

STUDY HABITS AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG UNDERGRADUATE NURSING STUDENTS IN KARACHI: A DESCRIPTIVE CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY

Izhar Rahman^{*1}, Mehwish Kiran^{*2}, Haider Ali³, Anwar Ali⁴, Masaud Ali Khan⁵, Iftikhar Khan⁶, Ihsan Ullah⁷, Raza Ullah Khan⁸

^{*1,3,4,5,6,7,8}Undergraduate Nursing Student, Advanced Health Sciences Institute of Nursing Karachi, Pakistan
Affiliated with Dow University Karachi, Pakistan

^{*2}Vice Principal, Advanced Health Sciences Institute of Nursing Karachi, Pakistan

^{*1}dearprofessor376@gmail.com, ^{*2}mehwishesaboor@gmail.com, ³ha049318@gmail.com,
⁴sandalsadakhan466@gmail.com, ⁵masaudkhan1136@gmail.com, ⁶iftikharkhan373756@gmail.com,
⁷ihsankhan.bsn@gmail.com, ⁸rahikhan5522@gmail.com

Corresponding Author: *

Izhar Rahman,

Mehwish Kiran

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ABSTRACT

Background: Study habits are important factors that influence students' academic success. Good study habits like managing time, taking notes, reviewing what was learned, and participating in learning activities help students achieve better academic performance. Nursing students especially need to keep learning and studying in a way that works for them so they can meet the standards that nursing education requires. Nursing education is about continuous learning and using effective study practices to maintain high academic standards.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional design was used. The sample size was 167. An adapted questionnaire was used from Alex et al. (2024). The "Study Habits Scale-Student Form" and the students' Grade Point Average (GPA) were used. Data were obtained through a Google Form questionnaire at a private institute in Karachi. Data were entered and analyzed using SPSS version 27.

Results: The majority of students were male (89.2%, n=149) and aged 18–23 years (58.1%, n=97). The majority of students (93.4%, n=156) had good study habits, while (6.6%, n=11) had poor study habits. Regarding academic performance, 78.4% (n=131) of students achieved a GPA of 3.50–4.00. Cross-tabulation showed that 73.7% (n=123) of students with good study habits achieved the highest GPA, compared to only 4.8% (n=8) with poor study habits. A moderate positive correlation was found between total study habits score and GPA ($r = 0.52$). The study habits scale showed good internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.84$).

Conclusion: The study found that good study habits positively influence academic performance among undergraduate nursing students in Karachi. Nursing students who regularly manage their time, review lessons, write down notes, and maintain regular study routines tend to achieve better academic results.

Encouraging effective study habits can lead to better academic results and professional competence among undergraduate nursing students.

Keywords: Study habits, Academic performance, Undergraduate nursing students.

INTRODUCTION

Study habits are the basis of academic success. They are actions that students perform regularly, such as reading, taking notes, participating in study groups, and consistently understanding their learning goals. A student's life significantly influences study habits. The study habits of each individual student determine their success or failure. Additionally, studying is an art that requires practice and hard work. The success of each individual student depends on their capability, intelligence, and actions. This method includes many effective study habits that can help improve a student (Tus et al., 2020).

Good and positively effective study habits can actually help you save time, energy, and money. Students need to know their strengths and weaknesses and figure out how to improve and learn things quickly and easily. For many students, studying is their top priority for a few years. They have to deal with subjects and topics and try to learn and master them all. Most students get overwhelmed and don't know how to get everything done on time. Poor study habits among students can lead to poor results or even failure (Sasi & Hsu, 2020).

Students who are naturally bright can still have poor study habits, and that is why they do not do well in school. There are many reasons why this occurs. The way a student strategizes and reviews their lessons on a daily basis is very significant. It helps them to get good marks because the more they practice, the better they become. The more a student pays attention to practicing what they learn on a regular basis, the more likely they are to get good marks on examinations or tests. So, the way a person studies actually says a lot about who they are. It also consists of how much time they spend on coursework, quizzes, projects, or any other work that the teacher gives them. This shows how well a student can balance their time and get all their college work done on time. Study habits are what students do when they are studying. We

can tell what kind of student they are by looking at their study habits (Bibi et al., 2020).

