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LEARNING GOAL ORIENTATION OF PROSPECTIVE SECONDARY TEACHERS IN RELATION WITH SOME VARIABLES

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This study was conducted to explore the level of learning goal orientation of prospective secondary teachers in relation to their gender, area of residence, study experience and academic streams. Learning goal orientation scale (LGOS) containing 24 items was used to gather the data. There were 282 randomly selected prospective secondary teachers in the sample. The result of the study showed that the level of learning goal orientation of prospective secondary teachers was moderate. Only 30% prospective secondary teachers scored above than 70% on the LGOS. A significant difference was found in the level of learning goal orientation of prospective secondary teachers in the context of their gender, area of residence, and study experience, while there was no significant difference in the level of learning goal orientation of prospective secondary teachers in the context of their academic streams.

INTRODUCTION

Goal orientation theory is based on the assumption that human behavior is purposeful and regulated by individuals' goals. The concept of goal-orientation provides an explanation for the approaches, responses, and reasons that individuals use to engage in achievement activities (Ames 1992). Goal orientation refers to the psychological dispositions towards achieving one's objective (Ahmed 2008, p. 241). In the context of learning process, goal-orientation can be defined as a unique set of student's characteristics which describe why a learner adopts a certain goal of a learning task and how much eager to accomplish it. Dweck and Leggett (1988) have described two types of goal orientations that individuals pursue in learning contexts. The first

is learning goal, where students focus on mastery of a task and have the desire to acquire new skills. Second is performance goal orientation. Performance goal orientation has been split into two subtypes i.e. performance approach orientation and performance avoidance orientation (Middleton and Midgley 1997). In performance approach orientation, learners' main concern is how competent they look in front of others, and focus on receiving favourable judgments of ability from others. Whereas in performance avoidance goal orientation, students attempt to avoid unfavourable judgments of capabilities and looking incompetent and may stay away from challenging tasks (Elliot & Harackiewicz 1996).

Individuals having learning goal orientation show more persistence towards efficiently accomplishing the task, increasing their competence and mastering whatever they are dealing with at that time. Learning goal orientation is related with student's internal motivation to achieve new knowledge and skills for self-improvement (Brett & Vandewalle 1999). Individuals pursue learning goal orientation are likely to evaluate their performance relative to their own previous achievement, and measure success in term of personal progress. Individuals having learning goal orientation tend to perceive negative feedbacks as valuable information on how to improve and they take failure as a learning experience, not as a sign of insufficient ability (Dweck and Leggett 1988).

This thought pattern is likely to be associated with a greater sense of personal control over the outcomes of one's efforts; since individuals concern with only their own selves when they set the goals and strive for achievement. Thus, challenging learning tasks become an opportunity for learning goal oriented learners to develop their knowledge and skills. Individuals with strong learning goal orientation see efforts as the means to success, and are therefore likely to be persistent when facing obstacles on their way to achievement.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Studies have shown that learning goal orientation is positively associated with self-regulation strategies, self-efficacy, adaptive learning behaviours, meta-cognition and academic achievement (Middleton & Midgley 1997; Mattern 2005; and Coutinho 2007). Hence, it would be beneficial for a student to be learning goal oriented rather than just learning for good grade or marks in his/her class. To orient our students towards learning goal orientation, it is important to familiarise the teachers with learning goal orientation first. This step should be taken from the beginning of teacher training programme. This innovative step would be fruitful in making teacher training programme more qualitative and meaningful too. Only those teachers can train, motivate and well familiarise their students towards learning goal orientation, who pursue this approach of learning themselves. To serve this purpose, awareness and training programmes are necessary. Before organising such type of programmes, some basic questions have to be solved by research work.

There are some questions that have not been answered yet. Ablard and Lipschultz (1998) reported that female students were more orientated towards learning goals than male students. However, Shelly (2009) reported that boys had high level of learning goal orientation than girls. Thus, it could not be concluded that whether students differ in level of learning goal orientation on the ground of their gender differences. Not a single study was found to answer the impact of area of residence, study experience and different academic streams on the level of learning goal orientation. So, this study was conducted to find out the real picture of our prospective secondary teacher's level of learning goal orientation and to answer if there is any difference in the level of learning goal orientation on the ground of their gender, area of residence, study experience and academic stream's differences.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.To describe the level of learning goal orientation of prospective secondary teachers.

2.To find out the differences in the level of learning goal-orientation of prospective secondary teachers in the concern of their gender, academic streams, area of residence and the study experience (Under Graduate and Post Graduate).

