



MAH/MUL/03051/2012  
ISSN-2319 9318

Issue-17, Vol-07, Jan. to Mar.2017<sup>®</sup>  
**Vidyawarta**

International Multilingual Research Journal



Editor

**Dr. Bapu G. Gholap**

[www.vidyawarta.com](http://www.vidyawarta.com)



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## Are Traditional & Professional Courses Students differs on Thinking styles?

D. P. Salunkhe

Sadashivrao Mandlik Mahavidyalaya,  
Murgud, Tal- Kagal Dist. Kolhapur

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### Abstract

This study aims at analysing the difference between thinking styles of Professional and Traditional courses students. The sample of the study consisted of 437 students studying in six institutions affiliated to Shivaji University. Thinking Styles Inventory (TSI-R2) developed by Sternberg, Wagner & Zhang, L. F was used to assess participants thinking styles. After analysing the data, it is found that students from traditional and professional courses seem to differ significantly on four thinking styles namely Legislative, Global, Liberal and Monarchic. Students from professional courses show more preference for the use of Legislative, Liberal and Monarchic thinking styles and students from traditional courses show more preference for the use of Global thinking style. In case of Executive, Judicial, Local, Conservative, Hierarchic, Oligarchic, Anarchic, Internal, and External thinking styles professional and traditional courses student do not differ significantly.

**Key words:** Thinking Styles, Traditional Courses, Professional Courses, Student.

### Intorduction

The basic aim of education is to impart knowledge and to enable students to face challenges in his life. In the field of education

psychology the great importance has been given to analysing the individual differences. The analysis of individual differences helps educators, teachers and school administrators to have better understanding of the various forces that provoke better academic achievement and learning outcomes. According to Strnberg (1997) "we need to take in account students thinking and learning style, students' success and failure depends on these thinking and learning style." The knowledge gaining process will affect if the teacher fails to recognize the thinking and learning style which students bring with them in the classroom. So there is a need to discover its various relations with other variables such as personality, culture, intelligence, creativity, sex etc. in the Indian context. It is hoped that this research can help educators to gain intuition and to be more aware of the importance of thinking style and therefore assist students' learning in order to enhance educational outcome and progress of students.

STYLES refer to our preferred ways of using the abilities that we have (Sternberg, 1997). Styles refers "how well" we can perform a particular task, it refers to habitual patterns or preferred ways of doing something that are consistent over long period of time and across many areas activity remain almost the same. In the past decade there has been renewed interest in the study of styles Evans and Waring (2012) identified 486 articles on cognitive styles; Evans (2013) subsequently updated this review to include a further analysis of an additional 221 articles from 2010 through 2013. Most of this research was conducted in the United States (29%), the United Kingdom (16%), Australia and China (11%; Evans & Waring, 2012). Evans (2013) noted an increasing representation of research reports from countries such as Australia and China (11%), Turkey (9%), Taiwan (7%), and the Netherlands, Greece, and Belgium (7%), which implies an increased interest in the concept of cognitive style around the world." (Kozhevnikov et al 2014).



## Sternberg's (1988) Theory of Mental Self-Government

In 1988, Sternberg proposed a theory of thinking styles which is called as the Theory of Mental Self-Government. This theory holds that styles can be understood in terms of constructs from human notions of government. According to Sternberg as there are many ways of governing a society, there are many ways of governing or managing peoples own abilities. According to this theory, people can be understood in terms of the functions, forms, levels, scopes, and leanings of government. In this theory Sternberg proposed thirteen thinking styles that falls in to five category or dimensions. The functions dimension has legislative, executive and judicial styles. The forms dimension includes the hierarchic, oligarchic, monarchic and anarchic styles. The scope dimension included the internal and external styles. And the last dimension contains the internal and external styles.

### THE PRINCIPLES OF THINKING STYLES

According to Sternberg (1997) there are 15 general points we need to understand about thinking styles. These are given below:

1. Styles are preferences in the use of abilities, not abilities themselves.
2. A match between styles and abilities creates a synergy that is more than the sum of its parts.
3. Life choices need to fit styles as well as abilities.
4. People have profiles (or patterns) of styles, not just a single style.
5. Styles are variable across tasks and situations.
6. People differ in the strength of their preferences.
7. People differ in their stylistic flexibility.
8. Styles are socialized.
9. Styles can vary across the life span.
10. Styles are measurable.
11. Styles are teachable.
12. Styles valued at one time may not be

valued at another.

13. Styles valued in one place may not be valued in another.

14. Styles are not an average, good or bad - it's a question of fit.

15. We confuse stylistic fit with levels of abilities.

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

"To Study the difference between Thinking styles of Professional and Traditional courses students'"

### HYPOTHESES

In fulfilment of the above problem of the study the following non-directional hypotheses were formulated for testing: -

1. There will be significant differences in thinking styles of Professional and Traditional courses' students.
2. There will be significant differences in thinking styles based on function dimension of Professional and Traditional courses' students.
3. There will be significant differences in thinking styles based on forms dimension of Professional and Traditional courses' students.
4. There will be significant differences in thinking styles based on Level dimension of Professional and Traditional courses' students.
5. There will be significant differences in thinking styles based on Scope dimension of Professional and Traditional courses' students.
6. There will be significant differences in thinking styles based on leaning dimension of Professional and Traditional courses' students.

