

## **A study on Learning Approaches and their Influence on Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students**

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### **Abstract**

In a developing country like India, ensuring quality education for all is a matter of prime concern. The educational system, especially the secondary school sector has expanded considerably in the post independent India. This sudden expansion has resulted in increased qualitative differentiation in schooling. The quantitative expansion of educational system needs to be simultaneously incorporated with improved inputs, instructional and learning techniques to improve the quality of learning outcomes.

An approach to learning is the way, in which a person approaches a learning material. It is based on a motive or intention that provides the general direction to learning and a strategy or set of strategies that will pursue that general direction. Whatever the interest in a particular task, students tend to have fairly stable motives towards school work, just as students have stable conceptions about what school learning might be. Accordingly, the learners tend to go about learning in a consistent way, this consistency of motive and strategy is what is meant by a student's approach to learning.

### **Key words**

Learning approach, Academic achievement, Deep learning approach, surface learning approach, Achieving learning approach

### **Introduction**

Today we live in an age of science and technology, comfort and luxury, explosive expansion of knowledge and instantaneous reach in communication. But it is also an age of over powering mist of mental pollution. Not knowing where to anchor for safety, many of them find themselves lost in the mire of helplessness and become the victims of drugs.

Only education in its true sense will help us to imbibe knowledge and wisdom without any loss. Education must empower each person in his/ her evolutionary growth so as to reach the highest potential and help him to develop intellectually, physically, spiritually, morally, economically and socially by gaining harmony and synergy in living. Most academics will agree that education is not just about acquisition of knowledge, but the ability to apply that knowledge ideally throughout all aspects of life. With this goal of education in view, all educational institutions do their best to bring out the all round development of students.

The learning approaches are of two types, deep learning approach and surface learning approach. A deep learning approach is based on intrinsic motivation and the students seek an understanding of the materials presented on the basis of their interest on the subject matter. Surface learning approach is based on extrinsic motivation and students tend to memorize information and focus on the requirements of tests and examinations. These approaches are not constant in any one student and someone might adopt a deep/surface and achieving learning approach depending on the circumstances and their intentions at that time.

### **Need and Significance of the study**

This study is designed to highlight on student specific variable like approaches to learning that affect the learning process. This variable has opened up avenues for the concepts of learner participation and involvement in learning tasks. Learning to a greater extent depends on a large number of facilitating factors such as the pupil's aptitude and interest, socio-familial background, instructional methods, cognitive style, classroom climate and pupils' style of learning and approaches to learning. As a result, a number of eminent researchers have attempted to evolve factors of how students learn from students' own perspectives.

Teachers need to know much about helping the learners to develop environment relevant skills. It is interesting to observe students in schools that have distinctive approaches to learning and that pay attention to helping the learners become effective in environments they are creating. Schools that emphasize self-directed activity needs to teach the students how to engage in self – direction.

A detailed survey of related literature regarding variables affecting academic achievement disclose that approaches to learning play active roles in making the learning process profound

and perfect. But the investigator could not locate much studies dealing with the influence of approaches to learning on students' achievements for which the study is undertaken.

## Hypotheses

1. There is a significant difference in the learning approaches of secondary school students based on gender, locality, place of residence, types of management, types of school and level of achievement.
2. There is a significant difference in the academic achievement of secondary school students having different learning approaches.

## Objectives

1. To study the learning approaches prevalent among the secondary school students
2. To study the learning approaches prevalent among the boys and girls in secondary school level
3. To study the learning approaches prevalent among the secondary school students of rural and urban areas
4. To study the learning approaches prevalent among the boarders and day scholars in secondary school level
5. To study the learning approaches prevalent among the secondary school students studying in government, aided and un-aided schools
6. To study the learning approaches prevalent among the secondary school students studying in boys', girls' and mixed schools
7. To study the learning approaches prevalent among the below average, average and above average students
8. To study the academic achievement of secondary school students having different learning approaches
9. To examine whether there is any significant difference between the boys and girls in the learning approaches at secondary school level
10. To examine whether there is any significant difference between the students of rural and urban areas in the learning approaches at secondary school level

11. To examine whether there is any significant difference between the boarders and day scholars in the learning approaches at secondary school level
12. To examine whether there is any significant difference among the students studying in government, aided and un-aided schools having different learning approaches
  - a. To examine whether there is any significant difference between the students studying in government and aided schools having different learning approaches
  - b. To examine whether there is any significant difference between the students studying in aided and un-aided schools having different learning approaches
  - c. To examine whether there is any significant difference between the students studying in government and un-aided schools having different learning approaches
13. To examine whether there is any significant difference among the students studying in girls', boys' and mixed schools having different learning approaches
  - a. To examine whether there is any significant difference between the students studying in girls' and boys' schools having different learning approaches
  - b. To examine whether there is any significant difference between the students studying in boys' and mixed schools having different learning approaches
  - c. To examine whether there is any significant difference between the students studying in girls' and mixed schools having different learning approaches
14. To examine whether there is any significant difference among the below average, average and above average students having different learning approaches
  - a. To examine whether there is any significant difference between the below average and average students having different learning approaches
  - b. To examine whether there is any significant difference between the average and above average students having different learning approaches
  - c. To examine whether there is any significant difference between the below average and above average students having different learning approaches
15. To examine whether there is any significant difference in the academic achievement of secondary school students possessing different learning approaches

