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A comparative study of multiple intelligence levels of secondary school students with reference to grade

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Abstract

This study aimed to identify the types of multiple intelligences among secondary level (Grade 9, 10, 11 & 12) students from Kailali, Nepal in light of Gardner's theory. To achieve this aim, the Multiple Intelligences Test (MIT) was administered on a study sample consisting of (300) students from four (two public and two private) different schools. The results of the study showed that the linguistic intelligence ranked first, while the spatial intelligence came last, and that there were no statistically significant differences on the intrapersonal intelligence, while there were statistically significant differences on the rest of the intelligences attributed to the grade level variable. The study concluded with suggesting many recommendations the most important of which is that faculty of universities should pay more attention to multiple intelligences of students.

Keywords: gardener's theory, grade level, multiple intelligences

Introduction

Intelligence is a general cognitive problem-solving skill. It is a mental ability involved in reasoning, perceiving relationships, analogies and calculating. It helps individuals to face and solve the complicated problems and situations, in learning things and making adjustments with the environment (Shaikh, Khan, & Wakpainjan, 2016, p. 95) ^[7]. "Intelligence refers to Capacity to learn with speed and accuracy, Capacity to solve problems and Capacity to adjust in the society" (Anitha, Vannessa, & Sreelakshmi, 2013, p. 12) ^[1]. There is challenge in the education field regarding the variation of student progress. No two individuals are alike in the universe. If any student wants to reach his or her goals or aims he or she has to meet many challenges like cognitive ability, efficient methods of learning, concentration, memory, intelligence, learning environment and the students' progress. Children differ immensely in intelligence.

Multiple intelligences are needed to reason, plan, problem solving, think abstractly, comprehend complex ideas, learn quickly and learn from experience. Intelligence is not merely book learning, a narrow academic skill. But it reflects a broader and deeper capability for comprehending our surroundings.

Intelligence is perhaps, still single most effective predictor of school achievement. This is the age for development carrier choosing, carrier success, personal wellbeing and leadership to improve student's achievement and success. Intelligence plays an important role in life and contributes to the personal, social development of an individual and harmonious development of the personality of an individual. Intellectual development implies progressive changes in the mental process which go on from birth to death. Intellectual development includes various aspects such as development of concepts, perception, language, memory, reasoning, thinking and imagination. Making use of these multiple intelligences can help us restructuring our class rooms into places where everyone have higher degree of success than ever imagined. It enables the learner to understand and to develop their unique way of understanding and this empowers that person with a great self-esteem and enthusiasm. This theory can help each of us build upon both our strong and weak intelligences to become more whole, happy and productive human being. Multiple intelligences are needed to reason, plan, problem solving, think abstractly, comprehend complex ideas, learn quickly and learn from experience. Intelligence is not merely book learning, a narrow academic skill.

But it reflects a broader and deeper capability for comprehending our surroundings. Intelligence is perhaps, still single most effective predicator of school achievement. This is the age for development carrier choosing, carrier success, personal well-being and leadership to improve student's achievement and success. According to Gardner (1999) [4] intelligence is the ability to solve problems; a biophysical potential to process information that can be activated in a cultural setting to solve problems or create products that are of value in a culture through which individuals are able to learn/teach new information.

The theory of multiple intelligences was proposed by Howard Gardner in 1983 to more accurately define the concept of intelligence and to address the question whether

methods which claim to measure intelligence are truly scientific. In his conception, a child who masters multiplication easily is not necessarily more intelligent overall than a child who struggles to do so. The second child may be stronger in another kind of intelligence and therefore, may best learn the given material through different approach, may excel in a field outside of Mathematics, may even be looking at the multiplication process at a fundamentally deeper level, which can result in a seeming slowness that hide a mathematical intelligence potentiality higher than that of a child who easily memorizes the multiplication process (Chan, 2005) [2].

The following table shows brief highlights of eight multiple intelligences and the ways of learning preferences.

