

A Study on the Attitude of Deaf/Dumb and Blind Children Towards Computer Technology

Abstract

Advancement in computer technology has caught attention of many educators and researchers. Computer based instructional applications are considered an effective alternative to teaching method. The present study is intended to find out the attitude of specially abled children towards the use of computer and to find out if specially abled condition had any effect on the computer attitude. Computer attitude has been defined as a person's general evaluation or feeling of favour or antipathy toward computer technologies and specific computer related activities. This study was conducted on a sample of 200 specially abled children. To test the level of computer attitude of specially abled children, "The computer attitude scale" by Dr.Tahira Khatoun and Manika Sharma was used. The major findings of the study have shown that specially abled condition had affect on computer attitude.

Keywords: Computer Technology, Computer Attitude, Specially Abled Children.

Introduction

We live in a post modern society, where information is considered to be an extremely valuable commodity. The importance of information and communication technology in education and particularly in teacher education is being widely acknowledged. An important prerequisite of I.C.T. is knowledge, and attitude towards the use of computer. Those who control important information, or who simply know how to excess and use it, are the key players in the information based economy.

Today children experience a wide range of technology from an early age. Research indicates that computers are widespread and becoming an increasingly important part of children's life. With the increased number of computer at home, children are exposed to computers from early childhood and at present computers are increasingly used in educational institutions.

Clements stated that the students who have previous successful experiences with the computers can easily adapt to the societies in which computers are frequently used. For the appropriate use of computers in school education, the teacher should be able to select and use of the computers in promoting the developmental fields of the students.

When it comes to teaching and learning computers can be an incredible tool, especially when the learners have access to data stored on CD-ROMs or Internet. They can use P.C. to access vast knowledge based on almost any topic, search archives of information dating back decades, ask questions online and even take courses. So, it is important to have a basic understanding of computers technology, regardless of one's career, choice or aspiration.

Researches have proposed that positive attitude toward computers, high computer anxiety level could be important factors in helping people learn computer skills. Sam, Othman and Nordian (2005) concluded that monitoring the users' attitude toward computers should be a continuous process if the computer is to be used as a teaching and learning tool. Other attributes such as gender and age (Morris) and anxiety (Paxton and Turner) were also shown to be related attitudes toward computers.

Computer Attitude

Attitude is one of the determining factors in predicting people's behavior. That is to say by understanding an individual's attitude towards something, one can predict with high precision the individual's overall



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pattern of behavior to the object. In general attitudes can be defined as “a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favourable or unfavourable manner with respect to a given object, situation, institution or Person.” Therefore, attitudes affects people in everything, they do and infact reflects what they are , and hence a determining factor.

Computer attitude has been defined as a person’s general evaluation or feeling of favour or antipathy toward computer technologies and specific computer related activities (Smith and Rawstorne, 2000).

According to Whitrow (1999) computers related attitudes influence students desire to enroll in computer related subjects and courses, and their prior experiences and use of computer(Levine and Donista,1997).

Attitudes can be examined at different levels of generality, depending on the action, target, context and time elements being evaluated (Smith et,al 2000). Specially, a person’s attitude towards computer is influenced by a variety of aspects, e.g, the social issues relating to computer use, computer liking, computer confidence, computer anxiety or comfort, achievement, usefulness and values.

Positive attitudes enhances the learning process (Shneiderman), specially the motivation to learn and the ability to retain information in a given situations (Jawahar and Elango). A negative attitude may lead to computer resistance (Shneiderman). A person’s attitude towards computers and related technology could determine his/her performance with the technology and satisfaction he/she draws with the experience.

Significance of the Study

Vision and speech both are actively used sense by man. But vision is most actively used sense than speech as cognition depends upon one’s visual experiences to a great extent. Impairment imposes basic limitations on the individual. Visually impaired as well as speech impaired children are deprived in terms of range and variety of experiences. They are not able to control their own environment and themselves in relation to it, specially the person having vision impairment. Although social attitudes are changing towards both visual impaired and speech impaired yet there are certain stereotypes which are reflected in terms of their attitudes and responses.

Among various disabilities, visual impairment is the oldest categories identified for special educations as visual impairment is apparent and provokes strong emotions. In almost all the countries of the world, special facilities and programs for children were established before other groups of disabled .The objectives of a good educational programme for children with visually impaired as well as speech impaired is the all round development of the child and realization of their full human potential.

The proposed study is also aimed to find out the relationship between computer attitude and vision impairment and between computer attitude and speech impairment.

Objective of the Study

1. To study the attitude of deaf/dumb and blind children towards computer technology..
2. To study the correlation between computer attitude and disability.
3. To compare the attitude of specially abled boys and girls towards computer technology.

