



ORIGINAL ARTICLE

The Impact of Informal Education on Development Of Functional Literacy Among Children And Adults

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to investigate "Impact of Informal Education on Development of Functional Literacy among Children and Adults". The study was conducted in the city of Karachi. This study is experimental in nature. This study consisted on 160 sample size, in which 80 was adults and 80 children were included. Both groups further divided equally into control and experimental groups. Pre-test was conducted before the experiment. The experiment duration was 6 month in which experimental groups of children and adults were part of the experiment. After the lap of six months, assessment of the sample was made as post-test to measure the impact of informal education on functional literacy development. The self-made achievement test was designed as a research instrument, which based on four different functions namely listening, speaking, reading, writing and numeric skills. The validity and reliability of test interment was checked before use. The normality test of data related to every skill was applied to check the normality. The statistical method of mean, standard deviation, skewness, correlation, and t-test were applied. The data was further analyzed graphically. Result of the study indicated that improvement was noted in the performance of both experimental groups (children and adults) as compare to the performance of control group (children without receiving informal education during the experiment). It was also noted that when researcher compared the result of both experimental groups result showed that adult's experimental group showed remarkable improvement as compared to children's experimental group. On the basis of the result, study concluded that informal education can play very important role in functional literacy development and purposeful informal learning environment can increase literacy skills of every individual.

Keywords: Informal education, Functional literacy, Development, Children , Adults.

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INTRODUCTION

Education performs a fundamental function in human development. It is the basic right of every entity. Education in its common term and understand as a form of learning in which the basic information, way of life, and habits of a nation or humans are being transferred from one generation to the next. According to Anthony T. Lobo (1974), etymologically the word Education bases on two words "E" mean "out" and "ducere" mean to lead out. According to Grundy, S. (1987), John Dewey in the 20th century defined education as education is a process of living through a continuous change by reinforcement, reconstruction of experiences. According to Thomas J. La Belle (1982), every individual is engaged in learning experiences at all times. This takes place through norms, culture, formal learning, informal learning or research.

There are three main types of education:

Formal learning or formal education normally delivers by qualified teachers in a methodical deliberate way. Informal learning, which characteristically takes place naturally as part of some other activity. It is a

broad term that is used for different types of education that occurs outside of educational institute's setting. (Olson, J. K, 2009). Informal education is unplanned learning process which become part of our conscious in our leisure time, with peer, or at home (Halliday-Wynes & Beddie, 2009)

The third type of learning is called Non-formal learning. As remarked by Ted W. Ward (1974), an exhaustive and standard meaning of non-formal education is not yet accessible in like manner utilization. It generally involves individual's interest-based courses, lecture on social rights organized by a trade union, workshops, community courses, conferences, seminars, and short courses (Candy, P. C. 1991).

The fundamental aim of education is to make people literate. There are two main types of literacy, basic literacy makes student learn, to read or write. Individuals who can read and write are called primary literate and the person who have erudite some reading and writing, and also know well enough for their work are called functional literate. Functional literacy is more significant than some people may believe. It is the foundation to a children scholastic, potentially, proficient achievement.

As Stromquest, N. (2005), said that an individual who doesn't have essential ability to recognize, and knowledge of the simple reading material, learners can't absorb information. They are unable to understand general literature for functional use or satisfaction. These learners are at a great difficulty in all areas of learning, from childhood and all the way through their lives. Learner (even children or adult) with weak reading and numeracy abilities often withdraw from school (Wernstin and Goetz, 1988).

According to Samuelsson (2005), in human life, education, is the most important element. First one is functional literacy,

Hodkinson (2003) said, that the role of the informal education in basic learning of a child is an important area in education. Informal learning is different from other two types of learning. It is an unplanned ongoing learning process. It includes experience in language development, image about socialization, provides information about culture, religion etc. There is not particular planned curriculum, examination system and educational institution for informal learning.

Informal learning is the first step of learning process. It starts from home environment. Informal learning plays very important role to develop functional literacy (Conlon, T.J 2004).

The phrase functional literacy came in common use in nineteenth century. When the UNESCO was addressing the short of functional literacy skills among huge fraction of the population of young people was out in large numbers in developing countries.

