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**A STUDY ON IMPACT OF RURAL COLLEGE
STUDENTS IN E-LEARNING (NAGAPATTINAM
DISTRICT, TAMILNADU-INDIA)**

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Abstract: Learning should be fast, relevant and integrated into day-to-day work patterns. One way of doing this is through e-learning. E-learning has created favorable conditions for rural college students to compete with the urban ones. The article examines whether the rural students of Nagapattinam district (Tamilnadu) are having the impact of e-learning. The research is based on sample survey of rural students from the Engineering College and Arts and Science College.

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Introduction

E-learning is the revolutionary concept in the present learning system in rural education. Learning methods are classified in two categories - traditional and focused method. The education methodology is updated with the help of technology. In the present education system information plays a vital role with the influence of e-learning. In traditional method assume that books, journals, magazine and other secondary based data form a main source of information. But in the focused method fresh data is available in internet. The both learning systems are knowledge based.

At present education system in India develops in rapid progress. The government of India gives more importance on e-learning system in the rural areas to improve education empowerment. A plan is prepared by the government to connect all the villages by internet to improve education environment in rural areas. Educational institutions in rural areas such as schools, colleges and deemed universities are growing in their capacity. India shows fast development in technical education especially in rural areas. The economy of the country also depends on information technology. Many of the techno-entrepreneurs create more employment for the technical students.

This research shows the value of e-learning system in Arts and Science colleges and Engineering colleges in Nagapattinam district (Tamilnadu). The students of rural areas adopted some approaches for their learning purpose. They have got good knowledge about computer to operate for their education and communication. In some of the rural area the schools are adopted by state and central government for conducting free computer training courses. Students of arts and science and engineering are aware of present learning system e-learning. This focused learning method is predominately followed by the rural area students for their education.

Literature review

Thangam Thennarasu, Minister for Education (The Hindu, 2008). Learning of English language by school

students, particularly in rural areas, has become very important in the global scenario of getting employment and having contact throughout the world, said Thangam Thennarasu, Minister for School Education. The Minister, who was inaugurating the first computer-aided English language learning laboratory in Anjuham Muthuvelar Government Higher Secondary School at Thirukkuvalai in Nagapattinam district, said that even though students in rural areas had a good command over all the subjects, they were not able to speak English language fluently compared to city students. Mr. Thennarasu pointed out that English language was playing a vital role in the world and stressed the need that the students in rural areas should be taught to learn to speak English language fluently to face the challenges in the interviews for employment conducted by several major firms.

Murali (Business Line, 2007). The e-learning portal that the ICSI (Institute of Company Secretaries of India) launched recently will be both asynchronous and synchronous, informs Ms. Preeti Malhotra, President of the institute. She anticipates that the new the facility, which would be accessible on home desktops and from Internet cafes on a 24x7 basis, will especially benefit students from rural, semi-urban and remote areas looking for company secretarial education. "Their learning, self-evaluation, querying, interactive education needs will all be satisfied through this modern distance learning process," says Ms. Malhotra, during the course of an e-mail interaction with Business Line.

The use of technology in education is highly positive but the caveat is to avoid falling through the looking glass. The true challenge for education is to freeze a model that captures quality and computer technology into an integrated communication system. Such a blend will zoom educational goals to dizzy heights of sublimity. If we bear the key idea in our mind that the true power of educational technology comes not from replicating things that can be done in other ways but from doing things that could not be done without it, we realise that most of our concerns are resolved. Technology is no doubt serves as the revitalizing antidote for a stagnating educational system, but the ideal situation would be a judicious blend that optimizes the advantages of both the traditional and telematic educational systems.

Vasanthi Vasudev (The Hindu, 2001). The Union Government is encouraging e-learning particularly to benefit the people in rural areas, Director of Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) R. Rajalakshmi said. She was delivering the keynote address at the inaugural of the two-day International Conference on e-learning organized jointly by the PGP College of Engineering and Technology (PGPCET) and the University of West Bohemia, Czech Republic, and supported by the STPI here on Tuesday. She said that the Government was keen on providing computer literacy to the rural people. Already countries such as Singapore, Japan and Indonesia were making a lot of progress in e-learning.

