

Learning Preferences of Degree College Students with respect to Demographic Variables



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Abstract

In the light of the concept of individual differences, the old concept of teacher centered education has been replaced by student centered. No two individuals are alike. Same concept applies to individual's way of learning, i.e. learning preferences. Awareness of learning preferences can have useful learning and teaching implications. Learning preferences indicates ones mode of receiving and processing information. The present study attempts to explore the learning preferences of college student with respect to their demographic variables.. A sample of 800 students was used for the present study and the sample was drawn by cluster sampling technique. Data for the present study was collected by using Dimensional Personality Inventory by Mahesh Bhargav.

Keywords: Individual Differences, Learning Preferences, Demographic Variables, Cluster.

Introduction

Learning is a life- long process. It is in fact personal journey of discovery. People learn in many different ways. Every individual has a unique style of processing and digesting information. Recently, how students think and how they learn is an important topic of discussion in the educational system. Especially, in our modern age of "Information Society", the opinion that individuals should be able to know and implement several thinking methods such as the ability to conduct research, to solve problem, creative thinking, and critical thinking, and should be active in the process of learning has brought the subjects of how thinking and learning would be performed into prominence.

Review of Literature

An individual knowing how to learn might be defined as one who knows his own features, or in other words, his own "learning style". Empirical evidences have considered that learning styles are tendencies and preferences (Dunn, 1984), while another considers learning styles are related to individual methods and strategies of information processing (Reid, 1995). Keefe (1987), writes that learning styles are generally considered as "characteristic, cognitive, affective, and psychological behaviors that serve as relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to a learning environment". Most of students are unaware of their learning styles. All the advantages claimed for met-cognition can be gained by encouraging learners to become knowledgeable about their own learning styles and that of others (Coffield, 2004). Once students have brought this knowledge into their level of awareness, they are better suited to choose learning strategies that match their learning styles. This initiates student ownership of the educational process. One of the most significant issues in learning to learn is an individual's taking the responsibility for his/her own learning. The individuals should know what their own learning styles are and what characteristics this style has and they should thereby behave according to this style. In this way, the individual can acquire the constantly changing and increasing amount of information without need for the assistance of others. When the learner takes the responsibility of his/her own learning, s/he attributes meaning to the process of learning. The knowledge of learning styles helps the teacher to make their lessons or teaching pattern according to learning style of an individual. Therefore, the present study attempts to explore the learning preferences of College Students with reference to demographic variables.

Periodic Research

Statement of the Problem

The problem for the present study is stated as: "Learning Preferences of Degree College Students with respect to Demographic Variables".

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the effect of Gender on Constructive and Reproducing Learning styles
2. To study the effect of Locality on Constructive and Reproducing Learning styles
3. To study the 1st order interactional effect of Gender and Locality on Constructive and Reproducing Learning styles

Hypotheses of the Study

1. There will be no significant effect of Gender on Constructive and Reproducing Learning styles
2. There will be no significant effect of Locality on Constructive and Reproducing Learning styles
3. There will be no significant 1st order interactional effect of Gender and Locality on Constructive and Reproducing Learning styles

Population and Sample

The population for the present study includes all the students studying in various degree colleges of Kashmir Division. All the districts of College division were listed. Out of listed districts, only one college from each district was selected through randomization. Further each district was taken as cluster and the sample of 800 was drawn by cluster sampling technique. The sample breakup is given below in table 1 with 1 representing Male and Rural respectively where as 2 represents Female and Urban respectively.

Table 1 showing Sample size

		N
Gender	1.00	408
	2.00	392
locality	1.00	531
	2.00	269

Delimitations of the Study

1. Present study was delimited to only college level students
2. Present study was studied with respect to only Gender and Locality as demographic Variables

Analysis and Interpretation

Descriptive Research was used for the present study and the data collected was subjected to analysis by using Multivariate Analysis (MANOVA)

Table 2 Showing Effect of Gender on Constructive and Reproducing Learning Style

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender	Constructive Learning Style	.547	.547	.005	.943
	Reproducing Learning Style	19.473	19.473	.284	.594

Perusal of the table 2 shows that the calculated values of f ratio for Constructive and Reproducing learning styles with Gender as independent variable came out to be .005 and .284 and also the p-values i.e. .943 and .594 respectively are greater than .05 which means both the values of F ratio are insignificant at .05 level of significance.

Hence, it can be inferred that there is no significant effect of Gender on Constructive and Reproducing learning styles. Therefore, the presumed hypothesis 1 stands accepted

Table 3 Showing Effect of Locality on Constructive and Reproducing Learning Style

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	Sig.
locality	Constructive Learning Style	33.149	33.149	.305	.581
	Reproducing Learning Style	58.532	58.532	.854	.356

Perusal of the table 3 shows that the calculated values of f ratio for Constructive and Reproducing learning styles with Locality as independent variable came out to be .305 and .854 and also the p-values i.e. .581 and .356 respectively are greater than .05 which means both the values of F ratio are insignificant at .05 level of significance. Hence, it can be inferred that there is no significant effect of Locality on Constructive and Reproducing learning styles. Therefore, the presumed hypothesis 2 stands accepted

Table 4 Showing 1st order interactional Effect of Gender and Locality on Constructive and Reproducing Learning Style

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender * locality	Constructive Learning Style	23.416	23.416	.216	.642
	Reproducing Learning Style	109.858	109.858	1.603	.206

Perusal of the table 4 shows that the calculated values of f ratio for Constructive and Reproducing learning styles with Gender and Locality as independent variable came out to be .216 and 1.603 and also the p-values i.e. .642 and .206 respectively are greater than .05 which means both the values of F ratio are insignificant at .05 level of significance. Hence, it can be inferred that there is no significant 1st order interactional effect of Gender and Locality on Constructive and Reproducing learning styles. Therefore, the presumed hypothesis 3 stands accepted

Conclusions

1. No significant effect of Gender on Constructive and Reproducing learning styles
2. No significant effect of Locality on Constructive and Reproducing learning styles
3. No significant 1st order interactional effect of Gender and Locality on Constructive and Reproducing learning styles

Suggestions

1. To provide each and every student a barrier free education, teachers should be well versed in culturally relevant pedagogy, which means a pedagogy which makes modifications in instructional materials to account for diversity. Reciprocal learning and cooperative learning are the two strategies that will help students to have culturally relevant learning. Reciprocal learning

occurs when students take turns leading the class discussion. In this method students use their cultural viewpoints to express the instructional material in their own words. Cooperative learning occurs when group collaboration and individual responsibility is used for the completion of assigned work.

2. Teachers can and do make a huge difference to their pupils' enthusiasm for subject as well as directly influencing their achievement. Science teachers in general have a major influence in pupils' motivation towards and their enjoyment of science subjects. Teachers in order to retain interest of students must focus on individual differences like abilities and aptitudes. Significant improvement in academic achievement, attitude and behavior results when learning style preferences are accommodated through complementary teaching styles and instructional approaches. Accordingly teachers in formulating teaching learning situations must comprehensively and consistently take learning styles in to account. Learning style appropriate instructions make it possible to more thoroughly and precisely meet students' unique differences.
3. Teachers should make use of multiple modes of instruction like aural, visual and at the same time give students opportunities to participate in the teaching process.

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