INFLUENCE OF BLENDED LEARNING ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY OF B.Ed. STUDENTS

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Blended Learning

Blended Learning refers to harnessing a few strategies together to produce significant achievement in Teaching and Learning process. It can be effectively employed irrespective of language or subjects. The investigator has employed Co-operative learning and Self regulated learning for finding out the effectiveness of the strategies in enhancing achievement in Educational Psychology of B.Ed. students.

Concept of Cooperative Learning (CL)

The education system should provide positive learning experiences so that learners become responsible citizens. Only responsible citizens can bring about sustainable development. Co operative Learning (CL) approach has the potential to become Learning strategy involving students' participation in group learning that emphasizes constructive interaction. It is a strategy by which small teams, each with students of different levels of ability, are engaged in learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject. The participation of every student in the group and cooperation among group members is considered important. The students enjoy their individual and collective efforts.

Self-Regulated Learning (SRL)

Paris and Newman (1990: 87-102) describe that students who construct their own cognitive and motivational tools for making learning effective are known as 'learners who have thirst for learning'. These learners,
- Seek challenges and overcome obstacles, sometimes with persistence and sometimes with inventive problem solving.
- Set realistic goals and utilize battery of resources.
- Approach academic tasks with confidence and purpose.

These learners are capable of doing the things which need perseverance on the part of the learner. Self-regulated can be defined as an ability to behave according to one's own intention in a flexible way. With respect to learning, self-regulation bridges the gap between academic performance and two of its determinants, viz. cognitive abilities and achievement motivation (Khul, 1992).

The complexity of information and information processing jointly constitute the Self-regulated Learning. SRL is a cognitively inherent aspect of learning. It is principally comprised of knowledge, beliefs and learned skills. Theories and studies indicate that most effective learners are self-regulating.

Zimmerman (1989: 297-306[2]) defined self-regulated learners as, those who are meta-cognitively, motivationally and behaviourally active participants in their own learning. In terms of metacognitive processes, self-regulated learners plan, organize, self-instruct and self-evaluate at various stages during the acquisition processes. From a motivational view, self-regulated learners perceive themselves as self-efficacious, autonomous and intrinsically motivated. In terms of behaviour, self-regulated learners select structure and even create social and physical environments that optimize acquisition. According to Zimmerman's view, effective learners become aware of functional relations between their patterns of thought and action and social and environmental outcomes. Self-regulated learning is also viewed as a process whereby students activate and sustain cognition, behaviour and affection which are systematically oriented towards attainment of their goals.

Significance of the Study

Self-regulated learning is an important aspect of learning and achievement in academic contexts. Students who are self-regulating are much more likely to be successful in Colleges, to learn more, and to achieve at higher levels. Of course, there are developmental, motivational, and contextual factors that can facilitate or constrain self-regulated learning, but there are implicit and explicit ways to help foster self-regulated learning. In the twenty-first century and as the explosion of information and multiple ways of learning increase, it will become even more important that individuals know how to self-regulate their learning and that fostering self-regulated learning becomes an important goal for all educational systems.

Motivation is of particular interest to Educational psychologists because of the crucial role it plays in student learning. However, the specific kind of motivation that is studied in the specialized setting of education differs qualitatively from the more general forms of motivation studied by psychologists in other fields.

Motivation in education can have several effects on how students learn and their behavior towards subject matter (Ormrod, 2003). It can:
1. Direct behavior toward particular goals
2. Lead to increased effort and energy
3. Increase initiation of, and persistence in, activities
4. Enhance cognitive processing
5. Determine what consequences are reinforcing
6. Lead to improved performance

Because students are not always internally motivated, they sometimes need situated motivation, which is found in environmental conditions that the teacher creates. It can be said with equal force that cooperative learning enhances the learning achievement of the slow learners. It so happens that slow learners do not have adequate courage to interact with teachers. They feel shy to exhibit their ignorance. Under such circumstances, the Achievers come to the rescue the slow learners.

Title of the Study

Influence of blended learning on the academic Achievement in psychology of B.Ed. students.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the achievement of students in psychology at tertiary level.
2. To find out the effect of Blended learning skill of the B.Ed. students upon achievement in psychology.
3. To bring to lime light salient features of motivation in learning.\
4. To construct a tool to measure the achievement of students in Educational Psychology.

Hypotheses

1. There will be no significant difference in the mean scores of achievement in PSYCHOLOGY in the pre-test between control group and experimental group.
2. There will be no significant difference in the mean scores of achievement in PSYCHOLOGY between the pre-test and Post-test for the control group.
3. There will be no significant difference in the mean scores of Achievement in PSYCHOLOGY between the pre-test and Post-test for the experimental group
4. There will be no significant difference in the mean scores of Achievement in PSYCHOLOGY for the Post-test between control group and experimental group.
5. Gap closures in experimental groups will be greater than those in control group.

Statement of the Problem

To what extent co-operative learning and self regulated learning strategies will be effective in enhancing achievement of the students of B.Ed. students in PSYCHOLOGY?

Instrumentation

The investigator employed the tool Achievement test in PSYCHOLOGY.

Method of Experimental Study

The investigator had employed three study phases which include two test phases for the collection of data and manipulation of experimental variables (i.e., content and method) of the study.

10 teaching sessions (45 minutes each) were required for this entire study in each session of the B.Ed. students from selected colleges in Madurai.