Statement of the Problem:

The present study has been designed to investigate **"Impact of Informal Education on Development of Functional Literacy among Children and Adults."**

Scope of the Study:

The present study is useful in many respects. In the first place it focuses on the use of the informal education for the development of functional literacy. The finding of this study will provide useful information for family, community and other informal agencies about the importance of their role in functional literacy development.

Objectives of the Study:

The objectives of the study are as following:

- To evaluate the effect of informal education on four functional learning skills (communication skills, reading skills, writing and numerical skills) .
- To analyse the effect of informal education on children's overall functional literacy skills.
- To evaluate the effect of informal education on adults of experimental group's overall functional literacy skills.
- To analyze the different level of functional literacy improvement ratio as a result of informal education among children and adults.

Hypotheses:

The following Hypotheses were formulated for the study:

- Informal education has a significant impact on functional learning skills.
- There will be a positive effect of informal education on overall functional literacy skills of children of the experimental group.
- There will be a positive effect of informal education on adult's functional literacy skills of the experimental group.
- There will be a significant difference between children and adults' post scores of the experimental group, when measurements made on total, listening, speaking, reading, writing and numeric scores.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Geographical Distribution of the Population:

Informal education and functional literacy both are the factors which are related to every individual. Therefore, the research statement is related to every individual. In this experimental research the universe of the study is, less educated or dropouts from formal school system at a basic level. This is the focus of the study. Who are living in servant colony of the University of Karachi. In sample size 160 adults and children included both genders (male and female). The sample was divided into two main groups 80 children and 80 adults. It was further divided into control (40) and experimental (40) groups. Ages of adults are 26 to 40 years and children as a sample of this study are between the ages of 5 to 16 years.

Research Design:

This research design of the study was based on experimental research method.

Instrument of the Study:

The instrument of the study was self-made achievement test. Reliability and validity checked according to rules and regulation.

RESULTS

This part explains analysis and interpretation of the results obtained during this study. The data were collected with pre and post test of the sample after experimental study to evaluate the impact of informal education on functional literacy development among children and adults. At first instance, the normality of the data were assessed through normality test after that descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation and coefficient of variation were calculated for pre and post-test scores obtained by children and adults in both experimental and control groups.

Normality of the Data:

This part of the chapter deals with the normality of data obtained during this study. Normality tests for sample pre and post-test total scores of control and experimental groups. It can be seen that P-values of Shapiro-Wilk test for both pre and post-test total scores for control and experimental groups are greater than 0.05, this confirms the normality assumption.

Descriptive Statistics of the Data:

At part of the article, descriptive statistics of the data such as mean, standard deviation and coefficient of variation were calculated for pre and post-test scores obtained by children and adults in both experimental and control groups.

Table

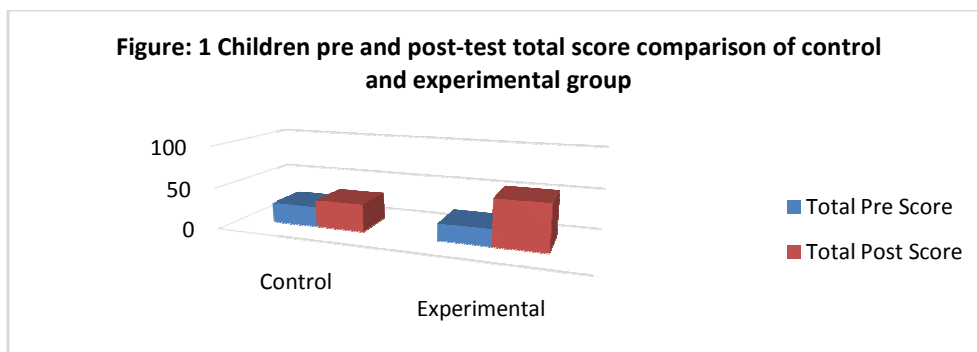
Descriptive Statistics for Children Pre and Post-Test Total Scores of Control Group

	N	Mean	S. D	Skewness	Coefficient of variation (%)
Total Pre Score	40	24.35	4.9797	0.536	20.45
Total Post Score	40	33.125	4.53017	-0.194	13.67

Table

Descriptive Statistics for Children Pre and Post-Test Total Scores of Experimental Group

	N	Mean	S. D	Skewness	Coefficient of variation (%)
Total Pre Score	40	20.22	6.1121	0.090	30.22
Total Post Score	40	54.97	12.8172	-0.651	23.31



