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Improving Female Students' Academic Achievement via Study Skills Training in Some Selected Departments of Arba Minch College of Teachers' Education

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Abstract

The main objective of this research was to assess the effect of study skills training on female students' academic achievement in ACTE. In order to attain this objective, pre-post test research design employed; purposive sampling method used to identify five departments (Amharic (1st year), English (1st and 2nd years), Mathematics (1st year), Social Science (Cluster1st year); three courses (General Methods of Teaching, Special Needs Education and Educational Measurement and Evaluation) and the year levels (first year and second year). All female students in these five departments were taken for the purpose of this action research (47). Data were collected using questionnaire and tests. Descriptive statistics-measure of central tendency (Mean) and dispersion (Standard deviation) were major statistical analyses employed in this action research. Furthermore, SPSS was used to analyze data collected through study skills inventory questionnaire. The major findings of this action research were: more than 60% of female students faced the problem of effective time management; nearly 55% deficiency in listening and note taking; about 53% had problem of knowing different types of reading strategies and utilization of these strategies; 67% of the female students faced the problem of concentration during study time; 62% did not employ memory retention mechanism; and about 50% faced problem in preparing for and taking examinations. The pre-test result showed: the mean of the test was 48 with the lowest result of 31 and the highest result 61. The post-test result showed mean of 59; and 37 and 84 the lowest and the highest results respectively. Which meant the mean was increased by more than 10; the lowest result raised by 6 and the highest score increased by 23 points. Therefore, the obtained results revealed that the training on study skills had improved the academic achievement of female students in the specified year level, departments and courses in ACTE.

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Improving; Female student; Academic achievement; Study skills and Training

Introduction

In general there is gap between male and female students regarding their academic achievement. There are different explanations regarding the gap. Some studies showed that male students' academic achievement is higher than that of majority of female student in all subjects/courses provided. Others argue that the achievement gap between male and female students was course or subject specific. In some subjects/ courses like language female student's achievement was higher compared to male students, whereas in mathematics or

other science areas male students' academic achievement outweighs that of female students. And still others contended that there was no academic achievement gap between female and male students, both can perform equally if we treat them equally.

We agree with the third idea. The academic achievement gap between male and female students was not natural but it is the result of our attitude, our attention and our practical favor to male students. The sources for female students low achievement achievements are numerous. The problems are multi-dimensional and intermingled in the cultural, social, economic, political and technological aspects of the nation.

According to the information obtained from the office of registrar, in Arba Minch College of Teachers' Education few female students score grades above 3:00 compared to male counter parts; the mean for male students was above 2.6 and standard deviation was about 4.9 whereas for female students the mean result was below 2.5 and the standard deviation was 2.9. This indicated that majority of female students score between 2.00 to 2.50; the percentage of female students scoring below pass mark (2.00) was very large compared to male student according the 2003 first semester result. Still the percentage of female students dominates the percentage of male students in grade point average between 2.00 to 2.5 in most departments. However, the percentage of male students begins to dominate the percentage of female students beginning from grade point average 2.5. The widest gap between male and female students observed at GPA $\geq$ 3.25 (male dominated) and < 2.00 (female dominated) which clearly indicated the existence of academic achievement gap between gep between female and male students in Arba Minch College of Teachers' Education.

This is also the reality what we observe in several other higher institutions in Ethiopia. For instance, similar findings reported in Jimma, Gondar, Harumaya, Arba Minch, and Addiss Ababa Universities.

Cognizant this problem, several strategies are designed and have been practiced. Some of these are provision of tutorial classes, provision of trainings on various issues, orientation for new comers, peer-tutoring reserving female student only reading rooms in libraries, re-exams, providing additional courses during summer months and so on. However, all these measures were unable to bring the female students to the desired level of competence. The problem is not attached to the natural potential of female students. The major problem is attached with the support we are providing for female students. Some of these problems are attitudinal and the major ones are practical. The practical problems are our due concern for the purpose of this action study. We can divide this issue into two parts- provision of tutorial support and provision of training. Both tutorial classes and training programs have their own weaknesses and strengths to effectively address the problem of female students in the higher institutions. This is because, first, the tutorial program which currently provided is not need responsive. Without assessing the needs of female students the instructors call them for a tutorial program in the afternoon or in the weekends without making prior discussion regarding the contents of the tutorial program, the time appropriate for female students, best methods or approaches of the tutorial programs and so on. Even at tutorial sessions some instructors use attendance as mandatory and assign marks for this attendance which is another headache for female students in higher institutions. In case if a female student fails in a subject, the instructor refers to the tutorial attendance in order to help here based on whether she was attended or not all the tutorial sessions given by the instructor. There are several issues related with tutorial programs provided in higher institutions.

