

CHALLENGES OF FIRST GENERATION COLLEGE WOMEN STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO COIMBATORE DISTRICT

Dr. A.Thiruvankateswari

Assistant Professor in Economics,

&

Mrs.P.Sangeetha

Assistant Professor in Commerce,

SNMV College of Arts and Sciences, Coimbatore

Introduction

Education is an essential ingredient of prosperity. Higher education in India is defined as education obtained after the completion of 12 years of schooling. Billson and Terry (1982) defined First generation college students as those whose parents did not attend college (journal of college counseling, 2007). First-generation college students are students whose parents do not have any postsecondary education (Choy, 2001). These students differ from continuing-generation students in many ways including race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and gender. When compared to continuing-generation students, first-generation students face greater challenges in the areas of access to college, persistence throughout college, and attainment of a degree. Research positively links students' co-curricular involvement with attainment (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991) and persistence (Astin, 1977).

Objectives of the Study

1. To know the strength and socio- economic status of the first generation college women students.
2. To bring to light the challenges experienced by these students

Size of sample

Size of sample refers to the number of items to be selected from the random sample. A sample size of 209 first generation college women students were selected for the study.

Collection of data

An interview schedule has been framed and information was collected from a sample of 209 women first generation college women students.

Methodology

Arts College student were selected in various courses wise, B.Com, (Bachelor of Commerce) B.Com (Computer Application), B.Com (Information Technology), and B.Com (Professional Accounting). This primary data was collected from 209 first generation women students with the help of a prepared questionnaire. Percentage analysis was applied for the data.

Scope of the Study

The finding of the study will be very useful for the concerned stakeholders of an educational institution to understand the challenges faced by first generation women students and tune-up their strategies for effective results. This study may also help future researchers to find out the ways and means to overcome the problems of first generation women students with special reference to higher education.

Limitations of the Study

Due to lack of time the study is limited to the students of only bachelor of commerce courses in various College of arts and sciences Coimbatore.

Review of Literature

Ryan D. Padgett (2012) and et.al “ First-Generation Undergraduate Students and the Impacts of the First Year of College: Additional Evidence” Using longitudinal data from the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education, their findings suggest that first-generation students are at a significant disadvantage across cognitive and psychosocial outcomes compared to students whose parents have at least some postsecondary education. Furthermore, we tested for the conditional effects of good practices on first- year outcomes and found that effects of good practices on both cognitive and psychosocial outcomes differed in magnitude, and sometimes in direction, for first-generation versus non-first-generation students.

Results and Discussions

Data was analyzed for age, community, type of family, total family members, nature of housing, type of housing, education status, host elite/day scholars, part time earnings, family income, educational loans and expenditure the results discussed below.

Out of 602 B.Com, (Bachelor of Commerce), B.Com (Computer Application), B.Com (Information Technology) and B.Com (Professional Accounting) students, 35% are of the first generation students.

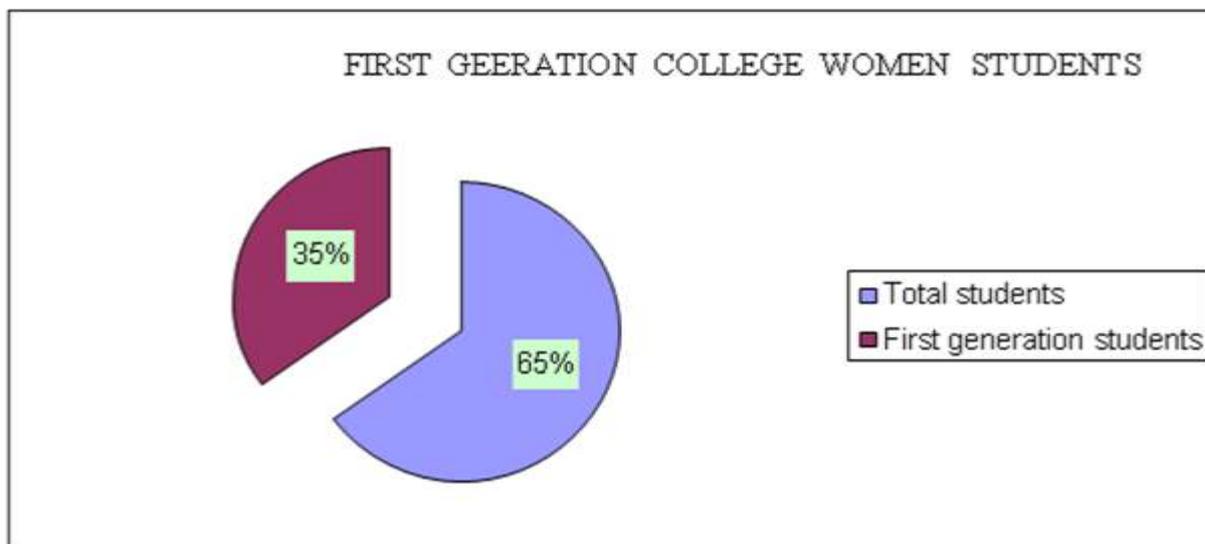


Table: 1 Age –Wise Distribution of the Respondents

Age (in completed years)	Number of Respondents	Percentage
19-20	68	33
20-21	86	41
21-22	30	14
22-23	25	12
Total	209	100

Source: Field Survey

It is clear from the table 1 that the highest number (41 per cent) of respondents belongs to the age group of 20-21 years. 33 Per cent of the respondents are in the age group ranging between 19-20 years, 14 per cent of the respondents belong to the age group of 21-22 years and only 12 per cent are in the age group of 22-23 years.

