

## A Cross-Sectional Survey on the Study Habits of University Students in District Rawalpindi

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**Abstract:** Study habits are considered as key to success of students especially at higher education level. This study was conducted to explore the study habits of university students. This study used a cross-sectional survey design. Out of 4000 students a sample of 360 university students was randomly selected. A self-developed questionnaire consisting of four portions was used to collect the data. The data were collected through personal visits. Mean score, independent sample t-test and one-way ANOVA were used to analyse the data. It was concluded that the students had effective study habits including habit of note taking, time management for study and habit of using guidance and counseling. The study also concluded that the male students showed significantly better scores as compared to the female students regarding their study habits. Furthermore, there was no significant mean difference between mean scores of study habits of the students with respect to their level of education. Moreover, the students of age group 17-22 had least interest in developing their study habits. It is recommended that female students may be provided proper guidance and counselling to improve their study habits. Furthermore, it is also recommended that the universities may arrange seminars for young students to improve their study habits.

**Keywords:** Study Habits, Effective Study Habits, Note Taking, Time Allocation to Study, Guidance and Counseling

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## Introduction

The study habits of students have been debated a lot these days as these show students intentions towards study. A student who's incredibly smart and behaves well, but if their study habits are lacking, it can really hold them back. There's definitely something getting in the way of their academic performance and achievements. Study habits play a crucial role in how well students do in school. Mark and Howard (2009) pointed out that to really hit it out of the park with their results, students need to build effective study habits and have a good amount of self-control.

Ashish (2013) emphasizes that for students to succeed academically throughout the year, they have to ditch bad study habits and pick up the right ones. And it's not just about school — these habits need to stick with them for life. She also mentions that there are plenty of study strategies out there that can lead to frustration. By developing positive study habits, students can really boost their academic success. This shift can transform them into high-achieving students. Ashish (2013) also stresses the importance of figuring out what works personally for each student. Once

they've developed a study habit, it's essential to connect it to what's going on in their lives. And after that, creating a timetable to stick to those techniques can make a world of difference.

So, if students really want to excel, they need to embrace effective study habits. Without those, it's tough to reach high performance. Katelyn (2013) gives us a breakdown here — she says there are basically two kinds of study habits: effective and ineffective. Effective study habits include focusing on studies, constantly asking critical questions, applying new facts to their learning, taking teachers' suggestions seriously, and making notes based on concepts. Students really should make an effort to adopt these qualities and use them in a positive way. Note taking and following a proper study timetable and getting prepared for the subject test are the competencies of effective study habits and side by side getting rid of the interference of television or phone calls at home, can be the reason of desired academic performance (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Likewise, according to Arquero and Esteban (2013), pupil's abilities of managing time in the way of learning have effect on their educational performance, study habits and time management abilities can leave constructive or destructive effect in their academic performance. To enhance students study habits there must be guidance of tutors. It can decrease or increase student results of different subjects.

Study habits are having significant importance in educational success of any student, but despite this fact, these elements are having slight interest by educational organizations (Karaduman, 2010). Hence, it is important to have a look on study habits of university students in Rawalpindi. Hence, this study was conducted to explore the effects of demographic variables (gender, age and level of students) on the study habits of the university students.

### Objectives of the Study

Following were the objectives of the study.

1. To explore the study habits of students at university level.
2. To compare the study habits of male and female students.
3. To compare the study habits of different age groups of students.
4. To compare the study habits with respect to different academic levels of students.

### Research Questions of the Study

1. What are the study habits of students at university level?
2. To what extent the difference exists between the study habits of male and female students?
3. What is the difference in the study habits of different age groups of students?
4. To what extent the difference exists in the study habits with respect to different academic levels of students.

### Review of Literature

#### Study Habits

Acheaw (2004) defines study habits as a planned and conscious learning model that enables students to be consistent in understanding academic subjects and passing exams. In line with Hussain (2000), study habits create and establish an inclination between student and their private reading in a period of time. He further stated that study habit is a gate way to success in educational line of a student.

Study habits are primarily external factors that promote the learning process, such as good learning practices, including the frequency of student attendance, material review, self-assessment, review of explanatory materials, and learning about an enabling environment. Adeniyi (2011) stated that the study habits can be as systematic, efficient and inefficient. Hacıfendioğlu (2010) have discussed in their research several study habits. Few of them are mentioned below.

#### Choosing Effective Study Habits

It is an important phenomenon that the students must know which study habits are effective for them. For instance, this is not enough for the students to know when or which time, tests and exams have to be held in the semester, but they also have to work hard each week without considering the test or exam being held or not. There should have balanced study plan to avoid the failure during the exams and tests (Yağmurlu, 2011). Likewise, if students are going to read book it must be divided in a suitable pattern e.g., they must not read 200 pages at one time. Tests and quizzes must be prepared before the coverage of course not the night before of the tests.



