



Gender differences in the study habits of high and low achievers

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Abstract

Study habits play a very important role in the life of the students. Success or failure of each student depends upon his own study habits. The purpose of present study was to see gender differences in the study habits of high and low achievers. Data were collected from 240 school students out of which 120 were males and 120 females. To assess academic achievements, last year exam percentage were considered and for assessing study habits a self structured questionnaire has been used. Data were analyzed with the use of statistical tests i.e. mean, t test, chi square etc. Results revealed that, gender differences were found in the study habits of high and low achievers like more number of females take short breaks during study, devote more time in self study, follow time table more than males while males revise their work daily and study for long time in one sitting as compared to females.

Key words: *study habits, academic achievements, adolescents.*

I. Introduction

Education is the process of developing the capacities and potentials of the individual so as to prepare that individual to be successful in a specific society or culture. From this perspective, education works primarily as an individual development function. Education begins at birth and continues throughout life. It is constant and ongoing process. Schooling generally begins somewhere between the ages four and six when children are gathered together for the purpose of specific guidance related to skills and competencies that society deems important. In the past, once the formal primary and secondary schooling was completed, the process was finished. However, in today's information age, adults are quite often learning in informal setting throughout their working lives and even into retirement.

Education in its broadest sense may be defined as a process designed to inculcate the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to enable individuals to cope effectively with their environment. Its primary purpose is to foster and promote knowledge and awareness to all people.

In our society academic achievement is considered as a key criterion to judge one's total potentialities and capacities. Hence academic achievement occupies a very important place in education as well as in the learning process. Academic achievement is defined by Crow and Crow (1969) as the extent to which a learner is profiting from instruction in a given area of learning i.e. achievement is reflected by the extent to which skill and knowledge has been imparted to him. Academic achievement also denotes the knowledge attained and skill developed in the school subject, usually designed by test scores. Achievement is influenced by personality, motivation, opportunities, education and training. There are several other factors also which influence the academic achievement of student like study habit, self-concept, parenting style, socio economic status, intelligence etc.

The term achievement refers to the degree or the level of success attained in some specific to a given subject matter. Academic achievement could be defined as self-perception and self evaluation of one's objective academic success. Academic achievement generally indicates the learning outcomes of

pupil. Achievement of those learning outcomes requires planned and organised experiences. In the field of education study habits are approaches applied to learning. Study habits refer to the activities carried out by learners during the learning process of improving learning. Study habits are intended to elicit and guide one's cognitive processes during learning. They are generally critical to success in school. They are considered for acquiring good grades and are useful for learning throughout one's life. There are an array of study habits, which may tackle the process of organising and taking in new information, retaining information or dealing with assessments.

They include memories, which aid the retention of lists of information, effective reading and concentration techniques as well as efficient note taking. These factors are play a significant role in the academic performance of the students. Harry Maddox (1963) states that success in academic study depends not only on ability and hard work but also on effective method of study. Brown and Holtzman (1956) and Srivastva (1967) point out that for good academic success, good study habits and attitudes are important.

. A modern society can't achieve its aim of economic growth, technical development and cultural advancement without harnessing the talent of its citizens one of the major task of education is to help children to develop the skills appropriate in the age to which they live and those skills which promote a lifetime of learning educationists and counsellors in educational settings are often confronted with students who appear to have average scholastic aptitude but are very poor in their studies. A recurring question baffling them has been why some students succeed in their study while others do not. This questions is sometimes considered to be closely related to learning than teaching. Jamuar (1974) stated that efficient learning depends not only on good teaching methods but also satisfactory learning procedures. Tiwari and Bansal (1994) mentioned that a child with high academic achievement is likely to be well treated as well behaved and independent and low achievers as incapable and deprived of employment which may lead this to maladjustment to life.

Good (1973) has defined academic achievement as knowledge attitude or skill developed in the school subject usually designed by test scores or by marks assigned by teachers or by both. Consequently, academic achievement could be defined as self-perception and self-evaluation of one's objective success.

Study habits play a very important role in the life of the students. Success or failure of each student depends upon his own study habits. Of course, study is an art and as such it requires practice,. Some students study more but they fail to achieve while others study less and achieve more. Success of each student definitely depend on ability, method of learning, intelligence, and guidance of parents. No doubt, regular study habits bring their own records in the sense of achievement of success.

Poor study method clearly disrupt the progress of students (Rowntree, 1988). A study by Nagarajun (2004) found that students in secondary schools in India usually do not devote sufficient time to their studies and seldom have proper study habits. Underachievers have many non-productive study habits (Gibson, 1999). Students' study habits seem to show differences in how they learn and how serious they are about learning (Young, 1998). There are a number of study methods identified as being helpful in the literature. Landsberger (2005) gave a list of keys to academic success: they are, taking responsibility, putting things in proper order, discovering one's key productivity periods and places, prioritising productivity periods and places for the most difficult study challenges, considering oneself in a win-win situation consulting with the teacher and continuously challenge oneself.

There were several research studies which worked on the academic achievement and its relationship with the income, family environment and intelligence, but there were very few research studies which

relate academic achievement with emotional intelligence, self esteem and with parenting style, so keeping this view in mind this study is an Endeavour to fill the empirical gap with the previous research. The present study has been designed with the following objectives.

