



Learner's Attitude towards Self Learning Material in Distance Education

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ABSTRACT

Distance education (DE) plays very significant role in the field of education. Person who did not received education form the formal mode. Distance Education fulfills the need of those people. India is a big country. Its population is very high so it is very problematic to provide formal education to every people in the country. In India there are many universities which are providing distance education to million of students. Advancement of new technologies, online tutorials, SLM makes distance education more flexible. Present study focuses on the attitudes towards Self Learning Material (SLM) of distant learners in distance education. To what extent SLM are suitable and do well to according to their attitudes with gender difference. Result shows that there is a significant difference among the attitude of male and female distant learners towards SLM. Questionnaire was filled up from students of distant IGNOU study Centre (AMU) in the academic year 2011 and 2012.

KEYWORDS : Distance education (DE), Attitude towards self learning material (SLM), Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU).

Introduction

Distance education provides education to the large section of the society in India. It provides cost effective and quality education including those living in remote areas, rural areas and to the weaker section. Distance education with a motto "Education for All". The fast growth of the adult learner population is raising the demand of distance learning techniques. Development in course material and learning techniques will helpful to adult learner's population in India.

Distance education presents a number of challenges of planners and consultants in expressions of programmes and materials design, media and technology use functioning logistics and achieving good quality, cost effectiveness and an empowering policy framework. Self learning materials are generally used in open universities in India. The self-instructional materials duties do most of the tasks of a classroom teacher. In distance education most learning is self directed. In the self-directed learning there is a need of guidance. SLM differ from textbooks and journal articles which are organized in terms of the subject matter rather than as supports to learning. It helps guide and motivate to the learners to reach at self pace. SLM plays very significant role in the field of education. It helps learners in the field of education to reach at their own pace. "The course materials should be self-instructional so that the learner may be able to learn without the support of the teacher" (Rowntree, 1990). In the light of development of educational materials "there is a need to develop world class educational materials" (Emmert, 1997). "Learning material must be constructed that anticipate the learning problems of the isolated student and provide a wide range of activities that will support learning" (Hall P, 1996). No doubt teachers of ODL should have possess skills from that of conventional since they involve in a major task of preparing self learning materials which must cater to the needs of distance learner. SLM re-educate the dropouts from formal education system. When a person has obtain some new information, skills or attitudes which can be apply to him or her the person is considered to be educated, since education means change in the behavior and enhancement of one's abilities and decisive of one's attitudes. SLM can help and guiding in every field of education. Women's education, education of drop outs, adult education provided by the means of distance education and SLM keep away from face to face education and provides standard education. The experimental findings of the studies Pandey (1982), Parsi (1982), Rabindras (1984), Shah (1984), Agarwal (2000), reported that "learning through the SLM is significantly better than that of traditional talk and chalk method". Learner's reaction towards SLM has been found to be positive. SLM could be effectively used as a workable plan for teaching school students. School teacher can take help of SLM and teacher can improve his teaching competence and fulfil the present needs of classroom teaching by collecting materials for classroom teaching. Wedemeyer (1983) in the context distance education suggests that independent learning through the self learning materials is effective because.

- The normal process of teaching and learning is carried on in writing.
- The teaching is individualized and learning takes place through the learner's activity.
- Learning is made covenant for the learner in his own environment, and
- The learner takes responsibility for the progress with freedom to start, stop and pace himself at will.

Attitude

According to the business dictionary "A predisposition or a tendency or respond positively or negatively towards a certain idea, object, person or situation, attitude of action and responses to challenges, incentives and rewards". Attitude has also been defined by V.S. Rama Rao (2010). Attitude is how positive or negative, favorable or unfavorable or pro or can a person feels toward an object. This definition views attitude as a feeling or an evaluation reaction to object. These definitions suggest that attitude influence on the behavior of person. Attitude is feelings what he is like or dislike. It determines the behavior of peoples. Attitude will be measured by the learner in this study on the score obtain by the sample techniques. Various factors determine the level of attitudes towards SLM in distance education like interest, usefulness, impact, acceptance and productivity etc.

Gender

Gender has physical and biological differences. Male and female are sex categories but also masculine and feminine are gender categories. The word gender difference is used with the same meaning with sex differences in this paper is that gender refers here simply to male and female in the sense they are generally understand.

