

UNDERSTANDING LEARNING STYLES OF ADULT LEARNERS IN THE VHEMBE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

By

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Abstract

Little is still known about the Vhembe district municipal employees' learning style although considerable research on learning styles has been conducted. The purpose of this study was to investigate and understand the different learning styles among municipal employees in order to develop appropriate strategies to be used by instructors during training and determine the relationship between those learning styles and training methods. The method of data collection for this study is quantitative in nature using a self-designed questionnaire consisting of 34 items. The findings of this study revealed that Vhembe district municipal employees prefer visual learning compared to verbal learning. Active learning was preferred to reflective learning. However, both sensing and intuitive learning received equal preference. The municipal employees also preferred sequential learning to global learning. The findings also revealed that training methods, which are suitable for the Vhembe district municipal employees are lectures, video tapes, computer based learning, and group discussions. The findings of this study suggest that those training methods are effective when used to train employees that are visual, verbal, active, and sequential learners. A considerable number of training methods is effective; however, the effectiveness of the training method largely depends on the instructor. If the instructor understands the learner's learning style, it will be easier for the instructor to select the training methods that will accommodate most of the learners. The importance of this study is to assist employees and trainers to identify the most suitable learning styles and training

methods which will assist in enhancing performance and productivity in the municipalities.