p- ISSN: 2708-2113 e-ISSN: 2708-3608 L-ISSN: 2708-2113 URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gesr.2020(V-III).12

Citation: Bibi, A., Naseer, N., & Habib, Z. (2020). Study Habits of Students and Academic Achievement: A Correlational Study. *Global Educational Studies Review*, *V*(III), 114-122. https://doi.org/10.31703/gesr.2020(V-III).12

Study Habits of Students and Academic Achievement: A Correlational Study

Aisma Bibi* | Naila Naseer† | Zahida Habib‡

Vol. V, No. III (Summer 2020) | Pages: 114 – 122 | DOI: 10.31703/gesr.2020(V-III).12

Abstract: *The study analyzed the relationship between students' study habits and academic achievement. The population was students of SSC level Rawalpindi. Sixty 9th graders were taken as a sample through purposive sampling technique. Study habits scale was a research tool developed by Ansari and Choudhary (1990), which comprised 30 items. Academic achievement was students' 8th class annual examination results. Students' academic achievement and score on study habits scale were correlated. The results showed that students' study habits scores had a positive correlation with their academic achievement.*

Key Words: Academic Achievement, Study Habits, Gender

Introduction

Students' academic achievement is affected by various factors, i.e. social, socio-economic, psychological etc., among these factors, the amount of time students spend on their study is also very crucial. Study of such factors is considered part and parcel for the good academic outcome (Kamoru and Ramon 2017). Rabia, Mubarak, Tallat and Nasir (2017) defined study habits as:

Study habit is; buying out a dedicated scheduled and un-interrupted time to apply one"s self to the task of learning. Without it, one does not grow and becomes self –limiting in life. Study habits tell a person how much he will learn and how far he wants to go, and how much he wants to earn. These all could be decided with the help of one's study habits, throughout life.

It means that the way a person plans his/her study plan is an important factor in the course of good or bad academic performance. But apart from this, individuals also differ in their study habits. Everyone differs in performance from the other in all walks of life, so is the case with academic success. Many students with high intellectual capacity show poor academic results because of poor study habits (Rabia, Mubarak, Tallat & Nasir, 2017). Sometimes the naturally bright students also exhibit poor study habits resulting in low academic achievement. There may be many factors associated with this, but the way a person plans and revises lessons on a daily basis is also very crucial. It helps in good grades as there is an association between drill and practice. The more one pays attention towards practicing concepts on a regular basis; the more is chance to get good marks in exams or tests. So, a person's habits truly indicate his/her individuality. It also covers preparation time allocated for routine tasks which are given as homework, quizzes, projects or any other assignment assigned by the teacher. This also tells about the daily routine of a student that how well he/she manages all the assigned educational tasks in the prescribed time frame. So study habits are the behavior of students related to studies, which can be judged by their study habits. According to Iftikhar (2002) in the learning process, the way students plan and execute their studies is regarded as study habits (much time devoted for the study is regarded as good study habits and vice versa). This is what may be called a learning character of students. It is also said that students' personality has an association with the amount they spend time on studies. Study

*Phd Scholar, AIOU, Islamabad/Lecuter, Hazara University, Mansehra, KP,Pakistan.
†Lecturer Distance, Non-formal and Continuing Education Department, AIOU, Islamabad, Pakistan. Email: naila.naseer@aiou.edu.pk
‡Associate Professor, University of Education, Township Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

habits are regarded as a path towards better learning because good practices lead towards better learning outcomes (Magulod, 2018). In other words, it may be regarded as success or failure is dependent or associated with the pattern of study habits of students (Sarwar, 2004). Students' consistent academic success mostly depends on their regular study habits. Students, who learn the art of study, do regular practice and achieve more, but some students with irregular study habits study more and achieve less. It also depends upon the push or motivation of the family member. Family and teachers can also play their role in motivating students to spend the day in a planned manner with more association with study-related tasks or revision of the topics on a daily basis. Gender differences may also exist regarding study habits. It is though that girl generally pays more attention towards timely completion of study-related tasks. It can be said that males exhibit a low level of study habits as compared with females. In this regard, a study by Koki and Abdullahi (2014) indicated a relationship between study habits and gender.