- a. To examine whether there is any significant difference in the academic achievement of secondary school students possessing achieving learning and deep learning approach.
- b. To examine whether there is any significant difference in the academic achievement of secondary school students possessing deep learning and surface learning approach
- c. To examine whether there is any significant difference in the academic achievement of secondary school students possessing achieving learning and surface learning approach

### Major findings of the study

A) Investigation of the factors that influence the learning approaches of secondary school students

Gender and type of management are the important factors that influence the learning approaches of secondary school students.

#### 1. Findings and conclusion based on ninth objective

There is a significant difference between the boys and girls in the deep learning approach of secondary school students. Hence gender has an influence on deep learning approach of secondary school students. This conclusion is derived by the following findings,

It is found that the obtained value (1.98) in the deep learning approach is greater than the table value, 1.96 required for significance at 0.05 level.

#### 2. Findings and conclusion based on tenth objective

There is no significant difference between students of rural and urban areas in the learning approaches. Hence, locality has no influence on the learning approaches of secondary school students. This conclusion is supported by the following findings,

The t-values obtained (0.6, 1.76, 1.63) are less than the table value, 1.96 required for significance at 0.05 level.

#### 3. Findings and conclusion based on eleventh objective

There is no significant difference between the boarders and day scholars in their approaches at secondary school level.

Hence, place of residence has no influence on learning approaches of secondary school students. This conclusion is supported by the following findings,

The t-values obtained (1.53, 0.32, 1.002) are less than the table value, 1.96 required for significance at 0.05 level.

#### 4. Findings and conclusion based on twelfth objective

There is a significant difference between students studying in government and aided schools having achieving learning approach. There is a significant difference between students studying in aided and un-aided schools having deep learning and surface learning approach. There is a significant difference between the students studying in government and un-aided schools having surface learning approach. Hence, type of management of schools has influence on learning approaches of secondary school students. These conclusions are supported by following objectives,

- i. It is found that the t-value obtained in the achieving learning approach (2.11) is greater than the table value, 1.96 required for significance at 0.05 level.
- ii. It is found that the t-value obtained in the deep learning (3.45) and surface learning approach (3.99) is a greater than the table value, 2.58 required for significance at 0.01 level.
- iii. It is found that the t-value obtained in the surface learning approach (2.84) is greater than the table value 2.58, required for significance at 0.01 level.

#### 5. Findings and conclusion based on thirteenth objective

There is no significant difference between students studying in girls', boys', and mixed schools having different learning approaches. Hence, type of schools has no influence on the learning approaches of secondary school students. This conclusion is based on the following findings,

- i. It is found that the t-value calculated (0.62, 0.24, 0.32) in achieving learning, deep learning and surface learning are less than the table value, 1.96 required for significance at 0.05 level.

- ii. The t-value calculated (0.6, 0.3, 0.94) in the achieving learning, deep learning and surface learning approach are less than the table value, 1.96 required for significance at 0.05 level.
- iii. It is found that the t-value calculated (0.2, 0.6, 0.55) in the achieving learning, deep learning and surface learning approach are less than the table value, 1.96 required for significance at 0.05 level.

B) Investigation of the factors that influence the academic achievement of secondary school students

Findings and conclusions based on fifteenth objective

There is a significant difference between the academic achievement of students possessing achieving learning and deep learning approach in the total sample and sub-sample (average group). There is a significant difference between the academic achievement of students possessing deep learning and surface learning approach in total sample and sub-sample (average group). There is a significant difference between the academic achievement of students possessing achieving learning and surface learning approach in sub-sample (average group and above average group). These conclusions are supported by the following findings,

- i. It is found that the t-value calculated in the total sample (3.28) is greater than the table value, 2.58 required for significance at 0.01 level. Also the t-value calculated in the average group (2.3) is greater than the table value, 1.96 required for significance at 0.05 level.
- ii. The t-value obtained in the total sample (2.71) is greater than the table value, 2.58 required for significance at 0.01 level. Also the t-value calculated in the average group (2.04) is greater than the table value, 1.96 required for significance at 0.05 level.
- iii. It is found that the t-value obtained in the average and the above average group (2.08, 2.29) is greater than the table value, 1.96 required for significance at 0.05 level.

The research study reveals that the learning approaches have a considerable effect on academic achievement of the students. By developing proper learning approaches, students can have a better outlook towards their education and can find it more useful in school and society.

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