

A Focus on the Study-skills of the Under-graduate level students.

Mrs. Arpana Nath

Assistant Professor, Department of Education

Abstract :

Performance of the students in the academic life depends upon their skills of managing the study matters. Its no secret that college requires a whole lot of studying. Learning how to study effectively can sometimes be tricky, but with the right tips and tricks, one can combat one's studying woes. The first semester students of undergraduate level are selected as the sample of the study as the first year is the most critical period of the student life. The first year is a transition period from school to college where students get a totally different environment of freedom, choice and selection. So to make adjustment and at the sametime to excell in their academic life they require to master certain study skills. These include time management, note taking, text book reading, test preparation and more. So at this crucial period of their student life, how they mange their study is a matter of interest to the investigator. The paper follows questionnaire methodology of data collection and stratified random sampling method is used for sample collection. Elaboration of the gathered data show the present status of study skills of the students. A comparative study of Arts and Science stream students as well as boy and girl students also show interesting trends of study skills.

Key words :

Academic life, undergraduate level students, success, study skills.

Introduction:

Education is nothing but the pursuit of developing, honring and mastering the skills that help us become the best that we can, with all that we have. It is the reaching for and realizing of our full potential as human beings. We all want to live full, productive lives, but sometimes, we just don't know where to begin. One thing, however is certain that if we want to accomplish anything in life and realize our full potential, we must have some skills. In order to excel at a job, a sport or any discipline including academic life, a person must acquire and master certain skills. Possessing

skills enables one to deal with the inevitable difficulties and adversities more effectively. It lessens chances of overusing prescription drugs, engaging in addictive behaviours, and experiencing overall despair and hopelessness. When we have the proper tools and strategies at our disposal, we have more controls over our life and are therefore happier and more productive. As Robert Louis Stevenson said : "To be what we are, and to become what we are capable of becoming, is the only end of life."

Origin of the problem :

Attending college for the first time is an exciting, yet daunting, prospect. College students have a lot more freedom than high school students, which means they can make their own decisions. This a double edged sword, as many new college students are not used to taking responsibility for their daily schedules and their academic achievements. Developing good study skills is one of the best ways to achieve success in college and create a bright outlook for the future. Developing good writing skills and learning how to take tests will help college students get the best grades possible, improving their chances of winning scholarships or getting hired for good jobs immediately after graduation. Success in college also depends on good time management. When a college student manages his or her time well, there is enough time for studying and socializing. Poor time management makes it difficult to balance the academic demands of college. In college, time quickly becomes a rare commodity, course work is lengthy, competition is intense and the level of expectation is quite a bit higher than it was in high school. So though some people erroneously believe that studying a lot is essential to become a successful college student, but the key to becoming a successful college student is learning to study smart. Time management, note taking, reading comprehension, essay writing, test taking, active listening, stress management, researching and memorization etc. are few areas which are part of study skills.

The present study will try to deal with few of these areas of study skills of college level students. How the students are been able to manage their study skills, what their present status in this particular and specific area of their academic life, is a matter of great interest and concern to the investigator.

Objectives of the study :

The following are the objectives of the study.

- a) To study the study skills of undergraduate level students.
 - b) To make a comparative study of study skills of the undergraduate level students of arts and science stream.
 - c) To make a comparative study of study skills of girl and boy students of undergraduate level.
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Methodology :

Place of study - The study is conducted on undergraduate level students of S.B.M.S. College, under Gauhati University. The college is situated in semi urban area in the state of Assam, in the north-east part of India.

Period of study - The study is conducted during the academic year of 2013-14.

Sample selection :

Sample -The sample is consist of 40 number of 1st semester students who have major course, 20 each from Arts and Science stream of the above mentioned college. In the each group of 20 students 10 of them are male and 10 are female.

Selection procedure - Sample is selected by the procedure of stratified random sampling covering the departments namely Arts departments - English, Philosophy, Political Science, Economic, Education and Science departments - Mathematics, Zoology, Chemistry. The total number of the students having major course of all these departments are -102

Inclusion criteria:

1. Consent of the particular student is one of the basic criteria for selection of the student in the sample.
2. Only the student with Major subject is selected for the sample.

