

MODERNIZATION AMONG FORMAL AND DISTANCE MODE LEARNERS-A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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ABSTRACT-

Modernization means to adopt modern ways, to have a modern spirit and character based on rationalism and scientific thinking. Education is believed to modernize a society and higher education institutions play a vital role in modernizing any society. The number of higher education institutions is rapidly increasing. Along with this the number of colleges and universities are also increasing and the number of courses being offered through the distance mode of these universities are also increasing. The present study has been carried out with the objective to find out the effect of Modes of learning on the Modernization of University students. The sample of the study constituted of 60% of M.Ed. students enrolled with distance as well as formal modes of learning in University of Kashmir. This comprises of 163 and 237 students from formal mode and distance mode respectively. R.S. Singh's Modernization scale was used for the assessment of Modernization of students. Data was analysed using percentage and t-Test. The result showed that there is no significant difference between distance and formal modes of learners as for as Modernization and its various dimensions are concerned. Hence studying in a distance mode of learning or formal mode learning doesn't affect the Modernization of students.

Keywords: *Modernization, Distance Mode of Learning, Formal Mode of Learning, Comparison*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Education has been one of the most influential instruments of social change which includes modern outlook among masses and also inculcate a creative self-awareness, an ability to think for oneself and a sense of critical judgment and make one socially aware about modern trends and social issues. With proper planning and under efficient direction education can make a meaningful contribution to the attainment of Modernization.

According to Moore “Modernization is a revolutionary change leading to the transformation of a traditional society into technological and civilized one”. Modernization means to adopt modern ways, to have a modern spirit and character based on rationalism and scientific thinking.

Modernization is a comprehensive concept aimed at capturing and describing transition of a society from medieval to modern culture. “It is a movement from traditional and quasi-traditional to certain desired type of technology and result in changes in the social structure, value-orientation, motivation, achievement and aspirations. It means a value change, significant institutional modifications and improvements of standards of imitation of a modern country. One must retain a distinct entity and be not a carbon copy of some other country. Modernization stands for discriminate selection between what is worthy and what is suitable in a particular situation. It does not stand for superficial acquisition of some isolated traits of elements of an advanced country. Modernization refers to a model of an evolutionary transition from a 'pre-modern' or 'traditional' to a 'modern' society. The teleology of Modernization is described in social evolutionism theories, existing as a template that has been generally followed by societies that have achieved modernity. While it may theoretically be possible for some societies to make the transition in entirely different ways but there have been no counter examples provided by reliable sources.

Modernization includes a temper of science, reason and rationalism, secularism, high aspirations and achievement orientation, overall transformation of attitudes and values, creation of new functional institutions, investment in human resources, a growth orientation economy, a national investment rather than kin, caste, religion and language oriented interests and open society and mobile person.

The process is different in each country, depending on its history, as mentioned by Shanker Roa (1990) "This includes the transformation indicated by Durkheim from "mechanical solidarity" to "organic solidarity"; that indicated by Becker, the transformation from the "change-resistant sacred outlook" to the "change-ready secular outlook"; the transformation indicated by Weber, from "personal bonds" to "impersonal relation" with bureaucracy; and the transformation from "status-based" relations to "contract based" relation as indicated by Maine. It applies to the individualist forms of organization to the western model, the communist form of organization to the Russian or Chinese model as well as to the socialistic pattern of Indian model."

Historians link Modernization to the processes of urbanization and industrialization, as well as to the spread of education. As Kendall (2007) notes, "Urbanization accompanied Modernization and the rapid process of industrialization." In sociological critical theory, Modernization is linked to an overarching process of rationalization. When Modernization increases within a society, the individual becomes that much more important, eventually replacing the family or community as the fundamental unit of society.

Impressed by the developments in modern science and the doctrines of reason and humanism of the west, in the nineteenth century many educated Indians demanded Modernization, which they felt would serve as key to the regeneration of their decaying society. In spite of the British contact Indian society at the time of independence had deep-rooted traditions. Still it decided to go in the direction of modernity. There were people to support the cause of modernism and there were people who cling on to the old traditional way of life. Thus people had to tolerate the coexistence of tradition with modernism. The means for agents selected for modernising of the society were- planning, education, legislation, assistance from foreign countries, adopting the policy of liberalisation, and the like.

Modernization is closely relatedly with education as education is a social process and an agent of change in the society. Education is considered a continuous and lifelong process. According to Aristotle "education is a process necessary for the creation of a sound mind in a sound body."

