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LEARNING STYLES OF PROSPECTIVE TEACHER AND ITS RELATION TO TEACHING COMPETENCY

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ABSTRACT

The present study is on Learning styles of prospective teacher and its relation to teaching competency. The main objective of this study was to find out the relationship between learning style and teaching competency of prospective teachers. Learning style inventory and teaching competency scale developed by the investigator was adopted for the data collection. The data was collected from 250 prospective teachers by adopting simple random sampling technique. This study proved that there exists a significant positive relationship between learning style and teaching competency of prospective teachers. This study will be a lime light for the teacher educator to understand that the type of learning style of prospective teachers plays a vital role in teaching competency. Thus it is important to understand the students' learning style and to inculcate best learning styles among our students.

KEYWORDS Learning style, teaching, competence, teachers

Introduction

Learning is a permanent change in behaviour brought about by activity, training or experience. But not all changes in behaviour are learning. Learning is a key process in human behavior. Learning is a complex, interrelated system of accessing information, getting it into the brain, and processing the information to solve problem or support activities. Learning styles are personal way in which individual process information's and the courts of learning new concepts and principles. Learning styles differ from individual to individual. For the same individual they differ from the subject to subject. Felicetti(1992) define learning styles as those "educational conditions under which a student is most likely to learn". Learning style refers to the way one internally represents experiences and recalls or processes information.

Need for the study

Learners are the core of the teaching learning process. Each learner is unique and their learning style also. Every teacher wants to be successful in the classroom. To be successful, every teacher has to "know the learner". The teacher should know the learner with reference to his entry behaviour, level of motivation, interest in the subject, attitude, aptitude and some information about his family environment. These mentioned factors influence the learner remarkably and jointly they create a pattern of learning functions in the brain, which is eventually responsible for the learning of the learner. This pattern is widely known as learning style, which is a key factor for the learner to learn anything and every-thing. This personalized learning pattern differs from individual to individual and even introspect in particular learner.

The learning style has its own impact in the teaching competency of prospective teacher. The present study aims to study the relationship between learning style and teaching competency of prospective teachers.

Title of the Problem

The present study is stated as "Learning styles of prospective teacher and its relation to teaching competency".

Objectives of the Study

- To develop and assess learning styles of prospective teachers.
- To find out significant relationship between learning style and teaching competency of prospective teachers.
- To compare the identified learning styles with one another.
- To know the learning style's influence in the teaching competency.
- To know the significant difference if any in the teaching competency due to variation in their personal variable with respect to each identified learning styles.

Hypotheses of the study

- There is a positive relationship between learning style and achievement of students in physics.
- There is no significant difference between the different identified learning styles of higher secondary students with one another.
- There is no significant difference in the achievement in physics due to variation in their personal variable. (Like rural, urban, male, female, girls, branch of study, etc.) with respect to each identified learning styles.
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Methodology

The present study was a descriptive survey which was intended to measure the Learning styles of prospective teacher and its relation to teaching competency. The data was collected from 250 prospective teachers by adopting simple random sampling method.

Tools of the study

Learning Style Inventory (LSI) and Teaching Competency Scale (TCS) constructed by the investigator were adopted for data collection.

Results and discussion

The investigator collected the relevant data and subjected it to statistical analysis. Table I showed the correlation analysis of learning style and teaching competency of prospective teachers for the total sample and sub sample based on gender and group of study.

Correlation analysis

Variable	Sub-variable	N	Coefficient of Correlation()
Learning style Vs Teaching Competency	Whole sample	250	0.83

	Male	131	0.81
	Female	119	0.84
	Language group	100	0.74
	Science group	90	0.77
	Arts group	60	0.77

The above table presented the rank correlation '' value: 0.83 which evinced a high positive correlation between the learning style and teaching competency of prospective teachers. Thus the stated hypothesis "there is a significant relationship between learning style and teaching competency of prospective teacher" is accepted. It is inferred that the teaching competency of prospective teacher depend on their learning style.

Male and female also exhibit high positive correlation in their learning style and teaching competency as the rank correlation '' value 0.81 and 0.84 respectively. Similarly there is a significant positive relationship between learning style and teaching competency of prospective teacher with regard to their branch of study (language - 0.74, science - 0.77, and arts 0.76 respectively). Over all it is inferred that there is a significant positive correlation between learning style and teaching competency of prospective teacher. The result implies that the learning style should be properly developed among prospective teachers for better teaching competency.

Differential analysis

In this part the differential analysis was employed to find out the difference between various patterns of learning styles of prospective teachers.

Table II

S No.	Learning style	N	Mean	SD	t-value
1	Enactive learning style	90	41.80	4.2	12.35**
	Figural learning style	85	34.29	3.119	
2	Enactive learning style	90	41.80	4.2	18.13**
	Verbal learning style	75	29.95	3.66	
3	Figural learning style	85	41.80	4.2	23.82**
	Verbal learning style	75	25.53	3.14	

Note : ** significant at 0.01 level

The obtained 't' value 12.35 is greater than the 't' critical value at 0.01 level. It is concluded that the Enactive learning style and Figural learning style of prospective teachers significantly vary in their teaching competency. The obtained 't' value 18.13 is greater than the 't' critical value at 0.01 level. It is concluded that the Enactive learning style and Verbal learning style of prospective teachers significantly vary in their teaching competency. The obtained 't' value 23.82 is greater than the 't' critical value at 0.01 level. It is concluded that the Figural learning style and Verbal learning style of prospective teachers significantly vary in their teaching competency. From the differential analysis it is inferred that figural learning style influences more in the teaching competency of prospective teachers when compare to other learning styles. It showed that this kind of learning style has good and desirable behaviour for good outcome in the educational process.

Table III showed the data and result of the t test for the N, mean, SD, t-value of different learning styles and the teaching competency of prospective teachers with respect to gender.

The obtained't' value 3.32 is greater than the't' critical value at 0.01 level. Thus the stated hypothesis "there is no significant difference between the learning styles and teaching competency of prospective teachers with respect to Gender" is rejected. It is concluded that male and female of figural learning style significantly vary in their teaching competency. When the mean scores were taken into consideration it is evident that the females are higher than male in the figural learning style. Whereas, the obtained t-value of enactive learning style and verbal Learning Styles 0.33 and 0.51 respectively are less than that of t- critical value at 0.01 level. Thus the above stated hypotheses were accepted. Thus it is conclude that the prospective teachers with enactive learning style and verbal Learning Styles do not vary in their teaching competency.

Table III:

	variables	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Teaching competency of Enactive Learning style	Male	44	40.64	3.87	0.33@
	Female	36	43.44	3.67	
Teaching competency of Figural learning style	Male	30	30.17	3.76	3.32**
	Female	35	29.87	3.34	
Teaching competency of verbal Learning style	Male	35	34.84	3.36	0.51@
	Female	30	34.43	3.08	

Note : ** Significant at 0.01 level

@ Not Significant

Educational implications of the study

The findings of the study have the following educational implications. This study proved that there exists a significant positive relationship between learning style and teaching competency of prospective teachers. This study is a lime light for the teacher educator to understand that the type of learning style of prospective teachers plays a vital role in teaching competency. Thus it is important to understand the students' learning style and to inculcate best learning styles among our students. This study also helped the teacher to identify and remediate the enactive learning style and verbal Learning Style students. Once the learning styles of the students are identified, the teacher can adopt the suitable teaching method as per the group. Thus, this study strongly evinced the importance of learning styles in the teaching – learning process.

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