Academic performance is a common way to measure student achievement. It is a difficult process influenced by several factors, including study habits. Study habits refer to different individual behaviors associated with studying. They combine several study methods and skills. In simple terms, study habits include various techniques that can enhance motivation and make studying more effective, thereby improving learning. Students' views and approaches to studying are key factors in predicting their academic achievement. However, these learning processes differ from one student to another due to differences in cognitive processing (Aljaffer et al., 2024).

Effective study methods are capable of improving one's self-confidence, self-efficacy, and self-esteem. They can help decrease the level of stress that accompanies deadlines and examination periods. It is possible to diminish the time spent studying when using effective study methods, leaving one with extra time for other activities. Study habits are the greatest predictor of one's academic accomplishment, and research has found that study habits have an effect on academic performance. Self-confidence, self-efficacy, and self-esteem can escalate because of good study habits. One can enhance his or her skills for learning and memorizing through overlearning. Effective study techniques may help students feel that their efforts pay off. Study habits are the greatest predictor of one's academic accomplishment; thus, they have a unique effect on a learner's academic performance (Alex et al., 2024).

Problem Statement

The academic performance of nursing students in college is a major concern because nursing colleges are very tough, and students need to know a lot of theory and be proficient at actually performing nursing responsibilities. One factor that affects

how well students do in college is how they learn, as well as how they manage their time, pay attention, take notes, and review what they have learned. Several students start nursing college inadequately prepared, but not all of them develop decent study habits. Approximately, some students struggle with managing their time, staying focused, and using effective study methods, which can negatively impact their results. Additionally, students come from various educational backgrounds, which affects how they study and learn.

Some studies have found evidence of how study habits influence academic performance. Approximately, some researchers believe there is a connection, while others do not see any link at all. This remains unclear, which indicates that we need to investigate it further, especially for undergraduate nursing students. In Karachi, not much research has been done to understand how study habits affect the performance of nursing students. Therefore, it is significant to examine how undergraduate nursing students study and how it impacts their results so we can identify problems and recommend habits to improve outcomes. Thus, this study aims to explore the relationship between study habits and academic performance of nursing students in Karachi.

Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this study is to determine the study habits and academic performance among undergraduate nursing students in Karachi.

Objective

To identify the study habits and academic performance among undergraduate nursing students in Karachi.

Research Question

What are the study habits and academic performance among undergraduate nursing students?

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Effective Study habits are truly significant for students when it originates to how they do in college specially for students who want to be

nurses. Masses of people have observed into how study habits disturb how well students do in their programmes.

Recently, people have found out that study habits are a portion of whether or not nursing students do well in college. One study that observed at nursing students who are completing their degree found that students who have decent study habits do well in school. This study supposed that if students have a study routine and be able to manage their time well, they will acquire more knowledge and experience (Princy et al., 2024).

Something similar was found in additional study with nursing students. This study thought that if students use habits of learning like actually thinking about what they are learning keeping pathway of how they are liability and learning in a systematized way they will do well in college. These demonstrations that it is not about study habits but also about how better student's study (Mohamed, 2022).

Additional study found that a portion of nursing students do not study better when they initial start college but they have to get well at learning if they want to do better in their nursing programmes. This means that study habits can modification over time and that what students are learning can disturb how they study (Oermann et al., 2017).

A study that observed at how study habits and self-discipliner associated found that students who are more self-controlled lean towards to study well and do well in college. This study found that when students are self-controlled, they make study habits for themselves which assistances them do well in college. Study habits are truly significant for nursing students. Can make a large modification in how better they do in college. Study habits, similar these can assistance nursing students achieve their designation (Kumar et al., 2023).

METHODS

Study Design and Setting

A descriptive cross-sectional design was used. The study was conducted at a private nursing college in Karachi (Advance Health Science Institute of Nursing).

Population

The study population was undergraduate nursing students.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sample size was 167 students. The convenience sampling technique was used.