The social reality in contemporary times has shown that the formal system of education is not accessible to all. The limitation in the access of educational opportunities is chiefly due to the

inability of a learner and instructor to be in face to face contact. There are about 880 million illiterate adults in the world who have been deprived access to education because they are required to be present in the four walls of a conventional class room before they can gain access to quality education (UNESCO-2002).

Clearly a realistic alternative is long overdue and this is what has necessitated the introduction of open and distance learning model. Since the demand for education is increasing with growth of population, face to face education in formal form is not able to cope up with the increasing demand for education. Moreover, the concept of lifelong learning mooted by the International Commission of Education, 1972 and reiterated in the Delores report of UNESCO, *LEARNING THE TREASURE WITHIN*, 1996, emphasis is being laid on alternative forms of education. Developments like these have given rise to distance mode of education.

Distance education is becoming a more vital part of the higher education family. Distance education reaches a broader student audience, better addresses student needs, saves money, and more importantly uses the principles of modern learning pedagogy (Fitzpatrick, 2001). Public as well as political interest in distance education is especially high in geographic regions where the student population is widely distributed (Sherry, 1996). In fact, public policy leaders, in some states, are recommending the use of distance education as opposed to traditional learning.

With the passage of time, demand for education has also increased day by day. Consequently formal system could not meet the increasing demands of the masses. Keeping in view all these circumstances, there was a need to supplement the formal system by establishing non-formal education which should be parallel in objectives, potent in curriculum and different in modes.

The distance education has made a huge progress. Students now a days can choose between the formal and distance modes of learning, especially in case of higher education. This has led to competition between these two systems. There is also the question of “Quality” when one talks of distance education.

II. NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

In the early 1900's, as correspondence courses came into vogue, there was a question that weighed on the minds of educators: could students learn as well at a distance as they could by

face to face? As with most controversial issues, there were proponents and opponents on both sides. Both sides were eager to gather evidence to substantiate their claims – and thus began the movement of comparison studies in education. In these studies, researchers looked to compare student outcomes for two courses that were delivered through two different methods, thereby identifying the “superior” method for teaching effectiveness.

Many researches have been carried out throughout the world to compare the achievement of distance and formal mode learners. Most original researches focus on student outcomes (grades, test scores), student attitudes, and overall student satisfaction toward distance education. Proponents of distance education contend that distance education is "as good as" traditional education. In other words, learning occurs as much in distance education as it does in traditional education. However, is this really so? Does distance education work better for some students as opposed to others? Does student assessment in distance education differ from that in the traditional classroom? (Phipps and Merisotis 1999). There are the opponents as well as proponents of distance education. Proponents of distance education say that many simply would not be able to get a degree without distance education—the full-time police officer, the mother of four, or the individual living in a rural area approximately 100-200 miles away from any educational institution. Many individuals desperately need distance education courses because they have jobs, families and civic responsibilities. (Fox, 1998). Opponents of distance education may agree that it is possible for some learning to occur through this medium, but that isn't enough. They stress focusing on the fullness of learning (Fox, 1998). Fox stated that only theories, not proof, allude to the fact that distance education student's education is not worthy of a degree. He stated that he found no actual evidence from a single study, from distance education teaching experiences, or from students who have provided proof of such a deficiency. Fox, along with other distance education supporters, students and professionals support the idea that distance education classes are good enough and feel that students are not sacrificing an on-campus education in order to get an education through distance education.

Souder (1993) conducted a natural experiment that compared traditional students and distance education students in management of technology master's degree programs. Results indicate that distance learners should not be viewed as disadvantaged in their learning experiences. Further, distance learners can perform as well as or better than traditional learners

as measured by homework assignments, exams, and term papers. Equally important, as noted by researchers, is the fact that students in distance learning courses earned higher grades than those in the traditional classroom setting.

Gubernick and Ebeling (1997) stated that distance education students scored from five to ten percent higher on standardized achievement tests than did students in the traditional classroom setting. Conversely, as reported by other researchers, there are no significant differences in grades for distance education students versus traditional students (Freeman 1995; Mortensen 1995; McKissack (1997); Larry, S.T. (2006). Nazirul Amin Gash (2010) also found there was no significant difference in the creativity and Achievement Motivation of B.Ed. pass outs who were trained through formal and distance modes of learning. Magugula and Ngwenya (2004) found that off-campus learners tended to perform better in the academic studies than the on-campus learners. Michael K. Swan and Diane H. Jackman (2011) found that receiving instruction by distance education resulted in no differences in GPA for all students at either remote site or host site. However, Thompson (1984) and Moore (1976) found that distance learners are at a disadvantage in their learning experience, especially in the evaluation of their cognitive performance.

