



ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ENGLISH IN COMPARISON TO THEIR VERBAL LEARNING STYLES

Dr. Anuradha Sindhwani¹, Dr. Rakhi Narula²

¹Associate Professor, K.M.College of Education, Bhiwani, India

²Lecturer, Vaish College of Education, Rohtak, India

ABSTRACT

The present study is an attempt to find the impact of verbal learning style on academic achievement of senior secondary school students. A descriptive survey was used. In the present study, 600 senior secondary school students in five districts of Haryana state formed the sample. Cluster Random sampling technique was used to select these subjects from the population. Learning Style Inventory by Mishra (2012) and Academic achievement scores were taken from Achievement Test in English which was prepared and standardized by investigator herself. Descriptive statistics like Mean, Standard Deviation and 't' test was used to compare the groups. The findings of the study revealed that (i) students having high verbal learning style had better academic achievement than the students having average verbal learning style; (ii) students having average verbal learning style had better academic achievement than the students having low verbal learning style; and (iii) students having high verbal learning style had better academic achievement than the students having low verbal learning style.

Key words: Academic achievement, verbal learning style, senior secondary school students

INTRODUCTION

Children are born without culture; they grow up in one, molding their behaviors and beliefs towards their eventual role in their society. In primitive cultures, education often involves little formal education and perhaps no schools as such. In some, only one or perhaps a few sacred books are studied. In more complex societies, the sheer quantity of accumulated knowledge can take many years of formal education to transmit to the next generation, even if broken up into specialized areas of study. Education itself in such advanced cultures becomes a matter of study since efficient and integrated means of transmission of knowledge become more and more critical. Today, educators, researchers and teachers have become conscious to incorporate such techniques/styles to the teaching-learning process so as to get the best learning outcome in the form of students' achievement. Students need to understand current state of their knowledge and built on it, improve it, and make decisions in the face of uncertainty. The aim of education should be to reorient the minds of young ones and inflame their intellect. It is the time when we also need to redefine teaching and learning. Learning should no more be considered as simple acquisition of facts, knowledge or skill but it should be reoriented as acquisition of facts, knowledge and skill and ability to apply it in real life.

Achievement is the accomplishment or acquired proficiency in the performance of an individual with respect to a given knowledge or skill. Thus, achievement is the glittering crown which reflects a sense of sincerity, candidness and perseverance on the part of the achievers. The term has been defined by different persons in various ways.

According to Clifford et al. (1986), "achievement is the task oriented behavior that allows the individual's performance to be evaluated according to some internally and externally imposed criterion". According to Rao (1980) "achievement is concerned to a great extent with the development of knowledge, understanding and acquisition of skills". In the words of Verma and Upadhyay (1981) "achievement is the attainment or accomplishment of an individual in some or particular branch of knowledge after a certain period of training. The achievement score of a student indicates towards the future success of the individual".

Analyzing the definitions mentioned above, we can conclude that academic achievement refers to the level of proficiency attained in academic work or as formally acquired knowledge in school subjects which is determined by the grades, or marks secured by the students in the examination. It reveals the level of educational accomplishment in various subjects taught in educational institution. It also reveals the quantity and quality of learning attained in a subject of study after a period of instruction. Besides being the criterion of promotion to the next class, academic achievement is also an index of future success and determines the pattern of one's living. In view of this, the factors which play an important role in determining an individual's academic achievement need to be studied.

LEARNING STYLE

The term 'Learning Styles' refers to "the view that different people learn in different ways. In recent decades, the concept of Learning Styles has steadily gained influence. The learning styles concept appears to have wide acceptance not only among educators but also among parents and the general public. This acceptance is perhaps not surprising because the learning styles idea is actively promoted by vendors offering many different tests, assessment devices and online technologies to help educators in identifying their students' learning styles and adapt their instructional approaches accordingly" (Pashler, 2008, p.105).

According to Kolb (1984), "Learning styles indicate individual differences in learning. An individual's Learning Style is the way he/she concentrates on; processes, internalizes and remembers new and difficult academic information or skills. Individuals' approach of learning is different due to differences in their learning styles. Persons' approach to learning is relatively a stable indicator of how they perceive, interact with and respond to the learning environment." Understanding learning styles and the role of learning styles in the thinking or learning process is a key component ineffective teaching. Utilizing learning styles theory in the classroom is extremely beneficial at all levels of education for a variety of reasons. Some researchers have found a relationship between occupational preferences and learning style type. In addition, students' learning styles have been shown to be affected by their educational experiences, particularly at the post-secondary level. Therefore, knowledge of learning styles is useful in designing classroom activities that support the development of this learning style.