Inclusion Criteria

- Students listed in undergraduate nursing programs
- Students willing to participate in the study
- Students present during data collection time

Exclusion Criteria

- Students who were absent on the data collection day
- Students who were sick at the time of data collection

Variables

- **Independent variable:** Study habits
- **Dependent variable:** Academic performance

Instrument

A structured questionnaire was used for data collection, adapted from (Alex et al., 2024). The instrument included:

- **Section A (Demographic Data):** Age, gender, program studying, batch.
- **Section B (Study Habits Scale – Student Form):** A 20-item Likert scale to assess study habits and academic performance. Response options: Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, Never.

Scoring

Each item was scored as: Always = 5, Often = 4, Sometimes = 3, Rarely = 2, Never = 1. The total score was categorized as:

- **Good study habits:** Responses of Always, Often, or Sometimes
- **Bad study habits:** Responses of Rarely or Never

Data Collection Procedure

Permission was obtained from the Nursing Director of the institution. Participants were given a self-introduction and informed about the purpose of the study. Written consent was obtained, and then the Google Form questionnaire was provided. Data collection took approximately 15 minutes per participant.

Data Analysis

Data were entered and analyzed using SPSS version 27. Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations) were calculated. Cross-tabulation was used to examine the relationship between study habits (good/bad) and academic performance (last semester GPA).

RESULTS

Totally, 167 undergraduates in the nursing field took part in this research. Table 1 depicts the demographics of the respondents. The majority of the respondents were males (89.2%; n=149) with age range 18-23 (58.1%; n=97). The most of them were pursuing Generic BSN programs (86.8%; n=145). The highest percentages came from the fourth year (40.7%; n=68) and second year (40.1%, n=67).

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of undergraduate nursing students (N=167)

Characteristic	Category	n (%)
Gender	Female	18 (10.8)
	Male	149 (89.2)
Age (years)	18–23	97 (58.1)
	24–26	46 (27.5)
	27–30	17 (10.2)
	30–33	7 (4.2)
Program	Generic BSN	145 (86.8)
	Post RN	22 (13.2)
Batch (Year)	Second year	67 (40.1)

Third year	32 (19.2)
Fourth year	68 (40.7)

Academic Performance and Study Habits

Table 2 summarizes the academic performance (last semester GPA) of the participants. The vast majority achieved high grades: 78.4% (n=131) had

a GPA between 3.50 and 4.00, and 15.0% (n=25) had a GPA between 3.00 and 3.50. Only 6.6% (n=11) had a GPA below 3.00.

Table 2. Distribution of last semester GPA (N=167)

GPA range	n (%)
Below 2.00	1 (0.6)
2.00 – 2.50	4 (2.4)
2.50 – 3.00	6 (3.6)
3.00 – 3.50	25 (15.0)
3.50 – 4.00	131 (78.4)

Students were further categorized based on the 20-item Study Habits Scale (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.84$) as those having either "good" or "bad" study habits. In general, 93.4% (n=156) were found to have good study habits, whereas only 6.6% (n=11) exhibited bad study habits. The mean scores of the total number of items were 78.2 (SD = 9.4) among students with good study habits and 58.3 (SD = 3.1) among those with bad study habits.

Table 3 presents the relationship between GPA categories and study habits classification. Specifically, out of the students with the highest GPA level of 3.50–4.00, 123 (73.7% of the total number of respondents) had good study habits as opposed to the other 8 (4.8%). Those with the next highest GPA (3.00–3.50) had 22 (13.2%) with good study habits and 3 (1.8%) with bad study habits. No student with bad study habits scored below a 3.00 GPA.

Table 3. Cross-tabulation of GPA and study habits (N=167)

GPA range	Good study habits (n=156)	Bad study habits (n=11)	Total
Below 2.00	1 (0.6)	0 (0.0)	1
2.00 – 2.50	4 (2.4)	0 (0.0)	4
2.50 – 3.00	6 (3.6)	0 (0.0)	6
3.00 – 3.50	22 (13.2)	3 (1.8)	25
3.50 – 4.00	123 (73.7)	8 (4.8)	131

Note: Row percentages are relative to total sample (N=167).

