



PROFILING LEARNERS' LIVES TO ENHANCE OPEN DISTANCE LEARNING (ODL) ERGONOMICS IN DEMOCRATIZING EDUCATION FOR ALL

By:

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Background Presentation

- Country Introduction: Malaysia
- Malaysia Economy
 - Moving into developing Malaysia as K-Economy
 - 20-23 % National Budget is on Education since Independence 1957
- Education in Malaysia
 - Focus to strengthen Knowledge Society
 - Positioning to Become an Educational Hub for Higher Education
 - Life Long Learning Blueprint Published in Nov.2011

Open Distance Learning as a Catalyst towards Higher Education Growth

- eLearning, online learning, modular approach as possible strategy to democratize education to ALL prospective students
- More Adult learners today than before
- Adult learners are working professionals who have family, work, responsibilities and various educational background

Here Comes the Problem....

- ODL (online, elearning) comes with a national attrition or dropout rate between 35-45%
- Why are the adult learners withdrawal and dropout rate high with ODL?

Possible Solution

- This paper deals with the fundamental purpose of improving the ergonomics design for open distance learning/education which could improve students' learning performance and reduce dropout rates.
- The issue confronting learning ergonomics which design characteristics in the learning process and the environment is its influence and impact on learning performance adaptability.

Defining Learning Ergonomics

- Learning ergonomics refers to the interdependence of educational performance and educational design.
- It is about finding the “best fit” that promotes and improves the learning performance and ability of distance learners.
- In ODL, ergonomics can be defined as the science of educational performance and design to continuously promote and maximise learning potential among learners.
- It is geared to enhance learning, making the process much more student-centred, inviting, accessible and more supportive for the learners in all aspects of the ODL operating system and functionality.

3 Types of Learning Ergonomics

- **Physical Ergonomics:** i.e. Video conferencing facilities, the resource room; library facility; online resources; the learning space, the learning centres, the audio systems, lighting, heat, light, noise control:
- **Institutional Ergonomics:** i.e. Curriculum, Teaching & Learning Approaches, Institutional structures, policies and processes
- **Mind-Set Ergonomics:** i.e Mental processes that are involved within the ODL career that a student is engaged in. These include actual learning, thinking, analysing, perception, memory, reasoning and motor response, as they affect the learning within the tutor-learner-content interactions.

The Need to Understand & Profiling Our Adult Learners

- The promotion of research on students' narratives and perspectives on open distance learning and maximising the usage of information from their data and profiling of their lives can improve institutional, physical and mindset ergonomics in open distance learning.

Profiling Adult Learners

- The learners' lives and perspectives (profiles) provide a narrative stimulus, establish the importance of stories and provide a student's voice which functions as an illustrative example of their perspectives on their learning experiences.

Profiling Leads to Improvement on Learning Ergonomics

- This can result in possible improvements in course design, facilitation of meaningful and inviting learning experiences, student comfort and productivity; the accumulation of these attributes could reduce learning frustrations in the process of acquiring new knowledge.

Improving Learning Ergonomics

Provide:

- Clear and achievable expectations from participation in ODL programmes and courses
- Strengthening personal support
- Maintaining students' motivation and enhancing their staying power
- Removing unnecessary hurdles

Conclusion

- This in turn offers the institution and all the prominent stakeholders an opportunity to reflect and suggest improvements for better services for busy working learners. The information and knowledge provided from such research enables the institution, in particular, to customise and bring about changes to ODL that would promote student-centredness. But most important of all, the learners' profile and such narratives are apt to improve the learning experiences that would support study completion.



Thank You