Exclusion criteria-

1. Nobody is included in the sample without consent.
2. Student without Major course is not included in the sample.

Data Collection

1. Data on the socio-demographic variables is collected using a performa constructed by the author.
2. Data on study skills is collected by using the Study Skill Inventory.

This inventory is a college level study skills inventory of the Student Academic Resource centre of the University of central Florida. The student Academic Resource centre Provides high-quality academic support programmms for enabling university of central Florida students to achieve their academic goal. The purpose of this college level study skills inventory is to provide students immediate feedback on their current approach to college level study skills. There are six critical study skills, college students need to consistently be developing : text book reading, note taking, memory, test preparation, concentration and time management. At the conclusion of the inventory, each of these skills are assessed based on the manner in which the questions are

answered. According to this inventory the bench mark in the different domain of study skills are as below -

Sections	Banch mark
Text book reading	30
Note taking	20
Memory	30
Test preparation	40
Concentration	35
Time management	20

If the individual scores are less than the above bench mark, the particular student stand to improve in those areas.

Result / Discussion

The result obtained by the study on 'study skills' of the students is presented in table and graph below

TABLE -1
TABULAR PRESENTATION OF THE RESULT ON 'STUDY SKILLS' OF THE STUDENTS OF SCIENCE STREAM.

BOYS							GIRLS						
Study skills →	Text book reading	Note taking	Memory	Test Preparation	Concentration	Time management	Study skills →	Text book reading	Note taking	Memory	Test Preparation	Concentration	Time management
Bench Mark →	30	20	30	40	35	20	Bench Mark →	30	20	30	40	35	20
Students ↓	INDIVIDUAL SCORES						Students ↓	INDIVIDUAL SCORES					
A	29	18	33	33	35	13	A	23	21	38	55	47	23
B	29	18	35	34	35	10	B	23	21	38	52	47	21
C	29	18	35	50	40	10	C	24	19	29	53	24	20
D	29	18	32	36	39	26	D	26	16	27	47	24	18
E	35	24	41	45	43	20	E	24	19	29	50	27	18
F	31	19	36	51	41	20	F	29	15	24	53	29	17
G	30	25	36	55	34	27	G	23	18	31	46	42	12
H	35	34	41	45	43	20	H	27	18	37	46	42	15
I	35	24	41	45	43	20	I	24	16	27	53	24	20
J	35	24	41	45	43	20	J	27	15	29	50	24	20
AV. Score	<u>317</u> =31.7	<u>222</u> =22.2	<u>371</u> =37.1	<u>439</u> =43.9	<u>396</u> =39.6	<u>186</u> =18.6	AV. Score	<u>250</u> =25.0	<u>178</u> =17.8	<u>309</u> =30.9	<u>505</u> =50.5	<u>330</u> =33.0	<u>184</u> =18.4

DISCUSSION ON TABLE -1

College level study skill inventory used for the purpose of data collection assist in providing student immediate feedback on their current approach to college level study skills. The table-I shows the bench mark, individual scores as well as average scores of the science stream students in the six different domains of the study skills.

DISCUSSION ON THE DATA OF BOY STUDENTS

The data show that the individual scores of 4 students are below, while that of 1 student is equal to and another five students are above the bench mark in respect of study skill 'text book reading'. The average score for the particular domain is 31.7 which is more than bench mark 30. In case of 'note taking' individual scores of 5 students are below and 5 students are above the bench mark and the average score which is 22.2 is more than bench mark 20. The individual scores for the study skill 'memory' of all the 10 students are more than the bench mark and the average score which is 37.1 is naturally more than the bench mark 30. The scores for the study skill 'test preparation' show that out of 10 students, 3 has scored below and 7 has scored above bench mark and the average score which is 43.9 is more than the bench mark. The scores for 'concentration' show that only 1 has scored below and 2 has scored equal to and 7 has scored above the bench mark and the average score which is 39.6 is more than bench mark 35. In 'time management' 3 has scored below, 5 has scored equal to and 2 has scored above bench mark and the average score which is 18.6 is less than bench mark 20.