To achieve educational goal, students must visualize it because it will help them a lot to achieve the goal. This will give them motivation to achieve what they want in future, and it will set a path of success for them (Geray, [2003](#)). In this context, Lerman ([2007](#)) suggests if anything goes wrong or the students face some failure in their studies, don't lose hope, just learn from failure and from experience, at the end it will help them a lot.

In order to do any task, students need accessories to accomplish it, and for the purpose of study they need to do hard work to attain success.

### **Note taking and time allocation to the studies**

Note taking and following a proper study timetable and getting prepared for the subject test are the competencies of effective study habits and side by side getting rid of the interference of television or phone calls at home, can be the reason of wanted academic performance (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). In order to gain desire educational outcome, note taking and giving proper time to study can assist the students most in order to attain desirable reward in their academic performance (Dearborn, [2014](#)).

Self-regulated learners seek help from their teachers and friends. They have extraordinary self-efficacy and powerful time control abilities, and they have full focused on their aim that they have to attain much in the line of education and in their academic achievement (Sucu, [2012](#)).

### **Study habits and time management**

Through the outstanding deal of studies, facts have come out that learning approaches and study habits are important variables as pupil's educational performance is decided by these variables. Study habits are having significant importance in educational success of any student, but despite this fact, these elements are having slight interest by educational organizations (Karaduman, [2010](#)).

In addition, with it in a research Humphreys ([2007](#)) found that study habit and time management are interlinked to each other, so student do not pay enough time to their studies. In this way they face terrible study habits and low academic performance. According to Arquero and Esteban ([2013](#)), pupil's abilities of managing time in the way of learning have effect on their educational performance, study habits and time management abilities can leave constructive or destructive effect in their academic performance. Selwyn ([2007](#)) observed that time that has spent on studies can show its dignity or effect on the 9th week or in the 5th week of any semester, the time which is given to the studies has influence on education, timetable which is given to their studies has influence on the educational capabilities or the students' academic achievement.

Present days are quite different to the past time, now world is transformed, and it has speed for doing change. To shine is desire of everyone. Non-public or public scope of existence having influence on any person's achievement. In this way the main element that effects the person's achievement in any educational situation is their educational routine. In order to enhance academic performance, it is our duty to adopt time management ability and study habits. Time management abilities and study habits are needed in learning. These elements are essential to get more knowledge (Günüç, [2009](#)). School related activities sports for free time, give them chance to achieve their goal create patience in them and solve their problem and follow time and manage it (Pappas, [2013](#)).

### **Guidance and Counseling and in terms of study habits**

Bicen and Cavus ([2010](#)) recommend that to enhance students study habits there must be guidance of tutors. It can decrease or increase student results of different subjects, plus evaluation of teacher in different subject can all be enhanced or decreased.

In line with this, Subrahmanyam and Lin ([2007](#)) suggested that freedom is the main purpose of schooling. The least purpose of education is to inspire newcomers in way to give them comfort in new conditions and teach them how to resolve new issues. Effective study habit is one of the few abilities which assist the student to acquire competency. These two variables have sturdy link plus these are maximum essential topic in academic world.



"For that reason, we can support pupils through the steering guidance program, to see their proficient act in their education. In the higher education, there are important stages for the students to show their proficiency in education. In this respect they have to adopt effective learning practices. Through following timetable effective study habits to concerning their studies can enhance their academic achievement" (Subrahmanyam & Lin, 2007, p. 464).

Kevin et al. (2010) are in favor that there must be guidance for the pupils in order to improve student's success. Tutor can supervise the students in order to improve their learning, eradicating their complication regard their studies and can also assist them to adopt effective study habits. Therefore, there should be guidance and counselling for the students in order to create effective study habits and remove the issues regard their studies supervision can play vital role.

In the same way, Atabek (1993) comments that it is exhibited through research contributors that learners are unable to adopt the satisfactory study habits as well as approaches having hostile study habits. Students are also having no concern with what they study and are unproductive in managing timetable of their studies. They haven't any schedule for studies and having no deliberation in their studies. Students are not able to talk about their problems to their teachers having no concern to read their subjects. Students are not able to ask for assistance from their teachers regarding their problem related to studies and poor results of exams. All these issues are due to ineffective study habits. There are hostile approaches about their instructors also. Though study habits and time management are two positive factors that may leave positive effects on study habits of students but also counselling and guidance can also help students in order to choose study habits for their studies and to solve their educational problem.

Educated parents always encourage their children and provide proper guidance in school matters, but unusual and economically deprived parents have to work with violence, and thus their child is more concerned with non-educational issues. A study by Englander et al. (2010) indicates, "Children have described themselves more demanding and having difficulties with their parents as they create more problems for their colleagues if they are not guided properly. These students may have problems such as being teased by friends or having more educational issues such as getting poor grades or difficulties with schoolwork "(p.1477).

