

COMMUNICATION

Learning Habits of Post-Graduate Learners in Distance Education

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Abstract : *There are many means and sources of learning, but inspite of all these development, the examinations were showing large number of failure. Failure has often demoralising effects on the otherwise successful candidates. In many cases, failure is due to lack of organised learning on the part of the students. The learner should be aware of the various laws and theories of learning and their educational implications and applications. It is the responsibility of the learners to utilise them properly by adopting efficient procedure of learning. Efficient learning depends upon learner's ability to schedule his time, the plans of his study, the habits of concentration, note taking, mental review and over learning. This article presents various study habits of the learners who study under distance education system.*

Introduction

Distance education or learning at a distance has become increasingly significant mode of education in almost all countries of the world as it provides independence of time and space to education. At present there is a dramatic increase in the number of students and the number of institutes offering distance education courses. Further this expansion is rather encouraging as it opens opportunities for those missed the "bus" due to one or the other reason.

The present day learner of distance education is confronted with many activities. The opportunities to participate in learning activities poses for many learners, a problem of meeting their learning obligations. Even many learners who don't have problem of time, find it difficult to settle down to effective learning. In fact the lack of learning skills is one of the major causes for dropout and failure. (Villi, 1994)

The learning habits of the distance learners, having such great educational importance, deserve careful investigation. It is therefore, pertinent to collect data regarding the learning habits of the learners through a learning habits inventory, so that the distance education teacher can get a better picture of the situation.

Strayer and Nosworthy (1917) observed "many teachers have taught subjects but not how to study "subjects" which is more important. Jamuar (1961) investigated into some

of the psychological factors underlying the learning habits of the college learners. Brown (1967) confirmed that most of the learners learn by the wasteful process of the trial and error.

Learners are generally confronted with questions like “What to learn” “Where to learn”, “When to learn”, and “What is the purpose of learning”. In order to understand the nature of their problems and to suggest some measures to solve them, it is necessary to enlighten the students and teachers about the techniques of developing sound learning habits.

Hence, this study has been undertaken to find out various learning habits of post graduate learners in distance education.

Objectives

The present study aims at investigating the pattern of learning habits among the post graduate learners of distance education programmes of the Madras University. This study especially attempts at finding out the following:

- the learning patterns “at home”
- the kind of participation “during the seminar”
- the learning habits of the learners “before the examination”
- the way they answer “during the examination”.
- the “reason for studying by distance education”
- the “reasons for joining the post-graduate course”.

Procedure

The survey was selected as the research design for the study. Cluster sampling method was used. In the first stage one contact seminar centre was chosen for collection of data. At the second stage data was collected from those were present during the seminar. The total size of sample was 180 (100 females and 80 males). Pre-tested questionnaire was distributed to the 250 learners who attended the contact seminar. But only 180 respondents returned them completely filled.

Findings

The main objectives of the present study was to find out the learning habits of the post-graduate learners of Institute of Correspondence Education, University of Madras. The influences of the factors like the pattern of study during various situation, such as “at home”, “during exam”, “before the exam”, was studied.

The author cautiously, keeping the limitations of the study in mind, has attempted to evolve the profile of the post graduate learners, which would help in highlighting the various learning habits of the learners. Further the result would help the teacher in

providing adequate guidance and counselling services to the distance learners. The following were the major findings of the study.

- Most of the female respondents were in the age group of 20-25 and males were in group of 25-30 years.
- Most of the respondents were graduates.
- Most of the female respondents were unemployed and most of the male respondents were in clerical occupations.
- The income of most of the male respondents were ranging from Rs 500/- to Rs 1000/-.
- A majority of female respondents had no income.
- "Recalling silently" got the top ranking with the males and females.
- "Reading when I get time" the second place in both the cases.
- There was uniformity in giving top priority by both males and females to the category note down the main points during the seminar.
- The female respondents took active participation in discussion during the seminar.
- Most of the female respondents prefer "not to miss any seminar"
- Both the male and female respondents stated that they studied late at night before the examinations which was the regular habits of the learners in general.
- The distance learners of the sample did full justice in the preparation of lessons before the examinations.
- Being adult, they planned their answers before writing and selecting questions after careful thinking, after going through the whole paper and also revised the paper after completion.
- Very few people felt nervous during the examinations due to the anxiety and fear.
- Few of the male and female learners are studying post graduate for getting promotions.
- Both male and female learners opted distance education because they were employed.
- Both male and female learners were studying post graduate either because they were unemployed or for getting a new job.

References

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