

‘Interest’ - A Pre-Requisite For Better Learning By The Under-Privileged Adolescents

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Abstract

The paper is based on the research study done with the focus on the ‘Interest’ in the underprivileged adolescents for better learning. Survey method has been employed to collect the data through the questionnaire, adopting simple random sampling technique. 100 high school students were taken as sample for study. The objectives of the study have been to assess the level of Interest of the underprivileged adolescents for better learning and to find out whether any significant difference exists in ‘Interest level’ of the underprivileged adolescents for better learning with respect to **gender** and among the **boards** of the school. The results indicate that the level of Interest of the underprivileged adolescents for better learning is **moderate** in nature. The findings of the study also reveal that there exists a difference in ‘Interest’ of the underprivileged adolescents for better learning with respect to **Gender, significantly**, and among students of different **boards** of the school, marginally.

Keywords: Interest, underprivileged, Adolescent, Better learning.

Introduction

‘Interest’ is a state of powerful inherent motivational process that energizes learning, guides academic and career trajectories, and is essential to academic success. Interest is a psychological state of mind behind attention and it is directed at a particular object or topic, and it’s an enduring predisposition to re-engage over time. Integrating these two definitions, the four-phase model of interest development guides interventions that promote interest and capitalize on existing interests. Four interest-enhancing interventions seem useful: **attention-getting settings, contexts evoking prior individual interest, problem-based**

learning, and enhancing utility value. Promoting interest can contribute to a more engaged, motivated, learning experience for students.

Need and Significance

Development of interest is related to the change in the content depending on the age of an individual. That is, in dissimilar life periods, age graded tasks have to be tackled. Interests may shift according to the changes in life tasks. The development of interest, however, has to take into account the whole range of goals a person strives for. It is argued here that interest transforms as hobbies that is seen in the areas other than academics. The development of interest can be described as an expansion in the level of stored knowledge (Renninger, 1990). As a matter of fact, it is an increase of discrepancy and integration in the subtle structure of the person and object of relationship (Fink, 1991, Krapp, 2002) that is, interests grow with age and may decline over the years. Hoffmann (2002) observed that, loss of interest in school matters is particularly severe when a child makes transition to secondary school. It is also that an individual interest develops only if the type of activities involved in, is pleasant and highly appreciated and they contribute to their personal goals of study. Krapp (2003) added that in most cases, “there are close interrelations between a person’s formation of individual interests and the development of his or her self. Hence the study done here is on the Interest level of the underprivileged adolescents for attaining better learning.

Statement of the Research Problem

“Interest among the underprivileged adolescents for better learning”

Objectives of the Study

The study was planned with the following major objectives:

- To assess the level of Interest among the underprivileged adolescents for better learning.
- To find out whether any significant difference exists in the ‘*Interest*’ among the underprivileged adolescents for better learning with respect to:
 - Gender
 - Board of School

Hypotheses of the Study

- There is no significant difference in the *Interests of the underprivileged adolescents for better learning* with respect to:
 - Gender
 - Board of school

Research Instrument

For the present investigation the following instruments were used after referring some available materials of books and thesis.

- To measure the '*Interest*' among the underprivileged adolescents, constructed and validated Questionnaire consisting of 23 items, has been used by the Researcher, as guided by the mentor / Supervisor.

Reliability of the tool

- The reliability co-efficient is (0.885) which is fairly high and indicates that the questionnaire is suitable.

Validity of the tool

- The validity was found to be (0.94) which indicates that it possesses high validity.

Population and Sample of the Study

The validated tools were made use of for the main study to collect the necessary data for the study. A randomly selected 100 high school Students from various schools in Chennai district have been involved for the present study.

Method and Technique of the Study

The study intended to collect the data pertaining to '*Interest*' among the underprivileged adolescents for better learning'. The Researcher selected the Normative survey method. **Simple random sampling technique has been applied for the present study through questionnaire.**

Descriptive Analysis

Table – 1: Sample distribution based on demographic variables

VARIABLES	Group	N
Gender	Male	35
	Female	65
Board of School	State	40
	CBSE	35
	Matriculation	25

Table – 2: The Level of Interests of the underprivileged adolescents for better learning

Variable	Level	N	%
Interest among the underprivileged adolescents for better learning	Low	20	20
	Moderate	68	68
	High	12	12

The above table depicts that 20%, 68% and 12% of the sample have low, moderate, high level of '*Interest*' among underprivileged adolescents for

better learning respectively. Based on the report it is concluded that Interest among the underprivileged adolescents for better learning is **moderate** in nature.

Differential Analysis

Ho – 1

There is no significant difference in the Interest of the underprivileged adolescents for better learning with respect to Gender

Table – 3: Interest among the underprivileged adolescents for better learning with respect to Gender

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t Value	p Value
Interests of the underprivileged adolescents for better learning	Male	35	86.34	3.932	3.256	0.001**
	Female	65	101.5	3.906		

Note: ** - indicates that 0.01 level significant.

The above table depicts that, the calculated Mean and SD value of male and female students are **86.34, 3.932** and **101.5, 3.906**, respectively. The calculated **t** value is 3.256 it is greater than the table value 2.58 and calculated p value is lesser than the 0.01 it is statistically significant at 0.01 level. Based on the mean value female students have more **interest** for better learning than male students.

Ho-01

The assumption that “There wont be significant difference in the Interest among the underprivileged adolescents for better learning with respect to Gender” is not found to be true.

