

STUDY HABITS

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ABSTRACT

The theme: STUDY HABIT is one of the important subject matter in the educational psychology. The etymological meaning of the words habit and study are to be explained. The word Habit means an action or pattern of behavior that is repeated so often that it becomes typical of somebody and the word study means to apply one's mind purposefully to the acquisition of knowledge or understanding. A good habit formation of regular and systematic study is very significant for achieving colorful results in examination or to be successful in one's professional life. There are various components and factors which help one to develop a good study habit. In order to attain good study habit one must be goal oriented and motivated. Therefore Motivation to achieve one's goal plays a significant role in forming a good study habit. A good study habit differs from person to person and beginners to advanced students. A greater concentration and motivation to achieve the goal are the distinguishing qualities found in advanced students. In order to keep oneself update he has to have an ongoing habit to study and learning. A good study habit is not only to achieve a good job, but also for the whole life.

1. INTRODUCTION

"That which we persist in doing becomes easier, not that the task itself has become easier, but that our ability to perform it has improved." (Ralph Waldo Emerson, American author, poet and philosopher)

In this world of fast developments in every field of Science and technology, the most discussed subject matter in the field of education is the study habits among the students. Because Good and effective study habits are essential for the successful completion of any field of education.

The above quoted statement clearly tells us that the persistence of a person in doing something regularly and systematically enable him to be an improved performer. Not because his task itself is easy but because of his repetition of the same action makes him day by day easier to perform in a better and efficient way.

It's a shame that far too many parents view a child's education as something that takes place only at school/college/university. This is obviously not the case, the education process starts at the home and that's why it's so important to not only be educated outside of our homes but inside them as well.

In this article, therefore, it is my humble attempt to put light on the various aspects of the subject matter of Study Habits.

2. ETYMOLOGICAL MEANING OF STUDY HABITS

Study: This word is derived from Old French *estudie*, from Latin *studium* zeal, inclination, from *studēre* to be diligent.¹ to apply one's mind purposefully to the acquisition of knowledge or understanding of (a subject). The cognitive process of acquiring skill or knowledge.

Habit: The Latin word *habere* from which habit is derived was used reflexively to mean "to be," and so its past participle *habitus* came to be used as a noun for "how you are," that is, your "state" or "condition."

" Subsequently this noun developed in two directions, coming to mean both "outward condition or appearance," hence, eventually, "clothing," and "inner condition, quality, nature, character," and later "usual way of behaving." (The notion of adapting a verb meaning "to have" to express "how you are, how you act in particular situation" is duplicated in the English word "behave").

Regularly repeated behavior pattern: an action or pattern of behavior that is repeated so often that it becomes typical of somebody, although he or she may be unaware of it. For instance I really need to get into the habit of writing down what I spend.

3. THE ROLE OF MOTIVATION IN THE STUDY HABITS

The Motivation plays an important role in the study-habit formation of a person. For example a serious medical student is motivated to learn his lessons well to become a good Doctor. So he makes his regular study programs and slowly Learning his lessons regularly becomes his most important habit.

In the learning process, there is difference in Humans und in Animals. "Animals, it would appear, were motivated only by biological needs, whereas such needs controlled only a minute fraction in human learning"²

¹ (Collins English Dictionary - Complete and Unabridged © HarperCollins Publishers 1991, 1994, 1998, 2000, 2003)

² A History of Behavioral Psychology, John A. Mills, 1998, New York University Press.

Human beings are intentionally motivated to an action that brings him good effects. The stronger is one's motivation, the more intensive is his study habits. One always looks at the Goal to improve motivation. That is why people tell about serious student "He or she is motivated to achieve his or her Goal". The Motivation makes a person lively in his efforts to achieve his Goal.

4. THE HABIT FORMATION OF STUDY

Habits are routines of behavior that are repeated regularly and tend to occur subconsciously³. An action, which is done regularly, can become routine. Slowly this becomes a part of one's behavior. This repeated behavior is recorded in the subconscious mind and reproduced when the time demands. For example the habit of learning religious Books regularly tends to read them wherever he goes. It is seen in India, that a good Hindu believer reads Gita in trains. A good Muslim automatically tends to do Namaz at the sound of Namaz signals from Mosque.

A serious and intelligent student will always acquire a systematic and regular study program. By doing so he forms a positive habit in his whole of learning process. He need not strain himself to understand the study-matter. An unconscious behavioral pattern is being formed in his personality. Thus Study becomes for him a matter of enjoyment and leisure.

5. THE VARIOUS COMPONENTS HELP TO DEVELOP GOOD STUDY HABITS:

a. Personal

Good study habits for students begins at home

i. Among the students of the Rich and poor families

It is generally seen that the Children from the rich Families have a good study habits, because they have better facilities and resources for learning at home. At the same time the children from the poor Families have poor facilities of learning. There are many factors that affect the regular learning process of a student. They are; worries for livelihood, study atmosphere at home, materials for study etc.

One of the biggest problems among the children of poor families is worry about the livelihood. Many of the children have to work before and after the school time. Some students have to help the parents in their daily earnings. In the pursuit of Food, the children get few time for regular study. Some are really affected with the daily problems of earning money.