Methodology and results

Scope and objective of the study. The study aims to know the state of e-learning among the rural college students of Nagapattinam District in Tamilnadu (India) and to analyze whether Engineering and Arts and Science students of rural colleges use the e-learning facilities.

Objectives of the Study include the following elements:

- to find out the students knowledge about the use of Internet;
- to find out whether the students use e-books and e-journals;
- to find out the percentage of rural college students using e-mail ID;
- to find out whether the rural students use e-learning channel to improve their English language;
- to find out the different approaches adopted by rural college students;
- to identify different classifications have been used to categorise efforts in learning.

Methodology: The article is based on exploratory study. The primary data through questioners are collected from the students doing courses at Engineering and Arts & Science rural colleges. The secondary data are collected from printed journals and books. Online journals also referred for references.

Sample design Non probability sampling - convenient sampling adopted in the study. The survey conducted in two Engineering colleges and two Arts and Science colleges in Nagapattinam District (Tamilnadu). The sample size of the study is 400 and 100 per each college: 200 sampling from Engineering college students and 200 sampling from Arts and Science college students. Total size of sampling is 400. The study adopts percentage model and coefficient of variation $CV = (\sigma / X) * 100$.

Empirical model framed for e-learning among rural students and classification of learning

Implementation assumes the following:

- selection of participants;
- securing operational resources (tutors, facilitates and equipment);
- course content, scheduling elements of the module

- tutor training approach

Two approaches are used among rural students – deep approach and strategic approach.

The deep approach: Here the students aim is to understand the course in a way that is personally meaningful to them and which engages their own experiences and previous knowledge through an interactive process with relevant content knowledge and logic. The primary aim is to make personal meanings out of the shared meanings available.

The strategic approach: This approach is seen as engaging some principles from both of the above approaches. The main concern of the student is to achieve the highest grade and therefore she/he adopts an assessment focused approach. The student is alert to the cues, will have a high degree of contact with staff and will have an exam strategy.

Findings

Knowledge about the use of internet: 65% of the rural students have knowledge of the internet in Arts and Science colleges. 98% of the Engineering colleges students have knowledge of the use of internet. Students use e-books and e-journals: 30% of the Arts and Science students using e-books and e-journals. 73% of the engineering college students are using e-books and e-journals. Students using e-mail ID: 50% of the Arts and Science college students use e-mail and 95% of the Engineering college students use e-mail. English language learning through communication lab: 25% of the Arts and Science college students use e-learning in the process of mastering English language. 100% of the Engineering college students learn English language through e-learning. Approaches adopted by students (deep and strategic approach): 60% of the students adopted strategic and 40% of the students adopted deep approaches in Arts and Science College. 75% of the Engineering students adopted strategic approach and 25% of the students adopted deep approach. Classification of learning (traditional and focused): 60% of the students are concentrating in focused method and 40% of the students concentrated in traditional method among Arts and Science colleges. 100% of the Engineering students are concentrated in focused learning. The coefficient of variation of the Arts and Science students (29.97) is less than that of the (44.28) Engineering College students in e-learning among rural students of Nagapattinam district.

Conclusion

Nagapattinam is one of the developing district in Tamilnadu. It was separated from Thanjavur district a few years ago. The district has many villages and few towns. Many colleges have come up in the district and most of them are rurally based. Internet helps the rural college students for information sources. The rural college students of Nagapattinam district experience well influence by internet use. The Arts and Science College students do not concentrate more in using e-journals and e-books when comparing to the Engineering College students. The higher ratio of e-mail users belongs to Engineering students comparing to Arts and Science college students.