DISCUSSION ON THE DATA OF GIRL STUDENTS -

In the study skill 'text book reading' individual scores of all the 10 students are below bench mark and naturally the average score which is 25 is less than the bench mark 30. In 'note taking' individual scores of 8 students are below and 2 students are more than the bench mark and the average score which is 17.8 is less than the bench mark 20. In 'memory' individual scores of 6 students are below and 4 students are above the bench mark and the average score which is 30.9 is more than the bench mark 30. In 'test preparation' the individual scores of all the 10 students are more than the bench mark and the average score which is 50.5 is more than the bench mark 40. In 'concentration' the individual scores of six students are less and 4 students more than the bench mark and the average score which is 33 is less than the bench mark 35. In 'time management' the individual scores of 5 students are less and 3 students are equal to and 2 students are more than bench mark and average score which 18.4 is less than bench mark 20.

The average scores for the different domain of study skills in comparison to bench marks are presented below -

Sections	Average Scores of boy students	Bench mark	Average Scores of girl students
Test Book reading	31.7	> 30	> 25
Note taking	22.2	> 20	> 17.8
Memory	37.1	> 30	< 30.9
Test preparation	43.9	> 40	< 50.5
Concentration	39.6	> 35	> 33.0
Time management	18.6	< 20	> 18.4

Graph-I is the representation of the above data

Graph-I

Graphical representation of the bench marks and average individual scores of the science stream students.

