

## A STUDY OF COGNITIVE STYLE OF PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS OF CHANDIGARH

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### ABSTRACT

*The present paper aims to study the cognitive style of prospective teachers of Chandigarh. The study consisted of a sample of 200 teachers of two colleges. The tool used for the study was Cognitive style inventory (CSI) scale prepared by Dr. Parveen Kumar Jha (2001). The main objectives of the study were 1. to study the differences in the cognitive style of the prospective teachers in relation to their streams and 2. to study the differences in the cognitive style of the prospective teachers in relation to their gender. The paper highlights the significant difference in the cognitive style of the prospective teachers in relation to stream and gender.*

### INTRODUCTION

Teaching as one of the oldest profession has been occupying a very dignified and important position in the society ever since man thought of building for himself a culture, enlightened and urban life pattern. In course of time, his passion and thirst for knowledge and refinement developed into a systematic schooling or learning in preparation for richer, fuller and satiated life. Accordingly, teacher is now being looked upon as nation builder. The main aim of education is to build the integrated personality. Teacher occupies a pivotal place in achieving this aim of education. Teacher cannot guide and direct the students to become successful in life merely by knowing their behaviour. The time has changed drastically and we have come a long way when it is essential for the educational system to understand the behaviour of the students for betterment of the society as a whole. It is equally important to study the different behaviours of the students like knowing, perceiving, judging, reasoning, appraising, etc. to which they are exposed to under different conditions. Teacher should take into account not only the range of styles exhibited by their students, but also recognise that their way of teaching is likely to be an expression of their own cognitive style. So, it is very important to study the cognitive style of prospective teachers. The construct of cognitive style stables individual preferences in the mode of organising the expressive and objective properties of the experiential field is central to a number of concerns of psychology on the one hand, research into personality development and the development of intelligence converges on the study of cognitive style. Some notion, such as cognitive style, is necessary to account for blatant individual differences in cognitive products among children of adequate intelligence. A construct of cognitive style is thus not excess theoretical baggage, but a useful interpretive mechanism that focuses attention on possible cause of individual difference in organising epistemic experience.

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**Cognition** comes from the Latin word meaning “to get to know”. The term cognition concerns with the way human beings perceive and learn, how they reason and think, even how their minds work in the ordinary day to day life. Cognition is a mediating process that is the centre of interest cognitive functions of perception, memory, learning and thinking are a part of person's personality as he begins to express and actualize himself.

*Bloom (1650)* states that cognition domain includes all the objectives, deal with recall or recognition of knowledge and development of intellectual abilities and skill.

*Dreves (1986)* defines cognition as a term covering all the various modes of knowing, perceiving, imagination, conceiving, judging and reasoning.

**Cognitive style** is a general term concerning all the various modes of knowing, perceiving, imagining, remembering, conceiving, judging and reasoning. Cognitive style is a broad dimension of individual differences and extends across both perceptual and intellectual activities. The term cognitive style refers to the characteristic ways in which an individual conceptually organizes the environment. It is viewed that cognitive style refers to the way an individual filters and processes stimuli so that the environment takes on psychological meaning.

*Coop and Sigel (1971)* equates cognitive style with modes of behaviour rather than mediating processes.

*Sharma and Aggarwal (1980)* conceive cognitive style as a term that refers to stable individual performs in a mode of perceptual categorization of external environment.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The following are the objectives of the present study:-

1. To study the differences in the cognitive style of the prospective teachers in relation to their streams.
2. To study the differences in the cognitive style of the prospective teachers in relation to their gender.

## **HYPOTHESES**

1. There will be significant differences in the cognitive styles of prospective teachers in relation to their streams.
2. There will be significant difference in cognitive style of prospective teacher students in relation to their gender.

## **DESIGN**

In the present study, descriptive survey method was used. The present study aims to describe the nature and the present status of the phenomenon. It attempts to discover relationships between existing non-manipulated variables. It also involves events that have already taken place and may be related to the present conditions. It also deals with testing of hypotheses and elements of generalizations.

## **Sample**

The sample of the present study comprises of 200 prospective teachers, 100 each of Shivalik Institution of Education & Research, Phase-6, Mohali and Indo Global College of Education, Abhipur.

**Tool used**

1. Cognitive style inventory (CSI) scale prepared by Dr. Parveen Kumar Jha (2001).

**Statistical technique used**

Descriptive statistics was used in the present study. z was worked out to see the differences.

**Results**

**Table 1: Mean and standard deviation in case of prospective teachers of humanities and science stream on the variable of cognitive style.**

CS	Mean	SD	z score
Humanities	80.49	6.62	2.67
Science	83.19	7.67	

The above table shows that the value of the z is 2.67 which is more than the table value at both the levels. It is insignificant at both the levels. So, the hypotheses “There will be significant differences in the cognitive styles of prospective teachers in relation to their streams” accepted.

**Table 2: Mean and standard deviation in case of prospective male and female teachers on the variable of cognitive style.**

CS	Mean	SD	z-score
Male	81.96	6.89	0.23
Female	81.72	7.66	

The above table shows that the value of the z is 0.23 which is less than the table value at both the levels. So, it is significant at both the levels and hence the null hypotheses “There will be significant difference in cognitive style of prospective teacher students in relation to their gender” is rejected.

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