HYPOTHESES

1.There will be no significant difference between the male and female prospective secondary teachers' obtained average scores on LGOS.

2.There will be no significant difference between the urban and rural prospective secondary teachers' obtained average scores on LGOS.

3.There will be no significant difference between obtained average scores on LGOS of the P.G. and U.G. study experience holder prospective secondary teachers.

4.There will be no significant difference between the obtained average scores on LGOS of different streams (general, science and commerce)' prospective secondary teachers.

METHOD

The present study falls in the domain of descriptive study. Survey method was used in this study.

Population and sample of the study

The students of B.Ed. colleges are called as prospective secondary teachers in this study. All students of B.Ed. colleges of the Ahmadabad district of Gujarat were the population of the present study. Cluster sampling method was used to select the sample. 282 B.Ed. students were included in the study from four randomly selected B.Ed. colleges of Ahmedabad district of Gujarat. There were 158 female prospective secondary teachers and 124 male prospective secondary teachers in the sample. Out of 282

participants, 74 prospective secondary teachers from urban area and 108 from rural area in the sample. There were 186 from general, 43 from science and 53 commerce streams' prospective secondary teachers in the sample. There were 133 Post Graduate (P.G.) and 149 Under Graduate (U.G.) study experience holder prospective secondary teachers in the sample.

Tool

To know the prospective secondary teachers' learning goal orientation, 'Learning Goal Orientation Scale (LGOS)' constructed and validated by researcher in Guajarati language was used. There were 24 items (14 positive and 10 negative items) in the LGOS. The split-half reliability of the scale was .80 and the Cronback Alpha reliability value was .81. Its content and concurrent validity were established.

COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The researcher visited the randomly selected four B.Ed. colleges to collect the data. After explaining the purpose of study, the prospective secondary teachers were requested to respond to the scale. Responded scale sheets were collected and arranged by the researcher.

Figure 1
Frequency histogram for learning goal orientation

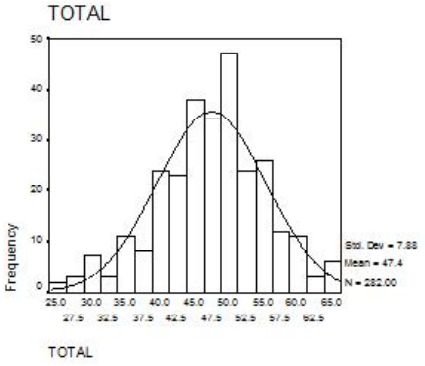

Table 1
Description of the Data

Point of description	value	Point of description	value
Total number of participant	282	Skewness	-.281
Mean	47.4	Kurtosis	.155
Median	48	Range	40
Mode	48	Minimum Score	26
SD	7.88	Maximum Score	66

Table 2
Mean, SD, and t-ratio in reference to gender

Gender	Number of prospective secondary teachers	Mean	SD	t-ratio
Female	158	49.92	7.02	6.58
Male	124	44.11	7.76	

Table 3
Mean, SD, and t-ratio in reference to area of residence

Area of residence	Number of prospective secondary teachers	Mean	SD	t-ratio
Urban	174	46.24	8.07	3.10
Rural	108	49.19	7.25	

Table 4
Mean, SD, and t-ratio in reference to level of study experience

Area of residence	Number of prospective secondary teachers	Mean	SD	t-ratio
P.G.	133	48.95	7.95	3.25
U.G.	149	45.95	7.56	

Table 5
Mean and SD of prospective secondary teachers in reference of academic streams

Academic streams	Number of prospective secondary teachers	Mean	SD
General	186	47.00	7.96
Science	43	48.21	5.23
Commerce	53	47.96	9.31

Table 6
Mean difference of prospective secondary teachers' LGO in reference of their academic streams

Source of variance	Sum of squire	df	Mean of squire	*F*- ratio
Between academic streams (ssbgs)	74.34	2	37.17	.60
Within academic streams (sswgs)	17395.04	279	62.35	

Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were used to analyse the data. Range of the scores, mean, median, mode, S.D., skewness, and kurtosis values were calculated in descriptive statistics. *F*-ratio and t-ratio were used to examine the hypotheses of the study. All calculations were done with the help of Ms-Excel and SPSS software programmes. There were four hypotheses tested in the study. The significance of differences was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

The first objective of the study was to find out the level of learning goal orientation of prospective secondary teachers. To serve this purpose the LGOS was administered to the sample. The responses on a four point scale, agree, partially agree, partially disagree and disagree, were scored respectively as 3, 2, 1, and 0. There are 24 items in the scale and the maximum score for each item was three. For each prospective secondary teacher it was possible to score 0 to 72 and 36 could be the average score for each prospective secondary teacher on LGOS.