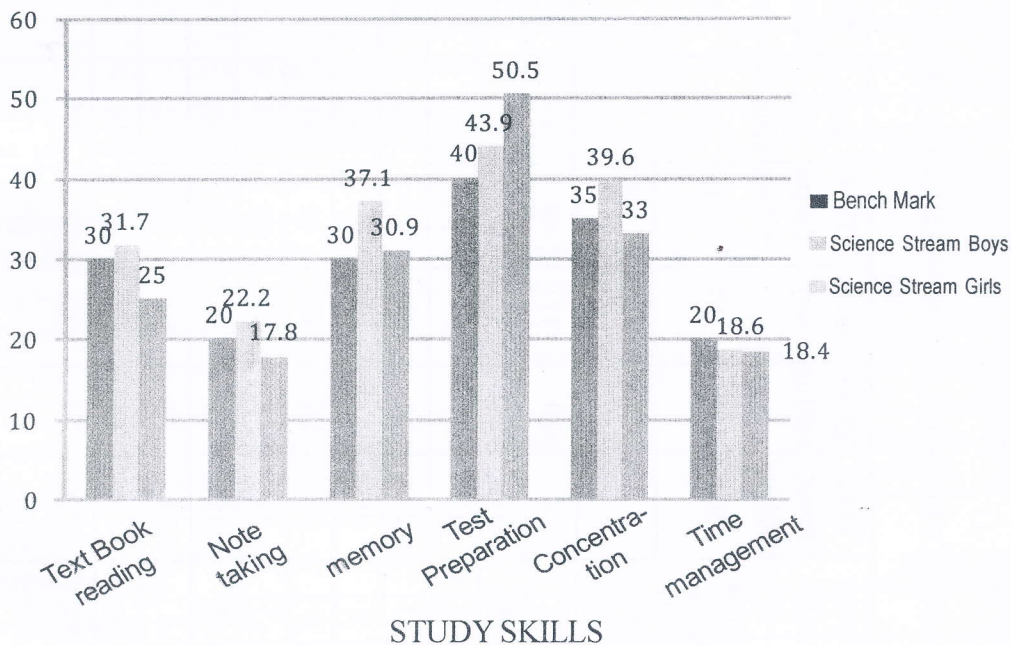


TABLE -II
TABULAR PRESENTATION OF THE RESULT ON STUDY SKILLS OF THE STUDENTS OF ARTS STREAM
GIRLS

Study skills → Bench Mark → Students ↓	BOYS					GIRLS						
	Text book reading 30	Note taking 20	Mem- ory 30	Test Prepa- ration 40	Con- cen- tration 35	Time manag- ement 20	Study skills → Bench Mark → Students ↓	Text book reading 30	Note taking 20	Mem- ory 30	Test Prepa- ration 40	Con- cen- tration 35
INDIVIDUAL SCORES						INDIVIDUAL SCORES						
A	37	19	37	49	45	16	31	22	29	43	37	18
B	32	21	40	51	45	17	34	16	41	50	35	06
C	33	21	37	50	45	17	34	16	42	54	31	06
D	27	14	39	49	39	23	37	20	38	52	43	09
E	26	13	39	49	43	23	36	20	33	48	43	07
F	30	16	39	49	43	23	34	16	38	50	31	06
G	34	18	40	48	34	21	37	18	32	45	44	10
H	30	18	35	42	35	18	36	19	38	51	44	06
I	32	18	32	38	42	13	34	16	37	47	44	06
J	29	16	37	49	38	22	35	16	36	54	35	09
AV.	<u>303</u>	<u>179</u>	<u>375</u>	<u>474</u>	<u>409</u>	<u>193</u>	<u>348</u>	<u>179</u>	<u>364</u>	<u>494</u>	<u>387</u>	<u>83</u>
Scores	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
	=30.3	=17.9	=37.7	=47.4	=40.9	=19.3	=34.8	=17.9	=36.4	=49.4	=38.7	=8.3

DISCUSSION ON TABLE -II**Discussion on the data of boy students -**

In 'Text Book reading' individual scores of 3 students are less, 2 students are equal to, 5 students are more than the bench mark and the average score is 30.3 which is more than the bench mark 30. In 'note taking' individual scores of 8 students are less and 2 students are more than the bench mark and the average score is 17.9 which is less than the bench mark 20. In 'memory' individual scores of all the 10 students are more than the bench mark and average score which is 37.5 is more than the bench mark 30. In 'test preparation' individual score of 1 student is less and 9 students are more than the bench mark and average score is 47.4 which is more than the bench mark 40. In 'concentration' individual score of 1 student is less and 1 student is equal to and 8 students are more than the benchmark and average score is 40.9 which is more than the bench mark 35. In 'time management' individual scores of 5 students are less and 5 student are more than the bench mark and average score which is 19.3 is less than the bench mark 20.

DISCUSSION ON THE DATA OF GIRL STUDENTS -

In 'text book reading' the individual scores of all the 10 students are more than the bench mark and naturally the average score which is 34.8 is more than the bench mark. In 'note taking' individual scores of 7 students are less, 1 student is more and 2 students are equal to bench mark. The average score which is 17.9 is less than the bench mark 20. In 'memory' individual score of 1 student is less and 9 students are more then the bench mark and the average score which is 36.4 is more than the bench mark. In 'test preparaton' individual scores of all the 10 students are more than the bench mark and naturally the average score which is 49.4 is more than the bench mark 40. In 'concentration' individual scores of 2 students are less, 6 students are more, and 2 students are equal to bench mark. The average score which is 38.7 is more than the bench mark 35. In 'time management' individual scores of all the 10 students are less than the bench mark and naturally the average score which is 8.3 is less than the bench mark.

The average scores for the different domain of study skills in comparison to bench marks are presented below -