Verbal Learning Style

Verbal linguistic learning style, or intelligence, is one of eight types of learning styles defined in Howard Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences. Verbal linguistic learning style refers to a person's ability to reason, solve problems, and learn using language. Verbal learners connect well with written information and spoken word. They enjoy reading and can usually remember what they have read. They are also skilled writers and enjoy learning new words. In speaking and writing, they have an extensive vocabulary. Verbal learners often talk to themselves. They enjoy reading out loud and tend to talk themselves through certain tasks. They also enjoy participating in classroom discussions, as talking their way through the material is a helpful learning strategy.

Zainol, Abdullah and Rezaee (2011) investigated of the relationship between learning styles and overall academic achievement. The analyses of the data indicated “a significant relationship between overall academic achievement and learning styles. It was also found that the high, moderate and low achievers have a similar preference pattern of learning in all learning styles. Moreover, the learning styles framework does not change with subjects, where it actually plays an important role across all the subjects”.

Chermahini, Ghanbari and Talab (2013) investigated the relationship between learning styles and the academic performance of students who attend an English class to learn English as a second language in Iran. The results indicated “significant relationships between the different learning styles and the performance in an English test, and the performance resulted differently in four groups with different preferred learning styles.”

Pellon, Nome and Aran (2013) determined the learning styles of fifth-year medical students who attended the ophthalmology course and to also determine the correlation with their academic performance. Methods: Kolb's learning style and neurolinguistic programming (NLP) questionnaires were applied and related to the final grades obtained. The variables were analyzed using Pearson's r test. It revealed “a relation between the variables of learning styles and academic performance ($p \leq 0.05$). According to Kolb's model, students with better performance were reflective style and according to the NLP model, students with visual style. learning styles variables from the NLP mode land Kolb, acting in dependently of the academic performance of

students in a medical career, marking the highest preference for the visual style and reflective questionnaires applied based on both models”. This study is consistent with other research in this field conducted with students of the same race.

NEED OF THE STUDY

Education is a dynamic process, which always changes in response to the requirements of the society. Our society is moving in an era of working with communications rather than working in factories. With these societal changes the model of schooling is also changing. This transformation creates chaos and confusion on one hand and offer immense opportunity and new possibilities on the other. Now the situations demand learning to be more flexible, experimental and collaborative. There have been many attempts made to enhance students’ academic achievements. It has always been the main concern of many dedicated teachers and parents that their students and children be as much successful as possible. In relation to this, many teachers are convinced that students need the positive attitude to succeed academically. Often, one’s learning style is identified to determine strengths for academic achievement. Dunn, Beaudry and Klavas (1989) assert that through voluminous studies, it has been indicated that both low and average achievers earn higher scores on standardized achievement and attitude tests when they are taught within the realm of their learning styles. Although learning styles has not received full consideration in the local educational context, it is certainly the time that learning styles be fully incorporated into the teaching services. However, without proper research in this area, it is difficult to illustrate the contribution and positive intervention of learning styles with students’ overall academic achievements. The present study was conducted to know the impact of verbal learning styles on academic achievement of senior secondary school students.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ENGLISH IN COMPARISON TO THEIR VERBAL LEARNING STYLES

OBJECTIVES

1. To study and compare academic achievement of high verbal learning style and average verbal learning style of senior secondary school students in English.

2. To study and compare academic achievement of average verbal learning style and low verbal learning style of senior secondary school students in English.
3. To study and compare academic achievement of high verbal learning style and low verbal learning style of senior secondary school students in English.

HYPOTHESES

1. There is no significant difference in academic achievement of high verbal learning style and average verbal learning style of senior secondary school students in English.
2. There is no significant difference in academic achievement of average verbal learning style and low verbal learning style of senior secondary school students in English.
3. There is no significant difference in academic achievement of high verbal learning style and low verbal learning style of senior secondary school students in English.

METHOD OF RESEARCH

The present study is an attempt to explore academic achievement in English in comparison to their learning style. So Descriptive Survey Method of research has been employed as this method is concerned with surveying, describing and investigating the existing phenomena or issues, conditions that exist.

POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The population of this study comprised of senior secondary school students in five districts of Haryana state. 600 students of senior secondary standard were taken as sample of the study. Cluster random sampling technique was used to select the subjects from the population.

