

COMPUTER LITERACY: AN ANALYSIS OF THE PRICELESS LAPTOP SCHEME IN KANCHEEPURAM EDUCATIONAL DISTRICT

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Abstract

The use of computer in learning has enhanced the undergraduate education. Learning through computers improves performance at examinations, develops problem solving skills and increases students' satisfaction. The present study was chalked out to study an analysis of the priceless laptop scheme based on computer literacy among undergraduates. The investigators adopted normative survey method for the present study. A sample of 52 undergraduate students was selected by random sampling technique. Computer Literacy questionnaire developed and validated by the researcher was used in the study. For the analysis of data, the descriptive statistics like mean, standard deviation and 't' test were employed. The findings revealed significant difference in computer literacy among undergraduate students with respect to gender.

Introduction

Computer literacy involves learning how to access information and perform basic operations in a computer. Computer literacy refers to the most basic knowledge and skills needed to operate software products such as an operating system, a software application, or an automated Web design tool. Computer literacy includes many types of cognitive and technical skills, from understanding text and visual symbols to turn devices on and off or accessing parts of an operating system through menus.

Government of Tamil Nadu has entrusted the work of procurement of Laptops for free distribution to cover the entire plus two students in Government and Government Aided Schools and students in Government and Government Aided Arts and Science, Polytechnic and Engineering Colleges in a phased manner.

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Literature Review

Nancy Sardone (2011) conducted a study on developing Information Technology (IT) fluency in college students: An investigation of learning environments and learner characteristics. Using a causal-comparative research method, data from 120 undergraduate students studying computer concepts were analysed to determine the relationship between learning environment, IT fluency, and course satisfaction. Results suggested that in learning environments based on active learning strategies, IT fluency was achieved and course satisfaction was significantly higher regardless of preferred learning style. The Study findings added to an understanding of higher education learning environments, student characteristics, and how IT fluency is achieved. The results provided additional support to the constructivist learning theory and its execution in higher education classrooms where IT concepts are taught to non-technology majors.

Rafeed Ali (2009) conducted a study on computer based technology and its pedagogical utility. The objectives of the study were to identify the basic computer knowledge among the higher secondary school teachers, to find out the purposes of using computer resources among the higher secondary school teachers and to find out the extend of use of computer resources in the teaching-learning process among the higher secondary school teachers. A self-developed tool (Computer Awareness Questionnaire) was used for the study. The objective scoring procedure was adopted for analyzing the questionnaire. The study found that most of the higher secondary school teachers had basic computer knowledge. Higher secondary teachers were not using the IT resources in the class room interactions. Only 13% of higher secondary school teachers were using power point in the class room.

Need and Significance of the study

Government of Tamil Nadu has been offering a number of schemes at school and college education levels in order to improve the academic performance of the students by giving scholarship, hostel facilities, bicycle and laptops. Regarding laptop, it is issued to students at free of cost from 2011 and it is being used by the students studying in undergraduate courses. Through this study, the researchers want to know how far the scheme is successful in developing computer literacy among the undergraduate students of Kancheepuram District with respect to their gender, locality, parents educational level and stream. Hence this topic has been taken up by the researchers.

Objectives of the study

The following are the objectives of the study.

1. To find out whether there is any significant difference between male and female undergraduate students in their computer literacy;
2. To find out whether there is any significant difference between rural and urban undergraduate students in their computer literacy;
3. To find out whether there is any significant difference between arts and science stream undergraduate students in their computer literacy; and
4. To find out whether there is any significant difference between under graduate students whose parents are illiterate and literate in their computer literacy.

Hypotheses of the study

The following hypotheses have been formulated for the present study.

1. There is no significant difference between male and female undergraduate students in their computer literacy.
2. There is no significant difference between rural and urban undergraduate students in their computer literacy.
3. There is no significant difference between arts and science undergraduate students in their computer literacy.
5. There is no significant difference between under graduate students whose parents are illiterate and literate in their computer literacy.

