Children's Information Literacy and Computer Programme : Tiruchirappalli and Pudukottai District : an impact study

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Introduction

This paper presents the results of the comparative study of the two districts Pudukottai and Tiruchirappalli, of the information literacy program and the impact before and after their study. The results show that 44.8% of the students had not seen the computer. Despite their prior knowledge or awareness of the computer they responded significantly well after the information literacy program. Students of parents who are skilled workers performed better in their tests than students of parents who are not skilled workers.

Origin of the Research Problem

1. This research will promote the objective of NKC.

2. Holy Cross College Library (HCCL) had adopted many villages 'to cater to the Children's information needs and of the entire villages'. To assess their performance before and after the study.

3. In addition to various huge electronic resources in public domain HCCL also subscribes to a large number of databases and besides, is an active member of DELNET AND NLIST. HCCL started Children's information literacy and Competency Program (ILCP) with a view to empower the students, researchers and faculty members to seek, evaluate, use and create Children's information effectively and efficiently to achieve their educational, social, occupational and personal goals.

4. In a nutshell they are the future of our country - and the entire program has been planned accordingly.

Objectives of the Study

This project's aims are :

1. To indicate and describe various socio-economic-demographic characteristics of children in the study area.

2. To empower children with the knowledge of information literacy program in the study area.

Methodology of the Study

Primary data from 156 samples were taken from the study area. Selection of samples: 156 samples were selected 78 from each district. This study selected 156 samples in two districts namely Tiruchirappalli and Pudukottai. The target group is between 6th standard and 9th standard of two different types of schools.

78 samples were randomly selected from the two selected districts. Random samples were selected by lottery method. Purposive random sampling method was adopted to take samples from two districts. Information was collected through direct schedule method. This study was conducted in 2 phases. Pre Installation study was carried out taking background information from the selected candidates. Pre test concerning the knowledge of the computer was tested from this controlled group. The marks were tabulated. Phase 2 was post installation study where the computer literacy classes were taken using LCD and it was programmed for six months. This duration included Practical classes too. The results were illustrated in pie diagram and bar diagram.

Review of Literature

In order to perform the role of information literacy several mediums and techniques are available for the librarian to promote the goal of information literacy among the users. The techniques like user orientation, online interaction, reference conducting workshops, class room teaching etc. [Mishra R,N, Relevance of information literacy in digital environment, (Department of library and information science, Mizoram university, Aizwal, Mizoram), 2010 (www.cisjournal.org) (Assessed as on 04.08.2011)].

Computer literacy is a fundamental part of undergraduate curriculum today. Computer literacy is as basic to undergraduate students as the course work in core curriculum in today's computer-centric information age [6]. The number of computers-in-use worldwide is growing, especially in the developing countries [3]. Computers affect every facet of our lives and every sector of the global society. Employers prefer workers who are computer literate because they are more productive and efficient at work than those who are not computer literate. This paper focuses on computer literacy and its benefits to people of all ages -- children, teenagers, adults and seniors. The researcher also describes the implementation of computer competency requirement at Belmont Abbey College and the process students follow to satisfy this requirement in order to graduate. *"Computer literacy: essential in today's computer-*

centric world"; A Gupta, Gireesh K; ACM SIGCSE Bulletin; V 38 N 2; P 115-119; 2006.

Profile of the Study Area

Pudukottai District was carved out of Tiruchirappalli and Thanjavur districts in January 1974. It has no University, but has the following institutions. Arts and Science Colleges – 4; Colleges for Professional Education Engineering and Technology- ; Colleges for Special Education (B.Ed., College)- 1; Schools for General Education-1431; Schools for Professional Education (DIET)- 1; Schools for Special Education Govt. Middle School for Deaf – 1; Govt. Music School-1; Govt. School for Blind – 1; Institutions for Other Professional Education (I.T.I) - 3 . Tiruchirappalli district lies at the heart of Tamil Nadu, with literacy rate of 83.56%. The district has 96 colleges under Bharathidasan University and numerous schools. The selected area is still with lot of slum dwellers and poor who go to panchayat schools.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Comparison of before and after test measures of the literacy program is given below. Before the literacy program students proved that they were interested in paint brush and games. Only 14 of them said that they wanted to learn IQ, whereas after the test the post results show that they are interested in learning IQ, that too majority of them 71 which sums upto 92%. Hence the literacy program in school motivates students to learn and improve their IQ.