The analysis of the data showed that the mean and SD value of learning goal orientation scores of prospective secondary teachers were 47.37 and 7.88, respectively. The value of skewness and kurtosis were -.28 and .155 respectively. The value of skewness was showing slightly negative skewness of the data. It means the frequency of high scorer prospective secondary teachers are more than less score achiever in respect of mean score of the data on LGOS. The value of kurtosis showed that the frequency of the data was leptokurtosis.

The result of the study showed that the range of achieved score on LGOS by prospective secondary teachers was 26 to 66. About 30% prospective secondary teachers scored above 70% on the LGOS. There were less than 11% prospective secondary teacher who could achieve more than 80% score and just 1.1% could

achieve more than 90% on LGOS. There was not a single prospective secondary teacher who could achieve 100% score on LGOS. On the basis of above result it was revealed that the level of learning goal orientation of prospective secondary teachers was moderate.

The analysis of the data revealed that the mean score (mean=49.92, S.D. =7.02) of female prospective teachers on LGOS was significantly ($t= 6.58$; $p< 0.01$) higher than male prospective teacher's mean score (mean= 44.11, S.D. =7.76) on LGOS. Means, it was found that there was a significant difference between the level of learning goal orientation of female and male prospective secondary teachers. Female prospective secondary teachers were having significantly higher level of learning goal orientation than male prospective secondary teachers. Ablard and Lipschultz (1998) also reported that female students were showing more orientation towards learning goals than male students.

Mean, SD and t-ratio were calculated to test the significance of difference between the urban and rural prospective secondary teachers' average scores on LGOS. The analysis of the data revealed that the mean score (mean=49.19, S.D. =7.25) of rural prospective teachers on LGOS was significantly ($t=3.10$; $p< 0.01$) higher than urban prospective teacher's mean score (mean=44.11, S.D. =7.76) on LGOS. Thus, null hypothesis-2 was rejected and it revealed that rural prospective secondary teachers were having significantly higher level of learning goal orientation than urban prospective secondary teachers.

The t-test was calculated to test the significance of difference between the P.G. and U.G. study experience holder prospective secondary teachers' average scores on LGOS. The analysis of the data revealed that the mean score (mean=48.95, S.D. =7.95) of P. G. study experience holder prospective teachers on LGOS was significantly ($t=3.25$; $p< 0.01$) higher than U.G. study

experience holder prospective secondary teacher's mean score (mean=45.95, S.D. =7.56) on LGOS. Thus, null hypothesis-3 was rejected and it revealed that P. G. study experience holder prospective secondary teachers were having significantly higher level of learning goal orientation than U.G. experience holder prospective secondary teachers.

F-ratio was calculated to test the significance of difference between the obtained average scores on LGOS of different streams' (general, science and commerce) prospective secondary teachers. Analysis of the data revealed that there was no significant difference (F=.60; $p > 0.05$) between the mean scores of general (mean=47.00, S.D. =7.96), science (mean=48.21, S.D. =5.23) and commerce (mean=47.96, S.D. =9.31) streams' prospective secondary teachers' average scores on LGOS. Hence, null hypothesis 4 was accepted.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of above result it can be concluded that the level of learning goal orientation of prospective secondary teachers was moderate. So, it is the need of time to motivate the learners and make them more inclined towards learning goal orientation and training programmes are needed to increase the level of learning goal orientation of prospective secondary teachers. A healthy learning environment and facilities of learning resources should be provided to prospective secondary teachers. Teacher educators are also advised to motivate and select such type of teaching strategies that prepare their students for learning to achieve the mastery on a certain topic of learning rather than just secure a good grade in examination.

The result of the study shows that there were significant difference in the level of learning goal orientation of prospective secondary teachers in relation with their gender, area of residence and level of study experience. Result of the study shows that male

prospective secondary teachers are less oriented towards their learning goals than female prospective secondary teachers. So, special attention is needed for male prospective secondary teachers in training and awareness programmes to make them learning goal oriented. In the same way, urban and just U.G. study experience holder prospective secondary teachers are also need special attention in orientation and training programmes. Teacher educators are also advised to be aware about the different types of learning goal orientation and its effect on the quality of learning process. They should consciously motivate their students towards learning goal orientation by their activities, teaching strategies and organizing special training programmes.

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