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DEVELOPING AN INTERVENTION TO REDUCE COMPUTER ANXIETY OF HOME MAKERS

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ABSTRACT

Internet enhances women's economic empowerment, political participation and social inclusion through initiatives that support increased productivity and income generation, mobilization and accountability, as well as improved livelihoods and expansion of services. This research focused on developing an intervention to reduce computer anxiety of home makers. 22 home makers from Thoothukudi who voluntarily attended the computer introductory course were considered as a sample for this study. Findings of the study revealed that computer introductory course prepared by the investigator was very effective in reducing the computer anxiety of home makers.

KEYWORDS: Internet, Income generation, Mobilization, Accountability, etc.

INTRODUCTION :

Advances in information technology (IT) have changed our life-style. The use of computer and internet is a part of the daily activity. Use of the internet is integrated in our daily communication habit and has become a technology as ordinary as the telephone or television. Use of computerized information system, helps us in updating our current knowledge. Women's empowerment is a key factor in determining success of development. Studies aptly indicate that women are suffering from various problems due to lack of education and information. The right information at the right time can empower adult women and protect them from several challenges. A number of ICT tools such as radio,

television, mobile phone and the internet are used to empower women about awareness, education and information, as this knowledge can create more opportunities. A women's ability to empower herself to learn to use a computer become a key factor in her success. Women who are resistant to technology are those who lead the most traditional lives, change not being a significant element in their life histories. They are less self reliant than those who are comfortable with computers. These women are more passive in their attitude towards life. Exposing young women to technologies such as computers, internet and smart phones allows them to gain familiarity with these technologies, and become active learners.

The potential benefits of computers as aids to update the knowledge of women may not be fully realized, and the success of using a computer is dependent on the user's acceptance and commitment. There is significant evidence that individual computer usage is affected by the computer anxiety or fear of computers that is widespread and negative attitudes towards computers in general.

Computer anxiety is context specific and covers a wide variety of situations in which people interacts with computers. Computer anxiety is the tendency of a particular individual to experience a level of uneasiness over his or her impending use of a computer, which is disproportionate to the actual threat presented by the computer. Computer anxiety, defined by Raub (1981), is "the complex emotional reactions that are evoked in individuals who interpret computers as personally threatening." According to (Cooper 2006) computer anxiety is the adverse anxiety reaction to the use of computers

Need and Significance of the Study

Internet enhances women's economic empowerment, political participation and social inclusion through initiatives that support increased productivity and income generation, mobilization and accountability, as well as improved livelihoods and expansion of services. If you educate a woman, you educate a family, and maybe even a community. But as ICTs and media become increasingly available around the globe, when you educate a girl or a woman, you may also educate a region, or even a country.

Increasing importance of computer and internet has created a need to study about these technologies for women and they are interested in learning more and more computer skills for their survival and especially for their children. On the other hand computer anxiety, low computer literacy and digital skills are significant barriers to women's internet usage. Thus there is a need to provide this particular group with computer literacy training, and to give them opportunities to learn about using computers. This research focused on developing an intervention to reduce computer anxiety of home makers and it provides basic knowledge about computers which would motivate them to learn computer skills further.

Objectives of the study

1 To construct a scale to measure the computer anxiety of home makers
2 To develop a computer introductory course for reducing the computer anxiety of home makers and to provide basic computer knowledge
3 To find out the level of computer anxiety of home makers before and after the computer introductory course
4 To find out whether the computer introductory course will significantly reduce the computer anxiety of home makers

Population and Sample

Home makers are women, whose main occupation is caring for their family; managing household affairs and doing housework. Homemakers are the population of the study. 22 home makers from Thoothukudi who voluntarily attended the computer introductory course were considered as a sample for this study.

Methodology

For the present study the investigator used the single group experimental design to find out the impact of computer introductory course in reducing the computer anxiety of home makers. The investigator prepared a Computer Anxiety Scale to measure the computer anxiety of home makers before the intervention. The investigator developed a one week computer introductory course for home makers. After the completion of this course post test was administered to measure the computer anxiety of home makers.

Intervention

The investigator developed a Computer Introductory Course as intervention to reduce the computer anxiety of home makers. The objective of this course was to enable homemakers in Thoothukudi to reduce their computer anxiety and to acquire the basic computer skills.

Topics Covered in the Computer introductory course are

- Basics of MS word and using MS Word
- Browsing the Internet for information
- Creating an email account
- Drafting and sending emails
- Online shopping
- Downloading audios and videos
- Transferring data onto CDs and USB drives.

Statistical Techniques Used In the Study

Percentage analysis and t-test was employed for analysing the data.

Table 1: Level of computer anxiety of home makers before and after the computer introductory course

Computer Anxiety	Low		Average		High	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Pre-test	4	18.18	16	72.72	2	9.09
Post-test	4	18.18	14	63.64	4	18.18

Table 2: Difference between pre-test and post-test scores of computer anxiety of home makers

Computer Anxiety	Count	Mean	S.D	Calculated 't' value	Table value at 5% level	Remark
Pre-test	22	26.818	3.2165	6.36235	2.080	**Significant**
Post-test	22	20.590	3.2755			

From the above table 1, it is inferred that 18.18%, 72.72 % and 9.09% of home makers have come under the category of low, average and high level of computer anxiety respectively in their pre test scores and 18.18%, 63.64. % and 18.18% of home makers have come under the category of low, average and high level of computer anxiety respectively in their post test scores.

From the table 2 it is inferred that the calculated‘t’ value is greater than the table value. That is, there exists significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores of home makers in their Computer anxiety.

Findings and discussions

Based on the analysis it is found that, majority of the home makers have average level of computer anxiety in their pre-test (72.72) and post-test (63.64) scores. Though most of them belong to average level of computer anxiety in their pre-test and post-test scores, intervention has decreased their anxiety level substantially and this is reflected in their post test scores.

Based on the analysis it is found that, significant difference exists between pre-test and post-test scores of computer anxiety of home makers.

Brown & Josephs, 1999; Chipman, Krantz & Silver, 1992), found that women are likely to have a negative view of computer use. Home makers might think that, computer usage requires some special skills and training though many of them are graduates. Also they are not aware about the significance of using computers. Anderson (1996) found that higher computer anxiety is accompanied by less experience and less perceived knowledge of computers, and that at higher levels of computer anxiety, women are over-represented. Negative attitude, less computer experience and lack of awareness might be the reason for their computer anxiety. The analysis revealed that the intervention has reduced the computer anxiety of home makers significantly. Since individual attention was given to the home makers in the computer introductory course, they felt free to clarify their doubts. The introductory course was presented in such a way that it motivates the home makers to learn more about computers. Since the content of the computer introductory course was very useful for their day to day life, it secured the attention and interest of the home makers.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this research was to develop an intervention to reduce the computer anxiety of home makers. The result clearly indicates that, computer introductory course prepared by the investigator was very effective in reducing the computer anxiety of home makers. The feedback collected from home makers after the completion of the course indicated that the course helped them to understand about basics of computer and they are very eager to learn computer further

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