

## **Study and Comparison of Harmony and Discord of Field Dependent/Independent Cognitive Styles with Acculturation of 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Junior High School Students in Tehran'S 12th District in the Academic Year of 2005- 2006**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This research studies and compares the harmony and the discord of the field independent and field dependent cognitive styles with the acculturation of the 3rd grade junior high school students in Tehran's 12th district in the academic year of 2005- 2006. The statistical population of this research includes all the male and female students of the 3rd grade junior high school who have been studying in Tehran's 12th district in the academic year of 2005-2006. The group embedded figures test and the researcher made questionnaire have been used in order to measure the cognitive styles and acculturation respectively. There is a significant and negative relationship between the field independent cognitive style and acculturation of the 3rd grade junior high school female students. There is no significant relationship between the field independent cognitive style and acculturation of the 3rd grade junior high school male students. There is no significant relationship between the field dependent cognitive style and acculturation of the 3rd grade junior high school female students. There is a significant and negative relationship between the field dependent cognitive style and acculturation of the 3rd grade junior high school male students.

**KEYWORDS:** field dependent/independent cognitive style, culture, acculturation, students, junior high school third grade.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Within teaching-learning discussions and regarding contemporary psychology, learning styles are of particular importance. Learning styles are beliefs, opinions, preferences and behaviors that individuals use to improve their learning in a particular situation. Learning styles have three basic fields which include physiological, affective and cognitive styles (1,2).

Physiological styles refer to biological aspects, that is, to the learner's reaction to the physical environment which affects learning. Affective styles refer to the emotional and personal traits of the learner. Cognitive styles refer to the manner of perception, memorization and problem solving used by the learner. In other words, cognitive styles are relatively constant styles used by individuals to receive, organize and conceptualize information. Cognitive styles are of various kinds among which field dependent and field independent cognitive styles are the most important ones identified and studied by Witkin (3-5).

On the other hand, culture and acculturation are among the most important discussions in the fields of sociology and anthropology; and in turn studies on the process of acculturation have attracted much attention in research and written works by sociologists and anthropologists (6-8). Given the importance of culture and acculturation in modern life and its application in cognitive styles to achievement cultural goals, the present study sets out to investigate and compare the harmony and discord of field dependent and independent styles with the acculturation of 3rd grade junior high school students in Tehran's 12th district during the Academic year of 2005-2006 (9,10). We hope that the results will serve the educational system. As it is known, social and cultural factors are closely related to individuals' field-dependent and field-independent cognitive styles. The extent of this relationship depends on the strength and weakness of the cognitive style and varies from one person to another. Acculturation is one of the most important discussions in the fields of sociology and anthropology (11-15). Understanding the process of acculturation increases our understanding of the complexity of cultural mechanisms in the whole society (16,17). Therefore, studies on acculturation have attracted much attention in research and written

works by sociologists and cultural anthropologists. An introductory definition of acculturation follows as: a phenomenon basically concerning a group of cultural changes that arise after the establishment of relationships among societies (18-20).

Acculturation is a process that assimilates the individual deeply and totally to the culture of the society, just like socialization which makes the individual more or less conformed to the social norms (21). Any child born in a particular society will unconsciously undergo acculturation. And any adult migrating from one society to another and thus encountering a new culture will find acculturation inevitable. Acculturation of children and newborn infants is a simple process and has one direction; while an adult who migrates to a new society cannot face new cultural matters as easily as a child can due to being accustomed to a particular culture. Therefore, acculturation for adults is a complicated process and has two directions: On the one hand, the new culture strengthens its power over the adult, and on the other hand, the old culture intervenes in the new one. Acculturation, in a sense, is getting accustomed to the culture of the society, and in another sense, acceptance of a new culture and expelling of the previous culture, thus requiring enculturation (22). In the studies carried out thus far, the relation between cognitive styles and acculturation and enculturation has rarely been investigated; and this lack is most evident regarding the studies carried out in our country. There is a need to perform investigations on the subject to fill this gap. The present study seeks to find out:

Is there any relationship between individuals' cognitive styles and their acculturation?

## METHOD

Investigation and comparison of the harmony and discord of field-independent and field-dependent cognitive styles with acculturation of 3rd grade junior high school students in the 12th district of Tehran. The data collected from questionnaires (the researcher-made questionnaire for measuring the extent of acculturation, and the standard cognitive style test for determining students' field dependence and field independence) have been organized in tables and diagrams, and the significance of the relation between the variables has been investigated using Pearson correlation coefficient.

### Results and discussion

There is a direct relationship between the field independent cognitive style and acculturation of the 3rd grade junior high school female students. The correlation coefficient of field independent learning style and acculturation of 3rd grade junior high school female students is significant and negative. There is a direct relation between the field dependent cognitive style and acculturation of the 3rd grade junior high school female students. The correlation coefficient of field dependent learning style and acculturation of 3rd grade junior high school female students is not significant (23-25).

There is a direct relation between the field independence cognitive style and acculturation of 3rd grade junior high school male students. The correlation coefficient of field independent learning style and acculturation of 3rd grade junior high school male students is not significant. There is a direct relation between field dependent cognitive style and acculturation of 3rd grade junior high school male students. The correlation coefficient of field dependent learning style and acculturation of 3rd grade junior high school male students is significant and negative (26-28). It should be noted that as this study has been carried out on %95 confidence level, some of the hypotheses show no significant relationship between the variables. However, decreasing the confidence level to %93 or %92, all the hypotheses become significant and show a significant and direct relationship.

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