Comparison of profession of the parents and average marks

Comparisons of the profession of the parents / family members Vs average marks prove that there is significant difference between them. When there is a degree holder in their homes, students perform once were the same as that of the children of parents who are coolies. Those who do follow profession apart from being coolie, or agriculture their students perform better and they live in the towns. There is a significant difference between those who stay in villages and those who stay in urban set up doing other profession.

Comparison of the two districts concerning % of the students who use the computers outside the school and those who have not seen at all

92% of the students use the computers from outside their schools. Students from Tiruchirappalli District had used computers more from outside than students from Pudukottai District. Students of Tiruchirappalli District have more exposure to computers than students of Pudukottai District.

Comparison of the districts concerning usage of the computers and their interest

There is no significant difference among students who had used the computers one hour frequently than students who used computers for one and half an hour. Students who had not touched the computers also had performed well during their exams after the literacy program. The conclusion is that students of both districts have performed well after the literacy programs irrespective of their prior exposure to computers.

Comparison of the districts concerning usage of the computers and their interest

Students of both districts have shown performance in their post test results. In their motivation level students of Pudukottai have shown much interest in learning. They also have said that they would use the computer knowledge to increase IQ. Tiruchirappalli District students have shown least efforts learning IQ, rather they showed comparatively lesser interest. The percentage of satisfaction level also varied.

Level of satisfaction and the average marks obtained by the students

Level of satisfaction of the students of Pudukottai District was centum compared to the students of Tiruchirappalli District. The nature of students of Tiruchirappalli District was influenced by the slum that they live in. They have more access to computers and their level of motivation was relatively low.

Performance of Coolie Parents vs Professional Works and their Children's Performance

There is a significant relationship between the two districts concerning the profession of their parents and the attitude of the participants of the program. Students from Pudukottai that too children of professional careers have performed well Hence there is significant relationship between parental education and the level of performance of the students.

Findings of the Study

1. Among the total number of students 44.8% of them had not seen the computer either in the school or outside their school.

2. 3% of the students have seen the computer, which is kept in the office room, and they had not touched the computers in their lives.

3. 51% of the students have seen, touched the computers outside their schools in their lives.

4. There is no significant difference in marks between those who used computers earlier and others. Hence prior exposure to computer has no relationship with the performance level in the literacy program.

5. After the literacy program, the students showed high level of motivation to use the computers.

6. Students / parents who had family members as degree holders had certainly made the difference. They had performed well in their exams.

7. Students of parents who did jobs other than agriculture, scored higher marks.

8. The average mark of the boys in performance level is higher than the girls.

9. 92% of them had already seen and had used computers in Tiruchirappalli District.

10. It is surprising to see 8% of the students have not seen computer at all in their life in Tiruchirappalli District.

11. Prior exposure to the computer is not in proportion to the performance at the post test level.

12. 70 students had expressed that they had high level of satisfaction concerning the literacy program which was taught to them. Their marks remained at 7.1 out of 10.

13. The literacy program in school motivates students to learn and improve their IQ.

14. There is a significant difference between those who stay in villages and those who stay in urban set up doing other professions

15. Students of Tiruchirappalli District have more exposure to computers than students of Pudukottai District.

16. Students of both districts have performed well after the literacy programs irrespective of their prior exposure to computers. (Tab 16)

17. In their motivation level students of Pudukottai have shown much interest in learning. They also have said that they would use the computer knowledge to increase IQ.

18. There is a significant relationship between the two districts concerning the profession of their parents and the level of attitude of the participants of the program.

Outcome

- This increased the knowledge of the childrens on Internet.

- Children were computer literates concerning their operation.

- There is a comparison of the two districts and the different schools and their level of competency in learning computer literacy.

Future Scope of the Research

- Further research is possible when the children have advance level literacy program.

- Level of literacy of the different standards of the children could be assessed.

- Rural and urban children's literacy level could be compared

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