Review of literature

Distance education to provide interaction among the students and teachers (Ghalib Ahsan, 2006). Distance education is a flexible learning and best means of self learning it is used by the learners in most common way and become most common among the learners (Roy et al., 2004, Ghalib Ahsan et al., 2006). There is found positive attitude towards distance education. Moreover married students had higher positive attitude in distance education then the unmarried students. There is a most significant existed toward self learning materials (SLM) (Kumar, 1999). In different studies it was found there was lack of expertise for writing learning material. The present learning materials are not good according the need of learners. The learning material should be in self instructional learner can reach at own pace without the support of teacher (Rowntree, 1990, Pugazhen, 1991). Take a special measure to motivate learners so that they can do self learning (O.P, Sharma, 1997). Siqueira and Lynch (1986) studied factors affecting student success and found that age, means of transportation, time devoted to study, use of personal instructional package, frequency of visits to local centers, concurrent attendance in other courses, working conditions while en-

rolled, main occupational activity, perceptions of the difficulty of written materials, assignment load, quality of reading material, counseling assistance, and satisfaction with the course are significantly related to academic outcome of distance learners.

OBJECTIVE AND HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

The objectives and hypothesis of the study ware as under.

Objective

To find out the difference between attitude towards self learning material among male and female distant learners.

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference between attitude towards self learning material among male and female distant learners.

Research methodology

Research methodology was decided after looking the nature of the research and the objective formulated. The researcher has employed survey method for the present investigation. This method involves hypothesis formulation of problem and testing hypothesis. In this method variables described as exactly as possible so that the study can be pretend by other researchers.

Sample of the study

Population of the study consist the male and female distant learners from Aligarh, U.P. The researcher adopted descriptive sample survey research methodology 100 distant learners were selected randomly from Aligarh in 2011-2012 academic years.in which (50 male and 50 female students) were collected from Aligarh IGNOU Distance Centre (AMU).

Development of tools

Self constructed scale of attitude towards self learning material. Questionnaires made up of 25 open-ended item and Likert-type scale used to collect data for this study. In addition, with a five point scale: strongly agree (5), agree (4), undecided (3) disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1) were included. The questionnaire was tested with 100 respondents. The questionnaire included attitudes of distant learners towards self learning material in distance education. For the analysis of data of the study, the researcher used the statistical technique which was independent t- test.

Method and data analysis

For the analysis of data of the study, the researcher used the statistical technique which was independent t- test and 't'- value was calculated to test the significant difference between mean score.

Objective

To find out the difference between attitude towards self learning material (SLM) among male and female distant learners.

Hypothesis

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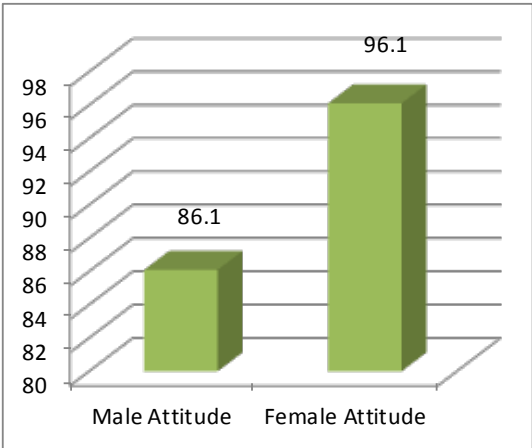


Figure shows male female attitude towards SLM

Table: showing the mean attitude score towards self learning material of male and female distant learners and t- test result.

Attitude towards SLM	N	Mean	S.D.	D f	't'	Sig. (2-tailed)
Male	50	86.10	7.45	98	-5.98**	.000
Female	50	96.10	9.19			

****Significant at 0.01 level**

From the given table that the t-value (-5.98) is significant at (0.01) level which conform the rejection of null hypothesis. *"There is no significant difference between attitude towards self learning material (SLM) among male and female distant learners"*. The result revealed that attitude score of male is (86.10) and the mean attitude score of female is (96.10) of distant learners towards SLM. That is clearly showed in this figure that there is a significant difference among the attitude of male and female distant learners towards SLM.

Finding of the study

There is significant difference between attitudes towards self learning material among male and female distant learners. Female distant learners have high positive attitude towards SLM as compared male distant learners. SLM has induced better scientific reasoning abilities among the students then the conventional method.

Outcome of the study

After analysis and interpretation of data the researcher came to the conclusion that due to the learner awareness towards distance education and attitude towards it shows SLMs are of high quality. The analysis of these views clearly indicates that on the basis of the findings that there is significant difference between attitude towards self learning materials among male and female distant learners. Male distant learners have low attitude towards as compared female distant learners.

Implications and suggestions

- There is a need development of interest, attitude, and motivation towards it.
- SLM should encourage to the learners working individually and independently.
- SLM should be rich in terms of organization units and content, help distant learners to complete any project work and assignments and should give more emphasis on self assessment.
- SLM should develop awareness of whole structure of learning the subject matter. The study should be linked with different activities.
- The language used in SLM should be improvement. SLM should be effective enough to prepare learners for examination. Today there is a demand of new technology of learning computer knowledge should be given to the learners.
- Policy makers and administrative authorities should take these fruitful suggestions for development of positive attitude towards SLM in distance education.

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