



A BEHAVIOURAL STUDY ON THE CHANGE OF ADULT LEARNERS' LEARNING PATTERNS DUE TO THE CHANGE IN THE LECTURE DELIVERY MODE

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INTRODUCTION

Covid -19 pandemic has affected the education system worldwide and most of the educational institutions had to close temporarily. Before the pandemic, most of the educational institutions in Sri Lanka were conducting class sessions and lectures in face-to-face mode but they were shifted to distance education mode during the pandemic. Likewise, the National Institute of Language Education and Training (NILET) was offering their Diploma in Second Language Teaching course in face-to-face mode but due to the Covid outbreak there was no possibility to conduct physical classes and the course delivery mode was shifted to Distance Education mode. So, the students had to adopt this new system to continue their studies. Some students were coming to Colombo from Puttalam, Rathnapura, Kandy, Galle, Mathara, and Gampaha districts to take part in the face-to-face classes, but under the new circumstances, the students were able to study staying their residences. Zoom video conferencing tool was used to conduct lectures during the pandemic because the students were familiar with its options and it helped to continue synchronous learning experience for the students. The students had used to take part in the physical classes from 9.00 a.m to 3.00 p.m on Saturdays but during the pandemic period the lectures were limited to two-hour slots and they were scheduled flexibly, considering the convenience of the majority. The objective of this paper is to observe the learning behavior of the students who were following the Diploma in Second Language Teaching in the National Institute of Language Education and Training (NILET) before the pandemic and during the pandemic. Accordingly, "how the students' learning patterns have been changed due to shifting face-to-face learning mode to Distance Learning mode?" is the research problem. In literature, some research related to this study is found. Lisa R. Amir and others have published a paper on student perspective of classroom and distance during Covid pandemic and it is based on a dental study program in Indonesia (2020). Vasile Gherphes and others have published another paper aiming at finding out the students' perspective of face-to-face and e-learning and their desire to return not to the traditional form of education (2021). Young Zhao has conducted research and published a paper titled "Covid -19 as a catalyst for educational change" (2020) but it is about school education at a global level. Compared to them, it seems there is a lack of such research conducted based on the Sri Lankan Context. Rytaro Hayashi and others have published a



paper titled "Online Learning in Sri Lanka's Higher Education Institutions during the Covid – 19 Pandemic" in 2020. It can be considered as an eminent study in the field but it is not

exactly a behavioral study on learning patterns. Studying students' learning patterns is very important when developing and designing curricula, deciding teaching methodologies, and making decisions related to the field of education. Therefore it is expected that this research will fill a gap in the field and this will be helpful for future research too.

METHODOLOGY

Thirty students who were following the Diploma in Second Language in the National Institute of Language Education and Training were the participants of this study. They belonged to 20 – 25 age limit and they were selected using a random sampling technique. Questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and participant observations were deployed to collect data. The questionnaires were distributed via emails and WhatsApp and the in-depth interviews were conducted via telephone calls. Both open-ended and closed-ended questions were included in the questionnaire. Everyone had filled and submitted the questionnaires and they had participated in the interviews too. The participant observations were used to strengthen the findings collected through the questionnaires and in-depth interviews, in addition to collect data. Therefore both quantitative and qualitative data have been used in this research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to the data collected through the questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and participant observations, the following results were revealed.

When the lectures were delivered via online mode, the student participation had been increased by 94% compared to their physical participation in pre-pandemic time. Unlike in the pre-pandemic time, the lectures were recorded using the recording option in Zoom and they were shared after the class sessions. As a result of that, 63% of the students had started to listen to those lectures again, when they were doing their self-studies. The students created a WhatsApp group during the pandemic period to share their notes and additional readings. Before the pandemic, the students were given only a list of additional readings and they were expected to search and find them from libraries. But during the pandemic, the students had no opportunity to refer to libraries so that most of the additional reading notes were shared by the teacher. It could be observed that the students were happy about that because they did not want to bother finding those readings. In the face to face classes, the students often try to take notes when the teacher was delivering lectures but 63% present of the students stated that they did not



try to take notes during the online lectures because they knew that the reading material and the recording would be shared after the class sessions. In the face-to-face class room, there were not many opportunities to learn by audio-video aids but they could be easily shared during the Zoom class sessions. The students have stated that they enjoyed learning through such audio-

video aids. 72% of the students had mentioned that they felt online lectures as a burden at the beginning as they were not familiar with them. 60% of the students had stated that they could not concentrate on the lessons well at that time but after 3-4 virtual class sessions, they could adapt to the new way of learning. 78% of the students had suggested continuing lectures online mode though there would be an opportunity for face-to-face classes, in the future.

CONCLUSIONS

The learning patterns of the students who were following the Diploma in Second Language Teaching in the NILET have been changed due to the transition of their lecture delivering mode during the Covid -19 pandemic. The majority of the students have positive feedback on the new way of learning.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Convey my sincere thanks to everyone who participated in this research.