Now let's come to the main point or the central theme of this action research. Provision of tutorial classes is similar to feeding with a spoon or feeding a kid with other person's hand because of the inability of the kid to eat using his or her own hands. If stated in other way tutorial means carrying someone on another persons' shoulder. Here, we are not undermining the importance of the tutorial programs provided in the higher institutions, but we are rooting up the problems associated with the tutorial programs. Okay, let's say female students completed the three years campus education as a result of the tutorial programs provided for them, who will going to help them in actual work environment? The right time female students must face challenges and start walking on their own feet is the campuses of higher institutions. However, in order to let them walk/run, one important pre-condition is required. This is provision of activity based training on full package of study skills. Most female students have no natural potential problems but how to learn a given portion/tackle a given problem is their major drawbacks. Thus this action research has identified one of the best strategies that empower female student with additional potential to compete with their male counter parts and with the expected lifelong challenges. Here, we want to

quote the Chinese saying "If you give man a fish you feed him for a day, if you teach him how to fish you feed him for life."

Statement of the problem

Education is a base for economic, social and technological development, political, and environmental protection sustainability. Without access to quality education it is impossible to think about effective development. Education is a door to better life, extended life expectancy, higher income, and so on. The benefits of education are numerous for the society as well as for individuals.

Despite this, girls' education is suffering from several tribulation for a long period time. The problems for female education can broadly be ground into two-access and success(king and Hill, 1993:101)

Access has been one of the challenging problems of female education in most developing countries for a long period of time. Bringing girls to school is condition to transform a given nation and to raise the living condition of women. Because of the pressures from the developed world through their funds, now days more female students are joining school in most developing countries. Ethiopia is one of these developing countries in which gril's access to education had been seriously limited for centuries. After the formation of the education and training policy the country launched series of programs focusing on female enrollment in different levels of the education programs. In order to improve enrollment various forms of affirmative action have been employed. As a result of this the number of female students attending their education at different levels of the education ladders drastically increased (ETP:2002).

The problem which needs serious attention after bringing the girls to schools is their success. Success refers to sustaining and completing a given of study effectively and efficiently. Regarding academic success still now we observe sharp distinction between male and female students at all ladders of the educational system. All studies conducted in higher institutions of Ethiopia reveal this reality. Therefore, Arba Minch College of Teachers' education by no means can be out of this fact.

The important thing is not identification of the problem, but the way how to tackle the problem and solve it as desired as possible. Regarding this several strategies have been proposed by various researchers- internal as well as external researchers. Some of the proposed remedies are: provision of tutorial classes for female students, orienting female student about campus life when they first join the higher institution, provision of training on assertiveness and study skills, arranging peer tutoring programs, reserving female only rooms in library, opening gender offices/units in the campuses of higher institutions to address the problems female students face in higher institutions, forming only gender clubs in which female students discuss some of problems in detail and problems solutions to overcome and improving the institution facilities and service to respond for the needs of female students immediately. All these strategies minimized their importance. One of this is provision of training on study on skills (Tamirat, 2009).

According to Tamirat (2009), the training on study skills failed to address the female student's academic success problems of three major reasons. First, the training on study skills was not comprehensive in the sense that the only some aspects of the study skills were emphasized at the time of provision of the training. Second, the trainings were not practice oriented, they were provided for the sake of reporting not for the sake of bringing the desired change. The training on study skills was considered supplementary to tutorial programs to overcome the success problems of female students.

Study skills refers to various approaches a learner employs, behaves, and sticks to be successful in his/her studies. Students who may have no much difference in natural potential to learning may fail or succeed based on their study skills they depend on. Some approaches are more simple and fruitful than others. Inability to identify the most efficient and effective study skills affect the academic performance of students. As the name indicates study skills are skills which can be developed like other skills if someone consciously acts upon them to improve. There are at least to options to improve study skills. One is repeatedly testing different strategies to the most efficient and effective study skills- the most preferred and long-lasting. The second approach is training on effective and efficient study skills- appropriate for

People who have no time to test different study skills by themselves. When boys and girls compared, most boys employ effective and efficient study skills than girls. The major reason for this difference is that, boys have time to test various approaches to learning and by that to develop their study skills; they have sufficient time to practice this in their homes. However, girls have few or no time when they are in their homes. Girls are responsible to

prepare food, serve the meal, wash cloths, cook coffee, take care of babies, and all house chores. Thus they are unable to test different approaches to learning and improve their study skills. Therefore, arranging and providing training on study skills play a considerable role in improving female students' academic success (Tamirat 2009).