³ Definition of Habit. Merriam Webster Dictionary. Retrieved on August 29, 2008

A good study atmosphere at home is very important for daily regular learning process. The children from the rich families have enough facilities of study: study room (mostly electrified) with furniture. Calm and quiet atmosphere in house that are conducive to study, is very important for a regular study program.

Lack of enough study materials can also cause the study habits of the children. The helpful study materials; (Internet and other electronic Media), Note books, books for various subjects and necessary writing materials help the formation of a good study habit among the students.

The children from well-to-do families because of their good habits attain the zenith of higher education and very few exceptional children from the poor families get higher learning. We have the examples in the history; Abraham Lincoln, and many more.

ii. Among the students of educated and uneducated parents

“There are generally two types of students - namely those who study on their will and others who do not. There are various explanations given by child psychologists on the study habits background of the students who are not ready to study willingly.”⁴ These students need special attention from the parents or any person from the family. If the parents are educated they can guide and monitor their children's study habits in a better way.

In India, it is generally seen, that the children of the uneducated parents perform often very poorly in their academic activities. It is because of poor study habits at home.

*“A child educated only at school is an uneducated child”*⁵

This quote is to mean that the children have to be taught at home under the guidance of the parents.

The parents have a greater role in forming a good study habit in their children. The children who do not study on their own will should be helped by the parents to form a systematic and regular way of learning their lessons and extra earnings of knowledge.

iii. Among the talented and dull students

We notice generally that the good motivated talented students have a good study habit than the dull students. It is because of the good results in their academic results that encouraged them to study systematically and regularly to attain better and better results in future.

The dull students always have to confront bad results that discourage them to study well. Thus their interest in their daily being decreased and deteriorate. A good study habit to form

⁴ <http://www.brighthub.com/education/homework-tips/articles/57827.aspx#ixzz1MnnTKhIU>

⁵ a famous educational quote by G. Santayana

in these students is extremely difficult unless the educated and good motivated parents help them in their defeats and discouragements.

b. Institutional

“It is a common notion that when students in the school setting study hard their grades would improve. Asian learners are expected by their parents to develop good study habits for the sake of learning as reflected in having favourable grades in school (Magno, 2010). Even poor students who have developed good study habits can perform well in school (On & Watkins, 1994). Study habits are “those activities necessary to organize and complete schoolwork tasks and to prepare for and take tests”⁶ “Brown and Holtzman in 1969 developed the Survey of Study Habits and Attitudes (SSHA) that was used to assess the students' attitudes and habits in studying”.

There are 4 factors:

- „1. Delay Avoidance - a measure of the degree to which a student is prompt in completing assignments and is efficient in time management
2. Work Methods - a measure of effective use of study skills.
3. Teacher Approval - a measure of student opinions about teacher classroom behavior and methods.
4. Educational Acceptance - a measure of student approval of educational objectives, practices, and requirements.”⁷

i. Study Habits among the students of private schools

In Indian situation, we notice that the students from the private schools, especially convent schools, have good study habit and thus perform better in their academic activities than the students coming from the public schools. There are many factors why the students in private schools perform better:

1. competitive and effective methods of teaching
2. better school atmosphere in learning
3. Means of better learning practices; constructive and effective completion in the studies.
4. Self responsibility from the part of the children and parents, because they pay great sum of money for the education of their children.
5. A matter of prestige that develops in the minds of the students

⁶ The International Journal of Research and Review, Volume 5, September 2010, pp. 40

⁷ The International Journal of Research and Review, Volume 5, September 2010, pp. 41

ii. Government schools

According to a study made on the issue of the academic performance of the students coming from the private and public schools, it is observed that the students from the public schools have very poor performance and thus it is concluded that these students have developed a bad study habits.

The cause this poor performance are the following:

1. Both the teachers and students of the public schools have less responsibility in the overall academic activities.
2. Most of the students who come to the public schools are from the backward classes of the society and therefore the necessary study atmosphere at home is not given.
3. Some few students even though they are intelligent enough to study well have no support from the part of their teachers or they have no chance of competition in the class, so that they can study better.
4. There is very poor guidance from the part of the teachers to develop a good study habits among the students.
5. Irregular examining of the students helps to develop a kind of sluggishness in regular studies.

iii. Schools for Talented Students

The study habits among the students of the schools for talented students comparatively good. Here also we may have to observe the difference between the private and the public schools. There are many public institutions in India, which are specially meant for the talented students. But most of these schools are not competent enough. The factor here is proper guidance and close observation the parents and teachers in the matter of curriculum.

The study habit of the children in most of the residential students is comparatively better. Here the children are guided and monitored regularly. A better atmosphere for study and personality development is provided, so the children develop a sense of inquisitiveness in acquiring knowledge.

iv. Methods of Teaching

Good study habits also depend on the various methods of teaching. We notice that many of the students in India go for extra coaching classes other than what they get from regular schools or colleges. It is because that these students experience a lack of proper coaching in their respective subjects.