FIGURE 1. THE PERCENTAGE MODEL OF E-LEARNING AMONG RURAL ARTS & SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING COLLEGE STUDENTS OF NAGAPATTINAM DISTRICT

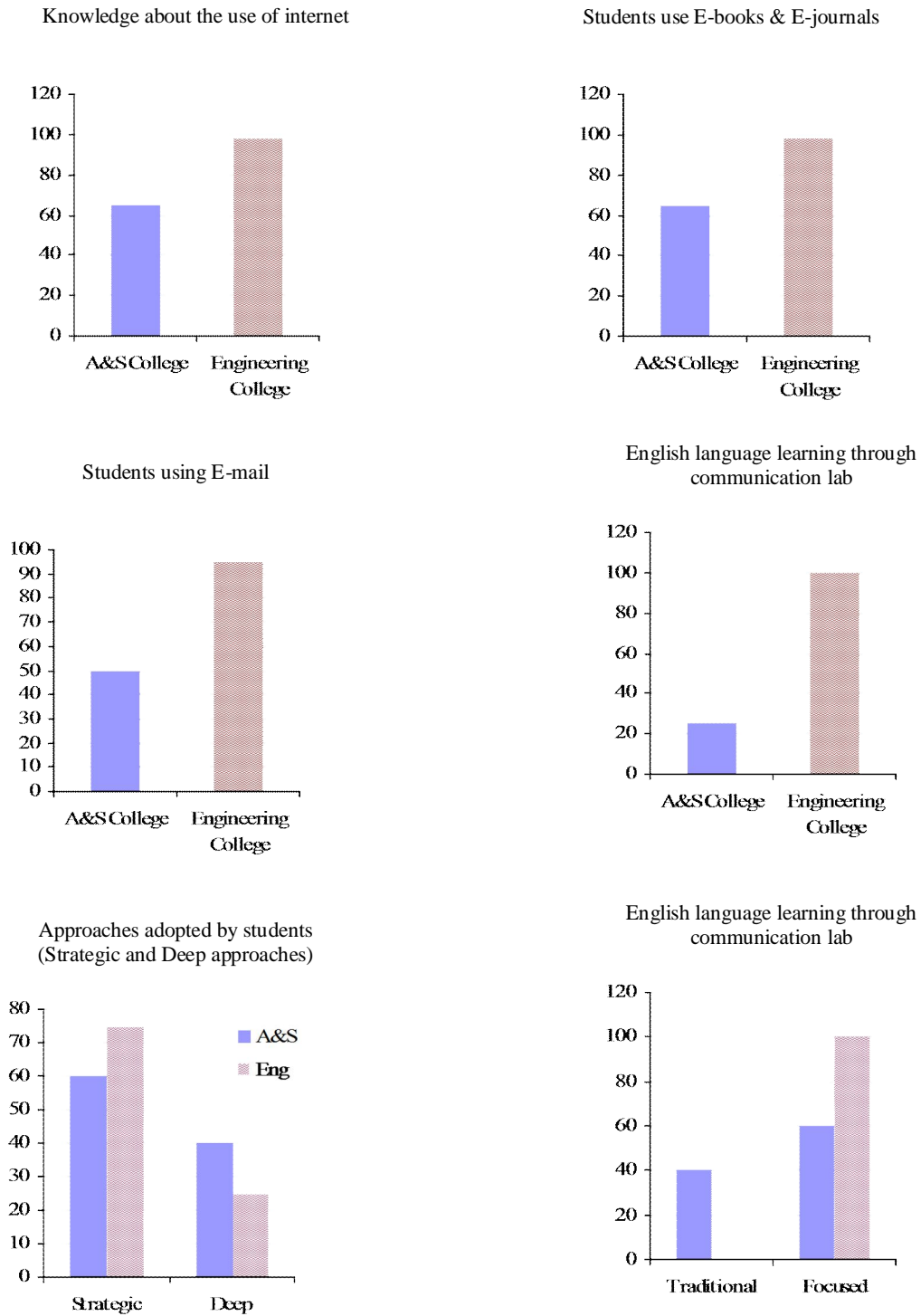


TABLE 1. LEARNING AMONG RURAL STUDENTS OF ARTS & SCIENCE COLLEGE AND ENGINEERING COLLEGE STUDENTS

E-Learning	Knowledge about the use of internet (%)	Students use e-books and e-journals (%)	Students using e-mail ID (%)	English language learning through communication lab (%)	Approaches adopted by students (%)		Classification of learning (%)	
					Strategic	Deep	Traditional	Focused
Arts & Science College Students	65	30	50	25	60	40	40	60
Engineering College Students	98	73	95	100	75	25	0	100