Scholars differ in their classification of the components of study skills. The following table 1 indicates three of these.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of this research was to assess the effect of study skills training on female students' academic achievement in AMCTE. The specific objectives of this research were:

- Identifying the achievement gap between male and female students in Arba minch College of Teachers' Education;
- Assessing the study skill gap of female students;
- Providing training on full packages of study skills; and
- Assessing the effect of the training on study skills on female students' academic achievement.

Materials and Methods

Study design

The design of this action research was pre-post test action research design. This was because the findings of this action research were analyzed based on the comparison between per intervention test results with post-intervention test results.

Sample and sampling techniques

The year level and the departments were identified by using purposive sampling method. Year one and year selected on the bases of the information obtained from office of the registrar. According to the information obtained, compared to third year students, more students are dismissed for academic reason in 1st and 2nd. The five departments were selected on the bases that two of the HDP candidates were teaching in these five departments which believed data collection and intervention easier for the action researchers. From the five departments all female students were included for the purpose of this action research. Because compared to male students, female students scored lower marks on special needs education and general method of teaching courses in these five departments.

Tools of data collection

Two types of data collection instruments employed for the purpose of this research. Questionnaire used to identify the study skill gaps of the female students. The questionnaire had six categories. Totally there are 97 items. It was 5 point Likert Scale. Some of the questions were positively stated and others were negatively stated. At the time of analyses the negatively stated questions were reversed to equate them positively stated questions. Two tests were given- one test before the intervention and the other test after the intervention. The effect of the intervention was judged from the difference between test one and test two.

Methods of data analyses

The data for this study was analyzed by using different techniques. The questionnaire on study skills was analyzed by using SPSS, tables and percentages. The test results were analyzed using descriptive statistics like mean and standard deviation.

Intervention Mechanism and procedures

The intervention mechanism selected for this research was provision of training on study skills. The steps followed for the intervention include:

1. Identifying female students in five departments (1st(4) and 2nd (1) years);
2. Analyzing Mid-Tem Examination results using descriptive statistics;
3. Disseminating Questionnaires on study skills;
4. Providing orientation on how to fill the questionnaires;
5. Collecting, screening, and feeding the data on SPSS;
6. Identifying the major problems of female students regarding their study skills;
7. Preparing training manual;
8. Providing training on study skills;
9. Collecting the results of final examinations;
10. Comparing pre-test result with post-test result; and
11. Writing report on the obtained result.

Data analyses and presentation

This section is divided into three parts. In the first part, pre-intervention activities are succinctly presented, second, while intervention activities and procedures are discussed and the third part is about post-intervention.

Pre-Intervention

Pre-Intervention phase includes all activities before the provision of training on study skills for female students in the five departments in 1st and 2nd year in AMCTE. In this phase several information were collected and analyzed. Three major activities were done in this phase. First, analyses of study skill gaps of female students in the identified departments and year level; second, preparation of the training manual based on the actual problems identified and finally analyze the mid-term examination results of female students in selected departments and year level.

Analyses and presentation of study skills questionnaire

A questionnaire with total of 65 items prepared to identify the study skill gaps of female students in 5 departments. From these 65 items, 5 items were respondents' background information solicitors; the remaining 60 items were directly designed to identify the problems. 8 items forwarded to identify the strengths and weakness of female students in utilization of different study strategies/reading strategies; 13 items focused on time management; 11 items on listening and note taking; 9 items on memory/retention mechanisms; 8 items on concentration and 11 items on preparing for and taking examinations. In all of these subcategories, the items were stated both in negative and positive connotations. Thus, before the items analyzed, all negatively stated items' scores were reversed in order to calculate the results appropriately.

In genera 50 questionnaires were disseminated to female students in five departments and 49 (98%) were returned back; from the returned 49 questionnaires 2 were incomplete. Therefore the analyses were carried out on responses of 47 (96%) female students which were more than sufficient.

Background information of the respondents

From five background information two GPA and age of respondents considered to be related with the study skills of the female students. The remaining three, program, department and year level seem no relationship with study skills. Therefore, the two, GPA and age of the respondents presented as follows.

GPA

Grade point average of the respondents analyzed from two angles as follows.

