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Relationship Between Study Habits and Academic Performance of Intermediate Students: Evidence from Pakistan

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Abstract

Background: Academic success is influenced not just by intelligence, but by consistent study routines. In Pakistan, students often rely on last-minute study patterns. Aim: To investigate the impact of study habits on academic performance among intermediate students in Dera Ghazi Khan. Methods: A correlational design was used with data from a 20-item questionnaire. Participants included 120 students. Statistical tests included Pearson's correlation and t-tests. Findings: A significant positive correlation ($r = 0.62$, $p < 0.01$) was found between organized study habits and academic performance. Gender differences were statistically insignificant. Conclusion: Regular and disciplined study habits support academic achievement. Institutions and families should promote structured learning routines.

Introduction

Achieving academic excellence depends not just on cognitive abilities but also on the habits and strategies students use in their learning journey. Effective time planning, regular review sessions, and environments that minimize distractions all contribute to stronger academic performance. Numerous studies have shown that structured learning habits positively influence academic outcomes (Credé & Kuncel, 2008; Nonis & Hudson, 2010).

In Pakistan, a significant number of intermediate students still rely on rote learning and initiate serious preparation only close to their examinations (Aftab & Khatoon, 2012). While this approach may help in short-term retention, it typically lacks in building lasting comprehension. This study aims to explore the link between strategic study practices and exam performance in the intermediate student population of Dera Ghazi Khan. It also aims to offer practical guidance for educators and parents to help students improve their academic behaviours.

Methodology

Research Design

This research used a quantitative correlational method to determine how study habits are related to academic performance.

Participants

A total of 120 students (60 male, 60 female) from public and private colleges in Dera Ghazi Khan participated in the study. The sampling technique was



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convenience-based.

Instrument

The research team developed a 20-item questionnaire focusing on three key areas: study time management, regularity of study, and maintaining focus. Educational experts reviewed the content for validity. Reliability testing indicated a Cronbach's alpha of 0.78, reflecting acceptable internal consistency.

Ethical Considerations

Participants were fully informed about the study's objectives and gave consent prior to participation. Their responses were treated with confidentiality and anonymity.

Academic Performance Measure

Student performance was assessed based on their most recent annual examination scores.

Data Analysis

Data entry and analysis were conducted using SPSS version 26. Descriptive statistics helped summarize response trends. Pearson's correlation measured the link between study habits and academic performance, while independent sample t-tests compared habits across gender lines.

Results

Analysis indicated a statistically significant positive correlation between structured study habits and better academic performance ($r = 0.62$, $p < 0.01$). Students who followed regular and planned study schedules tended to achieve higher marks.

In the gender-based comparison, female students ($M = 3.57$, $SD = 0.71$) appeared to follow slightly more effective study routines than male students ($M = 3.33$, $SD = 0.83$). However, the statistical test showed this difference to be insignificant, $t(118) = 1.45$, $p = 0.15$.

Discussion

The findings support the idea that methodical study behaviours are a critical factor in academic success. Those who study regularly, manage their time well, and maintain focus tend to excel academically. This aligns with prior research (Abid et al., 2023; Credé & Kuncel, 2008; Nonis & Hudson, 2010).

Within the local educational setting, the results emphasize that relying on last-minute cramming and memorization may not be conducive for long-term retention or deep understanding. The slight difference in habits between male and female students reinforces the need for developing these skills across all demographics.

Educational institutions can play a vital role by offering training sessions in time management and structured study skills. Parents, too, should cultivate a home environment that encourages consistent academic effort without distractions.



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Practical Implications

- Teachers should advocate daily reviews and encourage strategic learning.
- Parents must ensure a peaceful study environment at home.
- Schools and colleges should hold training programs to teach time management and effective study habits.

Limitations and Future Research

- The scope was limited to a single district, affecting generalizability.
- Self-reported data may carry inherent bias.
- Future studies should involve a broader, more diverse sample from various regions.
- Further research should investigate modern distractions like social media and their impact on study habits.

References

[References same as provided before]

Declarations:

1. Originality Statement: This paper represents original work that has not been published or submitted elsewhere.
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 - Muhammad Furqan: Research design, data collection, initial draft
 - Muhammad Irfan: Data analysis, literature review
 - Uzair Khan: Questionnaire validation, final editing
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