Research Paper Education

A Study of Learner's Attitude towards Personal Contact Programme in Distance Education

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ABSTRACT

PCP plays very significant role in the field of distance education (DE). The PCP is organizing to solve distance learning problems. Advancement of new technologies, online tutorials, Personal Contact Programme (PCP) makes distance education more flexible. PCP is organizing for the counseling and guidance of learners. An attempt has been made in this paper to study learner's attitudes towards PCP in distance education. To what extent PCP are suitable and beneficent according to their attitudes with gender difference. Random sampling technique has been used in selection of the sample of distant learners. The result shows that there is significant difference between attitude towards PCP among male and female distant learners. The out comes are derived after the filled up questionnaire received from students of distant IGNOU study Centre (AMU) in the academic year 2011 and 2012.

KEYWORDS Distance education (DE), Attitude towards personal contact programme (PCP), Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU).

Introduction

Personal Contact Programme very necessary in Distance Education. In distance education most learning is self directed. Learners are by their own choosing their courses and studying them individually. In the self directed learning there is a need of guidance. PCP provides guidance facilities to the learner. Personal Contact programme is popularly called, is a short duration instruction. PCP are conducted in the regional study centers which are well equipped with the required infrastructure. Where distance students from different areas assemble to summarize and revise at the hands of their teacher the lessons which they received in the form of written or even in audio-video forms and thereby get their problems solved. PCP provides guidance facilities to the learner. Contact programme are conducted in the regional study centers which are well equipped with the required setup. According to the studies conducting by Khan (1982), Pillai and Mohan (1983), Sahoo (1985), Biswal (1986) almost of the distant learners express positive opinion about the usefulness of PCPs. The personal contact programmes are specially meant for supporting or facilitating the learners and to solve the problems which they face in their self study. In the Personal Contact Programme (PCP) there is a facility to the learner to interact with the tutor and peer group. They help the learners:

- To get an opportunity to interact which the tutors and other students.
- PCP develops confidence among the students and helps him to solve the educational problem.
- Learner gets aspiration for further studies.
- It provided additional learning to the learning. Learning programmes helps learner in learning.

Importance of the PCP

PCPs are benefit to the learner in this way which is follows:

- To provide encourage, guidance, reinforcement and feedback to the study.
- To orient the students about the subject.
- To impart the knowledge of the subject in a concise form.
- To develop the insight into the concept of subjects.
- To develop the understanding of the basic and difficulties concepts or fundamentals of the subjects and help learners to solve the learning problems.
- To prepare the students for responses.
- To develop positive attitude and interest in their subjects.
- To provide suitable opportunities to discuss and seek the clarification of their difficulties.

ATTITUDE

An attitude can be defined as a positive or negative evaluation of people, objects, event, and activities ideas or just about anything in your environment (Zimbardo *et al*., 1999)."Learning predisposition to respond positively or negatively to a specific object situation, institution, or person" (Aiken, 2000). 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 effects on everything in life. It determines the behavior of peoples. Therefore the researcher operational definition of attitude is a predisposition to response towards objects (here PCP in ODL) in a generally favorable and unfavorable way drive from subjects answers to a number of questions about it. 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 PCP in distance education like interest, usefulness, impact, acceptance and productivity etc.

Gender

The working definition in use by the World Health Organization for to work is that "gender refers to the socially constructed role, behavior activities and attributes that given society considers appropriate for man and woman and that masculine and feminine are gender categories". Gender has physical and biological differences. Male and female are sex categories but also masculine and feminine are gender categories. The gender refers here simply to male and female in the sense they are generally understand.

Need and importance of the study

Every body in India can get education now just little it increase the student of Distance education. According to the Monashee Gogoi and Mukut Hazarik in order to achieve the target set by the planning commission of India to achieve the target of 15 GER by the end of the 11th fifth year plan. The people implementation of the ODL in India is very much essential as the target could not be achieved through commotional made alone. Awareness of people and a healthy attitude can ensure. The equity access and quality of learning through ODL system. Now we can say that for quality of distance education there is a need and importance of PCP in distance education. Facility of the PCP should be provided to

learners and to be effective in learning for the learners. PCP should be organized in study centers. Provision should be make organization of counseling. So that it will prove helpful for the learners to independent and self learning. Now just there is a need to develop PCP in distance education.