GPA as Reported by the Respondents

Graph 2: Actual GPA of the Respondents

As can be seen from Graph 1 and graph 2, there was sharp discrepancy between what female students reported and their actual GPA. This can be explained from different angles. First, the respondents might be ashamed to reflect their true GPA, except few. As can be seen from graph 1, small percentage of respondents considered their grade point average bad whereas in graph 2, nearly 23% of the female students had GPA less than 2.00 which is bad in actual sense. Second, female students might be satisfied with the GPA they had as satisfactory. For instance, in graph 1, more than half of the respondents reported that their GPA was fair (23%) and good (29%) whereas in Graph 2, 44% of the respondents were within the GPA limit between 2.00-2.49. Moreover, as can be seen from Graph 1,35% and 6% of the respondents rated their GPA as very good and excellent respectively whereas 21% and 8% of the respondents actually had GPA from 2.5-2.99 and from 3.00-3.49 respectively.

No female student scored GPA reater than 3.5. The implication is that if female students satisfy with the GPA they had, it might affect their hard working habit and changing their study skills in order to improve their GPA.

Age of the Respondents

Graph 3: Age of the Respondents

As it is depicted on Graph 3, the majority (74%) of students were lying age from 17=19. While only 2% of female students were in the age range of below 17. 25% of respondents were age range between 20 and 22. Almost all of the respondents were at adolescent age which may affect their concentration at the time of studying a material.

Study skills inventory

Reading strategies

It is fact that college students have their own various reading styles and strategies to be successful in their academic area. With regard to this issue, the following table 2 presents the respondents' reply to the questions accordingly.

As observed in table 2, on item 1 the majority of students (42%) were almost never formulating questions before reading a material. On the other hand, only 3(6%) students rated as almost always. But a large number of students replied to items 2.2, 2.3, 2.1, and 2.5, in encouraging manner. Which means the majority of them were reflected their news as they have habit of surveying headings, bold prints, italics, questions, summaries before study; setting in the meaning of a new word when encountered for the first time, looking for main ideas while reading and identifying clarifying details under each main idea. On the other hand according to item 2.6 and 2.8 majority of them were almost never read and reread without understanding the material and skip over the charts, graphs and tables when reading the material. In the case of item 2.11, although almost half of students have habit of reviewing reading material within short period of time, a considerable number of students have less habit in reviewing.

Time management

Time management is another vital aspect in study skills. It is difficult to be effective in college career without effective use of time. Regarding this issue, according to the information obtained from students, the analysis of data is presented as in Table 3.

Listening and note taking

Listening and taking short notes are other essential study skills, concerning this issue, the data was collected and analyses as follow.

As shown in table 4 on item 1, however, the majority of students (i.e., almost always and more than half of the time by rating 56% and 20% respectively) were taking notes while reading a material, on item 2 amongst them more than half of the time and about half of the time (i.e, 12% and 13% respectively) were only taking notes when the teacher writes on the chalkboard. On the other hand, about 34% almost never, 22%less than half of the time and again 22%about half of the time take notes from what the teacher says and from the chalkboard, in item 3. According to item 5 data, about 20% and 18% of students, which are considerable, number, less than half of the time and almost never respectively comparing notes with the classmates to check its completeness and accuracy. Likely, on item 6, a considerable number of students (i.e., 34%, 14%, 10% and 6% are less than half of the time, about half of the time, almost always and more than half of the time respectively) faced difficulty in determining important points in lecture. As observed in the table item 8, very high number of students (ie, 30% about half of the time, 24% more than half of the time, 22% almost never and still 10% less than half of the time) could not able to review lecture notes before the next class. On item 11, 12 (24%) students were almost never listening carefully instead of taking notes and the same number of students was again less than half of the time listening too.

Memory

Memory is one of very essential technique in effective study skill. Memory or remembering is helps students to be effective in their study and it requires as important skill. Accordingly, the research respondents' memory status has been presented in Table 5.

As shown in table 6, on item 1, the majority of respondents were denoted that they have less habit of studying in the same place (i.e., almost never, less than half of the time and about

Half of the time by rating 32%, 22% and again 22% respectively). On item 2, near to the half which is a considerable number of students have less habit in avoiding cramming and on item 3, the majority were not breaking large tasks in to smaller segments in order to complete a large assignment by rating 18%, 28%, and 20% at almost never, about half of the time and less than half of the time respectively.

On item 5, a great extent of respondents were showed their less trend in avoiding studying in evening (i.e. almost never, less than half of the time and about half of the time by rating about 22% respectively). Likely, 30% of students about half of the time, 22% of them almost always and 14% more than half of the time getting sleepy when studying on item 14, regarding responding for every mobile call, 15(30%) students, 14(28%) and 6(12%) were rated at more than half of the time, almost

always and about half of the time respectively as respond even though the call is not urgent.

