



A Survey on Learning Obstacles of Adult Learners Pursuing Equivalency Programme in Malappuram District (Kerala)

KEYWORDS

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Purpose of the Study: This study investigates the educational, familial, economical and social problems that affect Adult learner's pursuing equivalency programme in Kerala State, India and examines whether their problems vary with regard to certain variables, particularly gender, locality, marital status, employment and community background.

Methods: Seventy-six Adult learners studying in the perinthalmanna taluk, Malappuram District, Kerala State, were administered a 38-item Likert questionnaire which had high internal reliability coefficients along with an ideal response rate of 92 percent. Data were analyzed through descriptive statistics followed by relevant parametric tests, including t-tests and analysis of variance

Results: Educational and Economic problems were the most serious problems,

While Adult Learners differed in terms of the amount of perceived familial and social problems

with regard to gender, locale, community, employment and marital status.

Method

Seventy five adult learners studying in the municipal area of perinthalmanna for the academic year 2011-12. The whole adult learners studying in perinthalmanna municipality constitute the sample. Table 1 presents the demographic background of the adult learners participated in the study.

Participants' Demographic Information

Variable of interest	Level of variable	N	%
Gender	Male	26	36
	Female	47	64
Locality	Rural	57	78
	Urban	16	22
Employment	Employed	41	56
	Unemployed	32	44
Caste	Muslim	40	55
	Hindu	30	42
	Christian	3	4
Marital status	Married	51	71
	Unmarried	21	29
Total		73	100

Instrument:- In line with the reviewed literature, the problems that might face were categorized as educational, familial, economical and social. 35 statements were prepared for each of these, and these constituted

the first draft of the data collection tool. Copies of these were sent to the field experts for content validity and the questionnaire was revised in the light of experts feed back. The final version of the survey instrument comprised two parts. The first part contained the learners' demographic background. The second part consist of 35 items related to educational, familial, economical and social problems. Statement in the second part were prepared as Likert-scale items.

Procedure:- The investigator was asked permission to administer the questionnaires to all Adult learners in the municipality. 74 out of 75 questionnaire were returned- a return rate of 98.6 %.

Thus, items in educational, familial, economic and social problems were calculated first. To establish which type of problems were considered serious by the participants, one-sample t-tests were conducted to compare the mean of items with the neutral value of 3. To see whether these problems vary according to gender, locale, level of employment, caste and marital status, independent-samples t-tests were conducted.

Findings and results:- Which type of problems were considered most serious by adult learners?

To find the answer to this research question, four one-sample t-tests were conducted. The critical significance value of 0.05 was divided by the number of tests conducted (ie, 4) to reduce the likelihood of conducting a Type I error as suggested by Huck (2000). Table 2 summarises the tests:

One-sample T-Tests comparing Group Means With the Neutral value of 3

Problems	Mean	SD	Df	t	significance
Educational	25.16	2.20	75	98.8	0.01
Familial	28.09	120.02	75	2.02	0.05
Economical	15.84	1.98	75	69.27	0.01
Social	20.94	84.31	75	2.16	0.05

As shown in Table 2, educational and economical problems are most serious problems encountered by adult learners. Major educational problems were related to non-availability of teachers, guidance from teachers, participation in classroom discussion, lack of time to study at home and fear of examination.

Do these problems vary according to gender? It was hypothesized that adult learners' problems would vary in

accordance with gender. Result of the independent-samples t-tests confirmed this hypothesis as shown in Table 3 below:

Table 3
Independent-samples T-Test comparing male and female in terms of overall problems:

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t	significance
Male	47	62.81	4.02	71	01.01/3.93	
Female	26	61.67	4.89			

As summarized in Table 3, overall problems differed according to gender. Females (Mean= 62.81) had more problems than males (Mean= 61.67).

Do these problems vary according to locale? It was hypothesized that adult learners' problems would vary in accordance with locality. Result of the independent-samples t-tests confirmed this hypothesis as shown in Table 4 below:

Table 4
Independent-samples T-Test comparing urban and rural learners in terms of overall problems:

Locality	N	Mean	SD	df	t	significance
Rural	57	63.43	4.39	71	3.93	0.01
Urban	16	58.75	3.41			

As summarized in Table 3, overall problems differed according to locale. Rural learners (Mean= 63.43) had more problems than urban learners (Mean= 58.75).

Do these problems vary according to marital status? It was hypothesized that adult learners' problems would vary in accordance with marital status. Result of the independent-samples t-tests reject this hypothesis as shown in Table 3 below:

Table 5
Independent-samples T-Test comparing married and unmarried adult learners in terms of overall problems:

Marital status	N	Mean	SD	df	t	significance
Married	51	62.65	4.88	70	0.507	0.618
Unmarried	21	62.05	3.89			

As summarized in Table 3, overall problems not differed according to marital status. Married le(Mean= 62.65) and unmarried(mean=62.05) learners had confronting equal problems.

Do these problems vary according to community/caste? It was hypothesized that adult learners' problems would vary in accordance with community status. Result of the independent-samples t-tests reject this hypothesis as shown in Table 6 below:

Table 6
Independent-samples T-Test comparing Muslim and Hindu adult learners in terms of overall problems:

caste	N	Mean	SD	df	t	significance
Muslim	40	63.55	4.08	70	2.4	0.05
Hindu	30	60.95	4.98			

As summarized in Table 3, overall problems vary according to community status. Muslim (Mean= 63.45) learners

had more problems than Hindu (mean=60.95) learners .

Do the overall problems vary according to Employment level? It was hypothesized that adult learners' problems would vary in accordance with employment level. Result of the independent-samples t-tests reject this hypothesis as shown in Table 3 below:

Table 5
Independent-samples T-Test comparing employed and unemployed adult learners in terms of overall problems:

Level of employment	N	Mean	SD	df	t	significance
employed	41	62.16	4.16	71	-0.575	0
Unemployed	32	62.72	5.17			

As summarized in Table 3, overall problems not differed according to marital status. Married le(Mean= 62.65) and unmarried(mean=62.05) learners had confronting equal problems.