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A Survey on Students Study Habits in Nursing and Midwifery Faculty of Ahvaz Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences in 2012

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Abstract

Background: Academic success in college is dependent to effective efforts, correct reading and time management. The purpose of this study is to investigate students' study habits in the nursing and midwifery faculty of Ahvaz Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences.

Material and methods: The study was a descriptive, cross-sectional, questionnaire based conducted on 415 nursing and midwifery university students in 2012. Data was collected through a questionnaire consisting two sections, the first of which contained demographic data and the second was on Palsane and Sharma Study Habits Inventory (PSSHI) distributed to the students by the researchers and then collected in their dorms and schools.

Results: The mean of the study habits was 51.59 out of 90, and it was found that 21.4% of students had adverse study habits, and 60.5% had favorable study habits. There was no significant relationship between scores from different areas of study habits in nursing, midwifery and surgical technologist with Kruskal-Wallis test, however, the comparison of different study habits in academic terms we found that there was significant difference between scores in different areas of study habits among students.

Conclusion: In this study, the majority of students had unfavorable study habits and only a few of them had favorable study habits. Therefore, it is recommended they be trained and educated on proper study habits through workshops or courses to improve their learning.

Keywords: study habits, study skills, students, school of nursing and midwifery.

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Introduction

Various factors affect the quality and quantity of learning and remembering the learned material. These factors include individual intelligence, physical and mental health, motivation and interest to subjects, peace, quiet and facilities in the living condition, educational facilities, co-instructional and cognitive abilities. Nevertheless, psychologists have found the most effective one to be general study skills (1). One reason why some students do not get desired results from their efforts is lack of awareness on related practices and habits. Improvement and development of a learning function in learners is the main purpose of the education centers, because the education function of the individual paves the ground for the success and progress in different levels. The individual education function is affected by various factors, one of which is study habits of the individual (2).

Academic failure in the universities in Iran is in a worrying situation (3) and has become one of the main problems in the high education centers of the country (4), and this may not only cause mental problems in the students but also may limit their education achievements. One of the reasons behind the academic failure in the students is related to the poor quality of the learning and studying skills (5). It is obvious that failure to select a correct method for studying not only causes a waste of energy and time for the student but also leads to a formation of bad study habits (2). Berry in his studies showed that insufficient study skills have an impact on the academic failure of the students (6). Shams (2001) also showed in his studies that the problems in learning skills and lack of familiarity with efficient and effective study methods are correlated with the education failure of the students (7).

Study strategies includes attitude, obvious and hidden manners which are related to the achievement in the learning. These strategies have been defined as cognitive activities, feeling or manners which

facilitate the process of storage, recovery and use of science or learned materials (8). Researchers believe that study habits can be taught and learned (9).

Researches have shown that based on learning approach which includes study habits, one can anticipate the success and failure of learners (10). In the study of Aminian (2007) in Yazd University of Medical Sciences, it was revealed that successful students apply more effective methods for studying than the others (11). Various studies have demonstrated that failures in studying and learning can affect the whole benefits of one's desired academic results and even his or her intelligent abilities and physical and mental health. On the other hand, in term of efficiency, effective study skills can improve various academic and even deficiencies in motivation and physical or mental health that can have a good effect on the educational function of an individual (12).

It is vital to apply study skills in an educational environment and as the students in the medicine fields such nursing, midwifery and surgical technologist have large number of class discussions and various volume of subjects and education material to memorize which require a lot of time and energy, it is of significant importance to have an educational plan when faced with a variety of new and difficult materials in the field of diagnosis, treatment and care of patients. It is obvious that failure to select a correct studying method, not only causes a waste of energy and time, but it also tends to form bad study habits among them which can ultimately leads to discouragement from education and fear in students. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate students' study habits in nursing and midwifery faculty of Ahvaz Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences, so as to recognize the strong and weak points of the students' study skills, since their improvement and modifications

can help take a step toward progress in education. Because experts believe that the recognition of study habits is a basic step toward educational progress. Also evaluation of study habits in the students can help to find and recognize the students with poor and low quality performances.

Material and methods

This was a descriptive and sectional study conducted in the first term of the academic year of 2012-13. The population included the students of nursing, midwifery and surgical technologist in the faculty of nursing and midwifery of Ahvaz Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences (n=344). The sampling was done based on type of their courses and academic terms and the number of units passed. They were randomly selected according to a multi-stage stratified.

