A Study on the Preparation of Profile of NIOS Learners Enrolled in 2005-06

A report

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Introduction

The present study attempts to prepare the profile of learners enrolled in NIOS in the academic year 2005-06 for Secondary/Senior Secondary courses in order to know their social and educational background at the time of taking admission in NIOS courses and to assess the effectiveness of the courses of study pursued by them with the view to help the prospective learners to acquire independence and autonomy to make their own decisions about the subjects of study, contemporary topics, life skills and the current issues of which they would be able to make use of. The learners who have undergone the experiences to acquire knowledge and skills during their courses of study in the NIOS would be independently assessing the aspects of various types of learning whether it was a better way or not.
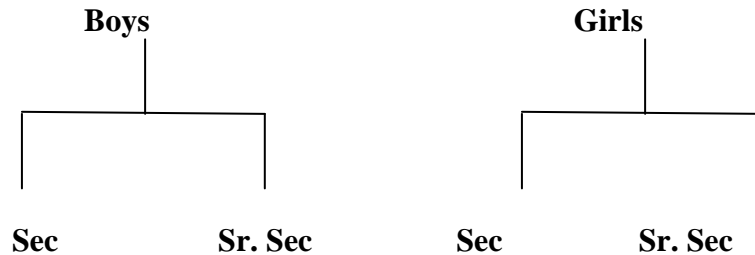
Objectives

The objectives of the study are to-

- Identify the educational status of learners and to know the causes of drop outs, if any, before taking admission in NIOS courses.
- Know the motivating factors of the learners for NIOS courses of study.
- Ascertain the perception of students about their learning experiences in NIOS courses.
- Find out the status of the completion of the courses of study undergone by the NIOS learners.

Methodology

Sampling: The study is basically confined to the selected learners of NIOS who had taken admission in secondary/senior secondary courses during the session 2005-06 in the NIOS Regional Centre of Delhi which covered Delhi NCR only. Based on the selection of random stratified sampling technique, list of all the learners enrolled during the year 2005-06 was obtained from System Analysis Programme (SAP) unit of NIOS and the learners were contacted on phone, informing them about the details of the study and also seeking their willingness to respond to the various items of the questionnaire

Delimitation

Through random stratified sampling, 500 learners were selected. Nearly 3000 learners, both boys and girls, admitted in the class 10th and 12th in the year 2005-06 in the Accredited Institutions of Delhi NCR region were contacted on phone during December, 2011 to February, 2012. Only 500 learners gave their consent to respond to the various questions given in the questionnaire which were later on sent to them along with the reply paid postage stamped envelopes. Till the end of May 2012, 435 learners sent their questionnaires or made the various responses given in the questionnaires on the telephone when they were reminded time and again to expedite the submission of the questionnaire. The respondents both males and females who responded to the questionnaire forwarded by the NIOS are mentioned as below

Boys   **Girls**

Sec   **Sr. Sec**   **Sec**   **Sr. Sec**

Tools

A questionnaire seeking information from the students admitted in 2005-06 In conformity with the objectives of the study was prepared and mailed to the students, in the self addressed and stamped envelopes in order to get back the questionnaire duly filled in by the learners. The data from the respondents has been tabulated in terms of learning outcomes. A questionnaire seeking responses from the learners contained information such as

- Whether they were drop outs or not?
- Reasons of drop outs.
- Their educational background at the time of admission at the NIOS.
- Information on the course of study undergone by them.
- Nature of study material, quality and type of PCP's, status of TMA.
- Motivational factors for taking admission in NIOS courses indicating their sources of information.

- Last but not the least about the characteristics and usefulness of NIOS courses of study such as flexibility in the choice of subjects, duration of completion of course of study, media and technology inputs to supplement print materials etc.

Findings and Suggestions

The present study is a preliminary effort on the preparation of profile of NIOS learners enrolled in the academic session 2005-06 to know their social, economic and educational background and the motivating factors to take admission in NIOS courses of study. It aims at ascertaining the effectiveness of the course of study and improves upon the quality of Self Learning Study Materials for the benefit of prospective learners.

