

ABSTRACT

For almost three decades Sri Lanka has been training teachers at various levels through the distance education mode. The Post Graduate Diploma in Education Programme was commenced from the time of the inception of the Open University i.e. in 1980. Though studies have been done about the effectiveness of this Programme pertaining to day- schools, assignments, teaching practice, no study has been done on print materials provided to the students. The main objective of the present study was to study students' perception on print study materials provided by the OUSL to PGDE students (Tamil medium)

The general objectives pertaining to this study are to find out the perceptions of PGDE (Tamil Medium) students on the following aspects of the print material (a) Layout (b) Language (c) Content (d) Presentation, to examine whether the students' perception with regard to print material differs according to their gender, teaching experience and other variables, to find out whether the designed features of print material influences individual study patterns and to make suggestions for the improvement of print material of PGDE programme.

The literature on the subject was reviewed and it formed the basis for the construction of the questionnaire for students. This questionnaire with 53 items was the main instrument used for collecting data for the study.

133 students registered for the said Programme for the academic year 1998/99 from 8 Regional/study centers of OUSL were studied for this purpose. However, views of other part-time teachers of the programme and experience of the researcher were also used in the discussions and in-warding suggestions.

A sample of students representing the population of PGDE (Tamil Medium) 1998/1999 of OUSL was selected on a stratified random sampling basis from 8 Regional/study centers. The sample included male and female students and students from rural and urban areas. The questionnaire was administered to the sample of students and 133 students responded to the questionnaire correctly. The responses of these 133 students were tabulated and analyzed.

The perception relating to print materials of the students were found in the areas such as difficulties in print material and the manner of using the print material i.e. study pattern.

The quality of print materials was judged in terms of their relevance, appropriateness, students' interest and language. As regards the content area in the learning material, majority of the students expressed dissatisfaction. They were of the opinion that the objectives of the lessons were not clearly stated, concepts not explained in small steps taking examples from real life and that the course contents were not completely covered.

Regarding the presentation of contents most of the students were not satisfied with the language used in the material. The style of writing they remarked had not stimulated their thinking. Illustrations, diagrams, pictures, graphs have not been used wherever they were necessary. Sufficient exercises have not been given at the end of each topic.

Some of the main suggestions presented for improvement of print materials are as follows. Print material should cover the entire course content. Content should be updated and it should be explained by taking real life examples. Language should be made more simple lessons should have more number of solved questions/exercises materials should provide appropriate reference.