Data was collected through a questionnaire consisting two sections, the first of which contained demographic data and the second was on Palsane and Sharma Study Habits Inventory (PSSHI) contained 45 questions in 8 areas including time management (maximum 10 scores), physical situation (maximum 12 scores), reading competence (maximum 16 scores), note taking (maximum 6 scores), learning motivation (maximum 12 scores), memory capability (maximum 8 scores), taking exams (maximum 18 scores), health (maximum 6 scores). The questions were answered on a 3-point Likert scale with the following scores: never or rarely = 0, sometimes = 1, always or often = 3. Therefore the least score was 0 and the highest 90, a higher score indicated good study habits. In this survey, the total scores of the students was classified in 3 sections including: undesired study (below 30), relatively desired (31-60) and desired (61 and above). The validity and reliability of this questionnaire was already evaluated. The test-retest reliability was reported to be 0.88, internal consistency averaging over the two scores was 0.65 and criterion-related validity was 0.74 (13).

The reliability and validity of this questionnaire were reported to be higher compared with the similar questionnaires. Granting permission from the department of instruction and instructors, the researchers attended the classes and described the nature and purpose of the research to the students at the end of their classes, and after obtaining their consent, distributed the questionnaires to the students selected based on the multi-stage stratified random method. When the questionnaires were filled by the students, collected them. It should be noted that the participants were selected from different terms and levels in the faculty.

Data was statistically analyzed through non-parametric ANOVA (Kruskal-Wallis test) and Dunn post-hoc test. SPSS V17 was used and the level of significance adopted was 0.05

Results

89.3% of the participants (370) were female and 10.8% (45) were male. 81.4% of them were single and 18.6% were married, 38.5% of the students were studying in the field of nursing, 50.3% in the midwifery and 11.2% in the surgical technology. The mean age of the participants was 21.02 (± 3.08) and which ranged from 18 to 44. The mean of grade point average was 17.26 and the range of GPA was 11.5 to 19.25. The mean scores of the study habits in the students was 51.59 (± 9.65) out of 90. It was found that 21.4% of the students had undesired habits, 60.5% relatively desired, and 18.1% had desired study habits.

The frequency of the study habits in different fields on the basis of the 3 education courses of students (nursing, midwifery and surgical technology) is demonstrated in the Table 1.

The comparison of the scores for different study habits in the 3 courses of nursing, midwifery and surgical technology, revealed that most of the scores were related to midwifery but with Kruskal-

Wallis test did not show any significant differences between them.

In comparing the study habits in different education terms, the post-hoc test showed that there was significant difference between scores for the different fields of the study habits in the 2nd term with the 4th term (P=0.007) and the 2nd term with 7th term (P=0.008). Also there was significant

difference between scores of different study habits in the students of 3rd term from that of the students of 4th term (P=0.011) and the students of 7th term (P=0.012). Also, the scores of the study habits in the students of 4th term was significantly different from that of the 5th (P=0.007) and the 6th term students (P=0.004).

Table 1. The frequency of the study habits in different areas based on the field of study

Areas of study	Field of study	Relatively desired	Desired	Undesired	Mdn	Maximum
Time management	Nursing	211 (50.8)	96 (23.1)	108 (26)	5	10
	Midwifery	206 (49.6)	111 (26.7)	98 (23.6)		
	Operation room	125 (30.1)	113 (27.2)	177 (42.6)		
Physical situation	Nursing	186 (44.8)	87 (20.9)	142 (34.2)	6	12
	Midwifery	117 (28.2)	123 (29.6)	175 (42.2)		
	Operation room	99 (23.7)	142 (34.2)	174 (42.1)		
Reading competence	Nursing	204 (49)	51 (12.2)	160 (38.8)	7	16
	Midwifery	111 (26.7)	201 (49)	103 (25)		
	Operation room	187 (45)	97 (23.5)	131 (31.5)		
Note taking	Nursing	215 (51.8)	163 (39.2)	37 (8.9)	4	6
	Midwifery	99 (23.7)	112 (27)	204 (49.3)		
	Operation room	192 (46.2)	108 (26)	115 (27.8)		
Learning motivation	Nursing	195 (46.9)	134 (32.2)	86 (20.7)	6	12
	Midwifery	126 (30.2)	132 (31.6)	157 (39.2)		
	Operation room	199 (47.9)	99 (23.7)	117 (28.2)		
Memory capability	Nursing	266 (64)	46 (11)	103 (25)	4	8
	Midwifery	223 (50.1)	56 (12.4)	156 (37.5)		
	Operation room	118 (28.3)	112 (26.8)	185 (44.9)		
Taking exams	Nursing	274 (66)	92 (22)	49 (11)	9	18
	Midwifery	192 (46.2)	110 (26.5)	113 (27.3)		
	Operation room	166 (40)	49 (11)	200 (49)		
Health	Nursing	210 (50.6)	101 (24.3)	104 (25.1)	3	6
	Midwifery	187 (45)	119 (28.3)	109 (26.7)		
	Operation room	134 (32.2)	182 (43.8)	99 (24)		
Total		60.5	18.1	21.4		

