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Gender Based Differences of Study Habits among University Students

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ABSTRACT

Study habits play deciding role in educational achievement. This research is a comparison of male and female students' study habits at undergraduate level in Education University Dera Ghazi Khan Campus; Pakistan. A null hypothesis was formulated for this research. This research was descriptive in nature and survey method was used for data collection. The sample selected was 300 out of 1500 students of BS science subjects of Education University Dera Ghazi Khan Campus for data collection. Mean, Standard Deviation and t-test, were used for data analysis. The finding of the study revealed that female students have better study habits than male students. It was recommended that university teachers, counselors, and parents should work collaboratively to guide learners for consistent study habits to develop their scholastic success.

Key words: Undergraduate Students, study habits, University level

Introduction

There is expectation from the students, institutions and teachers to show good academic performance. That's why it can be said that the whole education system is in pressure in this endeavor. In fact, the whole education system revolves around it, although some other outcomes are also expected from the system. Thus, it takes a lot of time from the teachers to reach this goal. Performance of students in their academics are going to be lower and lower every year and the low level of performance has become a problem to all the stakeholders of education, i.e. parents, teachers, community and government. Although students are getting good grades yet their level of understanding is deteriorating day by day and this problem is applicable to all level of education (Nathan, 2007). According to Ashish (2013) students having good study skills to achieve high targets in education and good grades. Students study habits counts in the whole education process. If the students, teachers and parents do not encounter the students' bad habits of learning, students cannot improve themselves in achieving their targets. It is the teacher who has positive mind always and they can help students achieve good study habits. According to Gettinger & Seibert (2002) supplementing a student's mental capabilities to the acquisition of knowledge is the cry of the day. Students of any grade level with bad study habits cannot reach the targets.

Habit means planning and doing something according to schedule on regular basis and which has primary importance in a students' life. Although students habits can be improved by the teachers and parents and it is not a difficult task. Even then its crucial nature cannot be undermined. Even genius students cannot achieve their targets without good study habits. Similarly Kohli (1977) suggests that study habits have primary importance theoretically and practically. Other researchers have also affirmed strong relationship between the habits of study and their respective strong academic achievement and students usually fail due to bad study habits (Aluja & Blanch, 2007). Other educationists have also confirmed strong predictive relationship between the habits of study and academic performance in their respective studies (Crede & Kuncel, 2008). The study of Ossai (2011) investigated that poor study habits encourage mal practices in the examination especially cheating in papers and

it was also found that there were strong relationship between students poor study habits and cheating in the examinations.

Researches conducted about the weak areas of teaching learning process show that students having poor study habits cannot get good education (Mark & Howard, 2009; Husain, 2000). Further Husain, (2000) states that good study habits are essential for achievement of one's educational goals. The goal is covered due to giving emphasis to planning for good and consistent study habits of students.

Kelli (2009) stated that a student succeeds in his/her studies if he/she understands the nature of the subject and is able to reproduce the acquired knowledge orally or in written work. They are successful students and their attitude towards habit of learning can be called positive. There is a common question about how to learn good study habits in the field of education is when a student can manage a good time table effectively and can fulfill his/her responsibilities can be called as a progressive student who has developed good study habits. Researches on study habits suggest that it depends on programming and planning the study, taking proper notes of the lectures, using library properly, techniques of remembering, recalling and preparation for examination. Many reasons are accountable for poor study habits throughout the world. The main aspects included are improper time management, poor note taking techniques and lack of neat and clean study room having no proper ventilation and have noise, lack of proper preparation for examinations, become responsible for difficulty in recalling the learnt material (Malgwi,2006).

Mahraj & Qamar (2012) describe that good study habits persuade a student for study and ultimately plays role in his/her achievement. If there is no consistency in regular study habits it will prolong the problem and will leave the student in distress, creating stress among the teacher, parents and policy makers. Similarly Katelyn (2013); Ashish (2013) & Marc (2011) explained that the learners' performance will worsen if there is lack of consistency in students' study habits. Students become aware of this problem of bad study habit only when they have wasted their precious time at the cost of deteriorated educational career. So it increases the responsibility of the teacher to handle this problem with the relationship with the student and professional training. This problem also increases the responsibilities of the parents because this problem usually erupts from home environment as the first school of a child is mother's lap. Students can mold their behavior towards self-planning because of having such qualities of self-attentiveness, self-directedness and self-motivation. Finally, for keeping the students on the right track their bad habits must be modified into good ones. Although some other factors such as parental qualification, home environment, economic background and cognitive development may also be responsible in their educational career. Similarly in another research study habits have effects on the students' performance in university (Hazard and Nadeau, 2006).

At higher education the importance of good study habits sounds even more important because of the competition with their class mates and the student may solve his/her problem independently. Unserious and Unproductive students do not have the consistency in their performance (Agba, 2013 & Adeninyi, 2011). In the words of Grace (2013) the development of good study habits also depends on the teacher's effectiveness. Good study habits are also promoted by the teacher because teachers are usually a role model for the students and also a motivational source. Some of the variables which compose good study habits are methods of study, learning skills, attitude towards the creating positive learning environment, planning and management of time, etc. Teacher can also reshape these variables by good rapport with the students.