According to Iftikhar (2002), study habits are those activities, which are developed to adjust with one's own circumstances and opportunities. The way study is done regarded as study habits. According to Shafiq (2003) a number of elements which lead to successful achievement are past achievements and the amount of satisfaction associated with them, flexibility, willing to adjust to new roles, learn to adjust to the demands of the job, close parent-child relationship, being independent of others, making own decisions being able and willing to take a certain risk making the best possible use of the abilities. Sharma (2006) was of the opinion that emotional stability and study habits play a vital role in personal as well as academic lives. In a study by Jafari, Agaei and Khatony (2019) relationship study habits of medical science students and academic achievement was explored. Verma and Trama (2000) have also explored it by reporting that a child who is self-determined, would be more internally motivated, and his performance in academics would be better as compared to one who is not much self-motivated in his learning. Rabia, Mubarak, Tallat and Nasir (2017) conducted a study and found highly significant differences between the high, and medium/low academic achiever groups, particularly high and medium academic achievers. The difference indicated a strong positive relationship between academic performance and an achievement-oriented attitude.

Ansari and Choudhary (1990) further found that students' attitudes towards learning and study habits had a correlation with academic achievement. Magulod (2018) and Iftikhar (2002) found that female students' study habits have a direct relationship with academic achievements. Regarding parents' involvement and its positive effects on students' academic achievement is reported by Shami and Hussain (2005). In another study, Snyder and Lopez (2007) highlighted the role of the teacher in developing good study habits among students. They highlighted that teachers play a significant role in developing good study habits for students' better learning. Students' sometimes feel confusion regarding the development of good study skills. Sarwar (2002) suggested that time is the main factor which may be associated with good or poor study habits. So, students may pay attention to proper time allocation to studies. Grolnick, Ryan, and Deci (1991) identified three inner motivational resources that contribute to academic outcomes,

- Control understanding: students must understand their own behavior and factors that are responsible for their school outcomes.
- Perceived competence: they must perceive adequate competencies in themselves for desired academic targets.
- Self-regulation: they must be autonomous in their behavior

Another important thing is the students' problem-solving ability which may help students in adapting good study habits (Elliott, Godshall, Shrout, & Witty, 1990).

Some studies have also explored differences between male and female study habits. In one such study, Ejaz (2006) and Shafiq (2003) showed that the girls' academic achievements were higher than the boys' academic achievements. According to a study by Jumani (2004), anxiety is also related to the achievement of students. If a student is anxious while taking the test and considers the test as important, he/she is likely to perform poorly on the test as important, than the one who is less anxious. There is a negative relationship between the level of ability and level of anxiety. Weak students tend to be more anxious when attempting a test. Brown and Nelson (1983) mentioned that clearly different types of

treatment are needed for anxious test students with poor study habits than for students who have adequate study skills and often do well in their academic work even though they experience intense anxiety during the examination.

Sarwar (2002) mentioned that there are some important skills, i.e. knowledge of lesson or content, ability to map concepts or test-taking skill which may help students to study independently. So, there is no simple rule regarding good study habits which may be applicable to every student. Besides, students may vary in their time management to develop good study habits. Kalia and Sheoran (2005) are of the opinion that students at higher levels develop better study habits than they did at the school level. So, self-learning is promoted through good study habits. Role of teachers at the school level may be important in the development of good study habits. In one more study, Child (1977) found that students' general habits are different. They have different time management and preferences for study. Some students like to study in the morning; some may prefer to study in the evening or in the night. Students have different time pace for study. For example, one hour or more or less than this and selected place for study. Different students have different attitudes towards the examination. Some feel nervous prior to the examination; some are anxious during the week preceding the paper; some experience nervousness during the exams; some attempt question after dividing the time for all questions; some revise each question, and some consider that time given for exam is very short. Useful classifications of four possible techniques for checking study habits are detailed interviews, keeping a log or diary of study events, inventories/questionnaires, and observations. The above literature shows that all the learning activities done by students to improve their learning are considered as study habits. Study habits are meant to bring forth and improve one's cognitive development during learning. Teachers can play an important role to develop good study habits among students. If study habits are developed among students of higher secondary level, they can enjoy its benefits. Students' academic achievement is e related to different variables, and one such variable is their study habits. This research was an effort to analyze the relationship between students' study habits and their academic success.

