



AN INTERVENTION PROGRAM TO ENHANCE STUDY SKILLS AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Study skills are the skills that enable each individual to study and learn efficiently – they are an important set of transferable life skills. Study skills are those skills and habits which are necessary for understanding and retrieving information, and in particular they are the link between comprehension and memorization. The aim of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of study skills intervention program among secondary school students. Students from eighth grade from a private school participated (N=50). At pretest and posttest students scheduling of time for study and homework, classwork and their time scheduling for exams are assessed. Paired sample t-test revealed that there is a significant change in pretest and posttest scores. It is concluded that study skills intervention has brought an improvement in time scheduling, concentration levels, exam time scheduling by improving the overall study skill scores among secondary school students.

KEYWORDS : Study skills intervention, secondary school students.

INTRODUCTION

Study skills are the skills that enable each individual to study and learn efficiently – they are an important set of transferable life skills. Study Skills are strategies and techniques that enable you to make the most efficient use of your time, resources, and academic potential (Donoghue, 2006). Study skills focus on the following measures:

- Goal setting
- Internalization or positive attitude towards academics
- Decision making
- Time management.

Learning styles:

The three main learning styles are:

- Verbal learner
- Visual (seeing)
- Auditory (listening/learning)
- Kinesthetic (moving, doing, touching).

Steps to improve study skills:

- Scheduling time.
- Divide the subjects according to the difficulty level
- Use relaxation techniques
- Use the best note taking system.
- Memorize actively not passively.
- Read and study at the same time.

Study skill is defined as a learning skill that set apart into other areas of life beyond school composing of good listening skills, computation, expression, memory, time management, problem solving and systematic analysis effectively.

A significant amount of research has investigated the role of students' study habits and their attitudes to study on academic performance. The study of Osa-Edoh and Alutu (2012) which examined the usefulness of imbibing in the student's study habit, as a means of enhancing their academic performance, revealed a high correlation between study habits and students' academic performance. This suggests that it is only when students imbibe or inculcate proper study habits that their academic performance can be enhanced upon. Noni's and Hudson (2010) also conducted a study on performance of college students-impact of study time and study habits in which they found that some study habits had a positive direct relationship on student performance but others had a negative direct relationship.

Hasselberg et al. (2011), in their study of the relationship between various study skills and academic performance of

university students, resulted that the study skills scores of students with GPA of 15 and above (out of 20) were statistically higher than those students with GPA of less than 15 in all of the seven skills (time management and procrastination, concentration and memory, study aids and note-taking, test strategies and test anxiety, organizing and processing information, motivation and attitude, and reading and selecting the main idea).

Due to the prominence of study skills and attitudes on academic performance, some researchers have proposed strategies that will help students develop effective study skills and attitudes. For example, the study of Demir et al. (2012), which examined the effect of development of efficient studying skills curriculum on academic achievements and studying skills of learners, found that students can acquire efficient studying skills by means of curriculum for developing efficient studying skills. The students were able to organize the study environment and use specific methods effectively, such as efficient reading, listening lectures, note-taking, efficient writing and doing homework. This research further found that those students where the curriculum was implemented have increased academic achievement as compared to the group of students on which the curriculum was not implemented. Mutso and Abenga (2010) also propose a paradigm shift in study methods and suggest strategies for both lecturers and the students in universities towards improved learning and performance. It is based on the "distributed learning approach" that adequately cater for individual differences that exist among the students. The model will address the study space needs and the efficiency and effectiveness of study methods. To sum up, the literatures cited point to the importance of study habits to academic performance or success of students.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

There is a plethora of research on study skills generalizing information on various population in all content area. However, limited research specifically analyzed the effect of study skills on secondary school students. A major component of study skills is the integration of critical thinking activities. Attention is being directed at finding methods that will increase attention in studies. Study skills provide excellent revenue for such integration of new strategies. The purpose of study skills intervention program is to maximize the students learning experience.

PROBLEM AND HYPOTHESIS

AIM

To enhance study skills among secondary school students.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the project are:

- To succor the students with concentration and memory exercises for boosting their brain activity.
- To help the students to identify and use effective study technique.
- To assist the students to schedule their time effectively.

HYPOTHESIS

There will be a significant difference in the mean scores of pre-intervention and post-intervention.

Method of Investigation

Research Design:

Before after without control design

Sample:

The sample consisted of students from a private school. It included 50 eighth grade girls aged 13 – 15 years.

Sampling technique:

Purposive sampling technique was used.

Inclusion criteria:

- Students from 8th grade
- Students who are studying in English Medium

Tool used

Name of the questionnaire	Author and year	Variables measured
Study Skills Questionnaire	Kanchana, 1986	Study skills

Statistical tool:

The statistical tool used in the study is paired sample t test.

Description of the study:

Phase I: Pre-assessment Administration of Study skills Questionnaire (Kanchana, 1986) among the students.

Phase II: Implementation of the intervention. Intervention was done in Eight sessions for the students.

Phase III: Post assessment using the same scale was done.

Results and discussion

The statistical package for Social Sciences (Version 16.0) was used to analyze data collected for the present study. The results of the statistical analysis are described below:

Table: Paired sample t-test analysis showing the difference in means and standard deviations of the per-test and post-test scores of study skills intervention.

<i>Pre-test</i>			<i>Post-test</i>			<i>t</i>
<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	
33.74	5.65	50	37.48	5.12	50	-36.44*

* $p < 0.05$, significant at the 0.05 level, two-tailed

A paired-samples t-test was conducted to compare scores on study skills between pre and post intervention conditions for students. There was a significant difference in the scores of study skills intervention ($M = 33.7400$, $S.D = 5.64533$) and without intervention ($M = 37.4800$, $S.D = 5.11596$) with $t(49) = -36.44$, $p = .0000000485$. These results suggest that the study skill intervention does have an effect. Specifically, these results suggest that students improved a lot in their overall scores for study skills. Thus, the hypotheses stating that there

will be a significant difference in the mean scores of pre-intervention and post-intervention has been accepted.

Discussion of the findings

Among the 150 eighth grade students 50 students were selected for the intervention. Pre-assessment was done using Study skills questionnaire. The intervention included group activities, teachings about reading strategies, Note taking methods, time management, goal setting, tips to avoid procrastination, Brain gym exercises, and relaxation techniques in eight sessions. After a week of intervention, post testing was done using the same questionnaire. Therefore, the post-test results clearly indicates that the students had gained a clear knowledge of time scheduling, goal setting, avoiding procrastination and various relaxation and concentration exercises. The means of the pretest (33.77) and the post-test (37.48) were compared using paired samples t-test. The results were significant proving that the intervention was effective by increasing the study skills of the students.

This intervention helped the students to schedule their time according to the severity and easiness of the subjects, to set long-term and short-term goals, to attend their examinations effectively, to improve their concentration by doing brain gym exercises and to gain overall positive attitude by carrying out the relaxation exercises.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the potential of study skills intervention to be used with students to enhance their reading, writing and note-taking skills. Study skills are fundamental to academic competence. Good study skills minimize failure and enable students to take advantage of learning opportunities. To be effective learners, students must (a) have a wide array of study strategies at their disposal, and (b) know where, when, and how to use these strategies. The strategies used in this study is very effective among secondary school students. The importance of study skills in terms of academic competence underscores the need for a strong emphasis on the development and maintenance of effective study skills across the curriculum and for all grade levels.

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