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. The success of distance education was found to be untenably associated with personal contact programmes (PCPs) (Gautam, 1990). No uniform policy was followed in directing teachers to select topic for teaching during PCPs (Sahoo, 1985). Hemant and Dharmender Singh (2001) found that there is a problem with distance education to maintain the sufficient PCPs, so that learners take benefit and support (Hall, 1995). Kirkpatrick (2005) found that there should be learner support through management of organized programmes and there should be establishment of study centers. Mani (1987) expected that the study centers should have literary, audio tapes, video cassettes and full time instructor for counseling each study center usually has a counselor and to give general counseling, guidance and advice the learners (Singh, 1997).

Statement of the problem

The problem has selected for the present study is "The study learner's attitudes towards personal contact programme (PCP) in distance education."

Objective of the study

To find out the difference between attitude towards personal contact programme among male and female distant learners.

Hypothesis of the study there is no significant difference between attitude towards personal contact program (PCP) 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 utilized normative survey method for the present investigation. This method involves hypothesis formulation and testing. In this method variables were described as exactly as possible so that the study can be pretend by other researchers.

Sample of the study

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 attitude towards personal contact programme. Questionnaires made up of 25 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 personal contact programme in distance education.

Method and data analysis

For the analysis of data of the study, the researcher used the statistical technique which was independent t- test. It provides implications involving purpose of statistical significance of difference between attitude of two groups of male and female with reference to selected variables, 't'- value was calculated to test the significant difference between mean score.

Objective

To find out the difference between attitude towards personal contact program (PCP) among male and female distant learners.

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference between attitude towards personal contact program (PCP) among male and female distant learners.

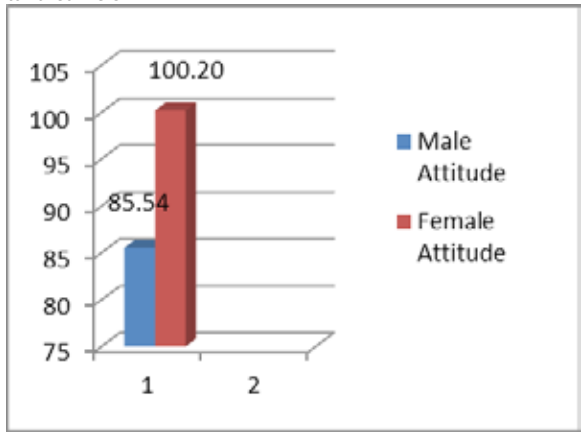

Figure shows the attitude of male and female distant learners

Table: showing the mean attitude score of personal contact program of male and female distant learners and t-test result.

Attitude towards PCP	N	Mean	S.D	d f	't'	Sig. (2- tailed)
Male	50	85.54	8.56	98	-7.48*	.000
Female	50	100.20	10.90			

***Significant at 0.01 level**

From the given table, the t-value (-7.48) is significant at (0.01) level, which conform the rejection of null hypothesis. "There is no significant difference between attitude towards personal contact program (PCP) among male and female distant learners." The result revealed that the attitude score of male is (85.54) and the attitude score of female is (100.20) of distant learners towards PCP, Which clearly show in graph which shows that there is a significant difference among the attitude of male and female distant learners towards PCP.

Findings of the study

There is significant difference between attitude towards personal contact programme among male and female distant learners. Female distant learners have high positive attitude towards PCP as compared male distant learners.

Outcome of the study

After analysis and interpretation of data the researcher came to the conclusion that the learner awareness towards PC Pin distance learning programmes and attitude towards it shows organization is of high class. The result shows the gender difference in attitude. The analyses of the views clearly indicate that on the basis of the findings that there is significant difference between attitude towards personal contact programme among male and female distant learners. Female distant learners have high attitude towards PCP as compared male distant learners.

Implications and Suggestions

1. PCP should encourage and motivate to the learners working individually and independently.
2. PCP 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. Counselor should be trained to solve the prob-

lem of indiscipline among learners and lack of interaction between teachers and taught.

Counselor should develop awareness of whole structure of learning the subject matter. Group discussion and educational training programme should be advance for achieving educational goals.

3. Today there is a demand of new technology of learning computer knowledge should be given to the learners. In distance study centers there should be organization of technical education.
4. Policy makers and concerned authorities should take these fruitful suggestions for development of positive attitude towards PCP in distance education.

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