those who, going through a crucial stage of their lives, have many complexes, have priorities such as the acceptance of their peers; therefore, the latter is what motivates them to achieve the proposed objectives and that, even being in collegiate or preparatory stage, they set goals higher than those of some adults; at this vital moment of the human being, energy and hyperactivity are in excess, perhaps this causes a weak domain and control, but determination and motivation will determine success (Gonzales et al., 2018). When analyzing personal performance, several internal factors are required such as physical, health, personal motivational state, interests and others, reinforcers such as rewards and losses that valued and weighed will define whether the performance is positive or negative, because the work will be rewarded or in an upcoming situation it will be important to correct some activities.

Dimensions of academic goals

According to Durán and Arias (2015), the variables are divided into three dimensions: learning goals, achievement goals and social reinforcement goals.

Learning goals: measure the students' preference to seek the development of their competencies through the adoption and mastery of current skills and knowledge that will help them to perfect the development of their learning lessons. This goal has an intrinsic motivation since the student pays more attention to the development of the task itself than to the development of the competency, and the student practices self-regulation in his learning process.

Achievement goals: these are directly related to self-concept and self-esteem and evidence students' preference to learn in order to gain acceptance from

others by positively valuing their skills and avoid moments related to probable frustrations in the performance of their learning activities and thus avoid disapproval from both teachers and parents. They try to obtain grades.

Social reinforcement goals: this is related to the psychosocial aspect of the student with respect to the educational area and has to do with acquiring social approval and avoiding rejection as a result of their academic behavior

Method

The research paradigm is positivism with quantitative approach. The hypothetical deductive method was used for this research. According to Arispe Alburqueque et al. (2020), this method is based on data collection to which statistics were applied to objectively quantify the results found for the variable academic goals and its dimensions. The research was applied, this type of study can solve specific and current problems or dilemmas by providing new theoretical knowledge (Arispe Alburqueque et al., 2020 and Sánchez Carlessi et al., 2018). Comparative seeks to compare in two different samples academic goals in times of pandemic. The design of a research is the path that every researcher follows during the development of the research (Arispe Alburqueque et al., 2020). The research had a non-experimental, cross-sectional design. For this purpose, it is non-experimental because the variables are not manipulated; that is, their spontaneous behavior and reactions in their natural environment are observed (Hernández-Sampieri and Mendoza, 2018); it is also cross-sectional because the data were collected by applying the instruments to the learners at a single moment (Arispe Alburqueque et al., 2020).

The population consisted of 897 students in the fourth and fifth cycles, and the sample consisted of 644

students from two private universities in Metropolitan Lima in the health career under a non-probabilistic convenience sampling.

Inclusion criteria were students in the fourth and fifth grades, those who have access, participated voluntarily, enrolled, male and female. Exclusion criteria were students who did not attend on the day the instruments were applied, students in cycles I, II, III, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, and those who were not enrolled.

Procedure

After compiling the theoretical support, we proceeded to develop the adaptation of the instrument to be used for the unit of analysis. Subsequently, coordination with the university was carried out in order to obtain the reliability of the instrument. Finally, once the instrument was applied to the sample, data analysis was carried out with SPSS and Microsoft Excel programs. The data processing will yield frequency tables to analyze the results in the discussion and reach conclusions.

Instrument

The Academic Goals Questionnaire (CMA) being the author Duran and Arias (2015) consists of 16 items having three dimensions: learning goals, social reinforcement goals and achievement goals on a scale in which each item is scored from 1 to 5, CS= Almost always; S=Always; AV= Sometimes; RV= Rarely; N= Never reliability of 0.901 through Cronbach's Alpha, being highly reliable is a standardized instruments.

Data analysis method

The analysis of the data collected was carried out in two ways: first, the validity and reliability of the instrument was tested using Cronbach's alpha after the application of the pilot test in 20 students from a university that was not the sample. Secondly, by means of statistical analysis in SPSS, the aptitude was analyzed in each of the dimensions of the academic goals analyzed. Additionally, descriptive and inferential statistics were applied for both variables in each of their dimensions; for hypothesis testing, **the** Mann. Whitney U test was used for hypothesis testing.

Results

The descriptive results indicate that both in the academic goals variable and in its dimensions, 48.8% had a low level; 27.8%, a medium level and 23.3%, a high level of academic goals. As for learning goals, 47.4% had a low level; 34.7%, a medium level and

17.8%, a high level and, as for achievement goals, 49.4% had a low level; 31.8%, a medium level and 18.8%, a high level and, as for the social reinforcement goals dimension, 48.6% had a low level; 22.9%, a medium level and 28.5%, a high level of the dimensions of the variable.

