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Investigating Kolb's learning styles in medical students in 2021-2022

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INTRODUCTION

Examining the learning styles of students in all disciplines has helped in better and more effective explanation of educational curricula in all corners of the world. Therefore, due to the lack of a previous study in the field of learning styles in Iran, we decided to improve the existing research gap by conducting this study. In this study, a comprehensive database of the presence of medical students in one of the most used messengers in Iran, which includes over 13 thousand people from all around Iran, was used. Therefore, this study aimed to determine the distribution of Kolb's learning styles among a national cohort of medical students and investigate their relationship with academic stages and performance.

METHODS

This is a cross-sectional-analytical study conducted during 2021-2022 and by a questionnaire of 12 questions with four options of Kolb's learning styles. Students of medicine from all around Iran, prioritized each of the options of these 12 questions from one to four and after checking the given scores, they are placed in one of four learning styles: convergent, divergent, Assimilator, and Accommodator. A total of 408 medical students were recruited via purposive sampling through a national social media platform. Data were analyzed using SPSS-23, employing descriptive statistics, Chi-square, and t-tests with a significance level of $P < 0.05$. The study was approved by the regional ethics committee (**IR.TBZMED.REC.1400.610**).

CONCLUSION

The predominant learning style among medical students was the divergent style. Considering that this style focuses more on feelings and looking at things from different perspectives, and given that this study included students at different educational stages, it seems necessary to review the educational curricula of universities to provide the possibility of learning for all students with different learning styles.

KEYWORDS

Education, Learning Style, Kolb, Medical Science, Medical Students

RESULTS

The students' learning style was **divergent (28.92%)**, **Accommodator (25.98%)**, **convergent (23.77%)**, and **Assimilator (21.32%)**. No statistically significant difference was observed between personality (P=0.552), internship status (P=0.559), or gender and learning style. Out of 408 participants, 71.07% were female. Regarding academic performance, students with GPA 14-17 mostly utilized the divergent style (13.97%), while those with GPA > 17 predominantly favored the Accommodator style (5.88%). Among the four learning stages, the highest mean score was in **Reflective Observation (42.15 ± 2.83)** and lowest in **Abstract Conceptualization (30.59 ± 2.96)**.





