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COGNITIVE STYLES AMONG RURAL AND URBAN ADOLESCENTS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The present study has tried to explore cognitive style of rural and urban adolescents. For this data was collected on 100 adolescents equally divided into rurals(50) and urbans(50) and they were further divided into two equal parts on the basis of their gender. Cognitive Style of the adolescents was measured by using Cognitive Style Inventory by Jha(2011). The results have revealed some significant findings suggesting that boys reported more intuitive styles than girls while girls were found to score significantly higher on Integrative and Undifferentiated style. Urban adolescents were found to use Split style significantly more than rural adolescents.

KEYWORDS: Rural, Urban, Adolescents and Cognitive Style.

INTRODUCTION:

Cognitive Style is a term used to describe the way individual think, perceive and remember information. Cognitive Style refers to the preferred way an individual processes information. Unlike individual differences in abilities which describe peak performance, styles describe a person's typical mode of thinking, remembering or problem solving.

Cognitive style may be defined as an individual's consistent approach of organizing and processing information during thinking (Riding & Smith, 2002). The cognitive characteristics involved in a relatively field-dependent or field-independent cognitive style and the personal characteristics associated with these contrasting styles have been shown to play a role in students' selection of electives and majors, in vocational preferences they experience early in life (Witkin, 2014).

The present study has tried to explore the difference between the thinking, behaving and remembering style of urban and rural adolescents as both


the groups belong to completely different background having totally different values and geographical backgrounds.

It can be supposed that younger people use different ways to interpret, think and solve the problems and they might be more strongly influenced by others views as they have less social stakes and experiences and are more easily influenced. . So, the present study has tried to explore the cognitive styles of the new generation ie adolescents.

Adolescence is a stage of Storms and Stresses. It is a phase of rapid growth and development during which physical, sexual and emotional changes occur.

The period of adolescence is of supreme importance in the life of human. It is the period

Cognitive Styles



Cognitive styles – Refer to the preferred way an individual process of information

It is a mental process that involves discovering, analyzing and solving problems. The ultimate goal of problem-solving is to overcome obstacles and find a solution that best resolves the issue.

in which a person gets physical, emotional and mental maturity(Gupta & Srivastava,2016). Adolescence is the time when the individual is expected to prepare for adulthood by replacing the childish attitude and behaviour pattern with those of an adult type(Gupta,2009).The process of coping with all these things generate anxiety among adolescents(Gupta & Joshi,2013) and they for their convenience start interpreting and rationalizing the things on experiential basis.So, it might be interesting to explore the cognitive styles of this period.

So, the present study has tried to explore it in relation to geographical condition and gender of the respondents.

METHODOLOGY

Objectives:

- 1.To explore Cognitive Style of the Rural and Urban adolescents.
- 2.To explore gender differences in the Cognitive Styles of the respondents.

Hypotheses:

- 1.There will be significant difference between Cognitive Styles of Rural and Urban adolescents.
- 2.There will be significant gender differences in Cognitive Styles of the respondents.

Design:

The present study has utilized a 2x2 factorial design to conceptualize the study and analyze the data. One variable being geographical condition of the respondents which was divided into two parts ie rural and urban and another variable being gender of the respondents divided into males and females.

Tools;

Cognitive Style Inventory by Praveen ,J.(2011)was used to measure cognitive styles of the respondents. This scale measures Cognitive Style through 40 questions. Each question has 5-point rating scale ranging from 'Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree'. The scale measures 5 types of cognitive styles. They are;

1. Systematic style 2. Intuitive style 3. Integrated style 4. Undifferentiated style and 5. Split style

Sample:

The data for the present study was collected on 100 adolescents equally divided into rurals (50) and urbans (50) . They were further divided equally into two parts on the basis of their gender(Rural=50 M=25.F=25 and Urban=50 M=50 F=50).

Statistical- Analysis:

The data was analyzed using Mean, SD and ANOVAs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

The results obtained are discussed as under;

1.Cognitive Styles among Rural and Urban Adolescents:

As it is evident from the inspection of TABLE-2 that no dimensions of Cognitive Styles was found to be significant. This result rejects the first hypothesis of the study suggesting that there will be significant difference between Cognitive Styles of Rural and Urban adolescents.

This result also suggests that rural and urban adolescents do not differ significantly in using different cognitive styles. They use same systematic,intuitive,integrated,undifferentiated and split styles of thinking and remembering.The reason may be attributed to the fact that nowadays the geographical conditions are changing rapidly and due to advanced information technologies the regional barriers have no significant impact on the thinking and remembering styles of the adolescents. Both the groups due to their exposure to advanced technologies perceive, think, solve problems, learn and relate to others equally.

