

## STUDY HABITS OF CLASS VIII STUDENTS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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### ABSTRACT

Achieving tremendously good grades are expected output of all the educational endeavors. This grading is one of the cardinal determinants for a child's learning process at a particular point of time. High-ranking students are believed to be well acquainted with the content than low-ranking students. Even though many studies have concluded that there are umpteen factors responsible for superlative high academic achievement. Students can't employ effective study skills, until they inculcate good study habits and developing a good study habits is an art. Study habits vary on a large spectrum from individual to individual as per the factors affecting the same. The present study was conducted to compare students of government, government aided and private schools of Delhi for their study habits. The sample comprised of 180 students of class VIII. The sample was randomly selected. A fifty item questionnaire instrument on a five point Likert scale of five choices ranging from always to never, was developed and administered to the students and questionnaire was divided into seven batches, i.e., Work Methods, Delay Avoidance, Budgeting, Time, Motivation, Memory, Comprehension and External Support. Semi-structured Interview Schedule was also made and conducted on 34 teachers (class teachers and subject teachers) which were randomly selected. Statistical analysis revealed that the academic achievement of students of all types of schools, namely government, government-aided and private was highly correlated with academic achievement. Study the habits of most of the students are lacking in some or the other areas as assessed. The study habits of students of Government-aided schools are better than that of the students in Private schools. On the contrary, the study habits of students of Government schools were not up to the mark. Further teachers' data analysis revealed that motivation has been rated the highest by teachers as the factor along with family's educational background which positively affects the academic achievement of students to a great extent. This study has important connotation for the educationists.

**KEYWORDS:** Delay Avoidance, Budgeting, Time, Motivation, Memory, Comprehension and External Support

### INTRODUCTION

"Plants are shaped by cultivation and men by education... We are born weak, we need strength; we are born totally unprovided, we need aid; we are born stupid, we need judgment. Everything we do not have at our birth and which we need when we are grown is given us by education"

-Jean Jacques Rousseau, Emile

Education is concerned with the accomplishment of knowledge, the cultivation of aptitude and potentialities that enable students to think analytically and act logically and legitimately. It also helps in the evolution of persona and attributes amongst students such as conceptual inquisitiveness, modesty and the inclination to question and call for a rationale for belief.

According to George F. Kneller (1971), “education refers to any act or experience that has a formative effect on the mind, character, or physical ability of an individual. In its technical sense education is the process by which society, through schools, colleges, universities, and other institutions, deliberately transmits its cultural heritage—its accumulated knowledge, values, and skills—from one generation to another.”

Of late education aims at the all round development of the child, and schools strive to provide optimal learning exposure to the child. Learning is an intricate process and there are many interacting variables that control learning. Learning is not a solitary human pursuit and for students, learning happens within the frame of reference of a classroom, the school, the home, the broader community and the society where they live. In the opinion of Tyler (1992), “The teacher, who is a variable in the classroom context, is charged with the function of acting as an intermediary between the variables outside the classroom and the students to assist the students in their learning”. That states the role of the teacher is to facilitate the learning of students, as well as being an integral part of the school and community.

The teacher’s job is to execute the rendered curriculum. All the teachers educate children with an expectation that all students will comprehend, accommodate and assimilate whatever s/he teaches. But in reality, these expectations are hardly met. Students fail to assimilate and retain and often do not generate good expected results in the examination. There may be diverse reasons for poor performance.

When it comes to assessing the general notion is that if a child is intelligent, he should perform well at school, but they overlook that the child is an amalgam of other psychological factors as well. These factors may escalate or de-escalate a child’s academic achievement at school. The performance of the individual is the consequence of encounter of many intrinsic and extrinsic factors.

The educationists have made a number of structured efforts to find out the reasons of the decline and suggested corrective measures thereof. Almost all the commissions and education policies have not only acknowledged this decline, but also suggested the points of improvement on the current situation. In spite of all these efforts, the complication still seems to be unresolved. A major reason for students’ progress and regress may be in their learning strategies or **Study Habits**.

Most of the students are unaware whether their study habits and attitudes are productive or whether there are other skills that would yield better performance.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **Studies Related to Study Habits and Academic Achievement**

Studying is dexterity. Being an achiever in school requires a high level of study skills. Students must first become proficient in these skills, practice them and develop effective study habits in order to be successful. Good study habits include many different skills: Work Methods, Delay Avoidance, Budgeting, Time, Motivation, Memory, Comprehension, and External Support. Studies pertaining to study habits and academic achievement of students have been compiled and presented here below.