Ho – 2

The assumption that there wont be significant difference in the Interest among the underprivileged adolescents for better learning with respect to Board of School.

Table – 4: Interests of the underprivileged adolescents for better learning with respect to Board of School

School Category	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
State	40	82.53	12.170
CBSE	35	77.02	12.968
Matriculation	35	78.69	13.829

Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p value
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Between Groups	1694.074	3	564.691	3.214	.023
Within Groups	75721.848	96	175.689		
Total	77415.922	99			

The above table depicts that, the calculated F value is 3.214 it is lesser than the table value and the calculated p value is greater than the 0.01 it is statistically not significant. **Based on the mean value state board school students have marginally more interest for learning than other counterparts.**

However the framed Ho that there wont be significant difference in Interest among the underprivileged adolescents for better learning with respect to Boards of Schools is found to be marginally varying and State Board schools scoring slightly better.

Results and Discussions

- 'Interest' among the underprivileged adolescents for better learning is moderate in nature.
- There is a **significant difference** in **Interest** among the underprivileged adolescents for better learning with respect to Gender.
 - Female students have more interest for learning than male students.
- There is **no significant difference** in Interest among the underprivileged adolescents for better learning with respect to Board of School.
 - State Board School students' 'Interest' is found to be **marginally** more.

Educational Implications

- In order to enhance teacher's ability to kindle interest, school managements could organize workshops, seminars and conferences for teachers in the field of **Activity Based Learning and teaching**.
- Interest is a powerful psychological state. It makes students feel energetic and excited, fully engaged and focused. It should be considered a major factor to be focused upon by the teachers.
- Interest as a factor affecting better learning should be considered as a mandatory objective and it should find an important learning objective for teachers getting trained. Adequate Curriculum focus in Teacher training (B.Ed) should be directed upon the ways and means to create / generate interest for better learning outcomes.

Suggestions and Recommendations

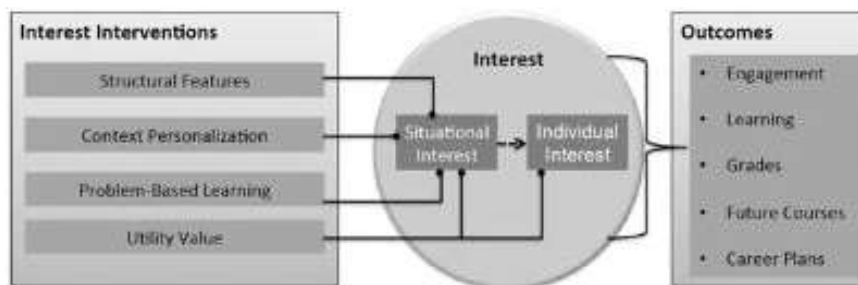
Based on the conclusions from this study, the following recommendations were recognized:

- The curriculum developers should highlight the topics in the curriculum which tackles critical thinking. Through this, students would have a boost in their motivation to learn the subjects, attain enhanced level of confidence, and become more proficient in learning.
- More studies could be done to have a better authentication on the findings. An assessment tool or instrument may be designed to test the students of lower grade level in both public and private schools.
- Future researchers may conduct a comparative study between the students from primary and secondary schools.
- Additionally, future research may be conducted based on an experimental approach to interest for learning between public and private schools.

Teachers interventions to create interest in students to engage in learning could be:

- Provide and engage students in activities that use structural aspects, such as problems, challenges, elements of surprise, which would work to stimulate attention and engagement.
- Building on emerging and already-developed individual interest. It is by providing content and tasks of academics, which will facilitate connect topics of academics with the already existing interests.
- The interventions should have elements that target motivational processes which affect and trigger critical outcomes in education, taking the learner's interest into account in the process.

Conceptual model showing how interventions promote interest development and subsequent educational outcomes



Judith M. Harackiewicz et al - 2016

Interest vs Attention

- Thought intuitive experience heightens attention when we work on an interest led task, the interest as a factor tends to reduce the need for attention generating resources. Research reveals that attention drawn while being engaged in interesting tasks, minimizes the self-search and

the resources needed (McDaniel et al., 2000; O'Keefe & Linnenbrink-Garcia, 2014).

- Interest, per se, elicits spontaneous, and not controlled attention (Hidi, 1990, 1995). When a task is interesting, it does not require any effort to extend attention to it. Contrarily, only the boring tasks call for increased attention, drawing resources, since one must self-regulate to maintain focus already drawn. (Paul A. O'Keefe et al - 2017)

The discussions upon the findings reveal that Interest is a major factor which is essential for learning to happen and the same to scale up to result in a better outcome. Teachers interventions could be chosen for emanating and escalating interest, which is supported by the researches already done. So creating interest is a possible solution, which could be sometimes a dormant feature within the students, in which case the teachers' interventions will only trigger interest.

Conclusion

Based on the results and analyses of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

Most of the students have moderate responses and interest for better learning. The respondents perceive positively that interest helps them develop critical thinking. There is a significant difference in the interest of the underprivileged adolescents for better learning with respect to their gender and there is no significant difference in interest of the underprivileged adolescents for better learning with respect to their board of school. The study concludes to corroborate that the teacher occupies an important position who facilitates the students learn and 'Interest' as one of the important factors for better learning outcomes. Teachers help the learners to learn better through facilitation, mentoring, motivating and encouraging them to self-engage, which would result in better learning outcomes of the students.

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