

## A STUDY ON THE FACTORS AFFECTING LEARNING AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Nithya S.

Research Assistant

District Planning Office Alappuzha, Kerala State-India

### Abstract

*Psychologists have identified so many factors affecting learning. But the contribution of these factors towards learning may vary. The investigator through the present study is investigating the factors that affect learning among secondary school students of Kerala State. The knowledge of the factors affecting learning will help the teachers to maximize learning among pupils. In the present study the investigator studied the influence of 5 variables - 'teacher', 'interest of pupils', 'difficulty of content', 'attention during class' and 'examination'. The study was carried out on a sample of 200 pupils (N=200). Through the present study, the investigator found out that the most influential factors affecting learning among secondary school pupils are 'Teacher' and 'interest of pupils'. The study revealed the importance of teacher and the interest of pupils in a secondary school classroom. The teacher as a role model can maximize the learning of pupils, while the interest of pupils is also holds the key.*

**Key Words :** Factors Affecting Learning, Teacher, Attention During Class , Pupils Interest, Contents Difficulty, Secondary School Students

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Learning is one of the most important activities in which all people engage. It is at the very core of the educational process, although most of what people learn occurs outside the school. For hundreds of years, philosophers and psychologists have sought to understand the nature of learning, how it occurs, and how one person can influence the learning of another person through teaching and similar endeavours. Teaching is an active process in which one person shares information with others to provide them with the information to make behavioural changes. Learning is the process of assimilating information with a resultant change in behaviour. Teaching-learning process is a planned interaction that promotes

behavioural changes. Understanding that each student has unique strengths and weaknesses related to the ways in which they approach learning is an important component of effective education.

Behavioral theories use a stimulus-response framework to explain learning and focus on environmental factors such as reinforcement, feedback, and practice; they conceptualise learning as something that occurs from outside. Behavioral theories provide very good explanations for certain kinds of learning like the rote acquisition of information, the learning of physical and mental skills, and the development of behaviors conducive to a productive classroom. This type of learning provides by far the best explanation of how and why people, including students, respond emotionally to a wide variety of stimuli and situations. However, they are very poor at explaining how individuals come to understand complex ideas and phenomena. But environmental factors are not the only ones that influence learning. Serious consideration of other perspectives began to enter mainstream psychological thinking about learning during the 1960s.

Learning is always influenced by the background knowledge of the learner (Bruner, 1962). The background knowledge may either facilitate learning or interact with the new learning in anticipated ways. Students either consciously or subconsciously construct their concepts as explanations for the behavior, properties or theories they experience. They believe most of these explanations are correct because these explanations make sense in terms of their understanding of the behavior of the world around them. Consequently if students encounter new information that contradicts their preconceptions it may be difficult for them to accept the new information because it seems wrong. The anomalies do not fit their expectations. Under these conditions the new information may be ignored, rejected, disbelieved, deemed irrelevant to the current issue, held for consideration at a later time, reinterpreted in light of the student's current theories, or accepted minor changes in the student's concept.

## **2. NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

It is clear from the above discussion that there is no clear cut idea regarding the process of learning. We can locate so many factors affecting learning. All these contribute to learning. But the extent of influence may vary. In order to maximize learning, we have to locate the factors which contribute greatly to learning. An attempt is made through the present study to locate and rank the factors which affect the learning among secondary school students

## **3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The study has the following major objectives:

- [1] To locate the factors influencing learning.
- [2] To rank the factors influencing learning.

#### 4. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The major hypotheses of the study are the following:

1. The influence of teacher will be significantly higher than all other variables affecting learning.
2. Examination related motivation will be significantly higher than factors such as student interest, difficulty of subject and attention given during classroom learning in the process of learning.

#### 5. METHODOLOGY

##### ⇒ Method of the study

Normative method was adopted for the study.

##### ⇒ Sample

The investigator adopted *Random Sampling Technique*. In the survey part 200 pupils from Alappuzha and Thrissur districts of Kerala State were selected.

##### ⇒ Variables of the Study

The independent variables of the present study are the factors affecting learning. The dependent variable is learning.

##### ⇒ Tools and Techniques for the Study

The important tools and techniques for the present study are

1. *Ranking scale for Schema modification*: This scale is used to rank the factors affecting learning.