Discussion

This research investigated the study habits of students in the faculty of nursing and midwifery of Ahvaz Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences. In the present study, the majority of the students had relatively desired study habits (60.5%) and a small number of the students had desired study habits (18.1%) and accordingly, we found that there was a big gap between the desired and the current levels. Therefore, it is recommended they be trained and educated on proper study habits. The studies done in the other universities also showed that the majority of the students had relatively desired habits which are remarkable. The research done by Koshan and Hydari'in 2006 showed that the mean of the study habits in the male and female students of Sabzevar University of Medical Sciences, was respectively 51.48, and 50.87 out of 90 (14).

The findings of Hosseini and his colleagues in 2008 also showed that only 30.7% of the students were in desired condition (15). In the study of Fereyduni and Cheraghiyan in 2007 the majority of the students had relatively desired study habits so that the mean of their scores was 48.26 out of 88, which according to the importance of study habits in the process of the learning, cannot be an ideal situation and it seems that necessary facilities and instructions for promoting the study skills and habits should be provided for them (16). The studies done in the other universities and on the other students also showed that study skills and habits of the majority of the students were relatively desired but far from an ideal level (17, 18). In comparing the study habits in different educational terms, there was a significant difference between the scores for the different areas of the study habits in the students of the different terms indicating that the students entering new terms better benefit from the study methods. In addition, the study of Nurian et al. showed that students of higher levels had better

conditions in their study habits in comparison with the students at other levels (12). Buhler et al. (2001) found that as more time passed in a field of study in universities, study skills improve, as well (10). It means that with passing and spending more terms and time in a university, the scores of the study skills and habits also increase. Various studies have shown that students of higher terms have better study habits (19).

The results of the present study indicate that the problems of the students in various areas of study habits are respectively attributed to memory capabilities, taking exams, reading competence, learning motivation, time management, physical situation, note taking and health.

Drosis's et al. (2004) in their study on the surgical assistants reported that there was a significant relationship between various components of study habits with the educational functions, thus skills such as memory and condition of exam taking were more correlated to the individual's educational functions (19).

In their study, Nuriyan's et al. in 2008 conducted in Azad University of Tehran, the main study problems among students were reported to be: time management, reading competence, concentration on studying, speed of studying and note taking. The study of Travik and his colleagues showed that teaching study skills and effective learning to students increases the control and motivation of students (20). In addition, Peniston indicated that the majority of students demonstrated various problems in the area of time management, and to solve this issue, the students should do activities with the focus on trying to reduce the interrupting factors which cause the reduction of their concentration and waste of time while studying (12).

Generally, the results of this study indicated that the condition of studying in the students of the faculty of nursing and midwifery of Ahvaz Jundishapur

University of Medical Sciences has no favorable quality. Therefore, with regard to the importance of the study learning and habits for these students, more investigations in this field and in different situations seem vital in order to clarify the dimensions of this issue. Also, instruction strategies for learning and studying need to be compiled by instruction planners and oblige students to take training and educational workshops in study and learning skills. The obtained results in this study can be generalized to the other students in Ahvaz Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences. However, with regard to different specialties, it seems necessary to carry out similar studies with larger sample populations in different faculties and universities and to offer strategies in order to improve the study and learning conditions and skills of students. Therefore, regarding the significant importance of study and

learning habits, it is recommended to conduct more investigations in this field with various student populations to clarify and demonstrate the different dimensions of this issue.

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