Phase-1

Development of packages for the teaching the units employing concept attainment strategies and preparation of tools were the two tasks concerned with Phase I. In this phase, the investigator has developed the Self regulated learning strategy Lesson Plans and Criterion Referenced Tests, Pilot study for the validation of CRT to establish validity and reliability of the tools at this stage.

Phase-2

In the second phase of the study, the investigator conducted the pre-test on the sample selected from B.Ed. students. The investigator taught the unit psychology to all the students by Conventional Method of Teaching. The topic was covered within ten days by taking one contact session of 45 minutes per day. One period (teaching session of 45 minutes) each was taken to teach each sub units on Psychology. After completing these units, a pre-test was administered by using the CRT, to assess the achievement of cognitive skills in Psychology.

Phase – 3

Students were divided into two groups by random selection to form the control and experimental groups. The experimental group was called as BLENDED LEARNING (BL) group. The students of BL group were given reinforcement through Self regulated learning strategy for duration of ten teaching periods. Special care was also taken to avoid the meeting of the students of the experimental and control groups during these intervals. The students of the control group were sent out of the class and were not given any type of reinforcement on the content on Psychology.

After giving reinforcement to the experimental groups through CAM and all the students including the control group were called together and a Post - Test was administered on the same day, with the help of the same CRT.

Variables Controlled during the Experimental Phases:

- The investigator himself taught the unit to the whole group of students through Conventional Teaching Method. Thus 'teacher variable' was controlled.
- The CL and SRL were employed as a reinforcement strategy to the students in the experimental groups selected for the study. Thus, the treatment variables were controlled.
- The students participated in the pilot study and pre-study were not involved in the sample selected for the main study.

- The experimental groups were given reinforcement through CL and SRL simultaneous.

Analysis and Interpretation

Table.1 Test Performance Control Group and Experimental Group

Pre-Test	N	Mean	SD	"t" value	Significance
Control	30	24.10	6.32	0.75	NS
Experiment	30	22.83	6.83		
Control	**N**	**Mean**	**SD**	**"t" value**	**Significance**
Pre	30	25.10	6.32	1.87	NS
Post	30	27.50	7.74		
EXP	**N**	**Mean**	**SD**	**"t" value**	**Significance**
Pre	30	22.83	6.83	5.83	S
Post	30	35.83	10.16		
Post Test	**N**	**Mean**	**SD**	**"t" value**	**Significance**
Control	30	27.50	7.74	3.58	S
Expt	30	35.83	10.16		

df=58   t $_{(0.05)}$ = 1.96   t $_{(0.01)}$ = 2.58

Interpretation

This is an experimental study with pre-test post -test equivalent group design. Entry behaviour test was conducted to separate control and experimental group to assess the prerequisite knowledge Both the groups are identical and this indicates the nature of identicalness in tune with the pre-test mean scores of both groups. All the pre-test 't' value for control and experimental reveal no significant difference among control and experimental groups. This establishes their identical nature and no significant achievement in their pre-requisite knowledge.

The means of pre-test scores and post-test scores of control as well as experimental groups differ significantly (0.01 level) with the post test mean being greater than the pretest mean. The implication of that is that the level of acquiring of the basic skills in Psychology has increased due to traditional method in control group and concept attainment in experimental group. The post test scores of control and experimental group differ significantly. The means score of experimental group is greater than of control group.

GAP Closure

Gap closure is the difference between the mean score obtained by the group and the maximum score, called perfect score. The gap closing score is the percentage up to which the gap to wards perfection gets closed for a group. Percent gap closed is defined by a variable which might be termed percentage of ignorance gap closed and stated as percentage.

Research Hypothesis (H_R)

Gap closure in the experimental group will be greater than that of the control group in Achievement in Psychology.

Null Hypothesis (H_o)

Gap closure in the experimental group will not be greater than that of the control group in Achievement in Psychology

Table 2 Gap Closure for Control Group and Experimental Group

Group	Gap Closure
Control	13.30
Experimental	41.74

An inspection the above table discloses the fact that the percentage of the gap closure for the experimental group is 41.74 where as there is gain of 13.30 Percent of Gap closure for the control group.

Findings of the Study

1. There was no significant difference in the mean scores in Achievement in Psychology between experimental group and control group in the pre-test performance.
2. There was no significant difference in the mean scores in Achievement in Psychology between pre-test and post test performance for control group.
3. There was significant difference in the mean scores in Achievement in Psychology between pre-test and post test performance of Experimental group.
4. There was significant difference in the mean scores in Achievement in Psychology between experimental group and control group in the post-test performance.
5. Gap closure in the experimental group was greater than that of the control group in Achievement in Psychology.

Recommendations for Further Study

1. Similar studies may be undertaken for Chemistry, Botany and Zoology.
2. Studies on Achievements in Chemistry, Botany and Zoology sciences may be made for students of different levels.

3. Training programmes may be envisaged for professors to high light the salient features of Co operative learning and Self regulated learning.
4. Programmes may be arranged for the B.Ed. students to high light the salient features of Co operative learning and Self regulated learning.

Implications

1. Self regulated learning plays a vital role in augmenting knowledge in Psychology.
2. Through Self regulated learning cause and effect relationship may be established.
3. Self regulated learning cherishes one's power of reflective thinking.
4. Self regulated learning inculcates skills among students which indirectly help one to become a promising literary candidate
5. The things highlighted above are the antecedent skills for a blossoming students of Psychology.

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