Concerning habit of reward oneself, on item 8, the majority showed their less trend by rating 28% on almost never, 26% on less than half of the time and 18% on about half of the time. On item 11, a large numbers of respondents (i.e. 26% almost never, 36% less than half of the time and 12% about half of the time) were replied that they have less habit of involving all sense organs while studying. In the case of item 10, more than half of students were affected by day dreaming (i.e., about half of time 24%, more than half of time 16% and almost always 14%)

Preparing for and taking test

Preparing for and taking test the main issue in effective study skill. Concerning this skill, the information has been obtained and presented as follow.

As observed in table 7, in item 1, about 20(40%) students (almost never, less than half of the time and about half of the time) do not setting help from classmates, tutors, instructors when they do not understand something, however, a great extent of respondents have good trend. In item 3, a large number of students were replied that almost never, less than half of the time and about half of the time start studying for exam from the first week classes have began by rating 12%, 22% and 26% respectively. Regarding item 4, a large number of respondents were denoted that they have less habit of participation in study skills workshop (i.e., 32% almost never, 145 less than half of the time and 22% about half of the time). In item 6, near to the half of students were Lesley experienced in organization of ideas (i.e. 4% of them almost never, 18% less than half of the time and 20% of them about half of the time).Concerning habit of predicting questions, about 8(16%students almost never, 10(20%) of them less than half of the time and 15(30%) were replied as they have habit of predicting 50% to 60% of the questions on test using lecture notes and text materials. Similarly, in item 8, more than half of respondents (i.e. about half of the time 28%, more than half of the time 24% and almost always 6%) lost marks because of careless mistakes. Again in item 9 a great extent of respondents have less habit of planning to use how much time on each section of the test before starting a test by rating 10% of them at almost never, 24% at less than half of the time and 22% of them at about half of the time.

In item 10, the majority of respondents were replied that they faced problem in checking over a test to avoid mistakes even if extra time left by rating about 24% on about half of the time, 20% of them on almost always and 16% more than half of the time. In the case of items 11 & 12, more than half of respondents were shoed as they have less habit of losing on Essay Tests even if knowing the material well and still less habit of studying enough for a test but Getting blank mind in exam rooms by rating 28% about half of the time, 16% almost always and 10% of them more than half of the time, and 22% more than half of the time, 20% of them about half of the time and 8% almost always respectively. In the last item, still a considerable number of students were studying in a haphazard way under the threat of the next exam (i.e., 18% more than half of the time, 16% about half of the time and 8% almost always, in sum 42% of responds.

Preparation of study skills training manual

The training manual prepared after the analyses of the data on study skills survey of female students in identified departments. The training manual had three major parts. First, the general aspects of female education and associated problems in higher education institutions of the country were dealt at the introductory part. Second, the meaning and components of study skills were addressed in detail. And finally yet importantly, the weakness areas of female students from the target departments as obtained from the study skills scale were clearly addressed.

Analyses of female student's mid-term examination result

As can be seen from Table 8, the lowest mean observed in Amharic (45.8) department in General Methods of Teaching and the highest mean is that of Social Science Cluster (51.5) and the grand mean is 48 which indicated that mid examination result was below pass mark for female students in five departments in identified courses. Regarding the variability of scores among female students, the smallest variability (4) recorded for Educational Measurement and Evaluation Course for 2nd year English Linear students whereas the highest variability (14.5) calculated for the course General Methods of Teaching 1st year Social Science cluster female students. For the remaining departments and courses it was between the two extreme limits. This indicated that in Social Science the academic achievement gap among students was higher than other courses and departments depicted on Table 8. The lowest

mid examination result (20) was observed in Amharic department and the highest was (62.5%) in English 2nd year.

While intervention activities

The study skills training was actually provided in while intervention phase of this action research. The provision of the training had its own procedures. First, the readiness of the training manual, training equipments, training hall, and arrangement of time with female students checked. Second, discussion with female students was conducted in order to identify the appropriate time for the training. Even though half a day required for the training, female students agreed to attend the training session from 4:oop.m. to 5:30p.m. for one and half hours for three consecutive days from June 8, 2011 to June 10, 2011 (Wednesday to Friday).

The topics of training and the time plan were presented in Table 9.

Post-intervention

After the training had been provided, the female students were advised to study according to the new techniques they had acquired from the training. In order to check whether the training had effect on female student's academic achievement or not, no tutorial programs were arranged on the selected courses between mid-term exam and final exam. Then the students were sat for the final exam. The result of the female students in final exam was depicted as follows.

