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Learning Styles of Physiotherapy and Medical Students in a Nigerian University

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Abstract

Background: Knowledge of students learning style is important in order for an instructor to be able to determine and select the appropriate teaching techniques for effectiveness and maximized student learning during a class session.

Objectives: This study was aimed at exploring the learning preferences of physiotherapy and medical students in a regional university in Nigeria.

Methods: A sample of 263 undergraduate physiotherapy and medical students in the clinical phase of their studies at the University of Maiduguri participated in this cross-sectional survey study. The participants completed a two part question-naire. Part I of the questionnaire elicits sociodemographic information such as age, gender and programme and level of study, while part II consists of a 24-item self-administered Learning Style Inventory that elicited information on the students' preferences on learning their subjects.

Results: These cohorts of medical and physiotherapy students were evenly divided between visual and auditory learning preferences. While for the medical students, the males tend to be visual learners more frequently than their female counterparts, gender difference in types of learning preference was not observed for the physiotherapy students.

Conclusion: This study affirms the heterogeneity in students' learning preferences, and also suggests the need for instructors in health disciplines to always consider blending appropriate voice and audios with pictures, photos and visual effects in other to maximize students learning especially during teaching sessions.