

## Self-Learning and Independent Study And Their Role In Learning Retention Of Physical Education Graduates

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### Abstract

New ways of Education focus on transferring learning responsibility to the learner rather than teacher. Self-Learning and independent study is one of the active learning ways in which sustainability learning (retention) is effectively achieved in some subjects and courses. The study was quasi-experimental study aimed to evaluate the effect of individual learning and learning retention of graduates in physical education. Information was gathered through eight questions on the package (240 questions) and the statistical population included graduates of physical education in state universities in second semester-2008-2011. The results showed that in general, independent study and self-learning would be effective in graduates' learning retention and those who had studied under individual training and education conditions had a higher retention level.

**Keywords:** distance learning, independent learning, effective learning, retention and alumni

### Introduction

Our understanding of the educational process, and of learning itself, has changed. We no longer believe that learning is the passive corollary of teaching, or that students do, or should, simply absorb material presented in lectures and textbooks. The new concept of *learning* recognizes the essential integration of personal development with learning; it reflects the diverse ways through which students may engage, as whole people with multiple dimensions and unique personal histories, with the tasks and content of learning. Student learning

produces both educational and developmental outcomes; as King and Baxter Magolda (1996) have asserted, "A successful educational experience simultaneously increases cognitive understanding and a sense of personal maturity and interpersonal effectiveness" (pp. 163-4). Baxter Magolda (1999) emphasizes that "Our vision of learning assumes that distinctions among terms such as personal development, student development, and learning are meaningless, if not destructive," and therefore proposes the "...integration of all domains of learning and involvement of all educators, regardless of their campus role".

Clearly, learning is far more rich and complicated than some of our predecessors realized when they distinguished and separated learning from student life. Seeing students as their component parts (body, mind, spirit), rather than as an integrated whole, supported the emergence of fragmented college systems and structures – academic affairs to cultivate the intellect, and student affairs to tend the body, emotions, and spirit.

Our society expects colleges and universities to graduate students who can get things done in the world and are prepared for effective and engaged citizenship. Both within the academy and among its observers and stakeholders, the need to identify the goals and effects of a college education has produced demands for, and commitments to, specific learning outcomes

Distance education system is a new personal training (Traditional Education), which features some physical separation and time between professors and students (Perraton, 1985) or with no proximity between students and professors ( Keegan, 1987) and more control over the learning process by students than teachers (Joanussen, 1996).

### **Research Methodology**

To compare the level of retention of graduates from two learning systems, we applied semi-empirical method. This study had one experimental group (graduates of distance or independent study) and control group (traditional Graduates). The independent variable was the method of teaching geared for subjects in the experimental group. Dependent variable is the level of retention of graduates in each educational system.

To compare the retention level for both subjects of the educational systems, we designed pre-test and post test with control group.

Pre-test was conducted at the end of training period (end of semester) and post -test was performed 5-4 months after the initial test. In this study, the instruction content, test questions, educational levels, length of training, educational requirements were similar and in both groups with different training methods, though.

The statistical samples were 197 graduates of traditional educational system and 190 people from the distance system.

We used descriptive analysis of the learning test, retention test, the difference between raw scores of learning and retention and z score criterion and the t -student test.

### **Research Findings**

Test results show that the learning retention of graduates was higher compared with traditional education. The average difference between the first and second test scores of students from 2.28 and the other 3.24-  $\alpha=0.03$ .

Table 1 - Learning test and retention scores and the difference between pretest and posttest in both groups of subjects

Title	Group	Total	Average	Standard deviation	Deviation from the mean	Maximum score	Minimum score
Learning Test (pretest)	distance	214	12.34	3.04	0.208	19.33	4
	traditional	211	13.33	2.88	0.198		
Retention test (test)	distance	197	9.36	2.87	0.204	17.33	1.33
	traditiona	190	15.10	3.15	0.22		
Raw test score differences in retention and learning	distance	197	2.28	2.27	0.162	0	- 4.67
	traditiona	190	3.245	2.7	0.198		
Differences in learning and retention test scores (standard scores)	distance	197	0.15	0.89	-0.06	-2.82	-2.97
	traditiona	190	-0.14	1.07	- 0.07		

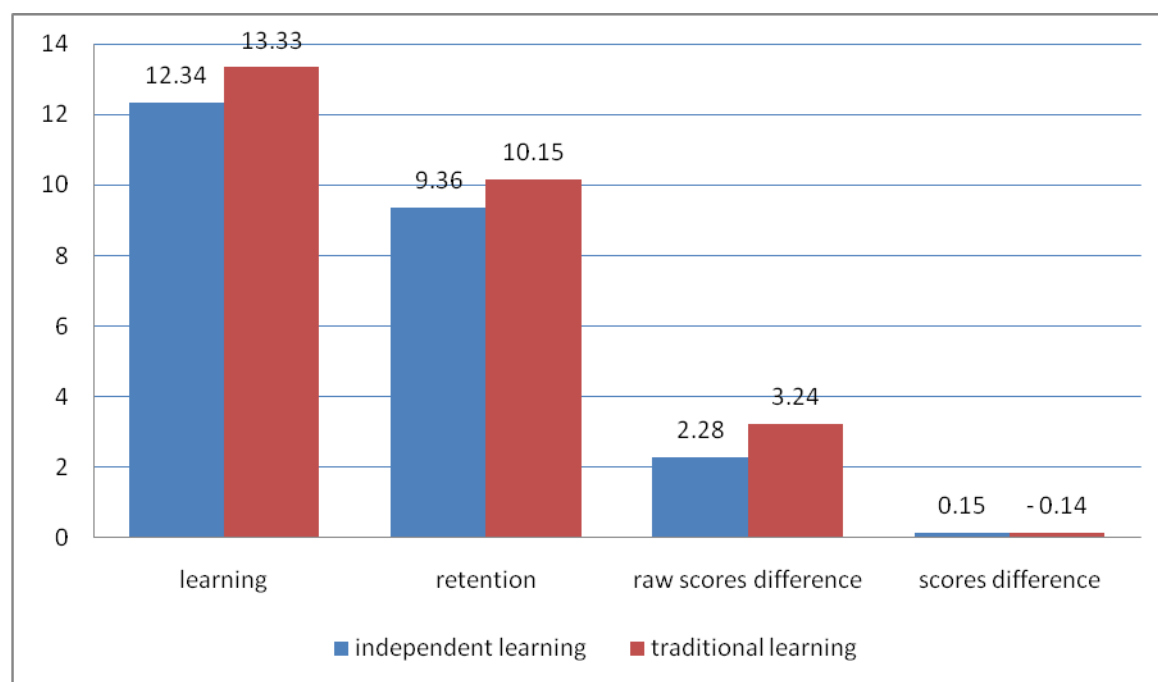


Figure 1 - The test of learning, retention, and the difference between pretest and posttest in both groups of subjects

**Conclusion**

The results showed that in general, independent study and self-learning would be effective in graduates `learning retention and those who had studied under individual training and education conditions had a higher retention level. The result of this research study was consistent with that of Schmidt (2005), Milk, Danny (1992) and Willis (1993).

Based on research findings, one can deduce that one of the reasons for the success of graduates from higher education entrance exam is a comprehensive educational approach to learning and training courses under which learners learn through self-learning.

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