### SAMPLE

The sample of the study consisted of 437 students studying in six institutions affiliated to Shivaji University. These students were selected through random cluster sampling technique. However prior to it, selection of six institutions was done by simple random method. It included 274 males and 163 females. They belonged to both Traditional (M.A., M.Com., M.Sc.) and Professional courses (M.B.A. M.S.W, M.C.A)



# TOOLS USED

## THINKING STYLE INVENTORY (2007)

Revised II (TSI-R2) by Sternberg, R. J., Wagner, R. K., & Zhang, L. F. Thinking Styles Inventory (TSI-R2) developed by Sternberg, Wagner & Zhang, L. F. was used to assess participants thinking styles. This is a short form, consisting 65 items. The inventory has 13 scales, with 5 items on each scale. On original TSI, the respondents are asked to rate themselves on a 7 point anchored by 1 - which indicates the statements does not characterize them at all, 7-which indicates that the statements characterize them extremely well. These 13 scales correspond to the 13 thinking styles described in Sternberg's theory of mental self-government.

Sternberg and Wagner (1992) collected norms for various age groups on the long version of the TSI (which contains 104 items, 8 for each of the 13 scales) for their college sample, scale reliabilities ranged from .42 (monarchic) to .88 (External), with median of .78.

The thinking styles inventory has proved to reasonably reliable and valid for identifying thinking styles of university students in Hong Kong. For example, while the alpha coefficients in Sternberg's (1994) study ranged .44 to .88, those in Zhang and Sachs's (1997) study ranged from .53 to .87 and in another study of Zhang between .46 and .89. This inventory has construct validity also. Validity data for TSI also have been obtained by investigating relationship between constructs underlying the thinking style inventory and those underlying instruments based on other theories of styles inventory and those underlying instruments based on other theories of styles (e.g. Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Gregoire Measure of Mind Styles, and Bigg's Learning Approaches).

## ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

**Table :** Showing Mean, SD., and 't' value of professional and traditional courses students on Thinking Style Inventory Revised II (TSI-R2).

S.No.	Thinking Styles	Professional Course (N = 222)		Traditional Course (N = 215)		t'	Sig.
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
1	Legislative	25.94	5.456	24.00	7.368	3.137	**
2	Executive	24.45	6.542	24.01	7.625	0.648	NS
3	Judicial	22.90	4.769	23.04	6.444	0.268	NS
4	Global	19.53	4.124	20.74	5.130	-2.718	**
5	Local	21.76	4.862	22.41	6.493	-1.187	NS
6	Liberal	25.78	6.284	24.06	7.774	2.537	*
7	Conservative	21.27	5.484	21.66	6.082	-0.712	NS
8	Hierarchic	23.32	5.513	23.49	6.973	-0.280	NS
9	Monarchic	22.23	6.332	23.60	6.841	-2.159	*
10	Oligarchic	23.73	6.266	23.16	6.447	0.925	NS
11	Anarchic	21.80	5.404	21.87	5.799	-0.144	NS
12	Internal	21.59	4.514	21.55	6.004	0.081	NS
13	External	21.46	6.402	24.03	7.373	0.645	NS

NS = Non-Significant at 0.05 level

\*\* = Significant at 0.01 level

\* = Significant at 0.05 level

The table 4.20 shows that students from traditional and professional courses seems to differ significantly on four thinking styles namely Legislative, Global, Liberal and Monarchic. The 't' ratios of Legislative and Global thinking style were found significant at 0.01 level and the 't' ratios of Liberal and Monarchic thinking style were found significant at 0.05 level of confidence respectively.

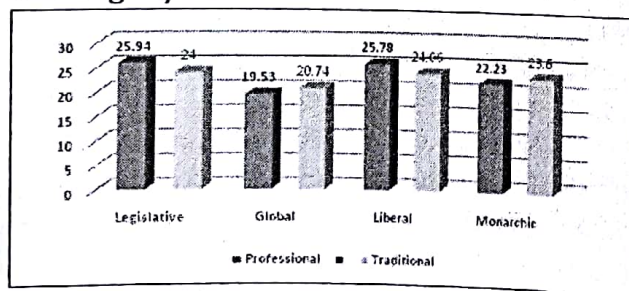
In case of Legislative Thinking Style, Professional courses student had higher mean scores than traditional courses students (25.94 > 24.00) and in case of Global Thinking Style, traditional courses students had higher mean scores than professional courses student (20.74 > 19.53). It means professional courses student had stronger tendency towards Legislative Thinking Style and traditional courses students had stronger preference



towards the use of Global Thinking Style.

It is also found in case of Liberal thinking style Professional courses student had higher mean scores than traditional courses students (25.78>24.06) and in case of Monarchic Thinking Style, traditional courses students had higher mean scores than professional courses student (23.60>22.23). It means professional courses student had stronger leaning towards Liberal Thinking Style and traditional courses students had stronger inclination towards the use of Monarchic Thinking Style. On other nine thinking styles, although there were slight differences in means but concerned 't' values were not found to be significant. Hence it may be said that apparent differences in mean scores of these nine thinking styles were due to chance factor.

From this it may be inferred that research hypothesis relating to differences in thinking styles of professional and traditional courses students was accepted in case of four thinking styles namely (Legislative, Global, Liberal and Monarchic thinking styles) and in case of other 09 thinking styles namely Executive, Judicial, Local, Conservative, Hierarchic, Oligarchic, Anarchic, Internal, and External thinking style the research hypothesis relating to differences in thinking styles was not accepted. Figure: Illustrates the significant differences in Legislative, Global, Liberal and Monarchic thinking styles.



## CONCLUSIONS

It is found that students from traditional and professional courses seem to differ significantly on four thinking styles namely Legislative, Global, Liberal and Monarchic. Students from professional courses show more

preference for the use of Legislative, Liberal and Monarchic thinking styles and students from traditional courses show more preference for the use of Global thinking style.

In case of Executive, Judicial, Local, Conservative, Hierarchic, Oligarchic, Anarchic, Internal, & External thinking styles professional and traditional courses student do not differ significantly.

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