In order to develop a good study habit, therefore it is necessary that the students receive efficient coaching Facilities. The tremendous growth in the science and technology help the students to develop a study habit. The teachers may have to use various visual teaching methods; like various computer programs, for example, power point etc.

c. Environmental

It is observed that some students who come from particular natural and family environment have a study habit. The whole atmosphere of the Village is so conducive to study and learning that a regular study program can be practiced.

Some students coming from a particular area acquire a good study habit. The reason to be there are in those areas good nature resources like natural mineral water, purified and natural air, less diseases among the people etc.

d. Cultural and Ethnic

It is generally seen that some cultural and ethnic groups, the children develop a good study habit. For example it is observed among Jewish children that these children have very good academic performance. This can be because of their inherited cultural and ethnic traits. In India the children from the high castes mostly acquire a kind of study habit that excels and differentiates from all other castes.

e. Motivational

“Goals guide habits most fundamentally by providing the initial outcome-oriented impetus for response repetition. In this sense, habits often are a vestige of past goal pursuit.”⁸

“You need to be motivated to learn and work hard, whether or not you like a specific subject or teacher. Self-motivation can be extremely important when you aren't particularly excited about a class. If you must, view it as an obstacle you must overcome. Then, set your mind to it and do it -- no excuses. Success is up to you!”⁹

A good study habit is essentially motivational. For example a medical student forms a regular and systematic study program, which brings him or her excellent results and become an efficient Doctor. Nobody can motivate unless one is really motivated.

⁸ American Psychological Association. [A New Look at Habits and the Habit–Goal Interface](#) Retrieved on December 22, 2008

⁹ <http://school.familyeducation.com/skill-builder/college-prep/37653.html#ixzz1MoG1FtpT>

6. A STANDARD NOTION OF STUDY HABIT

A HABIT is something that is done on a well arranged, regular and planned basis that is not relegated to a second place or optional place in one's life. Habits can be good and bad according to the Goal motivation of the person.

STUDY is a process of learning, practice, enlightenment. It is a good habit acquiring something that is lacking in a person.

In order to acquire knowledge the method should be systematic and regular.

Therefore a standard notion of STUDY HABIT can be derived from the above as dedicating oneself to a well arranged, scientifically and systematically planned regular practice of the process of learning.

For any attainment of knowledge one needs a systematic and a scientific approach to the task. In spite of all the above mentioned various study habits, which causes a person to develop his or her own way a good study habit, one should never forget the need of forming a good habit. Once a good habit is formed, then the acquiring of knowledge is easier and more effective.

Among the four stages human life, what Hinduism proposes, the "Brahmacharya" or the Student Stage is an example to the subject matter of a good study habit.

The student (Brahmacharya) should stay with the teacher (Guru) and go through a rigorous process of study and discipline. Being self-disciplined he prepares himself for the next stage called house hold life (grahasta). One forms here a study habit that will help him for whole of his life.

7. QUALITIES OF A GOOD STUDY HABIT

The web site for school family education proposes the following qualities of good study habits:

“1. Time Management

2. Good Study Habits

Good study habits include these basics:

- Always be prepared for class, and attend classes regularly. No cutting!
- Complete assignments thoroughly and in a timely manner.
- Review your notes daily rather than cram for tests the night before.
- Set aside quiet time each day for study -- even if you don't have homework or a test the next day!

3. The Ability to Set Attainable Goals

4. Concentration

5. Good Note-Taking
6. Completion of Assignments
7. Review of Daily Notes
8. Organizational Skills
9. Motivation
10. Commitment¹⁰

8. THE STUDY HABITS OF THE ADVANCED STUDENTS

The study habit of the advanced students is normally good, because they have developed it from school days onwards and therefore now they have reached college. In college they must have acquired a study habit, which helps them to cover their portion in a given time. Those who takes a study habit should have to strive hard to develop a better study habit, which will reward them with a successful college degrees.

The following are the qualities of a good study habits:

1. Concentration on the study matter both in the college and at home.
2. More to study in a short time
3. Unbroken self learning
4. better grasping power
5. try to learn more outside the class room

According to a study that made by Government India states that most of the college going students of the professional courses acquire good study habit.

9. AN ONGOING FORMATION OF STUDY HABITS

A good study habit has an ongoing character, because a good habit of study cannot end with the formal education, it should be for whole life. This is particularly important for any scientific knowledge. In this world of fast developments and change, everything has to updated time to time otherwise it is outdated.

A good study habit, which is continued even after the formal education helps a person in his personality development. To be successful in once professional life, he has keep up a good habit of learning. This is particularly important in medical, engineering, legislative and scientific professions.

¹⁰ <http://school.familyeducation.com/skill-builder/college-prep/37653.html#ixzz1NGlptEx6>

Making use of the leisure time and a keen interest in the subject matter of one's professional life are important factors to keep a good habit ongoing.

CONCLUSION

From the above discussions I have tried to bring out the meaning and various factors which help one to develop a good habit. I have also enumerated the important qualities of good study habit. However, a standard notion of a good study habit is that everyone who aspiring to achieve in life must create a regular, systematic and well planed program of study and learning. Every good habit is not only for a short period of time in one's life, but it is for whole of life. Therefore a good study habit must have an ongoing character.

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