## Research Methods and Procedures

In this recent study, the researchers decided to go with a cross-sectional survey design to gather their data. They aimed to get some solid quantitative insights, and the whole approach was pretty descriptive. To make sure they had a good mix, they used random sampling to select a group of 360 students from a population of 4000. They developed a questionnaire tailored specifically for this study. It had four main parts that focused on students' study habits drawing from related literature to shape their questions. The sections were titled: Effective Study Habits, Note Taking, Time Allocation to Study, and Guidance and Counseling. Each of these sections had 7 questions, all designed on a five-point Likert scale. So, when you add it all up, there were 28 questions in total. The researchers collected this data through personal visits and for crunching the numbers, they went with quantitative analysis and used SPSS software to help out. They looked at mean, frequency, standard deviation, t-tests, and ANOVA to make sense of all the data they gathered.

## Results

**Table 1**

*Study Habits of the Students: Effective Study Habits*

Statement	Mean
You can focus your attention to study without much effort	4.58
You are able to study subjects that you don't like.	4.47
At the start of each week, you carefully plan your study schedule for the week.	4.41
You schedule your study time, to avoid cramming	4.34
You attend extra support sessions provided by the teachers	4.24
You study for an hour without any break	4.19
You have a study area - free of noise and distractions	3.77

It is clear from Table 1 that the students viewed that they focused their attention to study without much effort; were able to study subjects that they did not like; carefully planned their study schedule for the week; scheduled their study

time to avoid cramming; attended extra support sessions provided by the teachers; studied for an hour without any break and had a study area - free of noise and distractions.

**Table 2**

*Study Habits of the Students: Note taking*

Statement	Mean
You pay attention in order to take any important notes.	4.48
You consult your notes to answer the questions posed by the teachers.	4.44
You review notes after class.	4.43
You spend available time in completing assigned tasks.	4.43
You have developed skills of effective note taking during every lesson.	3.88
You used to listen to the teachers attentively while taking down notes in the class.	2.55
You take down note to preserve new knowledge.	1.42

It is clear from Table 2 that the students viewed that they paid attention in order to take any important notes; consulted their notes to answer the questions posed by the teachers; reviewed notes after class; spent available time in completing assigned tasks; had developed skills of effective note taking during every lesson and used to listen to the teachers attentively while taking down notes in the class. Furthermore, Table 2 also affirms that the students declared that they were least interested in taking down note to preserve new knowledge.

**Table 3**

*Study Habits of the Students: Time Allocation to Study*

Statement	Mean
You schedule your time to cover all subjects.	3.05
You give additional time to learn your favorite subject.	3.04
You use alarm clock to keep you alert for studies.	2.91
You spend less time with your friend during university days to concentrate more on my study.	2.73
You have a personal study timetable.	2.71
Once you decide to study, you start and keep going on.	2.35
You apportion time for other social activities to avoid interference in studies.	2.25

It is clear from Table 3 that the students viewed that they scheduled their time to cover all subjects; gave additional time to learn their favorite subject; used alarm clock to keep them alert for studies; spent less time with friends during university days to concentrate more on their study and had personal study timetable. Furthermore, Table 3 also affirms that the students declared that they were least interested in apportioning time for other social activities to avoid interference in studies.

**Table 4**

*Study Habits of the Students: Guidance and Counseling*

Statement	Mean
Your university has guidance and counseling unit to regulate your study habits	3.77
Students need Guidance and counseling to be consistent in their studies.	3.54
You can guide other students to improve study habits.	3.53
Your teachers provide me appropriate study material.	3.45
You have opportunity(s) to get guidance to improve your study habits.	3.26
Guidance and counseling allow students to select effective study habits	2.68
You take guidance of teachers to plan about your study needs.	2.44

It is clear from Table 4 that the students viewed that their university had guidance and counseling unit to regulate their study habits; they needed guidance and counseling to be consistent in their studies; they could guide other students to improve study habits; their teachers provide them appropriate study material, and they had opportunity(s) to get guidance to improve their study habits. Furthermore, Table 4 also affirms that the students declared that they were least interested in taking guidance of teachers to plan about their study needs.



**Table 5**

Effect of Gender on the study habits of the students

Gender	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation	t	df	p
Male	164	98.57	9.927	2.188	358	.029
Female	196	96.26	10.038			

Table 5 showed that according to the views of the male and female university students, a significant difference was witnessed in the mean scores of males (Mean =98.57, Standard Deviation = 9.927) and females (Mean =96.26, Standard Deviation =10.038) students regarding their study habits, as  $t(358) = 2.188$ ,  $p = 0.029 < 0.05$ . Table 5 also showed that the male students (Number = 164, Mean =98.57, Standard Deviation =9.927) showed significantly better scores as compared to the female students (Number = 196, Mean =96.26, Standard Deviation = 10.038).