- The findings of the study have many significant educational implications which might be useful for the NIOS Accredited Institutions, Academic Facilitators, Educational Planners and above all the learners around which the whole process revolves. There is also an attempt to know the impact of the courses of study at the Secondary/Senior Secondary level, pursued by the learners in the Open Distance Mode.

- The study was confined to the 500 selected learners, both boys and girls of the Accredited Institutions of the Regional Centre of NIOS at the National Capital Region of Delhi, to identify the educational status of learners and to know the causes of Drop-outs, before taking admission in the NIOS courses, ascertain the perception of learners about their experiences while undergoing NIOS courses and their status after completion of their studies from NIOS

- In conformity with the objectives of the research study and the responses of the framed questions, received from the target learners which were mainly in the form of closed questions, one can easily draw the conclusion that there is a need to launch a series of innovative ventures such as establishment of Learning Resources Centre to focus on the development activities in order to improve the process of On-the-Job competences of distance learners, promote values, integral to society and environment. Considering this back-drop, conducting an intensive research on the how to achieve the goals in the light of the learning needs and their prospects, is more and more relevant. NIOS could endeavour to meet the aspirations of the learners to achieve the desired aims and objectives. This could specifically pursue for the activities in the study material to learn

by doing. Learners could carry out the programmes and activities related to the content areas in their respective Accredited Institutions which are monitored by the Academic Facilitators, Tutors and the Coordinators with the Regional Centre of NIOS as the overall Coordinating agency.

- NIOS by offering courses at Open Basic Education, Secondary/ Senior Secondary and Vocational level provide golden opportunity to the learners so that they can become useful citizens by acquiring knowledge and skills and simultaneously contribute effectively.

- The responses from the learners are the strong indicators that majority of them had dropped out from the formal schooling due to various reasons such as social, economic and family circumstances and their enrolment in the NIOS courses of study was a boom which revolutionalized their lives for overall betterment.

Important observations on the profile of learners

The profile of NIOS learners as stated on page 7 of the research study reiterates the fact that the NIOS reaches out to prioritized client groups including the school drop outs, rural youth, urban poor both girls and women and ex service personal who are not able to receive the education in the formal schooling system. This is a clear indication that the open schooling system is serving the real life needs of a large segment of Indian populations where the learners of the all age groups have complete freedom to chose the subjects according to their own needs, interests and abilities. This authenticated by the facts from the research study that 70.80% of the learners represent poor and middle class and is successfully engaged in their profession after passing out from the various courses of NIOS and is very well placed in their lives. Some of the have indicated in the questionnaire that they are prepare to provide financial assistance to the poor learners who wish to enrolled themselves in NIOS courses of studies. The entire strategy of NIOS is consciously designed to reach the unreached and satisfy the needs of learners in terms of knowledge and skills.

Suggestions for consideration with regard to the various ICT inputs

Technology can unable the learners in open distance learning to receive the live interactive session in every corner of the country. Developments in multimedia and interactive technology can become effective and the learners can have the access to the instructional devices anytime and anywhere.

Relevant education that focuses on the development of employability, skills in order to reach to the far flung areas, covering both the backward and the under privileged sections of the society in nearly 6 lakhs villages with more than 72% of the Indian population, is today the virtual reality with the new methods. Technology has come to play a key role to deliver self-paced education through its delivery mode in making learning on "anytime anywhere" basis. Knowledge is now being delivered to the doorsteps of students. If use of ICT becomes a part of the pedagogy itself to engage both urban and rural based learners, teaching learning would not only be interesting but more effective as the learners would be better prepared for the world of tomorrow. Many hazardous and unsafe experiments can be demonstrated with the help of sophisticated modelling and simulations using digital media and Computer Aided Instructions. There is a greater need to use audio- video programmes to support and supplement the text materials.

These inputs would have deep impact on the teaching learning process and transform the profile of NIOS learners

With the above suggestions it is hoped that the prospective learners would be better equipped to achieve the set goals and contribute to the society as well as the fellow beings for bringing an overall socio economic prosperity in the country.