As it is depicted on Table 10: the lowest mean value (53) was observed in English (1st Year for Special Needs Education) and the highest mean (67) was for Amharic on General Methods of Teaching. The grand mean was 59.4 and the standard deviation was 15. The minimum score was 35 and the maximum point was 100. When the departments compared based on their mean value in ascending order English 1st, English 2nd, Social Science, Mathematics and Amharic.

Results and Discussion

The major objective of this research is to assess whether provision of training on study skills had effect on female students' academic achievement or not. The attainment of the main objective and other specific objectives are justified in the following few paragraphs.

The initial point for this research was the achievement gap between male and female students. According to the document obtained from the office of registrar, the percentage of female students dominates the percentage of male students in GPA range below 2.00 whereas male students greatly dominate female students above 3.00. The mean GPA for female students is around 2.3 while it is about 2.6 for male students. Therefore, there is clear difference between male and female students in light of their GPA favoring male students-majority of male students score higher grades compared to female students in ACTE.

The responses for study skills inventory showed that female students were unable to use effective and efficient study strategies in order to be successful in the academic activities. From the six sub-scales/components of the study skills, major weaknesses were identified for time management, listening and note-taking, reading strategy, memory and preparing for and taking exams sub-scales, whereas for concentration no valid weakness was reported.

The training on study skills focused on the problems identified through the study skills inventory. Thus from the six sub skills, except concentration the training was given on the remaining five types. Within each sub-scale attention was given for the areas which need improvement to raise the achievement of female students.

As can be seen from Tables 8 and 10, female students' result showed sharp discrepancy between mid-exam and final exam results. The following 6 Charts show the comparison between mid examination and final examination results.

In all the above Six Charts, the Bar with light color stands for final examination results and the Bar with dark black color stands for mid examination results. In all above Charts, the height of the bar with light color is longer than the height of the bar with dark black color, which indicated that female students scored better results on final examination than mid-term examination. Moreover, the mean result for final examination (59.4) was much higher than the mean result for mid-term examination (48). And the minimum and the maximum score for final examination was 37.48 and 84.15 respectively is relatively higher than that of mid-term examination for which minimum and maximum scores of 31.66 and 62.05 respectively. All these facts force us to conclude that provision of training on study skills had

positive effect on improving female students' academic achievement. This is because, tutorial programs for the specified courses were not provided between mid-term examination and final examination.

Table.1 Components of study skills

No	Marton and Salijo	Ladsbergis	Chavez
1	Time Management	Time Scheduling	Organizing Time
2	Note Taking	Listening and Note Taking	Listening and Note Taking
3	Concentration	Concentration	Concentration
4	Textbook Reading	Reading	Remembering
5	Memory	Exam	Taking Tests
6	Test Preparation	Writing Skill	Motivation

Source: Tamirat 2003:27

Table.2 Information on reading

No	Item		Response						
			AN	LHT	AHT	MHT	AA	Total	Mean
1.	Formulating questions before reading a material	N	21	8	7	8	3	47	
		%	44.7	17	14.7	17	6	100	
2.	Habit of surveying headings, bold prints, italics, questions, summaries before study	N	2	13	9	13	10	47	
		%	4	26	18	27	21	100	
3.	Getting the meanings of a new word encountered for the first time	N	4	1	5	15	22	47	
		%	8	2	10	32	46	100	
4.	Look for main ideas while reading	N	14	24	7	4	14	47	
		%	28	48	14	8	29	100	
5.	Identify clarifying details under each main idea	N	4	3	9	12	22	47	
		%	8	6	18	24	44	100	
6.	Reading and rereading without understanding the material	N	2	3	6	7	32	47	
		%	4	6	12	14	64	100	
7.	Habit of Employing study systems like SQ3R,3R,QITM	N	8	6	19	9	8	47	
		%	16	12	38	18	16	100	
8.	Habit of skipping over the charts, Graphs and Tables when reading a material	N	2	4	12	10	22	47	
		%	4	8	24	20	44	100	
9.	Problem of identifying important ideas in a reading materials	N	3	6	7	6	28	47	
		%	6	12	14	12	56	100	
10.	Habit of remembering examples given by the instructors while reading	N	4	5	9	13	19	47	
		%	8	10	18	26	38	100	
11.	Habit of reviewing a read material within short period of time	N	10	10	4	12	14	47	
		%	20	20	8	24	28	100	

NB: AN= Almost Never (1 point given); LHT=Less than Half of the time (2 points given); AHT= About half of time (3 point given); MHT= More than half of time (4 point given); AA= Almost always (5 point given)