Table: 2 Community Wise Distributions of the Respondents

Community	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Forward community	25	12

Backward community	104	50
Most backward community	30	14
Scheduled community/scheduled tribe	50	24
Total	209	100

Source: Field Survey

Table 2 shows that majority (50 per cent) of the respondents belong to backward community, 24 per cent belong to Scheduled community/scheduled tribe, 14 per cent belong to Most backward community whereas only 12 per cent of the respondents are from Forward community.

Table: 3 Classifications of the Respondents Based on Their Type of Family and Family Size

Type of Family	Number of Respondents	Percentage	Family Size	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Joint family	79	38	2-4	80	38
Nuclear family	130	62	5-7	117	56
-----	-----	----	Above 7	12	6
Total	209	100	Total	209	100

Source: Field Survey

Table 3 shows that majority (62 per cent) of the respondents are from nuclear family and only (38 per cent) of the respondents joint families. Majority of the respondents 56 per cent come from a family size of five to seven members and only 12 per cent of the respondents' family size of above 7 members.

Table: 4 Classifications of the Respondents Based on Their Nature of Housing and Type of Housing

Nature of Housing	Number of Respondents	Percentage	Type of Housing	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Katcha	8	4	Own houses	96	46
Pucca	116	55	Rented houses	113	54
Thatched	85	41	----	---	---
Total	209	100	Total	209	100

Source: Field Survey

Majority (55 per cent) of the respondents are residing in pucca houses, 41 per cent of the respondents are in thatched houses. Only 4 per cent of the students are residing in the katcha houses. Though majority of the students (54 per cent) living in own houses and only 46 per cent of the students are living in rented houses.

Majority of students are doing their graduation in Bachelor of Commerce, Bachelor of Commerce with Computer Application. Majority are day scholars. Though majority of students are fully dependent on parents, 37% earn through part time jobs. Most of the respondents wish to go for jobs after completing UG course.

Table: 5 Classifications of the respondents Based on Their total Monthly Income

Monthly Income	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Less than Rs 5000	20	10
Rs 5001-10,000	98	47
Rs10,001-15,000	67	32
Above Rs 15,000	24	11
Total	209	100

Source: Field Survey

Table 4 shows that majority (47 per cent) of the respondents family members have a monthly income range of rupees 5001 to 10,000, 32 per cent of the respondents family members have a monthly income range of rupees 10,001 to 15,000 and only 10 per cent of the respondents the family members have a monthly income range of rupees above 15,000

Table: 6 Classifications of the Respondents Based on Their Education Debt & Monthly Expenditure

Debt	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	58	58
No	151	72
Total	209	100
Amount of debt (in rupees)		
Up to Rs 5000	12	21

Rs 5001-10,000	29	50
Above Rs 10,001	17	29
Total	58	100
Sources of debt		
Private bank	5	9
Money lenders	33	57
Chits with friends and relatives	20	34
Total	58	100
Rate of interest (%)		
Up to 5%	17	29
6-10%	23	40
Above 10	18	31
Total	58	100
Monthly expenditure		
Up to Rs2000	39	19
Rs2001-4000	46	22
Rs4001-6000	99	47
Above 6001	25	12
Total	209	100

Table 6 highlights that 72 per cent of the respondents did not have education debt burden and Only 28 per cent have education debt burden.

For majority (50 per cent) of the respondents the amount of debt ranges between rupees 50001 and 10,000 for 29 per cent of the respondents the debt ranges between rupees above 10,001, Only for 21 per cent the debt ranges between rupees up to 5,000.

Though for majority of the respondents (57 per cent) the main source of debt is money lenders, for 34 per cent the source of debt is chit fund with friends and relatives, for 9 per cent the sources is private bank.

Majority (40 per cent) of the respondents are paying the rate of interest from 6 to 10 per cent, 31 per cent are paying above 10 per cent and only above 29 per cent are paying upto 5 per cent rate of interest.

Majority (47 per cent) of the respondents the total monthly expenditure range between 4001 and 6000, for 22 per cent the total expenditure ranges between rupees 2001 and 4000

and for only 12 per cent the total expenditure is above rupees 6001.

Conclusion

Lack of parental experiences in higher education, lack of ability to persist, lack of human and cultural capital and lack of ability to finish academic programs are some of the challenges for first generation women students in the college. They can overcome this by developing self-confidence. It is concluded that the stakeholders of the educational institutions can extend their support whole heartedly bring light to the lives of first generation women students.

References

Astin, A. W. (1977). *Four critical years*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Astin, A. W. (1984). Student involvement: A developmental theory for higher education. *Journal of College Student Development*, 25, 297-308.

Atherton, M. C. (2014). Academic preparedness of first-generation college students: Different perspectives. *Journal of College Student Development*, 55, 824-829.
<https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2014.0081>

s Choy, S. P. (2001). Students whose parents did not go to college: Postsecondary access, persistence, and attainment (NCES 2001-126).

Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education. Fischer, M. J. (2007). Settling into campus life: Differences by race/ethnicity in college involvement and outcomes. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 78(2), 125-161.

Horn, L., & Nuñez, A. M. (2000). Mapping the road to college: First-generation students' math track, planning strategies, and context of support (NCES 2000-153).