

ATTITUDE OF UNDER GRADUATE DISTANCE EDUCATION STUDENTS TOWARDS ONLINE LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

Online learning is the learning process through using information and communication technologies and it uses variety of technologies and online platforms for effective learning and teaching activities. The results show that significant difference exists amongst attitude of under graduate distance education students towards online learning and their profile excluding monthly family income. Attitude of under graduate distance education students towards online learning is moderately, positively and significantly related with their learning interest. Thus, faculty members working in universities should increase the use of online technologies in order to enhance attitude on online learning and learning interest among under graduate distance education students. Under graduate distance education students must use efficient and self regulated learning strategies for improving their online learning capabilities and attitude towards it. Universities should adopt effective online teaching programmes and make efforts to improve attitude on online learning among under graduate distance education students. Universities must arrange workshops, seminars and training programmes to them for improving their skills and attitude on online learning and learning interest.

Keywords: Attitude, Distance Education, Online Learning, Under Graduate Students.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the stiff competitive educational world, universities are intensively using information and communication technologies in teaching and learning activities for their students and they are also providing online learning opportunities their students for improving their compositeness at national and international levels (Wong & Fong, 2014). In the present days, universities and premier educational institutions are encouraging online learning among their students and are also offering various online courses based on requirements, aspiration and demand of students (Arbaugh, 2000) and they are also heavily investing on online devices and digital infrastructure for promoting online learning among their students. At the same time, they are facing challenge of integration of online system to support and learning and teaching activities.

Online learning is the learning process through using information and communication technologies and it uses variety of technologies and online platforms for effective learning and teaching activities (Moore et al., 2011). Online learning is the blend of principles of learning and efficient use of information and communication technologies and it is also supporting offline or conventional method of learning (Yacob et al., 2012). Online learning is also referring to computer and internet-based learning and it is facilitating self and independent learning among students. Students are able to various information and study materials through online from anywhere and anytime and it is highly flexible (Egbo et al., 2011).

Online learning is involving in active and interested involvement of students and it is providing broad scope for effective learning for students and it is also creating opportunities for them to get knowledge from different online sources (Hussain, 2007). Online learning is offering students high quality and quantum of information and knowledge and they are having control over their learning process and it is useful for sharing and accumulating of knowledge that is enhancing their learning efficacy (Mehra & Omidian, 2011). Online learning is also improving performance of students and it is also providing student-oriented learning atmosphere. The Government is also supporting various online learning programmes for students by means of providing different online technologies and tools for improving online learning among students. Students are also using various online platforms and sources for improving their learning and getting unique learning experience. In the current era, there is a greater pressure and demand for providing a greater number of online learning options particularly for distance education students and it is necessary to understand attitude of students on online learning as they are shifting towards it. Therefore, it is imperative to study attitude of under graduate distance education students towards online learning.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Singh and Riza (2022) found that university students had favourable attitude on e-learning. Significant difference was prevailing in attitude for e-learning among gender of university students and no significant difference was found in attitude for e-learning among subject, tribal status and settlement of them. Khalid and Wahab (2021) concluded that engineering students had average degree of attitude towards online learning and it was varying among gender of engineering students and their attitude on online learning was lesser than attitude towards offline learning. Claudiu Coman et al., (2020) revealed that students of higher education had lower degree of attitude towards online learning and there existed no significant difference amongst gender of university students in attitude towards online learning and no connection was found between attitude towards online learning and their learning process.

Periasamy (2019) indicated that teacher trainees had low degree of attitude on e-learning and significant difference was existed amongst gender of teacher trainees and their attitude on e-learning and it was affecting their interest for learning. Kiran Odit-Dookhan (2018) showed that university students had favourable attitude on e-learning and it was largely useful for their studies, improving competencies, interface with their lectures and classmates and it had positive relation with their learning abilities.

Konwar (2017) found that students studying in college had positive and average degree of attitude on e-learning. Difference in attitude on e-learning was not significant among gender and locality of college students and it had affected their learning intensities. Zabadi and Al-Alawi (2016) concluded that students in university had larger degree of attitude on e-learning and it was significantly varying among use of technology, skills and gender among university students and it had supported their learning.