Anton and Angel (2004) conducted a study “to analyze the relationship among Catalan personality factors, study

habits and academic achievement. A total of 887 volunteer students from primary education (453 males and 434 females) enrolled in 29 public schools, participated in this research. It was found that students with higher scores on socialized personality traits showed better study habits than those students with lower scores on personality socialization traits. The relationship between personality and academic achievement seems to be mediated by study habits. Moreover, females obtained higher academic achievement scores than males. These differences could be explained by the fact that females showed a more socialized personality pattern and better study habits”.

Deborah and Brian (2006) conducted a study which “highlighted the relationship between study habits and exam performance of II year medical students. The study also discussed how students used study habit in preparing for exams and whether students who used other study habits performed well as students who created their own. Study habits of the students were more similar. The majority of students used study habit as a memory aid or for review, but students who performed in the top third of the class were less likely to use them at all. Preexisting differences related to Academic Achievement and Study Habit were found when students at the top, middle and bottom of exam performance were compared”.

Prima (2007) selected “a sample of 450 higher secondary students from different managements to find out the relationship between study habits and academic achievement. The study highlights the gender difference in academic achievement favoring girls for better study habits. It also revealed that there is a significant difference in study habits of students studying in government, government-aided and private schools favoring government-aided schools. The study also found that there is a positive relation between study habit and achievement motivation”.

A study conducted by Bagongon and Edpalinanad (2009) revealed “the effect of study habits on the academic performance of students. The study reveals that no single factor can be definitely pointed out as predicting grades. It has been an interplay of so many factors – gender, I.Q., Study habits, age, year level, parents’ educational attainment, Social status, Number of siblings, birth order etc. The findings revealed that study habit is influenced by time management, learning skills and study skills and there in a positive relationship exists between study habit and academic performance”.

Vanita (2011) observed that “even a good student who has the potentiality to achieve better may not be able to achieve as per expectations without good study habits. The general purpose of the study was to measure study habits of the secondary and higher secondary school students of the Amrawathi district of Maharashtra State. The sample of 160 male and female students was selected randomly. Study habits inventory developed by Pusan and Sharma was used as a tool for data collection. The study concluded that students from Secondary School have more favorable study habits than Higher Secondary school students. The study also revealed that there is a positive relationship between study habits and academic achievement of secondary and higher secondary school students”.

Mashayekhi and others (2014) investigated “220 undergraduate students of Islamic Azad University Jiroft Branch, randomly selected and studied from both Colleges of Humanities and Agriculture. The results showed that 89% of students have relatively desirable study habits and between the two variables, study habits and academic achievement, there was a correlation”.

## RATIONALE

In education, the problem of producing or deficient study habits is not new. However, effective study habits are highlighted today because of the increased requirement for developing each individual to his utmost intellectual proficiency and also in order to meet the demands of a tremendously technical advancement.

The present study is an effort in the same direction in the light of the fact that “teachers teach all students collectively, but all students do not get the same grades”. Most students do not know whether their study habits and attitudes are produced, or whether there are other techniques that would yield better grades.

We often encounter underachievers in the educational setting. Most of the teachers get perplexed on the glimpse of such situation and then either turn a blind eye to it or propel too much. Problem of underachievement can be thoughtfully resolved by an infusion of effective study habits. Therefore, this research work attempts to understand study habits of students studying in different educational settings.

## OBJECTIVES

- To find out the study habits of class VIII students of various schools in Delhi.
- To compare the study habits of class VIII students of government, government aided and private schools of Delhi.
- To find out the measures followed by schools for the systematic development of effective study habits. s
- To find out the co-relation of study habits with academic achievement.

## HYPOTHESIS

- There is no significant difference among students of government, government-aided and private schools in their study habits.
- There is no significant relationship between study habits and academic achievement of higher secondary students.

## METHODOLOGY

### Sampling & Sampling Technique

This comparative study focused on class VIII students of three types of schools. These schools were purposively selected. Since the number of sections of class VIII varied from school to school, one section was randomly selected in each school. From this chosen section 30 students were randomly selected by chit system for administering the questionnaire whereas the semi structured interview was carried out with 6 students who were once again selected randomly. Thus the questionnaire was administered to a total of 180 class VIII school students, and a total of 36 students were interviewed. The researchers also conducted a Semi Structured Interview with 34 teachers (class teachers and subject teachers).

