Research Paper EDUCATION

An analysis of Learning style among Higher Secondary School Students

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ABSTRACT

This study was done to find out the difference in the rural and urban area of students studying in the selected government, corporation and private higher secondary school of Coimbatore district. Many researchers identify that each individual differ in their learning. The present study investigated the learning style of XI standard students in Coimbatore district. A 50 item self prepared questionnaire was used to collect data regarding learning style. A total of 1005 students were randomly selected as the sample of this study. The analysis of data showed that there is no significant association between type of school and the learning styles namely visual-verbal, sensing-intuitive, sequential-global. Locale-wise analysis showed that there is significant association between rural and urban students on visual-verbal and sensing-intuitive learning styles.

KEYWORDS Learning style, Active – Reflective, Sensing – Intuitive, Visual – Verbal, Sequential - global.

Introduction

A learning style is the method a person uses to learn. By knowing a students' learning style, a teacher can use teaching methods that maximize student learning. Students can use recognition of their individual learning styles to find what study methods, environment and activities help them learn best. The term learning styles refers to the concept that individuals differ in regard to what mode of instruction or study is most effective for them. Learning style is a term generally used to describe an individual's natural or habitual pattern of acquiring and processing information in learning situations. There is no commonly accepted definition of learning styles. However, a core concept is that individuals differ in how they learn. The idea of individualized learning styles originated in the 1970s and acquired enormous popularity. Kolb (1984), psychological attributes, resulted from individual differences, determine the particular strategies a person chooses while learning.

FELDER-SILVERMAN LEARNING STYLE / MODEL

There are several different learning style models in literature such as by Kolb (1984), Honey and Mumford (1986) as well as Felder and Silverman (1988), each proposing different descriptions and classifications of learning types. In our work, we are focusing on the Felder-Silverman learning style model (FSLSM). Most other learning style models classify learners in few groups, whereas Felder and Silverman describe the learning style of a learner in more detail, distinguishing between preferences on four dimensions. Another main issue is that FSLSM is based on tendencies, saying that learners with a high preference for certain behaviour can also act sometimes differently. According to Carver et al. (1999), "the Felder Model is most appropriate for hypermedia courseware" and it can also be seen that FSLSM is used very often in research related to learning styles in advanced learning technologies.

In the following discussion, the four dimensions of FSLSM are described. Each learner is characterized by a specific preference for each of these dimensions. Active – Reflective, Sensing – Intuitive, Visual – Verbal, Sequential - global.

Significance of the Study

Learning styles are discussed here to make teachers realize that students have different approaches to learning and that adapting the way of presenting and dealing with content may facilitate the acquisition of knowledge on the cognitive and practical level. Learning style will contribute to accelerate academic success by making information easily available. Learning styles are important for all students to protect investment of time and to achieve educational goal.

- Learning styles enhance learning.
- Learning styles of students will lead in higher order thinking.
- Good learning styles are essential to educational success.
- Good learning styles are an important part of any student's success.
- It also improves the managerial and professional skills.
- This skills will help students become a more confident, effective, productive and intelligent person in both personal and professional lives.

Objectives

- To find out if there is any statistically significant association between learning styles and type of school.
- To find out if there is any statistically significant association between learning styles and locality.

Methodology

The current study was conducted in Coimbatore district. Survey method was used for the study. A personal data sheet and a self constructed tool (Learning Style) was used for data collection. Data were collected from 1005 higher secondary school students (420 males, 585 females) selected from government, Private and Corporation schools in Coimbatore city.

Results of the study

Chi-square analysis was carried out to find out the association between learning style and type of school. Students were selected from there different type of schools namely government, corporation and private the results obtained are given in Table 1.

Association between Learning style and type of school

TABLE 1. LEARNING STYLE AND TYPE OF SCHOOL

Learning style Govt		Type of school			df	χ^2
		Corporation	Private			
1	**Active**	265	282	146	2	2.304^{NS}
	Reflective	135	118	59		
2	**Visual**	104	182	105	2	48.425**
	Verbal	296	218	100		
3	**Sensing**	162	186	122	2	19.698**
	Intuitive	238	214	83		
4	**Sequential**	178	262	130	2	40.635**
	Global	222	138	75		

NS - Not significant, df- Degrees of Freedom

From Table 1 it is indicated that the chi square value obtained for visual-verbal (48.425), sensing – Intuitive (19.698) and for sequential – global (40.635) are greater than the table value at 0.01 level (9.210), which shows that there is a highly significant association between type of school and above mentioned learning styles. It is also found that the chi square value obtained for active-reflective (2.304) is less than the table value (5.991). which indicates that there is no significant association between type of school and learning styles.

Association between Learning style and locality

Table 2. represents the chi square value for the association between different learning styles and Locality. There were 880 rural students and 125 urban students in the total sample.

TABLE 2. LEARNING STYLE AND LOCALITY

Learning style		Locality		df	χ^2
Rural		Urban			
1	Active	606	87	1	0.004^{NS}
	Reflective	274	38		
2	Visual	320	71	1	18.382**
	Verbal	560	54		
3	Sensing	393	77	1	11.946**
	Intuitive	487	48		
4	Sequential	491	79	1	2.152 ^{NS}
	Global	389	46		

NS - Not significant, df- Degrees of Freedom

Analyses brought to light that there is highly significant difference in the visual-verbal(18.382) and sensing-intuitive (11.946) learning styles amd the locality. It is also found that the chi square value obtained for active-reflective (0.004) for sequential – global (2.152) is less than the table value (3.841). which indicates that there is no significant association between locality and learning styles.

Conclusion

The results of the study shows that learning style has significant association with type of school and locality.

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