

Comparative Study on Adjustments between the Students in Distance Education and Regular Set-up

RAVI K. MAHAJAN

Statistician, Dept. of Corr. Studies, Panjab University, Chandigarh

Independent study has been recognised as one of the strengths of distance learning. But the other side of the coin should not be forgotten. The personal problems and difficulties of distance learners do have an impact on their learning. At times this impact is overrated or often ignored. Mahajan's comparative study, contrary to the common opinion about learners' adjustment problems, makes a case for special counselling for 'Male' learners.

Education is considered to be the key to advancement, modernization and human fulfillment. With the ever increasing numbers and relative paucity of resources, newer strategies to reach the 'leftover' have to be evolved. The yearning for education can be traced to the inner motivation 'of Eklavyas' and the state objectives of universal education as means for Human Resources Development or Human development. Nevertheless, in this process Distance Education has assumed an indispensable role for itself.

The usefulness, relevance and importance of Distance Education has been well pronounced by various exponents of Distance Education. For instance, Anand (1979) has described it in a crisp way as 'the failure of the formal system'. Jayagopal and Ananthasayanam (1990) while referring to the growth in Distance Education suggest that "Historic and accidental factors account for the growth and development of educational structures in the Third World Countries".

The review of literature on Distance Education, however, suggests that the students of distance education have not received the due attention of the scholars engaged in educational and psychological analysis in the field (Sujatha, 1988; Sahoo, 1992). Hence this modest attempt to fill the void.

Studying within the real world is a particular advantage but it can of course be problematic as students at conventional institutes are primarily students, and their main identity is that of students whereas a student at a distance will also be a mother/father, worker, house keeper etc. and studentship is only one aspect of their lives. It is not always easy to fit together study and family life, work and living in a wider community (Price, 1985). Thus focus on Home adjustment, Health adjustment, Social adjustment and Emotional adjustment seems quite relevant when we are referring to the students in Distance Education, in particular.

The present investigation is based on the Bell's Adjustment Inventory, which measures Home Adjustment, Health Adjustment, Social Adjustment and Emotional

Adjustment with reliabilities more than 0.80. Where:

Home Adjustment is understood in terms of the existing relationship between the members of a family dependent upon such factors as stability of parents, the understanding they show of their children and the way they deal with them in an authoritative or affectionate manner and the response of the child to these stimulating factors.

Health Adjustment, in its broadest aspect is essential to a well balanced personality. People with poor health are often found to be deficient in surplus energy, lacking in self control and pessimistic in outlook.

Social adjustment implies a relatively broad base of operations.

Emotional Adjustment : An emotionally adjusted person is the one who is able to meet the demands made upon him by the society and the environment. The emotional development of well adjusted adolescents depends upon maturation and learning.

The data for the study was collected from the students undertaking their post-graduation from the Department of Correspondence Studies, Panjab University and their counterparts from the Regular University Departments.

RESULTS

In the following tables, results based on the group controlled on the marital status, and employment status, have been given for the 'male' students and the 'female' students from Department of Correspondence Studies (DCS) and the Regular University Departments (RUD).

In the sample there were:

160 - 'unemployed, unmarried and female' students from DCS

125 - 'unemployed, unmarried and female' students from RUD

84 - 'unemployed, unmarried and male' students from DCS

79 - 'unemployed, unmarried and male' students from RUD

Table No.1: Arithmetic Mean, Standard Deviation and t-values 'Unemployed, Unmarried and Female' Students

Status	DCS n=160	RUD n=125	t-value (d.f.=283)
Variable	Mean (s.d)	Mean (s.d)	
Home Adjustment	7.4375 (4.4137)	9.9200 (4.5554)	-4.64581*
Health Adjustment	7.8125 (3.9289)	10.3040 (4.4071)	-5.03503*
Social Adjustment	13.0688 (4.8734)	13.8080 (4.0275)	-1.36939
Emotional Adjustment	12.1187 (5.9064)	12.5280 (5.5960)	-0.59391

Table No.2: Arithmetic Mean, Standard Deviation and t-values for 'Unemployed, Unmarried and Male' Students

Stream	DCS n=84	RUD n=79	t-value (d.f.=161)
Variables	Mean (s.d.)	Mean (s.d.)	
Home Adjustment	7.8095 (4.8233)	9.1899 (3.1585)	-2.14708**
Health Adjustment	6.3810 (3.4288)	8.4684 (3.0206)	-4.11395*
Social Adjustment	11.8690 (5.0295)	10.9367 (3.9136)	1.31513
Emotional Adjustment	10.2143 (5.3752)	8.5949 (4.0431)	2.16318**

* - indicates significant difference at 1% level of significance

** - indicates significant difference at 1% level of significance

The Table No.1 indicates that between unemployed, unmarried and female' students from DCS and the 'female' students from RUD significant differences (at 1% level of significance) have been found on Home Adjustment and Health Adjustment, where, the unemployed, unmarried and female' students from RUD have scored significantly higher than their counterparts from DCS.

Though on Social Adjustment and Emotional Adjustment RUD have scored higher than their counterparts in

the DCS, yet these differences have been found to be statistically insignificant.

The Table No. 2 indicates that between 'unemployed, unmarried and male' students from DCS and the 'male' students from RUD, significant differences have been found, on Home Adjustment, Health Adjustment and Emotional Adjustment. While on Home Adjustment and Health Adjustment, the 'unemployed, unmarried and female' students from RUD have scored significantly higher than their counterparts from DCS, on Emotional Adjustment, students from DCS have scored higher than the students from RUD.

Though on Social Adjustment students from DCS have scored higher than the students from RUD, yet this difference has not been found to be statistically significant.

DISCUSSION

While comparing 'adjustments' of the students in the two streams it has been found that, Home Adjustment and Health Adjustment have, invariably, emerged as the key distinguishing variables. In the Bell's Adjustment Inventory the higher scoring is indicative of 'maladjustment', thus, the high scoring by the students from DCS suggests that the students from Distance Education have exhibited better Home Adjustment and Health Adjustment than their counterparts from the Regular University Departments.

However, 'unmarried and unemployed' male students from Distance Education have scored higher on Emotional Adjustment than their 'male' counterparts from the Regular University Departments. The reasons for this may be viewed in the light of status as neither a 'regular earner' nor a 'regular student'.

Further results on Social Adjustment indicating that (i) the 'unmarried and unemployed' male students have poor Social Adjustment than their counterparts in the Regular University Departments, and (ii) the 'unmarried and unemployed' female students have better Social Adjustment than their counterparts in the Regular University departments, speak for the prevalent social status vis. a vis. 'females' and 'males'.

The study, notwithstanding its limitations on account of limited scope and confining itself to a small sample, makes a case for a special counselling for the 'male' students in distance Education for improving their Social and Emotional Adjustments so that they could channelise their energies in a better way for a desirable out put.

REFERENCES

- Anand, Satyapal (1979) *University Without Walls*, Vikas, New Delhi.
- Jayagopal, R. and Ananthasayanam, R. (1990) "Comparative Study of Learners of Distance Education and Formal Education (Regular College) System in Madras University Area (India)", *ICDE Bulletin*, Vol. 22
- Price, Iris (1985) "The Student Perspective of Distance Education", *ICDE Bulletin*, Vol. 7.
- Sahoo, P.K. (1992) "Researches in Distance Education at University level in India: Trend and Perspectives", *Kakatiya Journal of Distance Education*, Vol. 1 No. 1.
- Sujatha, K. (1988) "Research on Distance Education in India", *Indian Journal of Distance Education* Vol. II.