## TOOLS USED

### Questionnaire

This technique was used because it was less time consuming and it can be administered to the large sample

simultaneously. A questionnaire was prepared after extensively reviewing the available literature related to study habits. This questionnaire contains 50 items instrument on a five point Likert scale of 5 choices ranging from always to never.

### Development of Questionnaire

After reviewing the related literature, it was found that there are many standardized tools to assess the study habits and attitude. The researchers adapted the Survey of Study Habits and Attitudes by Brown-Holtzman (1957) for the present study. To adapt the tool input was also taken from the following two tests:

- Study Habit Inventory by Prof. M. Mukhopadhyay and Prof. D. N. Sansanwal
- Study Habit Inventory by B.V. Patel

The adaptation was done in the following manner. First of all, different areas of study habits were identified i.e.,

- Work Methods
- Delay Avoidance
- Budgeting Time
- Motivation
- Memory
- Comprehension
- External Support

Then the questions in these areas were segregated, selected and simplified, keeping in mind that the sample comprised of students coming from different backgrounds in all the different schools. After that, the questions were validated by administering it on five students of class VIII. The questionnaire was then modified as per the difficulty faced by the students. Then the questionnaire came in its final shape.

### Interview

A semi structured interview schedule was used to obtain the view of the teachers regarding the study habits and factors affecting the study habits of students. Further a semi structured interview was also administered to the students to get in-depth reasons for the same.

### PROCEDURE FOR DATA COLLECTION

- The questionnaires were administered to the students of class VIII of various schools. Permission was taken from the principal for administration of questionnaires. A convenient time was given by the teachers.
- Academic records- The academic records of the students were also collected up to the midterm exams from the respective class teacher after fixing a convenient time with them.
- Interview schedule- A semi structured interview was carried out with the respective class teachers and subject teachers as well as with 6 students from each section.

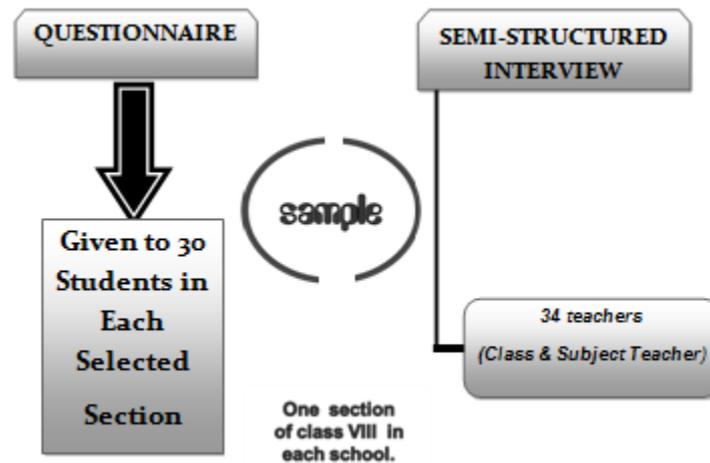


Figure 1: Flow Chart to Show Sampling

## DATA ANALYSIS

- Coding-The data obtained from the questionnaire were coded on the basis of information obtained. A coding sheet which contains all the items listed as per the questionnaire was prepared and each individual answer to each of the items was marked.
- The data were both qualitatively and quantitatively analyzed.
- The questions of the interview schedule were categorized into six dimensions and responses were coded.
- The matrix was made to highlight variations and common patterns in both private and government schools.
- The data obtained from the interviews and SPES were scrutinized to discover characteristic features and trends in the opinion of teachers and principals.
- Statistical techniques were used to find out the relationship between study habits and academic achievement correlation was calculated using the Rank Correlation Method. The formula used to find the ways

$$\rho = 1 - \frac{6 \sum d_i^2}{n(n^2 - 1)}$$

Where:

$d_i = x_i - y_i$  = the difference between the ranks of corresponding values  $X_i$  and  $Y_i$ , and

$n$  = the number of values in each data set (same for both sets).

## ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS

The entire study was focused to ascertain the study habits of children of various schools. After analyzing the data collected by various tools, some major findings have emerged. These are:

- The study habit of most of the students is lacking.