Problem Statement

Students, whether they are school students, college students or university students are always worried about improving their educational outcomes and performance. But unfortunately, many of them might lack to know how to manage it. Among many factors which affect students' academic success is the study habit of students. Study habit is one of the factors that needed to be explored. In this context, the present study was carried out to explore the relationship between students' study habits and academic success at the secondary level in Rawalpindi district Punjab, Pakistan.

Objectives

Following objectives were in the present research:

1. To explore the relationship between students' study habit and academic achievement.
2. To contrast the study habits of low and high academic achievers.
3. To make a comparison between the study habits of girls' and boys'.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant positive relationship between study habits and academic achievement of students.
2. There is no difference between male and female students' study habits and academic achievement.

Significance

The present research will be significant for instructors to help their students and guide them to adopt good study habits. It will also motivate teachers to plan their classes to encourage students to develop regular study habits. This study will also assist parents in analyzing the worth and importance of good study habits so that they can inculcate good study habits among their children. Since most of the

students are very sensitive about their academic success, and they want to know the way they can improve their school result. So, the present study will motivate students to realize the value of good study habits.

Research Methodology

The population consisted of students of government high schools of Rawalpindi district. Students of 8th class of from two government high schools of Rawalpindi district were selected as sample by using a purposive sampling technique. One school was Denny's Boys Higher Secondary School; the other was Government Muslim High School Murree Road Rawalpindi. Purposive sampling was used for selecting class IX students. Teachers in the selected schools were asked to identify 30 low and 30 high performers from the ninth class in the light of students' previous achievements in class VIII. In this manner, 60 students were selected as a sample. Among these, 30 were boys (15 high and 15 low performer boys) and 30 girls (15 high and 15 low performer girls). The following table contains a description of the sample of the study:

Table 1. Description of Sample

Performers	Boys	Girls	Total
High	15	15	30
Low	15	15	30
Total	30	30	60

Results of students in the sample were obtained from school authorities, and two criterion groups were validated as high and low. Summary of information contained in table 2 confirms the accuracy of that division done by the teachers.

Table 2. Comparison of High and Low Achievers

Academic Achievement	f	Mean Scores	Std	t	p
High	30	498.3	71.4	13.1	.000
Low	30	274.9	59.7		

From the above table, it is clear that there was a significant difference between the high and low achievers' school results. This confirms the formation of the criterion samples.

Research Instrument

A standardized five-point Likert scale of study habits was administered in this study. This scale was developed by Ansari and Choudhary (1990). The reason for using this scale in this study was that because the developers had earlier developed one scale on study habits, and this was the extended version of their scale, which was developed in 1983. An earlier version of the scale comprised of 20 items which also had difficult language. This modifies version had additional 16 items after deletion of 4 items from the previous version. So the total items of this scale were 30. Each item was comprised of five responses. The total score was 150, and the lowest score was 30, which could be obtained on this scale. This scale also contained comprehensive descriptions of items on the main constructs of study habits. Following is the detail of constructs and items of this scale:

Constructs	Items
Seeking Teachers' assistance	3
Understanding versus memorization	4
Examination	4

Planning and management of study time	5
Internal and external distractors	5
Study methods	5
Regularity and perseverance	4

Scoring of the scale was done in positive and negative scores. If negatively scored, the scale gives overall study problems of students, and if scored positively, this scale gives a description of the study habits of students. So, in this study, all the items were positively scored as per the purpose of the study. So, the scoring ranged from 1 as lowest and 5 as the highest value of one item. Total minimum scale score was 30, and the total highest score of scale was 150. Authors indicated reliability coefficients of this scale on different grade level students, i.e., 8th graders (.80*), 9th graders (.78*), 1st graders (.84*). Reliability of this scale is reflected on gender also (girls .80* and boys .81*). Test-retest reliability of this scale is reported as .79*. The researchers also found the reliability of the scale by administering it on a sample of 60 participants. Following is the description of the reliability of the scale:

No of Items	No of Participants	Reliability coefficient
30	60	.85*

Translation of this scale was done in Urdu so that the participants may understand, comprehend and participate in this study easily. Before the actual launch of the study, the research tool was validated by expert opinion. It was given to five educational experts from International Islamic University (IIU), Fatima Jinnah Women University (FJWU), National University of Modern Languages (NUML). Based on their recommendations, the research tool was revised and finalized. Participants were told about the research purpose and also about how to fill the questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered by personal contact. After administering the questionnaire on the respondents, it was statistically analyzed. Students' scores on each item of the questionnaire were calculated to get the total scores of each of them. Data was analyzed in Mean, Standard deviation, Pearson correlation and t-value.

