Abstract

Learning is an essential cognitive skill in the field of education. Empirical and conceptual deliberations have revealed the definition of learning being confined to marks/grades than holistic or ideal learning as put forth by psychologists time and again. Such a scenario has often seen the trend to adopt unscrupulous shortcut methods of academic success, and also forcing learners to learn by rote to achieve interim immediate success. The need of the hour at present is to address this issue of growing concern. Research and innovations in the field of education have often attempted to address this generically ignoring the learner's ethnic, cultural, social background. India being one of the oldest civilizations has its own unique history and past, and its contribution to the ocean of knowledge is a well known and established fact. Indian indigenous approach towards education has also been a time tested one. An attempt to explore into the processes and techniques of the unique tradition of having imparted values and holistic learning methods through its aboriginal educational technology; could shed some light on the adaptability of the same into the current scenario. Learning being a complex multi-dimensional facet has been tested and compared between the ancient and the modern schooling systems in the present study based on the revised blooms taxonomy model. In order to test learning on an appropriate platform, disciplines which are common for the two schooling systems were selected based on a qualitative interview. Tools assessing learning of Sanskrit grammar and Mathematics based on the revised blooms taxonomy model were developed in consultation with subject experts. Having validated the tools and methods based on a pilot study; a sample of 210 tenth standard students (Ancient; n=95, Modern; n = 115) were the sample for the main study. The sample was also
analysed for their preferences in learning styles using the VARK inventory. (Fleming, 1998). Further, the pedagogy ensued by the teachers of the respective subjects were assessed using the Differentiated Instruction survey (Tomlinson, 2001). The obtained data were subjected to appropriate statistical analyses to verify the objectives of the study. The findings revealed a significant difference across all dimensions of learning; irrespective of the subject - between the ancient and modern schooling systems - and a better learning at even complex levels of the taxonomy was reported in the ancient schooling system than the modern schooling system. The obtained findings were not attributable to learner differences; as a comparison of the learning styles revealed no significant differences in preference and adoption of preferred learning styles. A delve into the pedagogical differences in the use of differentiated instruction in teaching respective subjects between the two schooling systems was not quantifiable to verify the hypothesis. However, the reports of the small sample who were informally interviewed and tested on the use of Differentiated instruction did yield differences with respect to higher use of differentiated instruction in the ancient than in the modern schooling system which could be the factor operative in fostering better learning in the ancient as compared to the modern schooling system. The findings of the study were analysed in line with the theoretical background and the reviews of literature obtained. Further implications with regard to the scope of the findings obtained extendable to the overall learning in education are discussed and suggested for future research.

*An attempt has been made in the present thesis to adhere to the guidelines provided in the 6th edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (2010).*