A Pearson correlation analysis revealed a moderate positive correlation between the total study habits score and GPA ($r = 0.52$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that students with stronger study habits tended to achieve higher academic performance.

Summary

In this sample of 167 undergraduate nursing students, the majority were male, young (18–23 years), and enrolled in the Generic BSN program. High academic performance (GPA ≥ 3.50) was observed in 78.4% of participants, and 93.4%

demonstrated good study habits. The correlation ($r = 0.52$) and cross-tabulation consistently showed a positive association between study habits and GPA, with students who maintained good study habits being substantially overrepresented in the higher GPA categories.

Discussion

This research was carried out with the aim to examine the learning and study habits, and academic performance of undergraduates at nursing school in Karachi. The obtained results

indicate that the vast majority of students, 93.4%, had good study habits, while almost all of them had excellent academic performance as 78.4% of the sample achieved the GPA within 3.50-4.00. According to cross-tabulation and correlation analysis, there was a significant relationship between having a good learning habit and good grades ($r = 0.52$). The current findings are consistent with those made by other scholars. For example, Alex et al. (2024) claim that nursing students who use a structured approach to learning get good results at college. Likewise, Aljaffer et al. (2024) state that the study habits and personal traits contribute to good academic performance of students.

Most respondents of the sample in this research were men (89.2%) and between 18-23 years old, which means that they are young nursing undergraduates. This fact proves that the chosen participants represent the nursing students from Karachi private institutes. In addition, according to the obtained results, most respondents (93.4%) had good learning habits and high GPA (>3.50). In a similar way, Sadeghi et al. (2024) emphasize that nursing students who have a good management of their time get better scores and are ready for self-study.

Learning skills increase one's motivation, lower academic stress, and improve learning abilities. In the course of this research, the study habits scale (20 items) demonstrated high reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.84$), and its mean score was significantly higher for students with good study habits (78.2 vs. 58.3). This quantitative confirmation reinforces that regular time management, note-taking, focus, and lesson review lead to better college outcomes.

Limitations

In this study, the researchers have applied the convenience sampling method at a particular nursing college in Karachi, and this would reduce the validity of the results because they cannot be generalized. In addition, this is a cross-sectional study, hence the inability to draw any conclusions about cause and effect. Self-reporting might also be biased by social desirability.

Implications

The nursing organizations should provide counseling, workshops, and mentoring sessions to motivate students towards adopting positive study practices. There exists a significant relationship ($r = 0.52$) between study habits and GPA, which implies that efforts to improve study habits might lead to improved academic results.

Generally, the results of this research imply that the study habits contribute greatly to academic achievement in undergraduate nursing students in Karachi. Good study habits may assist nursing students in achieving success in academics and become competent professionals.

Conclusion

This research proves that proper study habits have a favorable effect on the academic achievement of undergraduate nursing students in Karachi. Nursing students who constantly practice their time management skills, revise lessons, take notes, and engage in consistent study habits generally attain better academic outcomes. Nursing students who demonstrated proper study habits had a higher chance of succeeding academically than nursing students who exhibited poor study habits. This connection is also supported by the moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.52$) between the scores of study habits and GPA.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, nursing institutions should organize workshops and mentoring programs to help students improve their study habits, time management, and academic skills. Teachers should encourage interactive learning methods such as group discussions and classroom participation to enhance students' understanding and engagement. Students should also be motivated to maintain regular study schedules, revise lessons consistently, and practice effective note-taking to achieve better academic performance. In addition, institutions should periodically assess students' study behaviors and provide academic support to those facing difficulties.

Future Research Gap

This study was conducted in a single private nursing institute with a limited sample size, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Future studies should include larger samples from multiple public and private institutions across different regions. Longitudinal and interventional studies are also recommended to evaluate changes in study habits over time and assess the effectiveness of study skills training programs. Furthermore, future research should explore other factors influencing academic performance, including stress, motivation, mental health, learning environment, and digital learning practices among nursing students.

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