

Styles of Learning and Thinking of the Job Applicants Applied for Armed Forces

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: The strategies of cerebral hemispheres-right and left and though different for processing information but are not mutually exclusive rather complement each other to give rise of distinct style of learning and thinking to make decisions for various important progressions of life.

Materials and Methods: The total sample of 374 male and female job applicants was collected from Services Selection Boards at Bhopal, India. A 50 items questionnaire-Style of Learning and Thinking (SOLAT) was used to measure the functions of right and left hemispheres.

Results: Recommended male job applicants showed whole hemisphere dominance while recommended female applicants showed right hemisphere dominance. They differed significantly in some dimensions of style of learning and thinking.

Conclusion: It can be also concluded that recommended male and female are opposite in showing whole hemispheric dominance, male using maximum while female using least. Continued same study on non-job applicants suggests that job aimed for is a potential variable in adopting style of learning and thinking.

INTRODUCTION

Every job applicant in the world wants to clear the hurdles of screening, exams and interview for getting recommended to be employed for the applied job. The process of being employed is very complex and sometimes painful also. It starts with interest, aptitude, academic and non-academic achievements, results, need of job, career choice, competitive exam performance and bit of luck. The underlying wire which connects the whole process and confirms the individual differences among the approaches of job applicants is "Style of Learning and Thinking". The style indicates the cerebral functions of the right and left hemisphere of the brain. It includes strategies and information processing based on the preferences of the brain area for learning and thinking. There are n number of permutation and combination of these strategies and information processing. People learn and think in different way and no two people do in the same way. There seems no right mix of it [1]. Brought out in a study that thinking styles were a significant factor in student's career decision making [2]. found a strong relationship between hemisphere dominance and the way subjects made a living. Broadly, left brain dominance is reflected in solving problem with planning and organizing abilities while right brain

dominance is reflected in intuitive problem solving and subjective judgements. In short both hemisphere of brain are perfect combination of mind and heart. Left brain loves task related acts while right brain chooses to be performer related acts.

The Services Selection Board (SSB), a compulsory gateway to the Indian Armed Forces employs multi-method multi-trait multi-day testing approach to assess personality of job applicants to be an officer in the forces. Thousands of job applicants appear before SSB across different parts of the India with different pattern of personality to perform [3]. Studied thinking styles of artists and engineers, and found that professionals in different areas showed different thinking styles. The role of styles of learning and thinking in

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attempt of SSB may be an underlined pattern of their success or failure. Thus, the aim of the research was to study the style of learning and thinking of job applicants for Indian Armed Forces and compare the different styles of learning and thinking of recommended and not recommended male and female applicants.

Methods

The total sample of 374 male and female job applicants was collected from Services Selection Boards at Bhopal, India. Age range of males was 16^{1/2} to 19^{1/2} years and they were from science faculty of education. Females average age was 23 years and they were from both science and arts faculty of education. A 50 items questionnaire-Style of Learning and Thinking (SOLAT) developed by Venkataraman [4] was used to measure the functions of right and left hemispheres. Learning Styles (25 Items) consists of following dimensions – Verbal, Content preference, Class preference, Learning preference, and Interest. Thinking Style (25 Items) consists

of following dimensions - Logical/fractional, Divergent/Convergent, Creativity, Problem Solving and Imagination. Scoring: In the tool, against serial numbers 1 to 50, award one score for checking of the first items to right hemisphere; second item to left hemisphere and checking of both the items to integrated hemisphere or whole brain. The hemisphericity dominance was determined by counting the highest score of numbers of items one has checked in three categories i.e. left, right or whole hemisphere. Reliability: The reliability coefficient of correlation for right hemisphere function was found to be 0.89. For the left hemisphere was found to be 0.65 and for integrated function was 0.71. Validity: The concurrent validity of the tool was established with the standardized SOLAT tool constructed by Torrence & Reynolds (1980). The correlation between the two test scores was 0.842 for the right hemisphere; 0.621 for left hemisphere and 0.678 for the integrated part (**Table 1**).

Table 1. Summary of descriptive statistics.