**Table 6**

Effect of Level of Education on the Study Habits of the Students

	df	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4	2.009	.093
Within Groups	355		
Total	359		

The results of one-way ANOVA indicated that the students' level of education had no significant mean difference regarding their study habits, as  $F(4, 355) = 2.009$ ,  $p = 0.093$  (Table 6).

**Table 7**

Effect of Age of Students on their Study Habits

	df	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4	4.298	.002
Within Groups	355		
Total	359		

The results of one-way ANOVA indicated that the students' age had a significant mean difference regarding their study habits, as  $F(4, 355) = 4.298$ ,  $p = 0.002$  (Table 7). Post Hoc Tucky test was used for further checking the difference existed between the groups.

**Table 8**

Post Hoc Tucky Test on Age of Students: Study Habits of the Students

(I) Age Group (in years)	(J) Age Group (in years)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig.
17-22	23-28	-6.885	.002
	29-34	-5.297	.017
	35-40	-5.783	.022
	40+	-8.644	.016
23-28	29-34	1.589	.759
	35-40	1.102	.959
	40+	-1.759	.959
29-34	35-40	-.487	.997
	40+	-3.347	.655
35-40	40+	-2.861	.810

Table 8 indicated results of Post Hoc Tucky test for checking difference between age of students w.r.t. their study habits. It is clear from Table 8 that there was a significant difference in the means scores of the students of age group 17-22 years with all other age groups i.e. for 17-22 years and 23-28 years (Mean Difference= -6.885 and  $p=.002$ ); for 17-22 years and 29-34 years (Mean Difference= -5.297 and  $p=.017$ ); for 17-22 years and 35-40 years (Mean





Difference= -5.783 and  $p=.022$ ) and for 17-22 years and 40+ years (Mean Difference= -8.644 and  $p=.016$ ). No significant difference was witnessed among other age groups regarding the study habits of the students.

## Discussions

The purpose of conducting this study was to explore the study habits of students and effect of demographic variables on their study habits.

The first objective of this study was to find out the study habits of students at university level. It was found that the students were having effective study habits. This also agrees with Omotere (2011) who said that good study habit is a key to effective learning. Lerman (2007) constructed that through study habits student can get new knowledge throughout their academic achievement. Effective study habits can make the students able to use their abilities in a better way by making use of their course of study in their educational career. According to Dearborn (2014), note taking and giving proper time to study can assist the students most in order to attain desirable reward in their academic performance. In addition, Kevin et al. (2010) are in favor that there must be guidance for the pupils in order to improve student's success. Hence, this study concluded that the university students were having effective study habits.

The second objective of the study was to compare the study habits of university students with respect to gender. It was found that the male students showed significantly better scores as compared to the female students. The results were enforced by Udeani's (2012) research which shows that a great degree of male students about their study habits. On the other hand, the female students are having no associations with study habits like as men have in there. The results of this study were also aligned with the Mushoriwa (2009) who found that study habit have significant relationship with gender, while it contradicted the findings of Aluja-Fabregat and Blanch (2004) who found that girls scored higher on study habits. Similarly, Selwyn (2007) conducted research and came to know that there can be a discrimination between female and male students and it's proved that female students can show the result effectively to use study habits in better way. Likewise, Dearborn (2014) recommended that the men, comparison to women, only focuses on their stumpy educational results marks. Similarly, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) found that female student has more concern about their learnings and about their study habits to improve their academic achievement. This shows that the gender has contradiction in results regarding the study habits of students which might be due to the demographic variations. Hence, it is concluded that the male students were having better study habits as compared to their counterparts.

This study also found that the age of students affects their study habits. This result has been enforced by Arquero and Esteban (2013) who stated that the student's age might be one of the reasons which affect study habits. Hence, this study concluded that the age of the students affects their study habits.

## Conclusions

Following are conclusions of this study.

1. It was concluded that the students had effective study habits including habit of note taking, time management for study and habit of using guidance and counseling.
2. The study concluded that the male students showed significantly better scores as compared to the female students regarding their study habits. Furthermore, there was no significant mean difference between mean scores of study habits of the students with respect to their level of education.
3. It was concluded that there was a significant difference in the means scores of the students of age group 17-22 years with all other age groups. Moreover, the students of age group 17-22 had least interest in developing their study habits.

## Recommendations

The results of the study concluded that male students have better study habits as compared to female students, hence it is recommended that female students may be provided proper guidance and counselling to improve their study habits. Furthermore, it is also recommended that the universities may arrange seminars for young students to improve their study habits.



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