TOOLS USED

- Learning Style Inventory by Mishra (2012)
- Academic achievement scores were taken from the Achievement test in English which was made by investigator herself.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED

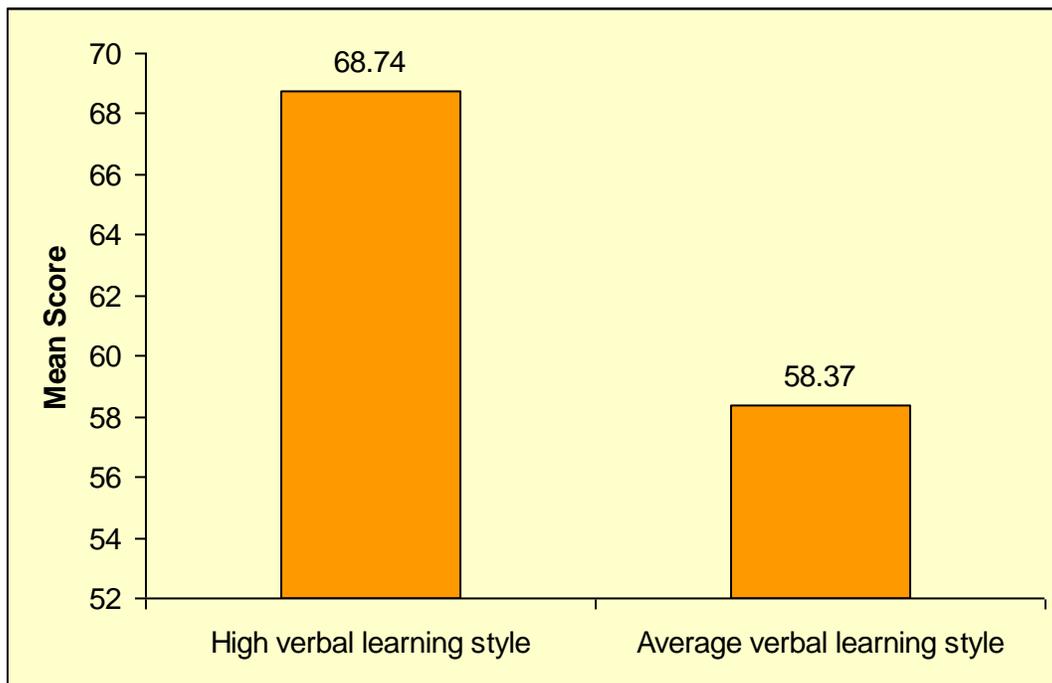
Descriptive statistics like Mean, Standard Deviation and 't' test were used to compare the groups.

RESULTS

Table 1

Means, S.D.s and 't' ratio of academic achievement of high verbal learning style and average verbal learning style of senior secondary school students in English

Variable	Group	Number	Mean	S.D.	't' ratios	Level of Significance
Academic Achievement	High verbal learning style	283	68.74	10.51	9.953	Significant at 0.01 level
	Average verbal learning style	249	58.37	13.07		