Akimanimpaye and Fakude (2015) revealed that nursing students in university had favourable attitude on e-learning and it was differing significantly amongst their year of study and gender and it had positively related with satisfaction in their learning. Dhiman Kar (2014) indicated that students studying in university had higher attitude on e-learning and no significant difference was prevailing amongst gender, residential area and academic stream of university students and they opined that it was useful for their independent learning. Rokade (2013) showed that students studying in university had medium and positive attitude on e-learning and it was largely helpful for their study and research activities and they were satisfied with content of e-learning materials.

3. OBJECTIVES

1. To study the difference amongst attitude of under graduate distance education students towards online learning and their profile.
2. To find relation amongst attitude of under graduate distance education students towards online learning and their learning interest.

4. HYPOTHESES

1. There is no significant difference amongst attitude of under graduate distance education students towards online learning and their profile.
2. There is no significant relation amongst attitude of under graduate distance education students towards online learning and their learning interest.

5. METHODOLOGY

This study is done in Sivaganga district of Tamil Nadu. Under graduate distance education students are randomly selected and self-made questionnaire is used to collect data from 250 under graduate distance

education students. Percentages are calculated to understand profile of under graduate distance education students. t-test and ANOVA test are used for scrutinizing difference amongst attitude of under graduate distance education students towards online learning and their profile. Correlation analysis is applied to find relation amongst attitude of under graduate distance education students towards online learning and their learning interest.

6. RESULTS

6.1. Profile of Under Graduate Distance Education Students

The profile of under graduate distance education students is shown in Table-1. The results indicate that 55.60% of under graduate distance education students are females, 59.60% of them are studying in arts stream, 56.40% of them are studying in English medium, 46.40% of them are having monthly family income of Rs.20,001 - Rs.25,000 and 76.80% of them are in married status.

Table – 1: Profile of Under Graduate Distance Education Students

| Profile | Number (n = 250) | Percentage |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------|
| Gender | | |
| Male | 111 | 44.40 |
| Female | 139 | 55.60 |
| Academic Stream | | |
| Science | 101 | 40.40 |
| Arts | 149 | 59.60 |
| Medium of Study | | |
| English | 141 | 56.40 |
| Tamil | 109 | 43.60 |
| Monthly Family Income | | |
| Below Rs. 20,000 | 91 | 36.40 |
| Rs.20,001 - Rs.25,000 | 116 | 46.40 |
| Above Rs.25,000 | 43 | 17.20 |
| Marital Status | | |
| Married | 192 | 76.80 |
| Unmarried | 58 | 23.20 |

6.2. Profile of Under Graduate Distance Education Students and their Attitude Towards Online Learning

The difference amongst profile of under graduate distance education students and their attitude towards online learning showed as below.

6.2.1. Gender and Attitude towards Online Learning

The difference amongst gender of under graduate distance education students and their attitude towards online learning is shown in Table-2.

Table – 2: Gender and Attitude towards Online Learning

| Gender | N | M | SD | t-Value | Sig. |
|--------|-----|--------|-------|---------|------|
| Male | 111 | 187.88 | 15.42 | 2.238 | .026 |
| Female | 139 | 183.54 | 12.90 | | |

The mean value for gender indicates that under graduate distance education students in male category (M=187.88) have higher degree of attitude towards online learning than in female category (M=183.54). The t-value of 2.238 is elucidating that significant difference exists amongst gender of under graduate distance education students and their attitude towards online learning in 5% level. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

6.2.2. Academic Stream and Attitude towards Online Learning

The difference amongst academic stream of under graduate distance education students and their attitude towards online learning is shown in Table-3.

Table – 3: Academic Stream and Attitude towards Online Learning

| Academic Stream | N | M | SD | t-Value | Sig. |
|-----------------|-----|--------|-------|---------|------|
| Science | 101 | 183.64 | 16.32 | 2.010 | .045 |
| Arts | 149 | 187.48 | 11.43 | | |

The mean value for academic stream indicates that under graduate distance education students studying in arts stream (M=187.48) have higher degree of attitude towards online learning than science stream (M=183.64). The t-value of 2.010 is elucidating that significant difference exists amongst academic stream of under graduate distance education students and their attitude towards online learning in 5% level. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

6.2.3. Medium of Study and Attitude towards Online Learning

The difference amongst medium of study of under graduate distance education students and their attitude towards online learning is shown in Table-4.