Table 1

Distribution of levels and dimensions of the variable Academic goals

	Academic goals				Learning goals				Achievement goals				Social reinforcement goals			
	Univ A		Univ B		Univ A		Univ B		Univ A		Univ B		Univ A		Univ B	
	f	%	F	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Under	166	51,6	83	25,8	161	50,0	79	24,5	176	54,7	95	29,5	154	47,8	92	28,6
Medium	89	27,6	145	45,0	111	34,5	167	51,9	90	28,0	144	44,7	90	28,0	112	34,8
High	67	20,8	94	29,2	50	15,5	76	23,6	56	17,4	83	25,8	78	24,2	118	36,6
Total	322	100	322	100	322	100	322	100	322	100	322	100	322	100	322	100

Table 2

Significance between the academic goals of undergraduate students at two universities.

	Ranges			Test statistics		
	University	N	Average range	Sum of ranks	Mann-Whitney U	36557,000
Social reinforcement goals	University A	322	275,03	88560,00	W for Wilcoxon	88560,000
	University B	322	369,97	119130,00	Z	-6,477
	Total	644			Asymptotic sign(bilateral)	,000

Table 2, presents the results to contrast the general hypothesis: there are significant differences between the academic goals of university students of two universities; the p value score is $p=.000 < .05$ indicating significant differences and a value was obtained as extreme as the calculated test statistic and the calculated value is smaller than the significance level; therefore, $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$), so the null hypothesis is

rejected. On the other hand, the surveys to students from university B obtained scores, of with an average = 369.97, unlike the surveys to students from university A, obtained results in scores of with an average = 275.03. Therefore, it is affirmed that there are significant differences in the academic goals of undergraduate students of two universities.

Table 3

Significance between the learning goals of undergraduate students at two universities.

		Ranges			Test statistics	
	University	N	Average range	Sum of ranks	Mann-Whitney U	36699,000
Social reinforcement goals	University A	322	275,47	88702,00	W for Wilcoxon	88702,000
	University B	322	369,53	118988,00	Z	-6,423
	Total	644			Asymptotic sign(bilateral)	,000

Table 3, presents the results to contrast the first specific hypothesis: there are significant differences between the learning goals of college students from two universities; the p value score is $p=.000 < .05$, indicates significant differences and a value was obtained as extreme as the calculated test statistic and the calculated value is smaller than the significance level; therefore, $\rho =$

0.000 ($\rho < 0.05$), so the null hypothesis is rejected. On the other hand, university B student surveys obtained scores of with an average = 369.53, unlike university A student surveys obtained scores of with an average = 275.47. Therefore, it is affirmed that there are significant differences in the learning goals of undergraduate students of two universities.

Table 4

Significance between the achievement goals of undergraduate students at two universities.

		Ranges			Test statistics	
	University	N	Average range	Sum of ranks	Mann-Whitney U	37788,000
Social reinforcement goals	University A	322	278,85	89791,00	W for Wilcoxon	89791,000
	University B	322	366,15	117899,00	Z	-5,975
	Total	644			Asymptotic sign(bilateral)	,000

Table 4, presents the results to contrast the second specific hypothesis: there are significant differences between the achievement goals of college students from two universities; the p value score is $p=.000 < .05$ indicating significant differences and a value was obtained as extreme as the calculated test statistic and the calculated value is smaller than the significance level; therefore, $\rho = 0.000$ ($\rho < 0.05$), so the null

hypothesis is rejected. On the other hand, the surveys of students from university B obtained scores of with an average = 366.15, in contrast to the surveys of students from university A, who obtained scores of with an average = 278.85. Therefore, it is affirmed that there are significant differences in the achievement goals of college students from two universities.

Table 5

Significance between the social reinforcement goals of undergraduate students at two universities.

	Ranges			Test statistics		
	University	N	Average range	Sum of ranks	Mann-Whitney U	37229,000
Social reinforcement goals	University A	322	277,12	89232,00	W for Wilcoxon	89232,000
	University B	322	367,88	118458,00	Z	-6,202
	Total	644			Asymptotic sign(bilateral)	,000

Table 5, presents the results to contrast the third specific hypothesis: there are significant differences between the social reinforcement goals of university students from two universities; the p value score is $p = .000 < .05$ indicating significant differences and a value was obtained as extreme as the calculated test statistic and the calculated value is smaller than the significance level; therefore, $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$), so the null hypothesis is rejected. On the other hand, the surveys of students from university B obtained higher scores of with an average = 367.88, unlike the surveys of students from university A, who obtained results in scores of with an Average = 277.12. Therefore, it is affirmed that there are significant differences in the social reinforcement goals of college students of two universities.