Gender	Result		N
	Recommended	Not Recommended	
Male	24	188	212
Female	9	153	162
	Total		374

RESULTS

Tables 2 and 3 summarizes the dominant and least style of learning and thinking in recommended and not recommended male and female job applicants.

Table 2. Summary of dominant and least style of male job applicants.

Styles	Hemisphericity	Recommended	Not Recommended
Style of Learning	Dominant	Whole Hemisphere	Right Hemisphere
	Least	Left Hemisphere	Whole Hemisphere
Style of Thinking	Dominant	Whole Hemisphere	Right Hemisphere
	Least	Left Hemisphere	Left Hemisphere

Table 3. Summary of dominant and least style of female job applicants.

Styles	Hemisphericity	Recommended	Not Recommended
Style of Learning	Dominant	Right Hemisphere	Right Hemisphere
	Least	Whole Hemisphere	Whole Hemisphere
Style of Thinking	Dominant	Right Hemisphere	Right Hemisphere
	Least	Left & Whole Hemisphere	Whole Hemisphere

The multivariate test for equality of error variance was applied to find out whether the variance in the dependent variable was constant across the group or not. It was found that for Gender (main effect) the variance was not equal in

male and female group, while Result (main effect) the variance was equal. Different styles are summarized in **Table 4** which were found significant between male and female job applicants.

Table 4. Summary of Significant Findings of Two-Way ANOVA.

S. No.	Effect	Independent Variable	Style	Dimensions	Hemisphere	F	Sig. Level
1	Main	Gender	Learning	i)Verbal ii)Class Preference iii)Learning Preference iv)Learning Preference v)Interest	Left Whole Left Whole Whole	3.87 8.708.00 6.336.90	0.05 0.01 0.009 0.0030.005
			Thinking	vi)Logical / Fractional vii)Divergent/ Convergent viii)Divergent/ Convergent ix)Creative x)Problem Solving xi)Imagination	Whole Left Whole Whole Whole	4.923.99 6.109.29 6.24 5.92	0.02 0.04 0.013 0.0150.0140.00 2
2	Main	Result	Learning	i)Class Preference ii)Class Preference iii)Learning Preference iv)Interest v)Interest	Left Whole Right Left Whole	5.033.79 4.68 4.09 11.50	0.02 0.05 0.04 0.001 0.03
			Thinking	vi)Logical / Fractional vii)Logical / Fractional viii)Creative	Left Whole Left	4.05 5.044.40	0.04 0.020.03
3	Interaction	Gender X Result	Learning	i)Class Preference ii)Learning Preference iii)Learning Preference iv)Interest v)Interest	Whole Left Whole Right Whole	5.377.199.89 6.216.39	0.02 0.008 0.002 0.012 0.013
			Thinking	vi)Divergent / Convergent vii)Problem Solving	Left Whole	3.684.09	0.050.04

DISCUSSION

Overall sample of the male job applicants who made decisions to make a career in Armed Forces to be an officer showed right hemisphere dominance and least left hemisphere. However, the recommended job applicants showed whole hemisphere dominance and least was left hemisphere, whereas not recommended job applicants showed right hemisphere dominance and least was left hemisphere. While the female job applicants who made decisions to make a career in Armed Forces to be an officer showed right hemisphere dominance and least whole hemisphere, the recommended female job applicants also

showed right hemisphere dominance and least was whole hemisphere, similarly not recommended also showed right hemisphere dominance and least was whole hemisphere.

CONCLUSION

Male and female differ significantly on the dimensions of style of learning and thinking as shown in **Table 4**. It can be also concluded that recommended male and female are opposite in showing whole hemispheric dominance, male using maximum while female using least. This research study was extended to the level of students who are not job applicants especially for Armed Forces. 100 boys and 100

girls of science faculty studying in 12th class were administered SOLAT. There was no significant difference between male and female in their style of learning and thinking. Hence, the job for which an applicant seeking and preparing for is a potential intervening variable in adopting style of learning and thinking by the individual.

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CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

There is no conflict of interest.

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