- Study the habits of the students of Government-aided schools proved to be better than those of the students in Private schools. Whereas, the study habits of the students of Government schools was not up to the mark.
- The students seemed to be **adept** in planning and scheduling their work, but often failed to execute these plans.
- Most students claimed to have faulty **work methods** like copying homework from others, skipping important details such as reading graphs or understanding diagrams, or committing careless mistakes (Figure 2 & 3).

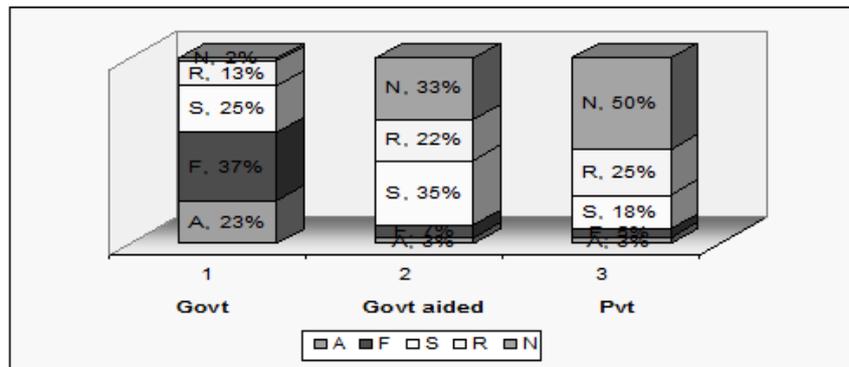


Figure 2: Copying Homework

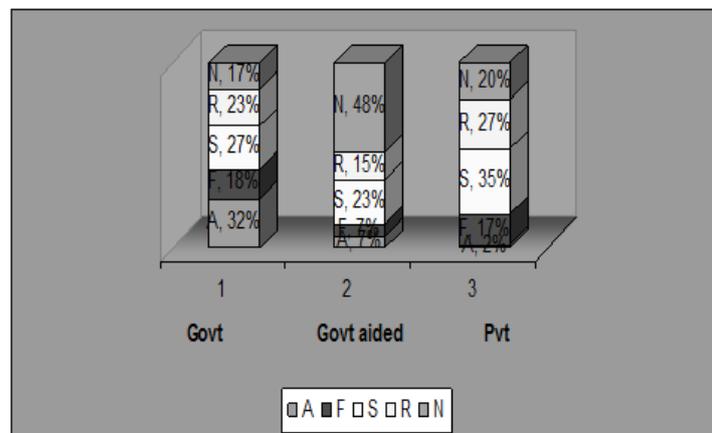


Figure 3: Skipping Important Details When Studying

- Study the habits of students in general were not much commendable.
- Although quite a high percentage of students say that they study daily but they also claim that they find it difficult to follow a definite schedule. This is especially true in the case of Private school students.
- Students have a tendency to put off work till the last moment and give up work when it becomes too difficult (Figure 4).

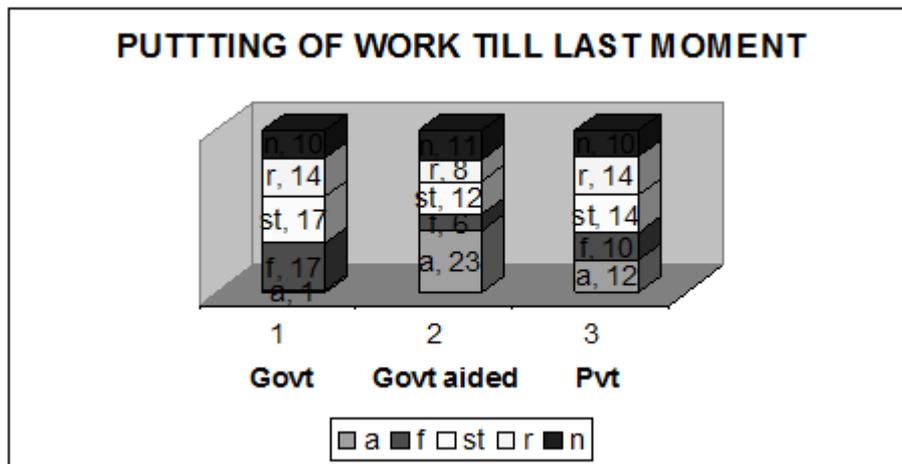


Figure 4: Putting up Work till Last Moment

- Students of Government-aided schools do not hesitate to take help from different sources be it teacher, parents, technology or peer group (Figure. 5).