From a research perspective Modernization is important facet of student development to understand because of the recognized links between Modernization and social change, as well as the development of critical thinking skills.

M.S. Bhat and Nahida Naseem (2012) revealed that there was a significant mean difference between male and female higher secondary students on composite score of Modernization. The mean difference favored female higher secondary students. H. M. Malik and, M.A. Malik (2011) found that undergraduate students of rural areas were less modernized than the urban undergraduate students. Toshniwal, S. R. (1991) found that female students have more modern ideas than male students in all three faculties. There was no much faculty wise difference in the Modernization and thoughts related to it. Arts and commerce female and male students showed the same extent of Modernization. Kumari, S. (1990) conducted a study to examine relationship between Modernization in reference to socio-economic status, self-concept and level of aspiration of Undergraduate boys (UGB) and undergraduate girls (UGG). The findings of the study revealed that UGG were more modern than UGB and they differ

significantly in respect of all the areas of modernity i.e., raise in socio-economic status, social concept and level of aspirations. Significant difference was found in the Modernization outlook among students but increase in the level of aspiration showed negated effect on Modernization. Angad Singh (1988) conducted a study to explore the attitude of undergraduate students towards Modernization and its relationship with their academic achievement, intelligence and socio-economic status. The results of the study revealed that female undergraduates and Hindu undergraduates had more modernized outlook than male undergraduates and Muslim undergraduates respectively.

From a practice perspective, higher education institutions are being called upon to create an informed citizenry capable of understanding and addressing a myriad of social issues.

Realizing the importance of education in Modernization and the increasing competition between formal and non-formal systems of education, the investigator felt interested in undergoing a comparative study on Modernization in distance and formal mode of learners. The study is also important as it will help us to know the impact of daily interaction with diverse peers on their Modernization levels.

III. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To assess and compare the level of Modernization of Formal Mode Learners (FML) and Distance Mode Learners (DML).

IV. HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses were formulated on the basis of objectives.

1. There is no significant difference among Distance Mode Learners (DML) and Formal Mode Learners (FML) on the Socio-Religious dimension of Modernization.
2. There is no significant difference among Distance Mode Learners (DML) and Formal Mode Learners (FML) on the Marriage dimension of Modernization.
3. There is no significant difference among Distance Mode Learners (DML) and Formal Mode Learners (FML) on the Position of Women dimension of Modernization.
4. There is no significant difference among Distance Mode Learners (DML) and Formal Mode Learners (FML) on the Education dimension of Modernization.
5. There is no significant difference among Distance Mode Learners (DML) and Formal Mode Learners (FML) on the composite Score of Modernization.

V. METHODS AND MATERIAL

A. SAMPLE

The sample was drawn randomly from the M.Ed. students enrolled with the formal system and the non-formal (distance mode) systems of education of University of Kashmir. The sample consisted of 60% (163) M.Ed. students from the formal system enrolled with Department of Education University of Kashmir, Govt. College of Education Srinagar and South Campus Anantnag and 60% (237) M.Ed. students enrolled with Directorate of Distance Education University of Kashmir who belong to Srinagar and Anantnag Districts.

B. TOOL

R.S. Singh's Modernizationscale (1999). This is a 32 item scale with 6 point rating. It measures Modernization on four dimensions: Socio-Religious, Marriage, Position of women and Education.

C. PROCEDURE

For the accomplishment of objective set forth for the present study R.S. Singh's Modernization scale was administered to M.Ed. students enrolled with Distance and Formal systems of learning in University of Kashmir and strictly in accordance with the instruction provided in the manual questionnaire. The scoring of R.S. Singh's Modernization scale provided raw scores for four dimensions, viz, Socio Religious, Marriage, Position of women and Education for each unit of the sample.

The hypotheses formulated for the study were tested by various statistical methods including Mean, Percentage, t-test etc. in order to analyze data and to find out characteristic differences if any between different sub groups on various dimensions of Modernization.

The M.Ed. students enrolled with the Department of Distance Education were administered the questionnaires at the time of their first contact Programme at all the three study centers, viz, Department of Distance Education University of Kashmir, B.Ed. Department of Education University of Kashmir and Government College of Education M.A Road Srinagar. Immediately after this the questionnaires were administered to the M.Ed. students enrolled with the formal system of education in University of Kashmir at Department of Education

University of Kashmir, Government College of Education M.A Road Srinagar and University of Kashmir South campus Anantnag.