Table 1: The Nature of multiple intelligences and the ways of learning preferences

S. N	Learners who are highly	Think	Love
1	Verbal-linguistic	In words	Reading, writing, telling stories, playing word games
2	Logical-mathematic	By reasoning	Experimenting, questioning, figuring out logical puzzles, calculating
3	Visual-spatial	In images and pictures	Designing, drawing, visualizing, doodling
4	Bodily-kinesthetic	Through somatic sensation	Dancing, running, jumping, building, touching, gesturing
5	Musical	Via rhythms and melodies	Singing, whistling, humming, tapping feet and hands, listening
6	Interpersonal	By bouncing ideas off other People	Leading, organizing, relating, manipulating, mediating, Partying
7	Intrapersonal	In relation to their needs, feelings, and goals	Setting goals, meditating, dreaming, planning
8	Naturalist	Through nature and natural forms	Playing with pets, gardening, investigating nature, raising animals, caring for planet earth

Source: (Emmiyati, Rasyid, Rahman, Arsyad, & Dirawan, 2014, p. 104)

Human learning differs on several factors which can be individual or environmental. The environmental factors like socio economic status, cultural aspects, social norms, learning materials, syllabus and resources available are few to mention. It is the learning environment which influences the learning process (Razmjoo, 2008) [6]. The schools are responsible for providing proper learning environment to students. Every school has its own climate which is perceived by the students. The schools follow a specific syllabus prescribed by respective boards of affiliations but the experiences provided by schools, resources made available to students are different. Therefore, the learning also differs in degree. For example if the school focuses on the physical development of students and organize sports and other physical activities in the school then the students may get ample opportunity to develop physical abilities and skills or bodily kinaesthetic intelligence. The formal education system is very structured and divided into grades. Each grade is characterized by specific curricular, co-curricular activities which are based on the developmental stage of the concerned age group.

Objective and research questions

The study aimed to investigate the types of multiple intelligences among secondary level students from Kailali district of Nepal in light of Gardner's theory. In particular, the study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. What are the types of multiple intelligences among secondary level students of Kailali district?
2. Are there statistically significant differences in multiple intelligences abilities among secondary level students

of Kailali district attributed to the grade level variable?

Limitations of the study

The results of this study could be interpreted and generalized in the light of the following limitations:

1. The sample of the study was restricted to secondary level students only from selected four schools of the academic year 2017/2018.
2. The results of the study are attributed to grade levels only.

Methodology Procedure

Data collection is essentially an important part of the research process. For the present study the data were collected from girls and boys studying in Grade 9, 10, 11 and 12 with English and Nepali as a medium of instruction from 4 schools situated in Dhangadhi, Kailali. Prior appointment and permission was taken from the principals of different schools. The researcher explained the purpose and procedure to the respondents to obtain their responses on the rating scale. Students were also permitted to ask any clarification and their difficulties. For data collection no fixed time limit was given for completing the task. This research is a quantitative research. This research was conducted at public and private owned schools, Kailali.

Participants

The number of participants of the study was 300 Secondary Level School students from the study area. The details are given in the following table.

Table 2: Demographic information

		Age					
		14.00	15.00	16.00	17.00	18.00	Total
		Count	Count	Count	Count	Count	Count
Gender	Male	4	2	101	23	20	150
	Female	8	116	2	14	10	150
Grade	9.00	7	52	3	0	1	63
	10.00	5	66	94	9	0	174
	11.00	0	0	6	23	6	35
	12.00	0	0	0	5	23	28
	Total	12	118	103	37	30	300
School Type	Public	8	82	66	21	24	201
	Private	4	36	37	16	6	99
	Total	12	118	103	37	30	300
Ethnicity	Brahmin Chhetri	3	3	88	21	15	130
	Janajati	5	54	0	12	5	76
	Tharu	3	57	8	3	8	79
	Dalit	1	4	7	1	2	15
	Total	12	118	103	37	30	300

Source: Field Survey 2017

Out of 300 respondents, 150 were boys and 150 were girls. Similarly, from grade 9 there were 63 respondents, 174 from grade 10, 35 from grade 11 and 28 from grade 12. Respondents were from both public and private schools. Out of 300 respondents, 201 were from public and 99 from private schools. Further, Table 2 shows the data of respondents' ethnicity. Out of 300 respondents, Brahmin/Chhetri were 130, Janajati 76, Tharu 79 and Dalit 15. However, this research analyzed data with reference to

gender differences.

Results and Discussion

The first research question was to explore patterns of multiple intelligences among secondary level students. To answer this question, the mean and standard deviation were calculated and arrange all patterns of multiple intelligences in general and according to the grade level in the following tables:

Table 3: Averages, standard deviation and arrange for patterns of multiple intelligences for all students

Patterns	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
Naturalistic Intelligence	300	17.9733	8.02417	1 st
Interpersonal Intelligence	300	17.0967	3.08963	2 nd
Musical Intelligence	300	16.7700	3.98959	3 rd
Intrapersonal Intelligence	300	16.6200	2.80628	4 th
Logical-Mathematical Intelligence	300	16.6000	3.47663	5 th
Bodily-Kinaesthetic Intelligence	300	16.5700	2.87971	6 th
Spatial-Visual Intelligence	300	16.4867	2.77528	7 th
Linguistic Intelligence	300	16.1233	3.22741	8 th

