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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Exploring the Study Habits of University of Isfahan Students According to Gender, Academic Year, and Field of Study

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is Exploring the Study Habits of University of Isfahan Students According to Gender, Academic Year, and Field of Study. This study is descriptive-survey in nature. The statistical population includes all third and fourth-year undergraduate students at the University of Isfahan, who were studying Education, Counseling, Civil Engineering, and Surveying in the academic year 2024-2025. The sampling method for this research is census. The Palsane and Sharma Study Habits Questionnaire was used for data collection. A total of 223 individuals responded to the questionnaire. The SPSS version 27 software was used for data analysis. The findings indicated that the average study habits of the University of Isfahan students are at a moderate level ($M=47.87$). Regarding the gender variable, a significant difference was found between men and women only in the mean scores of the Note-taking and Memory components; specifically, the mean scores for these components were higher in women than in men. In terms of academic year, only the difference in health means between third-year and fourth-year students was significant; more precisely, the average health score of fourth-year students was higher than that of third-year students. Concerning the field of study, a significant difference in memory means was observed between the Educational Sciences-Civil Engineering and Educational Sciences-Surveying groups; in other words, the mean memory score in Educational Sciences was higher than in Civil Engineering and Surveying. Ultimately, given the gap between the current situation and the ideal level, it is necessary to develop targeted programs to improve students' study habits.

KEYWORDS

Study habits, Students, University of Isfahan.



Introduction

The higher education system plays a pivotal role in societal advancement by fostering human capital and expanding the horizons of knowledge. In this process, the student serves as the primary driver of learning and can pave the way for innovation and a better future; therefore, addressing the issues and challenges faced by students is essential. One of the most critical issues is students' academic performance, which is influenced by various factors, most notably study habits. However, many students lack familiarity with effective study habits.

Various definitions of study habits have been proposed. According to Das and Mukherjee (2025), a habit is formed when individuals repeatedly and consistently perform a behavior; thus, a habit refers to the regular repetition of a task or behavior by an individual. Studying is the application of time and energy in the process of acquiring knowledge. Consequently, the term "study habit" implies the systematic and planned pursuit of a study regimen, as well as a continuous effort to dedicate full energy to the learning process.

The literature review indicates that most studies in this field have focused on medical students (Tarshizi et al., 2012; Zarezaadeh & Rasoulabadi, 2015; Yamin Firouz et al., 2019), while students in basic sciences, engineering, and humanities have been largely overlooked. To date, no similar study has been conducted in these areas. Therefore, the present research aims to investigate the study habits of University of Isfahan students, taking into account gender, academic year, and field of study. The study seeks to answer the following two questions:

1. What are the study habits of University of Isfahan students?
2. Are there significant differences in the study habits of University of Isfahan students based on gender, academic year, and field of study?

Method

This study employs a descriptive-survey research design. The statistical population comprised all third- and fourth-year undergraduate students at the University of Isfahan, enrolled in the departments of Educational Sciences, Counseling, Civil Engineering, and Surveying during the 2024-2025 academic year. The Educational Sciences department was selected due to the researcher's affiliation with the department and the anticipated high level of participant cooperation. The Counseling department was chosen as it possesses a comparable scale of faculty and student population to Educational Sciences. Among the engineering faculties, the Civil Engineering and Surveying departments were selected because they are similar to the aforementioned groups in terms of faculty and student numbers and are also highly popular disciplines.

A census sampling method was utilized. While the initial plan was to select two classes per group (one junior and one senior class), the final sample included two classes each from Educational Sciences and Counseling, eight classes from Civil Engineering, and four classes from Surveying. The increased number of classes in the Civil Engineering and Surveying groups was necessitated by the lower classroom attendance rates in these departments. Third- and fourth-year students were selected based on their advanced academic experience regarding effective study strategies.

Following coordination with faculty members, the researcher administered the Study Habits Questionnaire developed by Palansani and Sharma (1989), which was standardized in Iran by Karami (2008) (as cited in Hemmati Alamdarlu et al., 2017). Alamdarlu et al. (2017) reported a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.73 for this instrument. The questionnaire consists of 45 items across eight scales: time management, physical study environment, reading ability, note-taking, motivational factors, memory, exam preparation, and health. Responses were measured on a three-point Likert scale, with a maximum possible score of 90, where higher scores indicate superior study habits. A total of 223 participants completed the questionnaire

Results

Table 1 presents the mean score for study habits, which is 47.87. Considering the total possible score of 90 on the questionnaire, the results suggest that the students' study habits are in the moderate range.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics Related to the Study Habits Variables

Study Habits	M	Maximum Possible Score on Questionnaire	Median	Mode	SD	Minimum Value	Maximum Value	Skewness	Kurtosis
Time Management	34.5	10	5	5	10	0	2.07	0.005	-0.377
Physical Condition	5.09	12	5	5	9	0	1.73	-0.266	-0.304
Reading Ability	8.35	16	8	8	15	3	2.22	0.164	-0.227
Note-Taking	3.24	6	3	3	6	0	1.66	-0.146	-0.746
Learning Motivation	7.63	12	9	8	12	2	2.04	-0.218	-0.218
Memory	4.45	8	5	5	8	1	1.44	-0.162	-0.402
Exam Administration	10.80	20	12	11	17	3	2.54	-0.087	-0.142
health	3.04	6	3	3	6	0	1.45	0.088	-0.475
Study Habits	47.87	90	41	48	73	15	9.28	-0.117	-0.258

In examining the gender variable, the findings indicate that there is no statistically significant difference between male and female students in the mean scores of time management, physical condition, reading ability, learning motivation, examination performance, health status, and study habits. However, a statistically significant difference is observed between males and females in the components of note-taking and memory. More specifically, the mean scores of note-taking and memory are higher among female students than male students.

With regard to the academic year variable, the findings show that there is no statistically significant difference between third- and fourth-year students in the mean scores of time management, physical condition, reading ability, note-taking, learning motivation, memory, examination performance, and study habits. However, a statistically significant difference is found in the mean health status between third- and fourth-year students. More precisely, the mean health status among fourth-year students is higher than that of third-year students.

In examining the field of study variable, the findings indicate that the mean memory score differs significantly between the fields of Educational Sciences–Civil Engineering and Educational Sciences–Surveying Engineering, while no significant differences in memory are observed among the other fields. More precisely, it can be concluded that the mean memory score in Educational Sciences is higher than in Civil Engineering and Surveying Engineering.

Discussion and conclusion

the present study aimed to examine the study habits of students at the University of Isfahan with respect to gender, academic year, and field of study. The results indicated that the students' study habits are at a moderate level. Previous research has similarly shown that students' study habits at other universities are generally at a moderate level as well (Koushan & Heidari, 2004; Tarshizi et al., 2012; Zare Zadeh & Rasoulabadi, 2015; Alamdar et al., 2015; Yaman Firooz et al., 2019).

Regarding the gender variable, the mean scores for the note-taking and memory components were higher among female students than male students. Concerning the academic year variable, the mean score for the health component was higher among fourth-year students than third-year students. With respect to the field of study variable, the mean memory score was higher in Educational Sciences than in Civil Engineering and Surveying Engineering.

Overall, based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that students' study habits show a considerable gap from the desirable level. This finding suggests that improving study habits requires purposeful planning and educational interventions. Providing opportunities for students to become familiar with effective study habits—through workshops led by psychology professors and successful students in this area, as well as through the development and dissemination of accessible educational materials such as brochures on effective study habits—can play a significant role in improving this situation.

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Authors' Contribution

All authors had the same percentage of participation.

Conflict of Interest

According to the authors, this article is free of any conflict of interest.

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