2. Gender differences in Cognitive Styles:

As it is evident from the inspection of Table-2 that few dimensions of Cognitive Styles were found to be significant. The significant gender differences were found in use of Intuitive Style, Integrative Style and Undifferentiated styles of cognitive thinking. These results partially support the second hypothesis of the study that there will be significant gender differences in Cognitive Styles of the respondents.

As it is evident from the inspection of Table-1 that boys reported more intuitive styles than girls which means that the boys reported to use more unpredictable ordering of analytical steps when solving a problem while girls were found to score significantly higher on Integrative and Undifferentiated style. These results have suggested that girls were found to change their cognitive style more quickly and easily and they were not able to distinguish or differentiate between the two style extremes more often than boys. These gender differences in the cognitive styles may be attributed to the child rearing practices. The girls are trained to think in more predictable and organized way than the boys. All the informations gathered from the environment makes the schema of the child. A schema is a cognitively organized network of associations that is readily available to help guide an individual's perception and thinking. Gender schema acts as a guide or standard for consistent behavior in a given scenario. Therefore, the idea that once the child has developed basic knowledge on gender behaviors they will begin to construct gender schemas. This is acquired first through the basic understanding of gender-specific roles. In other words, the child learns the contents of the society, things that are related to their own and the opposite sex, and incorporates it into their gender schemas. The child then learns to apply the appropriate attributes respectively to the right gender by selectively using this knowledge to conceptualize their own actions. Hence, categorizing how they should perform and interpret various situations by molding their capabilities to match the schematic labels (Bem 1981).

Cognitive style is made up of the information processing methods of an individual. It is not focused on the specific decisions that a person makes but the mental processes that are used to make the decisions. These different mental processes may lead to significant gender differences in the cognitive style of the adolescents.

CONCLUSION:

The results of the present study have a potential for developing different cognitive styles which can be fruitful for the healthy personality and societal development. The results show light on how rural and urban perceive and interpret the situations and how males and females differ in their ways of perceiving, thinking and interpreting things. The findings of the study are potentially important when it comes to the implementation of social programmes aimed at children. There is a lot of researches needed to eliminate the gender differences in the process of thinking and perceiving. Boys and girls, both should be equally competent in all the cognitive styles used by them. People should know about what, why and how they are doing something rather than doing everything blindly and that will lead the next generation in a better logical life.

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Table:1 Mean & SD on all dimensions of Cognitive Style

1	Gender	Urban		Rural		Total	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Cognitive Style	Boys	73.32	14.03	60.76	17.59	67.04	15.81
	Girls	96.48	15.15	69.6	15.81	83.04	15.67
	Total	84.9	14.92	65.18	16.7		
2	Intuitive style						
	Boys	75.28	12.64	65.72	18.96	70.5	16.2
	Girls	70.72	19.87	59.68	15.35	60.12	17.61
Total	73.01	16.25	60.7	17.01			
3	Integrated Style						
	Boys	65.2	13.15	70.24	11.24	65.22	12.15
	Girls	71.19	18.15	65.11	13.4	68.51	14.9
Total	65.1	11.55	68.21	12.11			
4	Undifferentiated Style						
	Boys	73.32	14.03	60.76	15.12	67.04	14.23
	Girls	75.28	12.64	65.72	12.28	72.53	12.52
Total	74.3	13.33	63.24	13.7			
5	Split Style						
	Boys	86.48	14.69	69.6	15.35	77.54	14.79
	Girls	70.72	19.87	48.56	15.39	59.64	17.8
Total	76.6	17.73	59.1	15.36			

Table-2: Summary ANOVA on all the dimensions of Cognitive Style

Cognitive Styles	F-Values	Significance
1. Systematic Style		
Group	1.79	NS
Gender	1.19	NS
GpxG	0.23	NS
2. Intuitive Style		
Group	1.79	NS
Gender	6.23	Significant
GpxG	0.89	NS
3. Integrative Style		
Group	0.04	NS
Gender	7.27	Significant
GpxG	1.73	NS
4. Undifferentiated Style		
Group	1.01	NS
Gender	29.07	Significant
GpxG	2.11	NS
5. Split Style		
Group	3.08	NS
Gender	1.37	NS
GPXG	1.85	NS



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