Objectives:

- To assess the level of academic achievement and pattern of study habits of the respondents.
- To study the gender differences in the study habits of high and low achievers.

Hypothesis:

There would be no difference in study habits with regard to gender.

II. Method

The study was conducted on 240 adolescents (120 boys and 120 girls) of age group 14-16 years; area was Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh. Students were from 9th and 11th standard.

Measures

A self structured questionnaire has been designed and pretested for assessing study habits.

Academic achievements

The marks of students of last school examination were obtained from the school record to get an index of academic achievements

III. Results and discussion

Mean differences in the study habits of high and low academic achievers

Question	Academic achievement											
	High df=121				Low df=115				Total df=238			
	Male	female	T	P	Male	Female	t	p	m±SD	m±SD	t	p
	m±SD	m±SD			m±SD	m±SD						
Want to sit	2.51±0.62	2.44±0.53	0.68	>0.05	2.41±0.67	2.68±0.51	2.43	<0.05	2.46±0.45	2.55±0.53	1.20	>0.05
Reason for study	2.63±0.49	2.73±0.44	1.28	>0.05	2.51±0.50	2.57±0.49	0.68	>0.05	2.57±0.50	2.66±0.48	1.46	>0.05
Follow time table	2.29±0.69	2.25±0.59	0.33	>0.05	2.52±0.65	2.34±0.61	1.59	>0.05	2.41±0.68	2.29±0.60	1.41	>0.05
Time devote in self study	3.95±1.37	4.30±1.34	1.42	>0.05	3.41±1.17	3.54±1.17	0.58	>0.05	3.68±1.30	3.94±1.32	1.58	>0.05
Study in one sitting	2.64±1.11	2.27±0.78	2.20	<0.05	2.23±1.10	2.07±0.87	0.86	>0.05	2.43±1.12	2.18±0.83	2.03	<0.05
Take short	35.31±14.99	32.84±8.64	1.06	>0.05	37.02±16.03	41.98±18.99	1.48	>0.05	36.24±15.52	37.21±15.18	0.46	>0.05

breaks during study																		
Df=1	No.	%	No.	%	χ^2	P	No.	%	No.	%	χ^2	P	No.	%	No.	%	χ^2	P
revision of class work	47	79.7	44	68.8	1.90	>0.05	39	63.9	32	57.1	0.56	>0.05	86	71.7	76	63.3	1.90	>0.05
Chapter reading in advance	42	71.2	42	65.6	0.44	>0.05	28	45.9	30	53.6	0.69	>0.05	70	58.3	72	60.0	0.07	>0.05
Method of learning																		
By Writing and reading both	43	72.9	50	78.1	0.46	>0.05	47	77.0	46	82.1	0.47	>0.05	90	75.0	96	80.0	0.86	>0.05
By cramming	4	6.48	5	7.8	0.05	>0.05	1	1.60	4	7.1	2.16	>0.05	5	4.2	9	7.5	1.21	>0.05
Writing back on printed page	3	5.1	6	9.4	0.84	>0.05	3	4.90	4	7.1	0.26	>0.05	6	5.0	10	8.3	1.07	>0.05
Learn word to word	1	1.7	3	4.7	0.87	>0.05	4	3.30	3	5.4	0.31	>0.05	3	2.5	6	5.0	1.04	>0.05
By understanding concepts	36	61.0	50	78.1	4.27	<0.05	33	54.1	34	60.7	0.52	>0.05	69	57.5	84	70.0	4.06	<0.05
By highlighting important points	11	18.6	36	56.2	18.39	<0.05	7	11.5	17	30.4	6.38	<0.05	18	18.0	53	44.2	24.5	<0.001
Discussing with friends	14	23.7	25	39.1	3.33	>0.05	15	24.6	21	37.5	2.28	>0.05	29	24.2	46	38.3	5.61	<0.05
By speaking aloud to learn	5	8.5	20	31.2	9.38	<0.01	5	8.20	13	23.2	5.06	<0.05	10	8.3	33	27.5	14.99	<0.001

Data of the above table the gender differences among different factors which affect study habits, in total sample mean value of females were higher as compared to male on the basis of sitting interest, it

means females are more interested to sit in the front row as compared to their counterparts. Females complete their home work daily than males. While males follow time table to study more than the females. Females devote more time in self study than males and also devote more time in study in one time than females. A significant differences were found in this regard. Mean value of females to take short break during study is more than males. Male revise daily whatever they learn in class while females prepare themselves in advance for the next day class. A larger number of females learn subject by reading and writing both, and by cramming, by back on page, learn word to word, by understanding concepts, by highlighting important points, discussing with friends, and by speaking aloud in the class. Though the differences were insignificant but in understanding word to word, understanding concepts and by discussion with friends and speaking aloud to learn differences were found significant ($P < 0.05$, 0.001, 0.05, 0.001) and in favor of females.

The null hypothesis framed is partially accepted and partially rejected.

IV. Conclusion

The study on gender differences in the study habits of high and low achievers found that there is a role of gender in study habits as for some factors of study habits male were having high score and for some factors females were having higher scores. There is a gender differences in the study habits. The results revealed that gender differences were found in the study habits of high and low achievers like more number of females take short breaks during study, devote more time in self study, follow time table more than males while males revise their work daily and study for long time in one sitting as compared to females.

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