Table.3 Issue of time management

No	Item		AN	LHT	AHT	MHT	AA	Total	x
1.	Habit of using calendar book to record upcoming academic and personal activities	*f*	23	7	6	8	3	47	2.3
		%	46	14	12	20	8	100	
2.	Habit of preparing daily to do list for academic and personal activities	*f*	16	9	13	7	2	47	2.48
		%	32	18	26	18	6	100	
3.	Habit of setting up master schedule of fixed monthly activities	*f*	12	9	8	7	11	47	3
		%	24	18	16	18	24	100	
4.	Writing of short and long term academic goals	*f*	9	10	10	13	5	47	2.98
		%	18	20	20	30	12	100	
5.	Habit of starting doing papers and projects before the due day	*f*	4	7	14	8	14	47	3.5
		%	8	14	28	20	30	100	
6.	Setting regular study time everyday	*f*	7	17	14	1	8	47	2.8
		%	14	34	28	6	18	100	
7.	Problem in following a definite study schedule	*f*	9	12	11	8	7	47	3.08
		%	18	24	22	20	16	100	
8.	Waste time because of not get organized well	*f*	16	15	9	1	6	47	3.6
		%	32	30	18	6	14	100	
9.	Knowing the best time of study in a day	*f*	10	4	4	11	18	47	3.54
		%	20	8	8	26	38	100	
10.	Facing shortage of study time	*f*	15	14	7	2	9	47	3.4
		%	30	28	14	8	20	100	
11.	Habit of spending too much time on some subjects and not enough time on others	*f*	21	4	14	3	5	47	3.5
		%	47	8	28	10	12	100	
12.	Spending much time studying for what someone leaning	*f*	4	11	10	12	10	47	3.34
		%	8	22	20	28	22	100	
13.	Habit of cramming the night before	*f*	13	6	15	5	8	47	3.14
		%	26	12	30	14	18	100	
14.	Habit of giving much time for social activities of academic activities without allowing time for the other	*f*	15	9	13	5	5	47	3.4
		%	30	18	26	14	12	100	
15.	Habit of preparing plan for study, friendship, class attendance and other social activities	*f*	6	8	5	5	22	47	2.3
		%	12	16	10	14	48	100	
16.	Habit of wasting study time by several distracters	*f*	17	10	10	4	6	47	3.48
		%	34	20	20	12	14	100	
17.	After school, either by personal matters of helping others having little time to study	*f*	18	5	14	6	4	47	3.46
		%	36	10	28	16	10	100	

Table.4 Obtained information on listening and note taking

No	Item		AN	LHT	AHT	MHT	AA	Total	x
1.	Taking notes while reading a material	*f*	6	2	4	8	27	47	4.04
		%	12	4	8	20	56	100	
2.	Taking notes from only the teacher writes on the chalkboard	*f*	9	10	13	10	5	47	2.92
		%	18	20	26	24	12	100	
3.	Taking notes from what the teacher says and from the chalkboard	*f*	6	5	11	9	16	47	3.56
		%	12	10	22	20	34	100	
4.	Rewriting of lecture notes after class	*f*	4	10	8	12	13	47	3.48
		%	8	20	16	28	28	100	
5.	Comparing notes with classmates to check completeness and accuracy	*f*	9	10	3	13	12	47	3.26
		%	18	20	6	30	26	100	
6.	Difficulty in determining important points in lecture	*f*	18	17	7	1	4	47	3.8
		%	36	34	14	6	10	100	
7.	Problem of taking notes in lecture	*f*	34	3	6	3	1	47	4.24
		%	68	6	12	10	4	100	
8.	Reviewing lecture notes before the next lecture class	*f*	11	5	15	10	6	47	2.98
		%	22	10	30	24	14	100	
9.	Problem of hearing well organized lecture in lecture classes	*f*	25	4	5	5	8	47	3.58
		%	50	8	10	14	18	100	
10.	Recording everything a lecturer says in lecture	*f*	7	11	6	10	13	47	3.3
		%	14	22	2	24	28	100	
11.	Listening carefully instead of taking notes	*f*	12	12	9	8	6	47	3.24
		%	24	24	18	20	14	100	
12.	Taking difficult lecture notes to understand later	*f*	30	6	6	2	3	47	4.08
		%	60	12	12	8	8	100	
13.	Usually getting wrong materials into class notes	*f*	30	4	5	6	2	47	4.00
		%	60	8	10	16	6	100	
14.	Inability to review class notes periodically		21	7	9	3	7	47	3.50
			42	14	18	10	16	100	

