

**Abstract Details**

**TITLE:** Potential Learning Conflicts with Similar Learning Styles

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**BACKGROUND and PURPOSE:** There is a general assumption that people who have similar learning styles (LS) will be more compatible. This assumption does not take into account the individual variations within any one LS. On the Kolb (2007) Learning Style Inventory (LSI) an individual whose LS is located close to the graph intersection (centered LS) will have a more balanced and adaptive approach to learning. An individual whose style is located away from the intersection (dominant LS) will be more dominated by that style. If two people have a similar, but dominant LS, there could still be conflicts. The purpose of this case study was to examine the relationship between the LS preferences of two students with one clinical instructor (CI) and the completion of an 8 week acute clinical education (CE) experience.

**CASE DESCRIPTION:** The LSI is scored by adding points for each of the four learning modes. The LS preference and LS difference were calculated on both students and CI.

The final scores on the Clinical Performance Instrument (CPI) were used to evaluate assessments.

The primary difference between the two students was their LSs. Student 1 was a centered converger; student 2, a dominant accommodator. Similarities between the two students included their age, sex, race, and GPA. The female CI was a dominant converger. Her age and race were similar to the students.

**OUTCOMES:** The LS difference between student 1 and the CI was 16. The student's CPI scores ranged from 2.1 to 5.3 with a 4.6 average. The CI's CPI scores ranged from 1.1 to 4.4 with a 2.83 average. The school received a phone call expressing concerns with student 1.

The LS difference between student 2 and the CI was 22. The student's CPI scores ranged from 5.4 to 10 with a 7.38 average. The CI's CPI scores ranged from 2.2 to 10 with a 7.44 average. Student 2 had no reported CE problems. Student 2 received a 4.61 higher CI average score than student 1.

**DISCUSSION:** Even though student 1 and the CI were both converging LSs, there was a 16 point LS difference. The CI's dominant converging LS tends to be less balanced and less flexible. The CI's dominant LS might have accentuated the LS weaknesses.

There was a 22 point LS difference between the accommodating LS of student 2 and the converging style of the CI. The accommodating LS relies more heavily on people for information than technical analysis. Student 2 was able to adjust to the CI's LS expectations better than student 1.

While the LSI is still a viable instrument, more attention needs to be placed on the LS difference as well as the characteristic strengths and weaknesses of each LS.

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