Gender can be thought as a set of assumptions about the role and biological differences between man and woman that are interwoven in a number of ideas, norms, and social behavior that make their identity and role (Taylor, 1994). Similarly, Nnachi (2008) asserts that gender in a social meaning has based on norms built on the natural difference and environment of the genders. As human culture differs from place to place so a person perceived in one culture may be considered differently in other culture. Similarly a girl can be thought as having different roles from culture to culture.

All biological, physical, behavioral and mental characteristics differentiate between masculine (male) and feminine (female). The basis of performance between male and female stems primarily from social and cultural differences. Professions like art and craft, engineering and agriculture are considered to be male

oriented while nursing, catering and typing are regarded as female professions. Parents, in fact assign task like grass cutting, bulbs fixing, car washing, remove things climbing ladders to fix etc. simply we can say that easy and less demanding tasks are given to female while difficult and tough tasks are assigned to male. Therefore, girls go to school with these stereo types in our society and culture.

Gender puts a great effect on human thoughts, behavior and social development. Therefore, there might be a difference between study habit skills. Effective study skills are developed by the way on how one thinks of himself /herself. Gender differences and study habit skills have different and interesting findings and these differ from one study to another. In one study, girls scored higher than boys on the bases of good study habit (Aluya & Blanch, 2004). According to Awabil, Kolo, Bello & Oliagbo, (2013) and Mushoriwa, (2009) there were no significant difference between study habits of male and female students. A research study showed that there were significant gender based difference in the study habits and male students score high (Ossai's, 2012).

The students' success depends upon study habits for learning procedure. Girls usually perform better than male students. One reason for this may be good study habits than male students. Therefore, this study compares study habits of male and female students at undergraduate level in Education University Dera Ghazi Khan campus.

Delimitation of Research Study

Due to finance and time constraints, the research was delimited to BS level (undergraduate) male and female students of Chemistry department.

Hypotheses of the Study

For the purpose, a null hypothesis was formulated for this research study.

Ho1: There exists no significant mean difference between study habits of male and female undergraduate students of science subjects.

Research Methodology

Population and Sampling

The research study was descriptive in nature. The entire population consisted of 1500 male and female students studying in BS program in science subjects at university of Education, Dera Ghazi Khan Campus. The sample selected was 300 (150 male and 150 female) students through convenient sampling technique (on availability bases) for data collection.

Research instrument

A questionnaires was developed after literature review the literature and existing problems with the consultations of concerned teachers. The research questionnaire was based on five points Likert Scale such as strongly agreed; agreed; undecided; disagree; strongly disagree.

The questionnaire was validated by opinion of two subject experts and the suggestions were incorporated in the research instrument. For finding reliability, the questionnaire was administered on 50 students which were not included in actual sample. The Cronbach alpha value was .81 which was acceptable.

Data collection and analysis

Permission for administering the questionnaire was sought from the concerned teachers. The students were informed that this data collection were only for the research purpose and their responses would be kept confidential. They were given enough time for filling the questionnaires. The response rate was 100 percent.

Data was analyzed through independent sample t test to find out mean difference between study habits of male and female students.

Results

The following were the results from the data analysis;

Table 1

Mean difference in study habits on the basis of gender

Group	N	Mean	SD	Df	t	p-value
Male	150	22.58	3.96	298	9.22	.000
Female	150	39.47	4.13			

N=300, Level of Significance= 0.05

According to the table 1, the mean score of male 22.58 and female 39.47 and score of SD was 3.96 and 4.13. The t-value was 9.22, df = 298 and p-value = 0.000 < 0.05 so null hypothesis was rejected that there was significant difference between study habits of male and female undergraduate students. The greater mean score ($M = 39.47$) shows better study habits of female students as compared to male students ($M = 22.58$).

Discussion

All of the researchers have agreed through their findings that academic life and good career is always followed by good study habits because their solid will power and power of determination are created by their confidence and achievements. Students should boost up their confidence to achieve the goals of life and encourage themselves with positive study habits. When learners have consistent study habits, they will achieve their targets and objectives. In other words, the students those who have no sense of consistent study habits to face the difficulty of academic life, will remain backward (Onwuegbuzie, 2001; Marc, 2011; Ashish, 2013).

Regular study habits always help the learners for better performance in educational field (Agba, 2013). Similarly, according to Adeninyi (2011) the students work independently with consistent study habits when they have aspiration and motivation from their parents, teachers as well as peers.

In one study, girls scored higher than boys on good study habit skills (Aluya and Blanch, 2004) that are in quite agreement with the findings of this research study. However, the result of study of Awabil, Kolo, Bello & Oliagbo, (2013) is in contrast with the findings of this research study who found that there was no significant difference between male and female students on good study habit skills. Similarly the result of this study is also in disagreement with another research study that showed that there were significant difference in the skills of study habits on gender basis with male scoring high (Ossai's, 2012), while in another study female and male students showed no significant difference on good study habit skills (Mushoriwa, 2009) .

Conclusion

This research study explored study habits. It was concluded that female students have better study habits than male students regarding and have good performance in their academic life.

Recommendations

From the results and findings, the researcher recommended that all the educational stakeholders; teachers, parents, and counselors should work together to guide learners about consistent study habits, for their scholastic success.

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