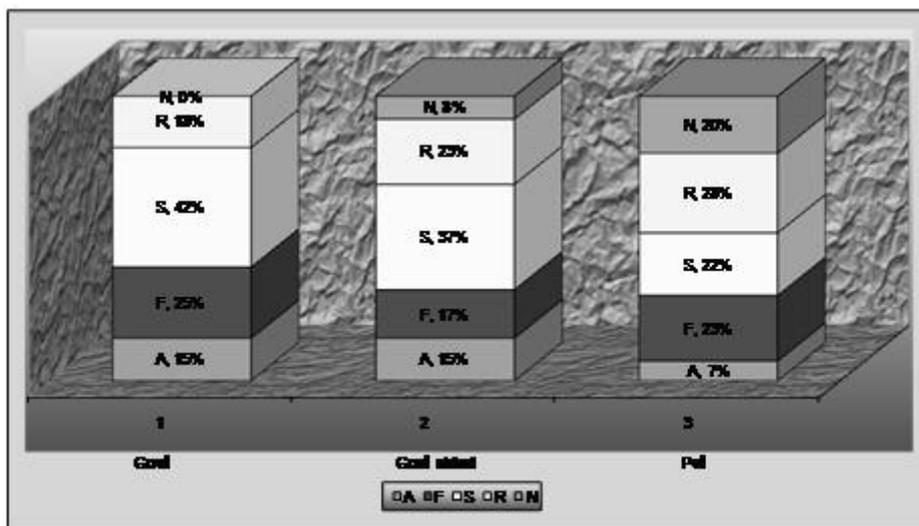


Figure 5: Taking help with Peers

In the light of the above findings, there is a dire need to provide students with correct information, and raising awareness of the techniques of studying and effective habits so that they can develop these habits.

#### Analysis of Teachers' Opinions

- After interviewing the teachers, it was found that they were in an agreement over the benefits of good study habits among students. It was found that there has not been any systematic program or procedure developed for encouraging effective study habits in students.
- Most of the teachers felt that the academic achievement of students gets positively affected to a great deal by their family's educational background. They further believed that educated parents make endless efforts to help their children in ways such as providing them with material resources, and emotional support.

- Teachers felt that academic achievement can also be enhanced by peer tutoring, i.e., Taking support and guidance from peers. This provides a platform for the students to discuss the areas of difficulty, and improve performance.
- Motivation has been rated the highest by teachers as the factor which affects the academic achievement of students to a large extent.

## CONCLUSION AND EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The research was conducted in the light of the fact that it is widely acknowledged by educators that correct study habits of students are a very important part of their academic life, and has a direct bearing on the student's academic performance. After completing the study, three main points that emerged were:

- The academic achievement of students of all types of schools, namely Government, Government-aided and Private were highly correlated with academic achievement.
- Study the habits of most of the students are lacking in some or the other areas as assessed.
- The study habits of students of Government-aided schools are better than that of the students in Private schools. On the contrary, the study habits of students of Government schools were not up to the mark.

So, it becomes essential that sustained efforts are undertaken so that effective study habits can be incorporated into the lives of students. This can be done in the following ways:

- Motivating teachers to include discussions on various study habits in their classes.
- Conducting interactive workshops wherein students can be guided in such matters in schools to promote effective study habits.
- Distribution of leaflets.
- Encouraging students to take support from parents, siblings or their peers to help improve their performance.
- Helping students to use proper time management related to formulating a time-table for oneself, and following it for an effective use of time.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Some suggestions for further research are as follows:

- The research can be conducted at a much larger scale i.e. By including many more schools and students from different classes in the sample.
- The parents can be interviewed upon the study habits, their children follow at home, in order to triangulate the data that has been obtained by the students through the questionnaires.
- An experimental study can be undertaken to assess the impact of a program to develop effective study habits for students.

- The research can be conducted to understand how the variables of gender, family and its socioeconomic status affect study habits of students.

## DELIMITATIONS

There were a few limitations to the study that was conducted.

- No program of systematic improvement of study habits was being taken up in schools.
- The adapted version of the standardized test that was used in our study was not validated.
- The academic achievement of students considered were the examination results, rather than being measured on a constructed achievement test that was standardized.
- The major delimitation to the study was its conductance in Delhi only.

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