##### ⇒ Procedure

The investigator located major factors affecting learning through book review. From the obtained variables, five major factors were selected for the present study through personal analysis and expert opinion. The five selected variables are

1. Teacher
2. Interest of pupils
3. Difficulty of content
4. Attention during class and
5. Examination

After selecting the factors, the tool was prepared for data collection. The tool consisted of 20 items, four each from the five selected variables. The items were carefully structured to ensure proper data collection. The tool was administered to 200 secondary school pupils of Kerala state, 100 each from the districts Alappuzha and Thrissur. The pupils were asked to rank the 20 statement in the order of their preference.

##### ⇒ Statistical Techniques used

The analysis of the data was done mainly by applying the statistical analysis such as mean, Standard Deviation and Analysis of variance (ANOVA)

**6. ANALYSIS OF DATA**

The collected Data was analysed through proper checking & analysis before finalizing the results

**Table 1: Results of One-way ANOVA between factors affecting learning**

| Source of Variation | Df  | SS        | MSS     | F      | Level of Significance |
|---------------------|-----|-----------|---------|--------|-----------------------|
| Between groups      | 4   | 34803.69  | 8700.92 | 90.00* | P < 0.01              |
| With in groups      | 995 | 96191.27  | 96.67   |        |                       |
| Total               | 999 | 130994.96 |         |        |                       |

\*0.01 level of significance

From Table 1 the obtained F-ratio is significant at 0.01 level ( $p < 0.01$ ). This indicates that there exists a significant difference between the factors affecting learning. To find out which factor contributes more in the process of learning, the investigator conducted Scheffe’s method of multiple comparisons. The result of Scheffe’s method of multiple comparisons is given in Table 2.

**Table 2: Results of Scheffe’s Method of Multiple Comparisons conducted for the factors affecting learning.**

| Source of Variation    | Mean  | SD    | N   | Mean difference |                        |                       |                    |
|------------------------|-------|-------|-----|-----------------|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
|                        |       |       |     | Examination     | Attention during class | Difficulty of content | Interest of pupils |
| Teacher                | 28.26 | 11.43 | 200 | 14.70*          | 14.48*                 | 10.46*                | 3.04               |
| Interest of pupils     | 25.26 | 11.41 | 200 | 11.66*          | 11.43*                 | 7.41*                 |                    |
| Difficulty of content  | 17.98 | 8.19  | 200 | 4.25**          | 4.02**                 |                       |                    |
| Attention during class | 14.02 | 9.36  | 200 | 0.22            |                        |                       |                    |
| Examination            | 13.80 | 9.34  | 200 |                 |                        |                       |                    |

\* 0.01 level of significance

\*\* 0.05 level of significance

From Table 2, it is observed that the mean difference between the variable ‘teacher’ and the variables, difficulty of content, attention during class and examination is significantly different at 0.01 level. As the mean score of the variable ‘teacher’ is higher than the other there variables, the contribution of teacher is significantly better than the variables difficulty of content, attention during class and examination at 0.01 level of significance. It is also noted that there is no significant difference between the variables ‘teacher’ and ‘interest of pupils’ as the obtained value is lower than the table value.

It is observed that the mean difference between the variable ‘interest of pupils’ and the variables, difficulty of content, attention during class and examination is significantly different at 0.01 level. As the mean score of the variable ‘interest of pupils’ is higher than the other there variables, the contribution of the variable interest of pupils is significantly

better than the variables difficulty of content, attention during class and examination at 0.01 level of significance.

It is also observed that the mean difference between the variable 'difficulty of content' and the variables, attention during class and examination is significantly different at 0.05 level. As the mean score of the variable 'difficulty of content' is higher than the other two variables, the contribution of the variable difficulty of content is significantly better than the variables attention during class and examination at 0.05 level of significance.

Finally there is no significant difference between the variables 'attention during class and examination' at 0.05 level of significance.

## 7. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The study has the following major findings

1. 'Teacher variable' and 'interest of pupils' are the most contributing factors affecting learning of pupils compared to all other variable such as 'difficulty of content', 'attention during class' and 'examination related'.
2. 'difficulty of content' is a more contributing factor affecting learning of pupils compared to other variable such as, 'attention during class' and 'examination related'.

## 8. CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study concluded that the teacher and the interest of pupils are the most contributing factors in a teaching learning process. So the teacher behaviour in a classroom is very important. A friendly teacher can improve the learning of pupils in a secondary school. Also it is highly essential to keep the interest of pupils, lack of interest may lead to lower attainment.

## 9. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The Ranking scale for Schema modification is not a standardised one.

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***Nithya S.***

*Research Assistant, District Planning Office, Alappuzha, Kerala-India  
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