Methodology

Generally research problems have different methods for investigation. The method followed in the present study is normative survey method.

Sample

For the present study the investigators collected the samples from the undergraduate students from colleges in Kancheepuram Educational District. The investigators collected a sample of 52 undergraduate students from different colleges in Kancheepuram Educational District. Adequate representations were given to factors like gender, stream, locality and parents' educational level.

Tools

For collecting the pertinent data, the investigators used Computer Literacy Questionnaire which was developed and validated by the investigators and field experts.

Data Analysis

The collected data for the variables are analysed by using 't' test.

Null Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between male and female undergraduate students in their computer literacy.

Table 1

Difference in the Computer Literacy of Undergraduate Students with respect to Gender

Gender	Mean	SD	Calculated 't' value	Remarks at 5% level
Male	19.74	3.266	2.717	S
Female	22.57	4.238		

(At 5% level of significance table value of 't' is 1.96)

The calculated 't' value (2.717) is greater than the table value (2.000) at 0.05 level. So the null hypothesis is rejected and so it is concluded that there is a significant difference in the computer literacy of undergraduate students with respect to gender.

Null Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference between rural and urban undergraduate students in their computer literacy.

Table 2

Difference in the Computer Literacy of Undergraduate Students with respect to Locality

Locality	Mean	SD	Calculated 't' value	Remarks at 5% level
Rural	20.52	3.366	1.376	NS
Urban	22.40	5.641		

(At 5% level of significance table value of 't' is 1.96)

The calculated 't' value (1.376) is less than the table value (2.000) at 0.05 level. So the null hypothesis is accepted and so it is concluded that there is no significant difference in the computer literacy of undergraduate students with respect to locality.

Null Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference between arts and science undergraduate students in their computer literacy.

Table 3
Difference in the Computer Literacy of Undergraduate Students
with respect to Educational Stream

Educational Stream	Mean	SD	Calculated 't' value	Remarks at 5% level
Arts	19.57	4.363	1.488	NS
Science	21.37	3.672		

The calculated 't' value (1.488) is more than the table value (2.000) at 0.05 level. So the null hypothesis is accepted and so it is concluded that there is no significant difference in the computer literacy of undergraduate students with respect to educational stream.

Null Hypothesis 4

There is no significant difference between undergraduate students whose parents are illiterate and literate in their computer literacy.

Table 4
Difference in the Computer Literacy of Undergraduate Students with respect to Parents
Educational Level

Parents Educational Level	Mean	SD	Calculated 't' value	't'	Sig
Literate	19.75	3.536	0.891	2.000	NS
Illiterate	21.09	3.976			

(At 5% level of significance table value of 't' is 1.96)

The calculated 't' value (0.891) is less than the table value (1.96) at 0.05 level. So the null hypothesis is accepted and it is concluded that there is no significant difference in the computer literacy of undergraduate students with respect to parent's educational level.

Discussion

The recent technological advances in the field of education have made computer literacy a vital competency for the present day undergraduate education. In this study, the result reveals that female undergraduate students have high-computer literacy compared to male undergraduate students in Kancheepuram Educational District. This may be due to the reason that female students have more attitude and access towards using computers. From the findings, it is concluded that there is no significant difference between rural and urban and arts and science streams in their computer literacy.

Conclusion

At present although computer knowledge and competence are essential requirement for undergraduates, they are becoming increasingly important due to the reasons such as limitation of access to current books and journals and difficulty in obtaining up-to-date information, which may affect performance at examinations and work after graduation. The present study contributes to the knowledge on computer literacy among undergraduates in Kancheepuram Educational District. The factors identified during the present study could be used to improve computer literacy amongst undergraduates in Kancheepuram Educational District and other developing educational districts in Tamil Nadu with similar student populations. In addition, technology is advancing very rapidly and it is possible that some of these students are using devices and resources that are not being covered in the current survey.

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