Results

Table 3. Relationship between Students' Study Habits Scores (SHS) and Academic Achievement

	Results	SHS Scores
Pearson Correlation		.504**
Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
N	60	60

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.*

The above table indicates that Pearson Correlation .504 is significant. It means that there is a relationship between the variables under investigation.

Table 4. Comparison of the Study Habits Scores of Low and High Performers

Achievers	F	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	p	Level of sig
High	30	117.30	15.302	3.1	.001	95%
Low	30	107.23	8.784			

The above table reveals that high achievers scored significantly higher than the low achievers. Not only they were high achievers academically, but they also achieved high scores on the study habits scale. T-value of the low and high group was 3.1, which was signed on the .001 level.

Table 5. Comparison of boys and girls study habits scores

Achiever	Number	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	p
Girls	30	120.50	14.258	6.033	.000
Boys	30	104.03	4.491		

The above table tells the difference between the girls' and boys' study habits scores on the whole, and it was also very significant. It was found that girls scored significantly higher than the boys. Not only they were high achievers academically, but they also achieved high scores on the study habits scale. T-vale was 6.033 that were significant on the .000 level.

Discussion

The main objective of the present research was to find out the relationship between students' study habits scores (SHS) and their academic achievement. It was found that there was a relationship between students' study habits and their academic achievement (Table 3). It means that high achievers have better study habits Sarwar (2004) also revealed that high academic achievers have better study habits and more positive study attitudes than low academic achievers. The second objective was to make a contrast between study habits of low and high academic achievers. It was found that high achievers scored significantly higher than the low achievers (Table 4). They were high achievers academically and also achieved high scores on the study habits scale. So it can be said that better the study habits higher is academic success. The third objective was to make a comparison between boys' and girls' study habits. The difference between the girls' and boys' study habits was found very significant. It was found (table 5) that girls scored significantly higher than that of the boys on the study habits scale. They achieved academically high scores and also scored high on the study habits scale. The study findings showed that girls' study habits scores were better than that of boys. Moreover, the girls' school results were also high as compared to boys. As Mirza and Milk (2000) found, in Pakistan, the results of the SSC and HSSC examinations over the last four decades indicate that girls showed better performance than boys in both the science and the arts groups. Not only their pass percentage was higher, but the grades obtained by girls' students were also higher than the boys. The difference was found to be increasing in favor of girls with the passage of time. In such one study, Sarwar, (2002) also found that overall girls score higher than boys on all the categories of study attitude. It was hypothesized in the present study that high academic achievers have better study habits so they will score high on study habits scale. The results of the study confirmed that high performers scored high on study habits scale. Along with the overall comparison of the high and low performers, comparisons within both the genders were also made separately. The second hypothesis was also confirmed as the low achievers scored significantly low on study habits scale.

Conclusion and Recommendations

1. There is a relationship between students' study habits and their academic achievement.
2. High academic achievers scored high, and the low academic achievers scored low on the study habits scale. The significant difference was found when t-test was applied to see the difference between the two groups. The difference was significant in favor of high performers because high performers scored high and low performers scored low on study habits scale. It means that high achievers had better study habits.
3. The findings showed a significant difference between the girls' and boys' study habits scores. Girls' high scores on the study habits scale as also academically support the general idea that girls take their work more seriously. From this, it can be derived that girls excel the boys academically due to their study skills. The correlation between students' academic result and SHS scores was also significant. In the end, it can be concluded that good study habits or study skills lead to high academic achievements, and the undesired study habits cause low achievement. Therefore, for improving the achievements students should develop good study habits.

Following recommendations will also help to improve students' study habits at school and home level.

- Parents may take more interest in developing good study habits in their children.

- There should be school counselors who can guide students on how to develop good study habits.
- Teachers may provide coaching sessions to guide students to pay attention to their studies and to develop good time management skills.
- Students may be provided information on how good study habits contribute to their academic performance.
- Future longitudinal researches may be conducted to find out the persistent effects of study habits on students' performance.

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