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ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING STYLES AMONG PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS

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Abstract

The main objective of the study is to find out the level of learning styles among pre-service teachers with respect to Locale, Academic Streams and Type of Management. Survey method was adopted to collect the relevant data for the present study. Learning Styles Questionnaire (LSQ) was constructed and validated by Peter Honey and Alan Mumford and it was used to collect data for the present study. The Investigator randomly Selected 630 pre-service teachers (D.T.Ed.) studying in Government, Government Aided and Private Teacher Training Institutions in Chennai. For analyzing the data percentage, mean, standard deviation, 't'- test and one way ANOVA are used. The major findings of the study are: The most of the pre-service teachers having moderate level of learning style preference. With regard to locale and Academic Streams, the result reveals that there is no significance difference in overall learning styles among pre-service teachers. The Self Financing institutions pre-service teachers have higher learning styles compared to their counterparts.

Keywords: *Learning Styles, Pre-service teachers, TTIs, Teacher Trainees, Activist, Pragmatist, Theorist and Reflector learning styles.*

Introduction

The learning styles have been considered as an essential factor in the cognitive domain of the learners. Each individual will have their own method or system of learning the concept and theories. Learning style has a big contribution to the academic performance of the student. Learning style refers to an individual's characteristic way to respond to certain forces in the instructional environment. It shows the different ways in which people process the information in the course of learning. Knowing students learning style is one of the most valuable pieces of information for teachers. Honey and Mumford (1992) describe learning style as an individual preferred or habitual ways of processing and transforming knowledge. Components of learning style are cognitive, affective and physiological elements, According

to Honey and Mumford (1986) there are four distant learning style. The four types of learning styles are: Theorist, Pragmatist, Activist, and Reflector.

Need and Significance of the Study

This study aimed to assist the learners to identify their dominant learning styles and to improve weaker learning styles. The teacher should understand their students learning styles and to recognize that in a pragmatic manner. They have to equip themselves to adopt teaching strategies which cater the needs of the learners. All students should be taught partly in a manner they tend to prefer. Students' having quality information about their learning styles thought to contribute to their cognitive and affective qualifications throughout supporting their learning. Being informed about one's own learning style is important because, this leads to their effective arrangement of their learning processes and improvement of their academic achievement and self-confidence. For pre-service teachers to be effective in their professional teaching career, they need to be made aware of their learning styles, which contribute to their achievement and their self-confidence during their learning processes. In light of these facts, the present study aims to investigate the pre-service teachers' perceptions of their own learning styles.

Review of Related Literature

Jepsen and *et al* (2015) carried out a study on the relationship between students learning styles with student perceptions of teaching quality. The study used survey responses from 272 undergraduate students. All 80 items in the Honey and Mumford's (1986) Learning Style questionnaire and all 46 teaching quality items (Thompson, 2002) were used to assess learning style and perceptions of teaching quality, respectively. The result shows that the learners with dominant reflector or activist styles are influenced in their perceptions of teaching quality of their teacher or lecturer. No perceptions of reaching quality relationship were found for students from dominant theorist or pragmatist learning style.

Bryce, (2002) examined in college teacher preparation courses learning style models along with that of temperament models should be taught for the purpose of preparing new teachers to discover that students do have different learning styles and temperament styles. If pre-service teachers understand these differences and incorporate them into the classroom, teachers can be more effective educators and students can become better learners

Ravi Babu, M (2015) investigated on the preferred learning style with respect to gender, management type of secondary school students. Students were selected 24 secondary schools of Hyderabad and Ranga Reddy District of Telangana State from each school, 25 students were selected randomly. 600 students were selected as sample. Learning Style

Inventory (LSI) by Karuna Shankar Misra (2012) was used; the result reveals that there is a significant difference in learning style with respect to gender and management among secondary school students.

Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the level of learning styles among pre-service teachers.
2. To find out whether there is any significant difference in learning styles among pre-service teachers with respect to
    a. Locale
    b. Academic Streams and
    c. Type of management

Hypotheses of the Study

1. There is no significant difference in the learning styles among pre-service teachers with respect to Locale.
2. There is no significant difference in the learning styles among pre-service teachers with respect to Academic Streams.
3. There is no significant difference in the learning styles among pre-service teachers with respect to Type of management.

Methodology of the Study

Method: The present study attempts to describe and interpret what exists at present in the form of conditions, practices, processes, trends, effects, attitudes and beliefs. Survey method was adopted for the present study.

Method of study	Normative Survey
Sample of the Study	Pre-service Teachers
Sampling Techniques	Random sampling technique
Area of Study	Chennai

Tools Used for Data Collection:

The following research tools used for data collection:

1. Personal data sheet developed by the researcher
2. Learning Styles Questionnaire (LSQ) was constructed and validated by Peter Honey and Alan Mumford.

Sample:

The present study consists of 630 Pre-service teachers (D.T.Ed.) studying in Government, Government-Aided and Self Financing Teacher Training Institutions in Chennai District. The random sampling technique used for selecting the sample.