The scoring of the questionnaires was done as per the guidelines provided in the manuals and the scores were subjected to the statistical treatment to make necessary conclusions.

VI. ANALYSIS OF DATA

Figures and Tables

Fig.1: Showing the percentage distribution of Distance Mode Learners (DML) on various levels of Modernization

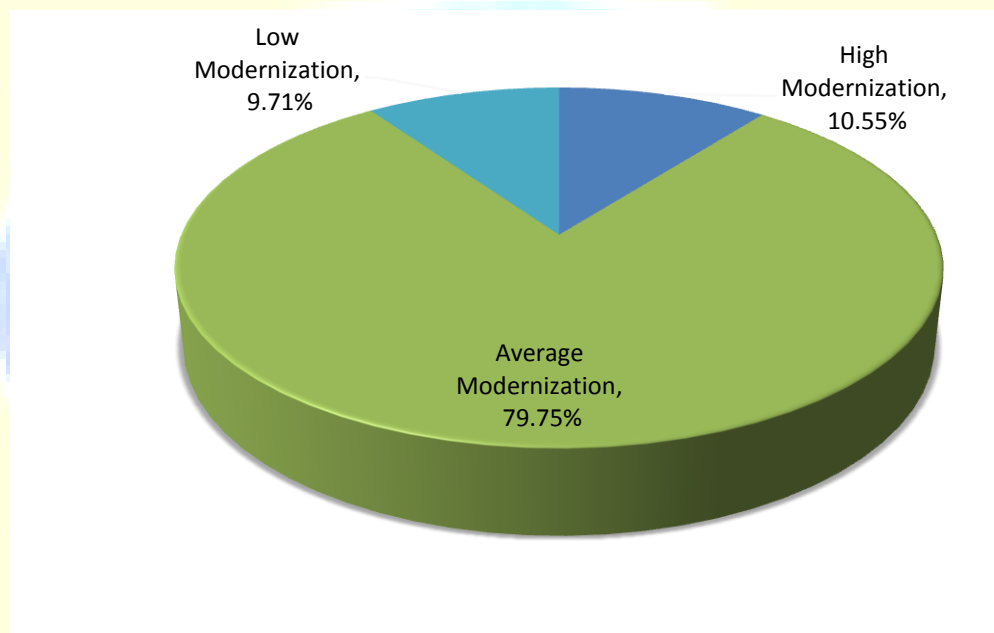


Fig.2: Showing the percentage distribution of Formal Mode Learners (FML) on various levels of Modernization.

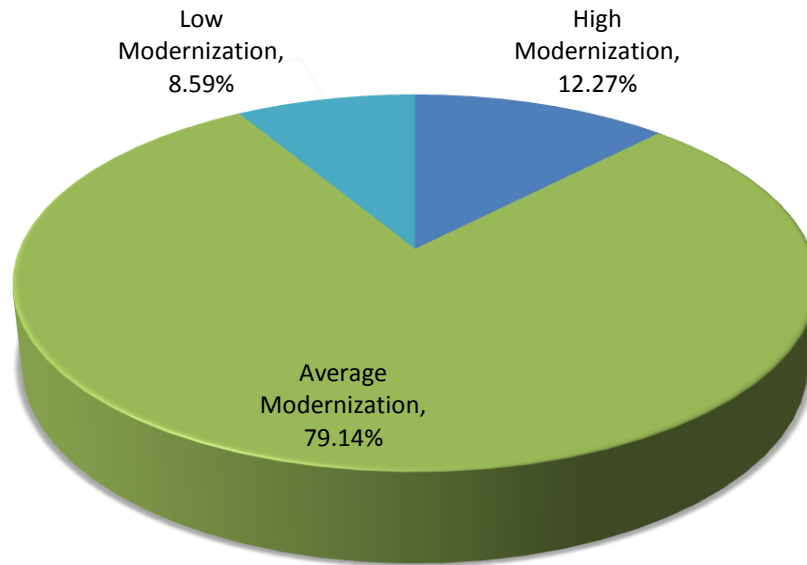
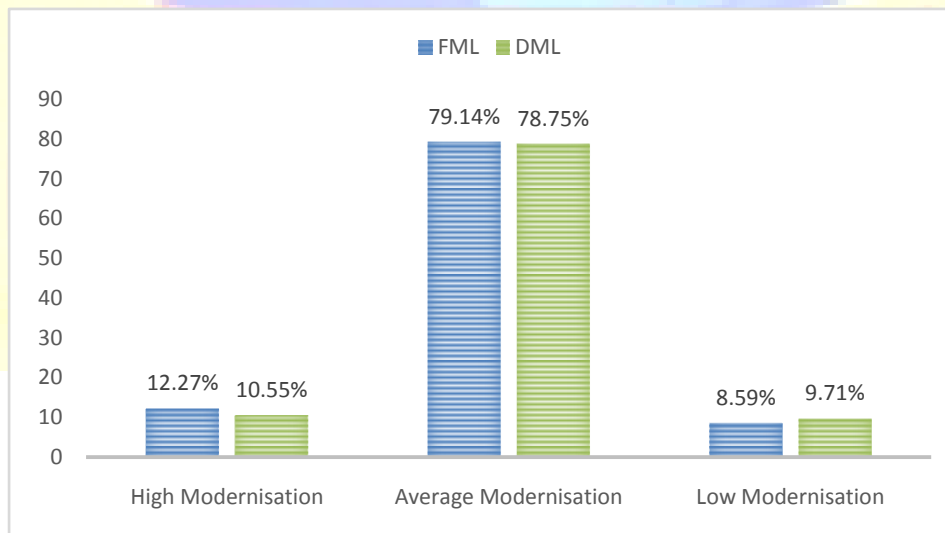


