

Cognitive Styles of Hearing and Hearing Impaired Students of High School Level

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The major aim of the present study is to explore the cognitive styles of hearing and hearing impaired students of high school level as they play an important role in teaching, learning process. Assessment of cognitive style of students will help in encouraging the use of certain strategies to operate on learning tasks as they work as major determinants of learning outcomes.

I. FIELD DEPENDENCE – INDEPENDENCE (FD-I) COGNITIVE STYLE

To identify the FD-I cognitive style of hearing and hearing impaired, ‘Group Embedded Figure Test’ (GEFT) developed by Witkin et al., (1962) was administered and scored as per the scoring procedure provided in the manual.

As the ‘t’ value 0.76 for the FD-I mean difference between hearing and hearing impaired groups was not significant at 0.05 level, it could be stated that the hearing and hearing impaired as whole group did not differ significantly in their FD-I cognitive style. The results of the present study fall in line with the findings of Bowd (1967), Bergilow (1971), Domesh and Balter (1976), Dani (1983), Tharakan (1987), Thakur (1991) and Kalyani Devi (1992) who reported that boys and girls did not differ significantly in their FD-I cognitive style

II. REFLECTIVITY – IMPULSIVITY (R-I) COGNITIVE STYLES

To explore the Reflectivity – Impulsivity cognitive style of hearing and hearing impaired Ss ‘Matching Familiar Figure Test’ (MFFT) developed by Kalyani Devi (1992) was adopted and administered. It was scored as per the scoring procedure given in the manual. A negative score indicates reflectivity cognitive style; a positive score indicates the impulsivity cognitive style of the Ss.

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III. FINDINGS

From the results and discussions presented in section-I the following findings were obtained:

- Hearing and hearing impaired students of high school level in general did not differ significantly in their FD-I. This was true irrespective of their sex or grade or social class to which they belonged. However, in the case of hearing group grade differences and social class differences in the cognitive styles were found to be significant.
- With regard to reflectivity-impulsivity cognitive styles, hearing and hearing impaired in general had impulsivity cognitive style. But hearing impaired more impulsive than their hearing peers.

IV. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Research on cognitive styles has a definite purpose as they are found to be significantly related to school and academic variables. They are helpful for teachers in predicting academic achievement. Cognitive styles as constant emphasize on ways of learning differences. If teachers can identify the learning preferences of their students, they can adopt teaching – learning strategies that suit the individual differences as well as student style of perceiving and processing of the information.

In a class-room situation, there are certain situations where quick responses required and there are certain situations that require accurate response. Students with impulsivity cognitive style have a tendency to react quickly and commit more and more errors. Whereas children with reflective style respond by understand the situation and answer accurately. In the present study all the Ss had impulsivity cognitive style. There is need for teachers to develop reflectivity cognitive style among deaf children. Knowledge of cognitive style alerts teachers to identify the possible sources of errors in learning and encourage children’s reflection where it is appropriate to the task but contrary to the child’s preferred learning style. It also helps teachers to encourage deaf children for speedier information processing where it is advantageous and needed. Thus deaf students need training and encouragement to think and process the information in different ways as appropriate to situation.