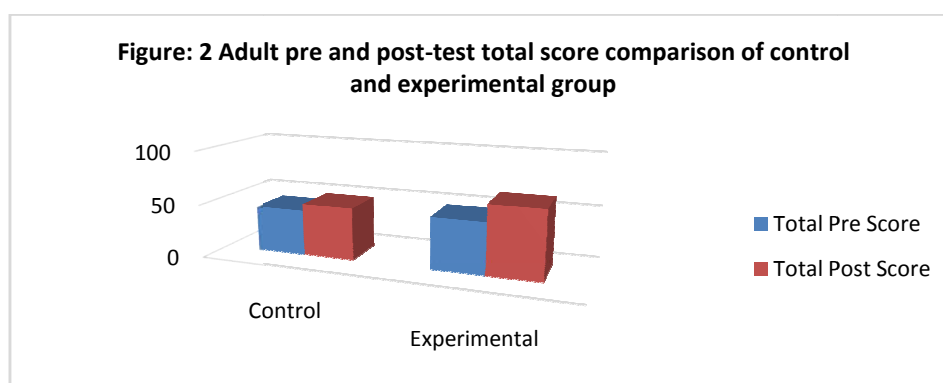
Overall result concludes that the experimental group children's performance was better and study concluded that functional literacy skills have improved when we used informal education for learning.

Table
Descriptive Statistics for Adult Pre and Post-Test
Total Scores of Control Group

	N	Mean	S. D	Skewness	Coefficient of variation (%)
Total Pre Score	40	42.87	5.6893	0.151	13.27
Total Post Score	40	49.17	5.8699	0.191	11.93

Table
Descriptive Statistics for Adult Pre and Post-Test
Total Scores of Experimental Group

	N	Mean	S. D	Skewness	Coefficient of variation (%)
Total Pre Score	40	48.10	9.6018	0.469	19.96
Total Post Score	40	63.80	9.0389	0.707	14.16



Overall result concludes that the experimental group adults' performance was better and it can be said that functional literacy skills have improved when researcher used informal education for learning.

DISCUSSION

The aim of the study was to find out the impact of informal education on functional literacy skills among children and adults, within the framework of four basic literacy skills researcher tried to find out how informal learning has made an impact on functional skills e.g. conversational, reading, writing and numeric functional skills. The results of this study have demonstrated a significant correlation between both variables. This seems logical that our surrounding environmental situation has an impact on our literacy skills. Informal learning is very important as many studies showed that informal learning may be defined as the almost learning by everyday living. To live is to learn (Findsen& Formosa 2011).

It is the form of education which based on those learning experiences in which individ is self-directed with his/her interest and learn without pressure just as watching T.V, reading a book, working on hobby, playing with peer group, community activities. There are lots of learning opportunities in informal learning through sharing their skills with others, ANHLC (2012) (Association of Neighborhood Houses and Learning Centers, 2012), MacKean& Abbott-Chapman (2011) Informal learning is flexible and easy to adapt learning experiences to it. Men's personality is have been identified and affected much from informal learning (Misan, 2008). Lombardi (2007), said that some have used term "authentic learning" to define the learning experiences which come from informal or real-life experiences or the natural learning (Scevak& Cantwell, 2007). However, now a days, academics try to include the experiences of the increasingly formal education are all the time more seek to incorporate informal learning, (Mantei&Kervin 2009).

As the study show that informal learning has an impact on literacy skills. Its utilization the finding shows that as we give importance to formal education, informal learning is also important. According to Halliday-Wynes, S., &Beddie, F. (2009). We may classify learning as formal, non-formal or informal. Formal education which takes place within the formal educational institution, non-formal education mix up of formal and informal and informal education is a huge part of our learning process where learning occurs at the workplace, in leisure time and at home. Learning takes place with many forms and different context. Browse, E, Bronwyn, J. (2013) define basic education of individuals in their informal learning environment, which foster individual's curiosity to learn new things.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Informal education is one of the significant type of education. Educational programs should be introduced for uneducated parents to aware them about how to improve literacy skills of their children and how to meet the unique needs of every child. Now a day's social media is a part of everyday life. Social media programs should be designed by the government to provide awareness related to the importance of functional literacy skills and its improvement. It's also a good mean for adult education.

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