Fig.3: Comparison of Distance Mode Learners (DML) and Formal Mode Learners (FML) on percentage distribution of Modernizationscores.



FML: Formal Mode Learners

DML: Distance Mode Learners

Table 1: Comparison of Distance Mode Learners and Formal Mode Learners on various dimensions of Social Awareness

Dimension	N (DML)	N (FML)	Mean (DML)	Mean (FML)	S.D (DML)	S.D (FML)	t-value	Level of significance
Socio-religious	237	163	25.52	25.72	4.68	4.61	0.43	Not significant
Marriage	237	163	33.04	33.42	4.85	4.97	0.78	Not Significant
Position of Women	237	163	31.31	31.42	8.12	8.39	0.13	Not significant
Education	237	163	30.27	30.99	6.37	6.34	1.13	Not significant
Composite score	237	163	120.13	121.55	15.52	15.65	0.89	Not significant

Mean, S.D, t-value and level of significance of Distance Mode Learners (DML) and Formal Mode Learners (FML) on various dimensions of Social Awareness.

The computed t-values show that there is no significant difference among Distance Mode Learners and Formal Mode Learners on Socio Religious, Marriage, Position of women and Education dimension of Modernization. This indicates that the hypotheses numbers 1,2, 3, 4 and 5 are accepted.

VII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Descriptive analysis (based on Fig. 1, Fig. 2 and Fig. 3)

Social Awareness among Distance Mode Learners (DML) and Formal Mode Learners (FML).

1. After applying percentage statistics it was revealed that reveals that 79.75% Distance Mode Learners have average Modernization, 10.55% Distance Mode Learners have high Modernization and 9.71% Distance Mode Learners (DML) have low Modernization as indicated by the scores on R.S Singh's Modernization scale.
2. The study also found that that 79.14% Formal Mode Learners (FML) have average Modernization, 12.27% Formal Mode Learners have high Modernization and 8.59% Formal Mode Learners have low Modernization as indicated by the scores on R.S Singh's Modernization scale.

B. Comparative Analysis(based on table 1)

1. The study indicated that Distance Mode Learners (DML) and Formal Mode Learners (FML) do not differ significantly on the Socio-Religious dimension of Modernization.
2. The study revealed that there is no significant difference among Distance Mode Learners (DML) and Formal Mode Learners (FML) on the Marriage dimension of Modernization.
3. It was found that there is no significant difference among Distance Mode Learners (DML) and Formal Mode Learners (FML) on the Position of Women dimension of Modernization.
4. The findings revealed that there is no significant difference among Distance Mode Learners (DML) and Formal Mode Learners (FML) on the Education dimension of Modernization.
5. It was also found that there is no significant difference among Distance Mode Learners (DML) and Formal Mode Learners (FML) on the Composite scores of Modernization.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The results are completely in line with the investigations carried by Michael K. Swan and Diane H. Jackman (2011), Gash, N. A. (2010), Larry, S.T (2006), Mckissack, C.E. (1997), Souder (1993). All these studies revealed that there is no significant difference between distance and formal modes of learners. Hence studying in a distance mode of learning or formal mode of learning doesn't affect the Modernization of students.

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