Discussion

The descriptive results as the hypothesis test show that there are significant differences between the academic goals of the University students of two universities existing in university A with a lower average range to university B which works performing the accompaniment of the student in learning, in this regard Suárez, S. and Suárez, J. (2017) stated the importance of academic goals in academic performance, the one that obtains the

highest frequency results the information regarding the tasks and the one with the least is the task avoidance. Finally, with regard to performance, the highest value corresponds to the English course, with the lowest being mathematics. The study is of relevance, since it shows us very interesting results, which will guide the research more effectively and will allow us to support the point referred to the discussion of results.

As for the learning goals dimension, it was found at a low level with 47.4%, which is due to the fact that university students require tutoring in the achievement of their learning, the results coincide with the study of Patrick et al. (2001) where they state that the goal orientation theory has the purpose of explaining the behaviors, achievement behaviors of students, learning and student performance in their educational context. On the other hand, Moreno et al. (2019) recognize that students who develop learning goals have a trajectory of sustained achievement five years after admission; on the other hand, students who after five years are still passing less than 50% of the courses of the career, their goals are only referred to save self-esteem and avoid failure, which adds

to certain behaviors that do not allow significant learning.

In the same line, Covarrubias-Apablaza et al. (2019). show that Model 1 (M1= Self-regulation of learning and general self-efficacy to learning goals) shows better indicators that allow explaining the academic goals in its subdimension learning goals, with an explained variance of 43%. With this, it can be concluded that the University should promote mechanisms to achieve better learning goals in students. The descriptive results in relation to achievement goals showed that 49.4% present low level, it means that students are not clear about the purpose of obtaining good results in the semester, making use of different learning strategies for the achievement of their goal of learning and passing the cycle, the results coincide with the study of English et al. (2016) who conclude that academic goals, are necessary for the achievement of student goals in the results of their study students who were positively nominated by other peers made known a greater possibility of achieving learning goals and achievement than those who were nominated negatively, recognition and reinforcement of achievement is impactful for the student in achieving the proposed goals.

Similarly, Aguilera and Bono (2015) A quantitative descriptive study shows the results of a descriptive cross-sectional study in which they seek to know and describe what motivational learning choices students develop and choose, the results showed that students develop learning goals to improve grades or to face difficult courses; to not complicate their lives and thus demonstrate a way of behaving in the classroom; also to solve easy or manageable subjects or courses.

Nájera et al. (2020) concluded that the scale related to goals obtained an internal consistency, factorial validity where it is considered that the instrument measures what it has to measure, helping to recognize the dimensions of academic goals as theoretical constructs of the student's academic purpose, highlighting the relevance of the Social-Cognitive theory of development in academic performance. Similarly Cabanach, et al. (2017) unveiled psychophysiological responses such as fatigue and negative thoughts are negative factors for the achievement of academic goals. For the researchers, any prevention and intervention program against academic stress, should include this information in future designs to help the fulfillment of the achievement goals of the university student.

Regarding the inferential results in the dimension of social reinforcement goals, there are significant differences between university A and university B, where the merit of the academic effort made by students is recognized by using social networks to recognize their performance in the academic semester, Barca-Lozano et al.(2019) prove that variables such as social valuation goals, performance goals and failure avoidance goals, as well as attributions to the subjects and luck have a medium influence on the superficial approaches to learning, the goals are the purposes that students have to complete their studies, where the effort made to complete the academic cycle is valued, the student needs reinforcers (awards, grades, recognition) by their teachers, friends, family.

On the other hand Azabache et al. (2019) research demonstrated direct small and medium direct correlations

between happiness and academic goals, being happiness an important aspect for the achievement of academic purposes. Furthermore, Lagos San Martín, et al. (2017) conclude that high grades reflect self-oriented perfectionism allow predicting high goals in social reinforcement and if high grades reflect effort-oriented self-oriented perfectionism, they predict high academic goals. These results demonstrate that perfectionism enables the achievement of desired academic goals and, in turn, with this we can recognize how university students' motivations can be shaped.

Finally, Ruiz-Esteban et al. (2018) show with respect to sex, women oriented their motivation more towards achievement; in relation to academic course, the goals linked to social reinforcement increased as they progressed in these, although this pattern is not stable. The results obtained were determined by intrinsic motivational patterns such as goals oriented to achievement and better learning, while extrinsic motivational patterns were determined by the age of the academic subjects studied. At the same time, the study suggests that with these results it is possible to create novel evaluation instruments, as well as psychoeducational intervention programs to improve the motivation and promotion of study in students.

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