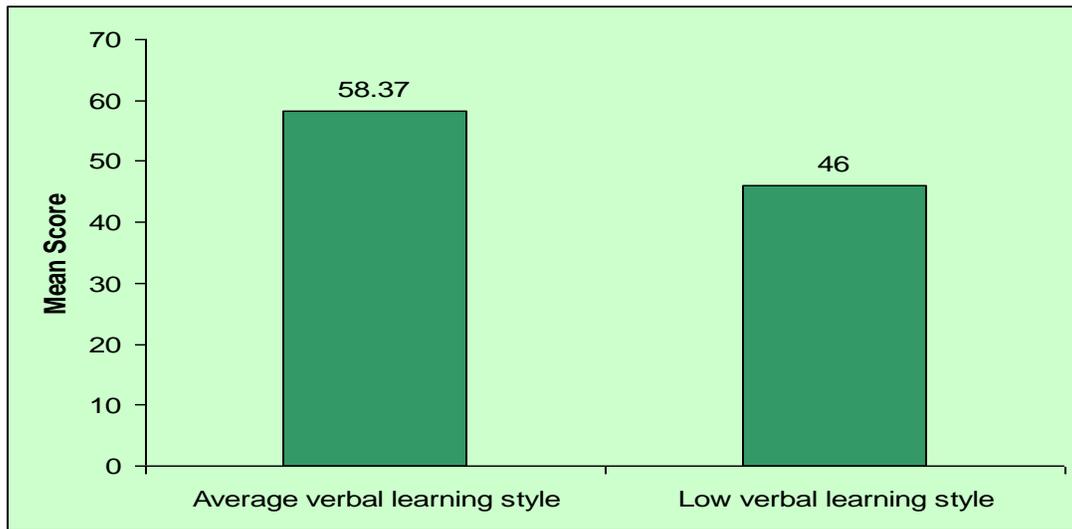


A scrutiny of Table 1 indicates that the mean score of academic achievement of students having high verbal learning (68.74 ± 10.51) is higher than the mean score (58.37 ± 13.07) of students having average verbal learning style. The 't' value is 9.953 which is significant at 0.01 level. It depicts that students having high and average verbal learning differ significantly on academic achievement. Further mean score of students having high verbal learning style is higher than the students having average verbal learning style. It indicates that students having high verbal learning style had better academic achievement than the students having average verbal learning style. Thus the hypothesis framed earlier, "There is no significant difference in academic achievement of high verbal learning style and average verbal learning style of senior secondary school students in English" is not retained.

Table 2

Means, S.D.s and 't' ratio of academic achievement of average verbal learning style and low verbal learning style of senior secondary school students in English

Variable	Group	Number	Mean	S.D.	't' ratios	Level of Significance
Academic Achievement	Average verbal learning style	249	58.37	13.07	6.739	Significant at 0.01 level
	Low verbal learning style	68	46.00	14.62		

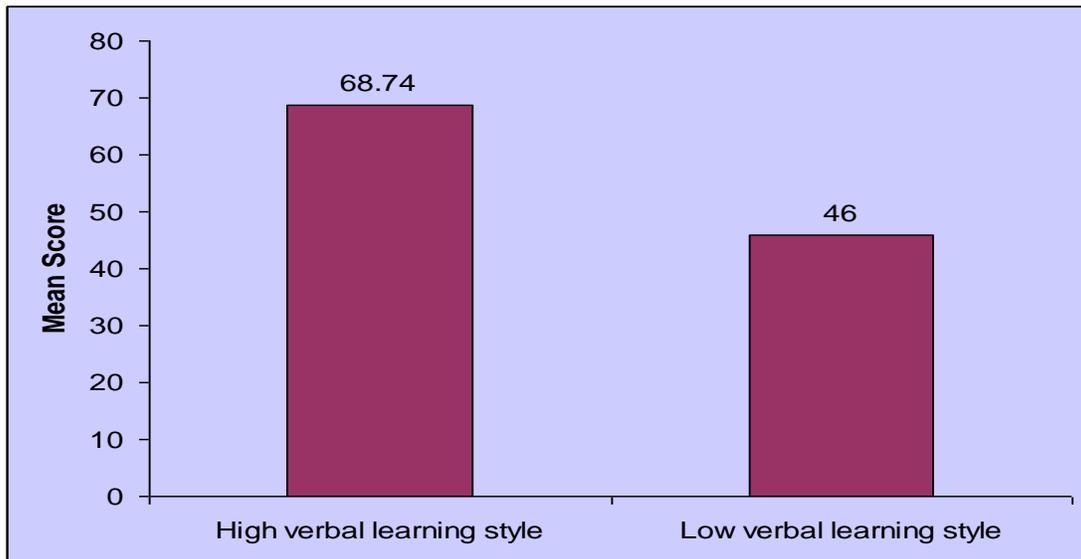


A scrutiny of Table 2 indicates that the mean score of academic achievement of students having average verbal learning (58.37#13.07) is higher than the mean score (46.00#14.62) of students having low verbal learning style. The ‘t’ value is 6.739 which is significant at 0.01 level. It depicts that students having average and low verbal learning differ significantly on academic achievement. Further mean score of students having average verbal learning style is higher than the students having low verbal learning style. It indicates that students having average verbal learning style had better academic achievement than the students having low verbal learning style. Thus the hypothesis framed earlier, “There is no significant difference in academic achievement of average verbal learning style and low verbal learning style of senior secondary school students in English” is not retained.