Table – 4: Medium of Study and Attitude towards Online Learning

| Medium of Study | N | M | SD | t-Value | Sig. |
|-----------------|-----|--------|-------|---------|------|
| English | 141 | 188.39 | 9.62 | 3.732 | .000 |
| Tamil | 109 | 181.24 | 18.47 | | |

The mean value for medium of study indicates that under graduate distance education students studying in English medium (M=188.39) have higher degree of attitude towards online learning than Tamil medium (M=181.24). The t-value of 3.732 is elucidating that significant difference exists amongst medium of study of under graduate distance education students and their attitude towards online learning in 1% level. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

6.2.4. Monthly Family Income and Attitude towards Online Learning

The difference amongst monthly family income of under graduate distance education students and their attitude towards online learning is shown in Table-5.

Table – 5: Monthly Family Income and Attitude towards Online Learning

| Monthly Family Income | N | M | SD | F-Value | Sig. |
|-----------------------|-----|--------|-------|---------|------|
| Below Rs. 20,000 | 91 | 184.38 | 14.35 | 0.265 | .768 |
| Rs.20,001 - Rs.25,000 | 116 | 185.49 | 13.98 | | |
| Above Rs.25,000 | 43 | 186.26 | 13.04 | | |

The mean value for monthly family income indicates that under graduate distance education students having monthly family income of above Rs.25,000 (M=186.26) have higher degree of attitude towards online learning than Rs.20,001 - Rs.25,000 (M=185.49) and below Rs.20,000 (M=184.38). The F-value of 0.265 is elucidating that no significant difference exists amongst monthly family income of under graduate distance education students and their attitude towards online learning as it is not significant. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted.

6.2.5. Marital Status and Attitude towards Online Learning

The difference amongst marital status of under graduate distance education students and their attitude towards online learning is shown in Table-6.

Table – 6: Marital Status and Attitude towards Online Learning

| Marital Status | N | M | SD | t-Value | Sig. |
|----------------|-----|--------|-------|---------|------|
| Married | 192 | 181.36 | 15.35 | 6.280 | .000 |
| Unmarried | 58 | 189.92 | 7.67 | | |

The mean value for marital status indicates that under graduate distance education students in unmarried (M=189.92) have higher degree of attitude towards online learning than married status (M=181.36). The t-value

of 6.280 is elucidating that significant difference exists amongst marital status of under graduate distance education students and their attitude towards online learning in 1% level. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

6.3. Relation amongst Attitude Towards Online Learning among Under Graduate Distance Education Students and their Learning Interest

The correlation analysis is carried out to find relation amongst attitude towards online learning among under graduate distance education students and their learning interest and the result is shown in Table-7.

Table – 7: Attitude towards Online Learning among Under Graduate Distance Education Students and their Learning Interest

| Particulars | Correlation Coefficient (r) |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Attitude towards Online Learning among Under Graduate Distance Education Students and their Learning Interest | 0.43** |

** Significance in 1% level

The correlation coefficient amongst attitude towards online learning among under graduate distance education students and their learning interest is 0.43 and it shows that they are moderately, positively and significantly correlated in 1% level. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

7. CONCLUSION

The above study reveals that significant difference exists amongst attitude of under graduate distance education students towards online learning and their profile excluding monthly family income. Attitude of under graduate distance education students towards online learning is moderately, positively and significantly related with their learning interest. Thus, faculty members working in universities should increase the use of online technologies in order to enhance attitude on online learning and learning interest among under graduate distance education students. Under graduate distance education students must use efficient and self regulated learning strategies for improving their online learning capabilities and attitude towards it. Universities should adopt effective online teaching programmes and make efforts to improve attitude on online learning among under graduate distance education students. Universities must arrange workshops, seminars and training programmes to them for improving their skills and attitude on online learning and learning interest.

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