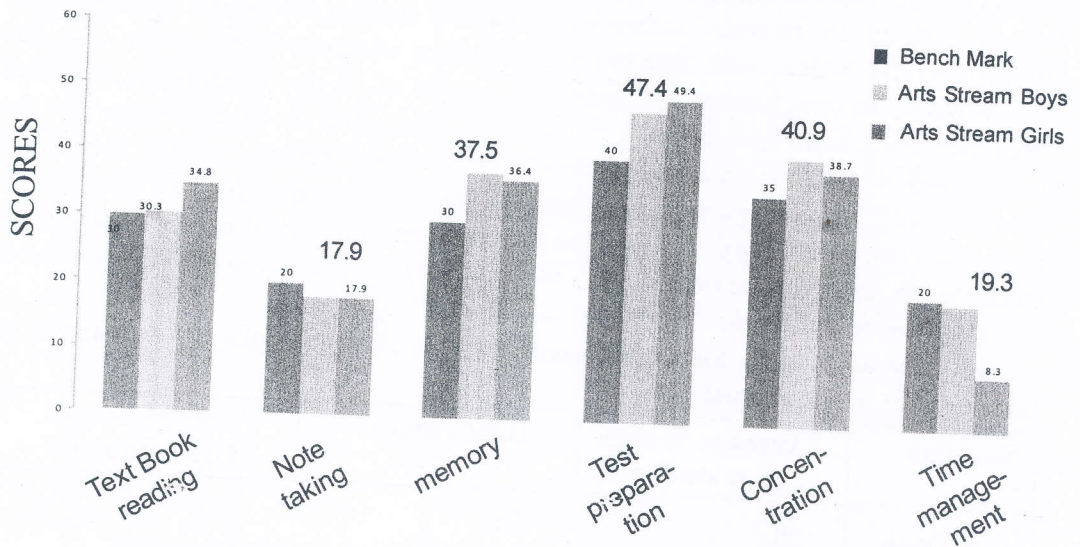
Sections	Average Scores of boy students	Bench mark	Average Scores of girl students
Test Book reading	30.3	> 30	< 34.8
Note taking	17.9	< 20	> 17.9

Sections	Average Scores of boy students		Bench mark		Average Scores of girl students
Memory	37.5	>	30	<	36.4
Test preparation	47.4	>	40	<	49.4
Concentration	40.9	>	35	<	38.7
Time management	19.3	<	20	>	8.3

Graph-II is the representation of the above data

GRAPH-II

Graphical representation of the bench mark and average individual scores of the Arts stream students

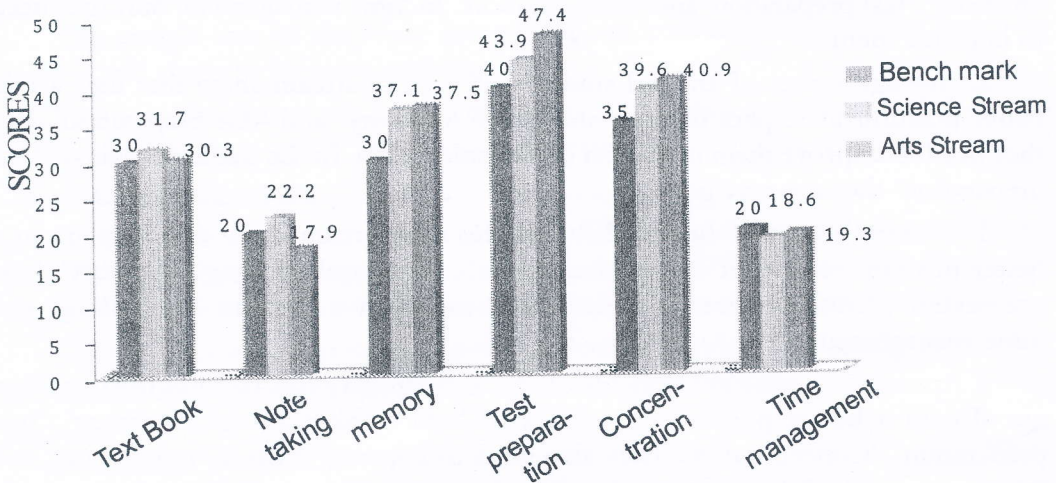


STUDY SKILLS

Graph-III represents the data of boy students of both the Science and Arts Stream

GRAPH-III

Graphical representation of the bench mark and average individual scores of Boy Students of both the Science and Arts Stream.