Hypothesis

1. There is significant difference between the attitude of deaf/dumb and blind children towards computer technology.
2. There is significant correlation between computer attitude and disability.
3. Specially abled boys show more positive attitude towards computer technology than the girls.

Research Methodology

Method Used

Descriptive method was used for this study.

Sample

A sample of 100 deaf/dumb and 100 blind children were taken from the institution meant for the specially abled children.

Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling technique is used to select the sample.

Tools Used

Computer Attitude Scale by Dr. Tahira Khatoon and Manika Sharma.

Research Design Used

Ex-post- facto research design.

Statistical Techniques Used

1. Mean and S.D.
2. ‘t’- test
3. Pearson”r”

Analysis of Data

Data related to difference in Mean scores of Computer Attitude of Deaf/dumb and Blind children :

In order to find out the significance of difference between the mean scores of Deaf/dumb and blind children towards computer technology ‘t’ – test was computed. The detailed has been presented in table 1.

Table 1
Significance of Differences in Mean Scores of Deaf/Dumb and Blind Children towards Computer Technology

Groups	N	Mean	S.D.	‘t’ value	Significance level
Deaf/dumb	100	76.61	3.801	7.936	0.01
Blind	100	72.24	3.970		

From the table above it is observed that the mean scores of deaf/dumb and blind children are 76.61 and 72.24 respectively and corresponding S.D. are 3.801 and 3.970. The obtained ‘t’ value(7.936) is significant at 0.01 level .It means that deaf/dumb and blind children differs significantly on their attitude towards computer. Thus research hypothesis no.1 i.e. there is significant difference between deaf/ dumb and blind children towards computer is accepted.

Table 2
Correlation between Disability and Attitude Towards Computer

	Anxiety	Confidence	Interest	Tool	Career
Anxiety	1				
Confidence	0.314**	1			
Interest	0.153**	0.177*	1		
Tool	0.345**	0.365**	0.392**	1	
Career	0.341**	0.374**	0.370**	0.399**	1

From the above table it is observed that there is significant correlation in all the areas of computer attitude with specially abled condition i.e.

disability. So, the hypothesis 2 i.e. there is significant correlation between computer attitude and disability is accepted.

Table 3
Mean Scores of Deaf/Dumb and Blind Boys and Girls Towards Computer Technology

Areas of Cas	N=100(Boys)		N=100 (Girls)		"T"	Significance Level
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Total	77.16	3.390	71.69	3.656	10.971	0.000**

From the above table it is observed that the 't' value is significant . So, the hypothesis 3 i.e. there is significant difference between the computer attitude of deaf/dumb and blind boys and girls is accepted.

Findings of the Study

The major findings of the study are:

1. Deaf/dumb children show more positive attitude towards computer technology than the blind children.
2. Specially abled boys are more interested to use computer than the girls.
3. Disability affected the computer attitude of specially abled children.
4. There is difference between the computer attitude of deaf dumb and blind children.

Review of Literature

1. Kilik, Gulsen in his study on "Descriptive study of students' attitude towards computer" found that the students' were already positive about computer and stayed positive at the end of the study.
2. Ahmed, Gujjar, Muhammad Naumullah and Tabassum, Rabia in their study reveals that male and female students have the same attitude on all dimensions of the computer scale and the students who have computer at home are significantly better than their counterparts on fear of using computers.
3. Dr. Tamer, Kutluca (2011) in his study found that there is a significant difference according to the variables of taking computer course, computer ownership, level of using computer program, frequency of computer usage, computer experience and class of the scores of attitudes towards computer.
4. Drescheid (2003) in his study revealed that the early childhood educators had a neutral to positive attitude toward computers. It is also found that the educators who used computers in their classroom had a more positive attitude toward computers than those who did not use a computer in the class room.

5. Taghvi (2006) made a study on the computer attitude of the undergraduate college students. The findings of the study showed that subjects with access to a home computer had higher positive attitudes toward learning and working with computers. The findings also revealed that senior students significantly expressed more positive attitude toward computer than sophomore, and junior students.

6. Alabay & Keshinkilic (2006) made a study on computer supported teaching. Findings of the study revealed that the computers increase the self-confidence of the students according to their class level

Conclusion

In this study we have seen that deaf/dumb and blind children differ significantly in their attitude towards computer technology. The specially abled boys are more interested in the use of computer and computer related activities than the girls . It is also found that there is significant relationship between computer attitude and disability. From the study it can be concluded that vision as well as speech plays an important role in developing attitude towards something.

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