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A Comparative Analysis of Male and Female Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students' Attitudes Toward E-Learning

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Abstract

This study was conducted across multiple colleges in the Kashmir division in 2019. Its primary aim was to compare the attitudes of male and female students toward e-learning. The application of the e-learning scale on different student groups indicated that female students showed a greater interest in e-learning compared to their male counterparts.

Keywords: Attitude, E-learning, male, female, colleges, undergraduate, postgraduate, Kashmir

Introduction

E-learning, or electronic learning, refers to the use of computers to deliver part or all of a course, whether in schools, business training, or full-distance learning programs. It offers several benefits, whether used independently or as a supplement to traditional in-house training. E-learning is cost-effective, time-efficient, and accessible 24/7 from anywhere. Additionally, it allows students to learn at their own pace and eliminates geographical barriers associated with traditional classroom learning. However, despite its advantages, e-learning has some drawbacks. It can lead to social isolation, hinder communication skills, and increase the likelihood of cheating during assessments.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in 2019 across colleges and universities in the Kashmir division of J&K, with a focus on students' gender. A total of 120 students were selected using simple random sampling, comprising an equal number of males (60) and females (60). Among the male participants, 30 were undergraduate students and 30 were postgraduates. The same distribution applied to female students, with half being undergraduates and the other half postgraduates.

The study utilized the E-Learning Orientation Scale developed by Upinder Dhar, Santosh Dhar, and Saurabhi Chaturvedi. This scale assesses learners' inclination toward e-learning.

Results and Discussions

- E-Learning May Develop in the Students Ability to Meet Global Challenges. It Prepares Them to Face the Challenges Posed by the Technology Driven World. The Analysis of The Results Showed That the Male Students Are More in Agreement to the Statement That E Learning Helps to Meet Global Challenges as Compared to Their Female Counterparts ($T = 0.60$, $P = 0.00$). It Implies That Male Students Are More Inclined Towards E Learning on Account of Its Ability to Help Them Meet Global Challenges as Compared to Females.
- E Learning Provide the Students with A Chance to Learn According to Their Own Pace. In Normal Class Room Learning the Students Are with Diverse Intellects and It Is Not Possible for the Instructor to Help All the Students to Learn at Their Own Pace but Learning Through Internet Enables the Students to Acquire Knowledge According to Their Own Learning

Abilities. The Analysis of the results showed that the number of students who believe that e learning helps students to learn at their own pace is higher in males as compared to female ($t=0.24$, $p=0.1$). hence it can be interpreted that male students are more interested in using e learning due to its ability to help them to learn at their own pace.

- The contents of e learning courses can be pre planned according to the needs and interests of students. the contents of the study can be selected beforehand. the results showed that the female students are in more agreement than males to the statement that the contents of e learning can be preplanned ($t = -0.21$, $p = 0.24$). it implies that female students are more interested in e learning as compared to males on account of this feature of e learning that its contents can be pre planned.
- E learning provides geographic independence to the learners. the learners can be situated at any part of the globe and can easily acquire knowledge from their respective places. the analysis of the results showed that the number of females is higher who believe that e learning provides geographic independence as compared to males ($t= -0.18$, $p = 0.03$). hence the results show that females prefer the use of e learning more than the males on account of its ability to provide geographic independence.
- One of the main issues with e learning can be network failures which can prove to be spoilsport in the process of e learning. it may create hurdles in the process of learning. The analysis of the results reveal that there is a significant difference between male and female students on account of the statement that network failures create hurdles in e learning. the number of males who are of the opinion that network failures act as hurdles in e learning is higher as compared to females. ($t = 0.21$, $p = 0.03$).
- In e learning the learners can be free from external pressure because there is no physical presence of any instructor or evaluator. the learners learn and acquire knowledge according to their own convenience. a significant difference is noted from the results among male and female students regarding the statement that learners are free from pressure in e learning. the number of females who believe that e learning provides pressure free environment to learners is higher as compared to their male counterparts. ($t = -0.11$, $p = 0.05$).
- E learning provides opportunity to the learners to refer to the previous module. whenever the need arises the learners can refer to the previous modules of their contents of the course. on the basis of this characteristic of e learning a significant difference is observed among male and female students. the results reveal that number of females is higher than males ($t=-0.29$, $p= -0.00$) who believe that in e learning learners can refer to previous modules.
- E learning provides the learners with updated knowledge and skills. it provides the learners with latest knowledge and modern day skills to enable them to compete with the world. the analysis of the results reveal that a higher number of females believe that e

learning provides updated knowledge and skills as compared to the males who believe the same in lesser number ($t= -0.17$, $p = 0.03$).

- Another obvious aspect of e learning is that it is technology dependent. all the characteristics and features of e learning are totally dependent upon the technology and the results show that females agree in more numbers to the statement that e learning is technology dependent as compared to the males ($t= -0.17$, $p=0.01$)
- Training through e learning program can be repeated whenever required. the repetition of content can make the learning more effective and long lasting. the analysis of results reveal that greater number of male students believe that training through e learning program can be repeated as compared to females ($t=0.29$, $p=0.00$) who believe the same in less numbers. the greater support of males to the above given statement depicts their keen interest in e learning.

Conclusion

The results revealed by the e-learning scale when applied to the undergraduate and post graduate students show that post graduate students are more inclined towards e learning as compared to undergraduate students and among them female students are more used to e-learning as compared to males. The possible reason could be that post graduate students are more mature and they make judicious use of technology to increase their knowledge. On the other hand under graduate students were found to make use of internet more for recreational purposes rather than learning. The reason for females being more inclined towards e-learning can be their higher level of devotion and motivation towards their studies as compared to males. They tend to make use of every possible source of knowledge in addition to the traditional means of knowledge i.e books.

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