Table 3

Means, S.D.s and ‘t’ ratio of academic achievement of high verbal learning style and low verbal learning style of senior secondary school students in English

Variable	Group	N	Mean	S.D.	‘t’ ratios	Level of Significance
Academic Achievement	High verbal learning style	287	68.74	10.95	14.334	Significant at 0.01 level
	Low verbal learning style	56	46.00	14.62		



A scrutiny of Table 3 indicates that the mean score of academic achievement of students having high verbal learning (68.74 ± 10.95) is higher than the mean score (46.00 ± 14.62) of students having low verbal learning style. The 't' value is 14.334 which is significant at 0.01 level. It depicts that students having high and low verbal learning differ significantly on academic achievement. Further mean score of students having high verbal learning style is higher than the students having low verbal learning style. It indicates that students having high verbal learning style had better academic achievement than the students having low verbal learning style. Thus the hypothesis framed earlier, "There is no significant difference in academic achievement of high verbal learning style and low verbal learning style of senior secondary school students in English" is not retained.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. It was found that students having high verbal learning style had better academic achievement than the students having average verbal learning style.
2. It was found that students having average verbal learning style had better academic achievement than the students having low verbal learning style.
3. It was found that students having high verbal learning style had better academic achievement than the students having low verbal learning style.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

This study aimed at studying Academic Achievement in English of Senior Secondary School Students as compared to their Learning Style. The findings of the study point out many significant implications.

The present study reveals that learning styles can be considered as a good predictor of academic performance, and it should be taken into account to enhance students' performances specifically in learning and teaching the English language, and also showed that individual differences in learning styles play an important role in this domain. The findings of the present study are in consonance with the findings of **Zainol, Abdullah and Rezaee (2011)** who also revealed that the high, moderate and low achievers have a similar preference pattern of learning in all learning styles. Moreover, the learning styles framework does not change with subjects, where it actually plays an important role across all the subjects. While in other study, **Nzesei (2015)** also found a positive relationship between learning styles (all dimensions) and academic achievement.

In the present study, it was also found that students use different preferred learning styles to learn English language, which is in consonance with the findings of **Chermahini, Ghanbari and Talab (2013)** who explained the relationship between learning styles and the academic performance of students who attend an English class to learn English as a second language in Iran. The results of the present study indicated significant relationships between the different learning styles and the performance in an English test, and the performance resulted differently in four groups with different preferred learning styles. These results lead us to conclude that learning styles can be considered as a good predictor of any second language academic performance, and it should be taken into account to enhance students' performances specifically in learning and teaching the second language and also showed that individual differences in learning styles play an important role in this domain.

This study revealed significant differences in students' overall academic achievement. It showed that the students have better verbal learning styles have better academic achievement in comparison to their counterparts. As such, it is inferred that learning styles do make an impact on the students' overall academic achievement. Such finding highlights the importance of recognizing students' varying learning styles. Teachers should be aware of the usefulness of learning styles for effective learning to take place. The learning styles framework does not

change with subjects, where it actually plays an important role across all the subjects. Therefore, the results here suggest avenues of future research to understand this phenomenon. As a related matter, a study of other learning style variables should also be conducted to bring essential variables to the forefront. As such, the variables which might be significant for learning and related to the Malaysian culture can be discovered and utilized.

REFERENCES

- Chermahini, S.A., Ghanbari, A, and Talab, M.G. (2013). Learning styles and academic performance of students in English as a second-language class in Iran. *Bulgarian Journal of Science and Education Policy*, 7(2), 322-333.
- Clifford T. Morgan, Richard A. King, John R. Weisz and John Schopler (1986). *Introduction to Psychology (7th Edition)*, New York, McGraw Hill Book Co.
- Dunn, R., J. Beaudry, and A. Klavas.(1989). Survey of research on learning styles.Educational Leadership, March, 50-58.
- Kolb, D. (1984). *Experiential learning experience as the source of learning and development*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Nzesei, M.M. (2015). A correlation study between learning styles and academic achievement among secondary school students in kenya. Master of Education Dissertation. University of Nairobi
- Pashler, Harold, McDaniel, M., Rohrer, D., & Bjork, R. (2008) Learning styles: Concepts and evidence. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 9(3), 103-119.
- Pellon, M., Nome, S. and Aran, A. (2013). Relationship between learning styles and academic performance of fifth graders enrolled in the medical course. *Rev Bras Oftalmol.*, 72 (3), 181-184.
- Rao, S.N. (1980). *Educational Psychology*. New Delhi, Wiley Eastern Limited.
- Verma, O.P. and Upadhyay, S.N. (1981). Some Psychological Correlates of School Achievement. *Indian Psychological Review*, 20(4), Agra, 30-34.
- Zainol, M.J., Abdullah, H.N. and Rezaee, M.A.A. (2011). Learning Styles and Overall Academic Achievement in a Specific Educational System. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 1 (10), 143-152.