FIGURE 2. EMPIRICAL MODEL OF E-LEARNING AMONG RURAL STUDENTS

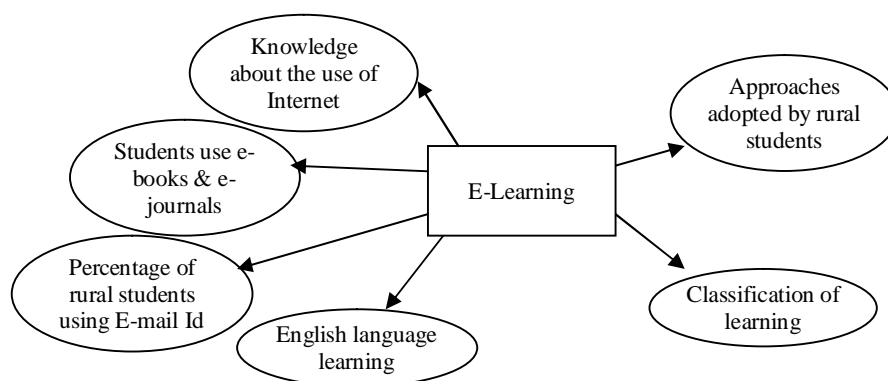
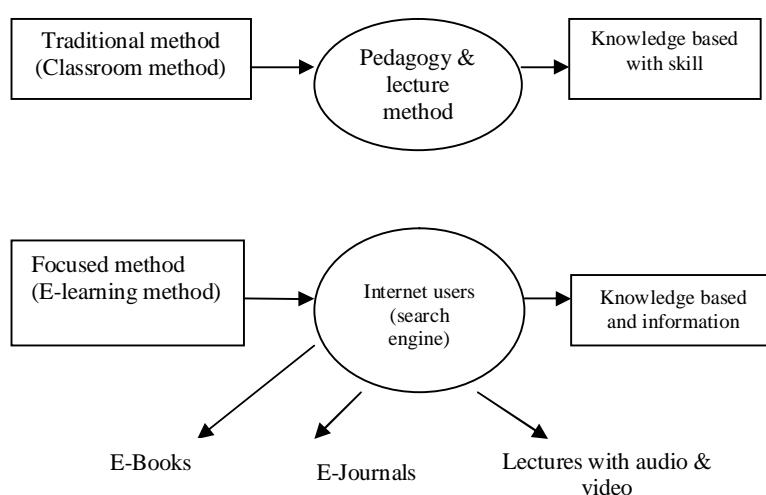


FIGURE 3. EMPIRICAL MODEL FOR CLASSIFICATION OF LEARNING PROCESS



English language learning is fully utilized by the Engineering college students to compare with the Arts and Science college students. The analysis shows that students of Arts and Science colleges and Engineering colleges are highly adopted in strategic approaches. The deep approaches are embraced to a lesser extent. Classification of learning is divided in two types i.e., traditional learning and focused learning. In this learning method, the rural students of both Engineering colleges and Arts and Science college students concentrate more on focused method of learning. There are differentiation among the rural college students between Arts and Science and Engineering colleges. The Engineering comes under technical based education. The technology is helped to the students for their learning through e-learning.

The Anna University - Trichy implemented the e-learning system to all the affiliated colleges. It is not done by the other non technical universities in the rural Nagapattinam district. But now the Bharathidasan University is also concentrating on practicing e-learning methods in all Arts and Science colleges. It helps the rural college students to gather knowledge in e-learning. Government of India and the local authorities have implemented several schemes and projects related to e-learning in rural areas especially to schools and colleges. The government introduced several projects facilitating the focused learning system in rural schools.

The faculty and all the teachers of colleges are well aware about the focused learning system, so they implement e-learning methods in lecturing process in the form of OHP presentation and LCD presentation. In rural schools the students are being trained to operate computer for their learning purpose. At the same time traditional method is not withdrawn from the learning process as the explanation methodology is only clear from classroom teaching.

Since rural education is important in Indian scenario of national education development, the states like Karnataka, Andrapradesh and Gujarat give more importance for e-learning in rural colleges. ICECD introduced E-Learning for 2000 villages in Gujarat.

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