Statistical Techniques Used:

For analyzing the data percentage, mean, standard deviation,'t'- test and one way ANOVA are used.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: The level of Learning Styles among Pre-Service Teachers

Learning Style and its Dimensions	Level	N	Percentage
Activist	High	174	27.6
	Moderate	408	64.8
	Low	48	7.60
Reflector	High	235	37.3
	Moderate	372	59.0
	Low	23	3.70
Theorist	High	161	25.6
	Moderate	437	69.4
	Low	32	5.0
Pragmatist	High	255	40.50
	Moderate	342	54.30
	Low	33	5.20
Overall Learning Styles	High	207	32.85
	Moderate	389	61.75
	Low	34	5.40

From the above table it is inferred that 64.8% of the pre-service teachers having moderate level of activist learning style preference. 27.6% and 7.60% of pre-service teachers having high and low level of activist learning style preference respectively. From the table it is inferred that 59% of the pre-service teachers having moderate level of reflector learning style preference. 37.3% and 3.70% of pre-service teachers having high and low level of reflector learning style preference respectively.

It is evident that 69.4% of the pre-service teachers having moderate level of theorist learning style preference. 25.6% and 5.0 % of pre-service teachers having high and low level of theorist learning style preference respectively. The table concluded that 64.8% of the pre-service teachers having moderate level of pragmatist learning style preference. 27.6% and 7.60% of pre-service teachers having high and low level of pragmatist learning style preference respectively.

From the above table it is clear that the most of the Pre-service teachers (61.75%) have moderate level of overall learning styles. The study also reveals that 32.85% of pre-service teachers have high and 5.40 % of pre-service teachers have low level of overall learning styles.

Table 2: Learning Styles among Pre-service Teachers with respect to locale

Locale	N	Mean	SD	t-value	P value
Urban	253	66.01	3.672	1.624	0.105
Rural	377	65.45	4.944		

Since P value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level, with regard to overall learning styles. The result reveals that there is no significance difference in overall learning styles among pre-service teachers based on Locale.

Table 3: Learning Styles among Pre-service Teachers with respect to Academic Streams

Academic Streams	N	Mean	SD	t-value	P value
Arts	232	65.95	4.295	1.157	0.248
Science	398	65.52	4.585		

Since P value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level, with regard to overall learning styles. The result reveals that there is no significance difference in overall learning styles among pre-service teachers based on academic streams.

Table 4: Learning styles among Pre-service Teachers with respect to Type of Management

Source of Variation	df	SS	MS	F Value	P Value
Between	2	986.290	493.145	26.547	0.000*
Within	627	11647.299	18.576		
Total	629	12633.589			

Table 5: Post Hoc Test of learning styles among Pre service teachers based on Type of Management

Type of Management	N	Mean	S.D	P Value
Government	277	64.33	5.484	0.000**
Govt. Aided	170	66.22	2.863	
Government	277	64.33	5.484	0.000**
Self financing	183	67.21	3.284	
Govt. Aided	170	66.22	2.863	0.008**
Self financing	183	67.21	3.284	

Note:

** denotes Significant at 1% level

The Government Aided institute pre-service teachers have higher learning styles compared to Government institute. The self-financing institute pre-service teachers have higher learning styles compared to Government teacher training institute. The self-financing institute pre-service teachers have higher learning styles compared to Government Aided teacher training institute.

Major Findings of the Study

- The most of the pre-service teachers having moderate level of learning style preference.
- The findings of the study reveals that 64.8% of the pre-service teachers having moderate level of activist learning style preference. 27.6% and 7.60% of pre-service teachers having high and low level of activist learning style preference respectively.
- The 59% of the pre-service teachers having moderate level of reflector learning style preference. 37.3% and 3.70% of pre-service teachers having high and low level of reflector learning style preference respectively
- The 69.4% of the pre-service teachers have moderate level of theorist learning style preference. 25.6% and 5.0 % of pre-service teachers having high and low level of theorist learning style preference respectively.
- The results reveals that 64.8% of the pre-service teachers having moderate level of pragmatist learning style preference. 27.6% and 7.60% of pre-service teachers having high and low level of pragmatist learning style preference respectively.
- With regard to locale and Academic Streams, the result reveals that there is no significance difference in learning styles among pre-service teachers.
- The Self Financing institutions pre-service teachers have higher learning styles compared to their counterparts.

Educational Implications

- Many students in a particular class may have the same and similar learning styles. Understanding that each student has unique strength and weaknesses related to the ways in which they approach learning is an important component of effective education.
- Learning styles can help a teacher to design instruction. The concept of learning styles has two important implications for teaching. The first suggests the need to vary our instruction. The second implication is that the concept of learning styles reminds us

that students are indeed different and help us become more sensitive to differences in their behaviour.

Conclusion

It is very important for an individual to know his/ her learning styles. The reason is that one of the most significant issues in learning to learn the new concept. In the future, teacher preparation programs would be best served by assessing their methods courses to include learning styles as part of the curriculum. Pre-service teachers, as well as new teachers need to acquire classroom skills that encompass the knowledge of learning styles. Learning styles is important for many reasons which develops understanding of their own learning styles and adopts the suitable learning styles for improving their future learning progress.

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