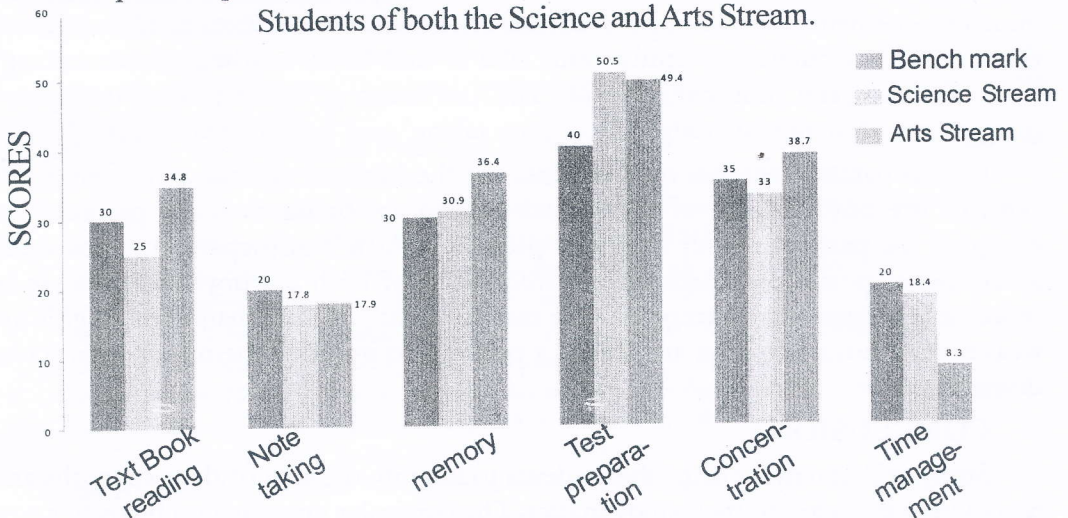


STUDY SKILLS

Graph-IV represents the data of girls students of both the Science and Arts Stream

GRAPH-IV

Graphical representation of the bench mark and average individual scores of Girl Students of both the Science and Arts Stream.



STUDY SKILLS

Findings :

From the above discussion we can draw the following finding -

1. Average scores of boy students of the science stream show that they are in a better position in respect of their study skills - 'text book reading', 'note taking', 'memory', 'test preparation' and 'concentration'. In 'time management' only they need to improve them.

2. Average scores of the girl students of science stream show that they are in better position in respect of their study skill 'memory' and 'test preparation'. But they need to improve them in the rest of the study skills. In the particular skill of 'test preparation' they are very good.

3. Average scores of boy students of the Arts stream show that they are in a better position in respect of the study skills - 'text book reading', 'memory', 'test preparation', 'concentration', and they need to improve them in 'note taking' and 'time management'.

4. Average scores of girl students of the Arts stream show that like the boys they are also in a better position in respect of 'text book reading', 'memory', 'test preparation', 'Concentration'. They also need to improve them in 'note taking' and 'time management'. In the particular skill of 'time management' they are very weak.

5. If we do a comparative analysis of these results on the basis of stream we find that the skills of boy students of both the streams are more or less of the same kind. The boy students of the science stream need to improve them in 'time management' only and the boy students of Arts stream need to improve them in 'note taking' and 'time management'. In case of girl students, science stream students need to improve them in four domains of study skills like - 'text book reading', 'note taking', 'concentration', and 'time management'. The Arts stream girl students need to improve them in two domains of study skills - 'note taking' and 'time management'

6. Comparative analysis of these data on the basis of sex show that the study skills of the boy students of the science stream are batter than the girl students except in the particular study skill, 'test preparation'. In 'test preparation' girls are in a very better position. In Arts stream, study skills of both the boys and girls are of more or less same kind, except in 'time management'. In time management girls are weaker than boys, but boys are also in a position to improve them in the particular domain.

CONCLUSION :

Study skill inventory helps the students to identify the area of their strengths and weaknesses in regard to their study matter. The particular investigation helps to know the present status of students' study skills and thereby it helps to identify the area ~~where guidance is needed by the students. Proper arrangement of guidance will~~

definitely help the students in their academic life and will minimize the scope of failure or dropout. So it has the very much educative value for the students to be conscious and careful regarding their study skills as it will help them in their academic life to pursue a golden path.

LIMITATIONS :

The sample size of the study being small, on condition of its being larger the study could claim to be more authentic.

Fact remains that if the study conducted could have included more than one college, the findings would have been more extensive.

Acknowledgement :

I owe a deep sense of gratitude to the 'Student Academic Resource Centre' (SARC) of university of Central Florida as with the aid of "The study skills Inventory" of SARC the present study has been materialised and hence comes into a reality.

I express my sincerest thanks to the student respondents for kindly responding and furnishing necessary and accurate feedback needed for the study.

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