Source: Field survey 2017

Results in the Table 4 show that naturalistic intelligence has the highest mean score, i. e. 17.9733. It means that many of them love playing with pets, gardening, investigating nature, raising animals, caring for planet earth, etc. Interpersonal intelligence has the second highest mean score (17.0967). They love leading, organizing, relating, manipulating, mediating, partying, etc. Musical intelligence has the third rank with 16.77 mean score. They love singing, whistling, humming, tapping feet and hands, listening, etc. Intrapersonal intelligence has fourth rank with 16.62 mean score. Learners who are highly intrapersonal, they think in relation to their needs, feelings and goals, and they love setting goals, meditating, dreaming, planning, etc.

Similarly, logical-mathematical has fifth rank with 16.60 mean score. Learners who are highly logical mathematical, they think by reasoning, and they love experimenting, questioning, figuring out logical puzzles, calculating, etc.

Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence has sixth rank with 16.57 mean score. Learners who are highly bodily-kinesthetic think through somatic sensation, and they love dancing, running, jumping, building, touching, gesturing, etc. Spatial-visual intelligence has seventh rank with 16.4867 mean score. Learners who are highly spatial-visual they think in images and pictures, and they love designing, drawing, visualizing, doodling, etc. Linguistic intelligence has the least mean score. Learners who are highly logical-linguistic, they think in words, and love reading, writing, telling stories, playing word games, etc.

On the other hand, the second research question was whether there are statistically significant differences in multiple intelligences abilities among secondary level students of Kailali district attributed to the grade level variable. To test the significant level, ANOVA test was done. The following table shows the results.

Table 4: ANOVA test of multiple intelligences with respect to grade level differences

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Linguistic Intelligence	Between Groups	134.317	3	44.772	4.447	.004
	Within Groups	2980.120	296	10.068		
	Total	3114.437	299			
Logical-Mathematical Intelligence	Between Groups	67.439	3	22.480	1.876	.134
	Within Groups	3546.561	296	11.982		
	Total	3614.000	299			
Musical Intelligence	Between Groups	17.319	3	5.773	.360	.782
	Within Groups	4741.811	296	16.020		
	Total	4759.130	299			
Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence	Between Groups	4.456	3	1.485	.178	.912
	Within Groups	2475.074	296	8.362		
	Total	2479.530	299			
Spatial-Visual Intelligence	Between Groups	46.628	3	15.543	2.039	.108
	Within Groups	2256.319	296	7.623		
	Total	2302.947	299			
Interpersonal Intelligence	Between Groups	80.649	3	26.883	2.869	.037
	Within Groups	2773.548	296	9.370		
	Total	2854.197	299			
Intrapersonal Intelligence	Between Groups	10.823	3	3.608	.456	.714
	Within Groups	2343.857	296	7.918		
	Total	2354.680	299			
Naturalistic Intelligence	Between Groups	242.064	3	80.688	1.256	.290
	Within Groups	19009.722	296	64.222		
	Total	19251.787	299			

Source: Field survey 2017

Table 4 shows that there are significant differences of linguistic intelligence and interpersonal intelligence with respect to school types; p values (.004 & 0.037 respectively) are less than 0.05. However, there are no significant differences of bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, logical-mathematical, musical intelligence, spatial-visual intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence and naturalistic intelligence of students of public and private school students; p values (.912, .134, .782, .108, .714 & .290 respectively) are greater than 0.05.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The purpose of this research was to explore and analyze multiple intelligences among secondary school students from Kailali, Nepal. The research shows that naturalistic intelligence has first rank and linguistic intelligence has eighth rank among eight multiple intelligences of the students from Dhangadhi, Kailali. The data also show that there are significant differences of linguistic intelligence and interpersonal intelligence with respect to grade level differences. However, there are no significant differences of logical-mathematical, musical intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, spatial-visual intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence and naturalistic intelligence of grade 9, 10, 11 and 12 students from the study area. This is not the final result because it does not cover all the students of Kailali district. These results show only the representative data. Thus, the following are the areas in which further studies can be conducted. A study of basic level students' multiple intelligences in relation to gender, a study of students' multiple intelligences in relation to achievement motivation and parent-child relationship, a study of the relationship between multiple intelligences, home environment and academic achievement of school students, a comparative study of students' multiple intelligences in relation to their parental qualification and socio economic status, etc. Similarly, there would be research in students'

multiple intelligences with reference to public and private schools.

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