Table.5 Information on memory

No	Item		AN	LHT	AHT	MHT	AA	Total	x
1.	Reviewing notes more than once before exam	*f*	4	5	6	11	21	47	3.88
		%	8	10	12	26	44	100	
2.	Using mnemonics	*f*	8	7	13	11	8	47	3.16
		%	16	14	26	26	18	100	
3.	Using visuals like Sketches, Mind Maps. Diagrams, Charts in class notes	*f*	14	8	8	11	6	47	2.82
		%	28	16	16	26	14	100	
4.	Quizzing oneself over the material that could appear in future exams and quizzes	*f*	6	7	11	10	13	47	3.42
		%	12	14	22	24	28	100	
5.	Converting text and lecture notes into once own words	*f*	10	5	10	13	9	47	3.20
		%	20	10	20	30	20	100	
6.	Focusing on understanding opposed to memorizing	*f*	9	10	5	10	13	47	2.76
		%	18	20	10	24	28	100	
7.	Organizing main ideas and details into some logical or meaningful order	*f*	9	6	16	9	7	47	3.06
		%	18	12	32	22	16	100	
8.	Assigning time to review each work every week	*f*	14	9	12	6	6	47	2.7
		%	28	18	24	16	14	100	
9.	Taking studying and reviewing side by side	*f*	7	6	11	11	12	47	3.38
		%	14	12	22	26	26	100	
10.	Problem in getting interested in some of courses	*f*	15	13	10	5	4	47	3.52
		%	30	26	20	14	10	100	
11.	Problem of remembering much of already studied	*f*	15	17	5	9	1	47	3.64
		%	30	34	10	22	4	100	
12.	Checking main ideas and summary before reading in order to remember it better	*f*	10	3	12	15	7	47	3.2
		%	20	6	24	34	16	100	
13.	Inability to review lecture notes until the night/week before a test	*f*	19	5	10	5	8	47	3.36
		%	38	10	20	14	18	100	

Table.6 Issue of concentration

No	Item	AN	LHT		AHT	MHT	AA	Total	x
1.	Habit of studying in the same place	*f*	16	11	11	6	3	47	2.46
		%	32	22	22	16	8	100	
2.	Avoid cramming	*f*	8	2	12	10	15	47	3.52
		%	16	4	24	24	32	100	
3.	Breaking large tasks into smaller segments in order to complete a large assignment	*f*	9	10	14	6	8	47	2.96
		%	18	20	28	16	18	100	
4.	Difficulty in paying attention in the class	*f*	24	5	2	3	13	47	3.4
		%	48	10	4	10	28	100	
5.	Avoid studying in the evening as much as possible	*f*	11	6	11	14	5	47	3.00
		%	22	12	22	32	12	100	
6.	Getting sleepy when studying	*f*	8	9	15	5	10	47	2.92
		%	16	18	30	14	22	100	
7.	Respond for every mobile call even though the call is not urgent/important	*f*	5	10	6	13	13	47	2.54
		%	10	20	12	30	28	100	
8.	Habit of rewarding oneself during study time	*f*	14	13	9	2	9	47	3.34
		%	28	26	18	8	20	100	
9.	Habit of involving all sense organs while studying	*f*	13	18	6	4	6	47	3.48
		%	26	36	12	12	14	100	
10.	Daydreaming interfering with once study	*f*	10	13	12	6	6	47	3.22
		%	20	26	24	16	14	100	
11.	Interference of male students when studying	*f*	24	7	6	7	3	47	3.76
		%	48	14	12	18	8	100	

Table.7 Preparing for and taking test

No	Item		AN	LHT	AHT	MHT	AA	Total	x
1.	Habit of studying with classmate or in group	*f*	7	4	9	18	9	47	3.4
		%	14	8	18	40	20	100	
2.	Getting help from classmates, tutors, instructors when someone do not understand something	*f*	5	3	9	14	16	47	3.74
		%	10	6	18	32	34	100	
3.	Problem in doing all exercises on study materials and homework assignments	*f*	6	11	13	9	8	47	3 .12
		%	12	22	26	22	18	100	
4.	Habit of turning in all assignments on time	*f*	16	7	11	3	20	47	2.76
		%	32	14	22	10	22	100	
5.	Identifying what somebody have learned and what somebody have not yet learned before taking a test	*f*	27	2	10	5	3	47	3.82
		%	34	4	20	14	8	100	
6.	Start studying for exam from the first week classes have begun	*f*	2	9	10	10	16	47	3.66
		%	4	18	20	24	34	100	
7.	Participation in study skills workshop	*f*	8	10	15	8	6	47	2.9
		%	16	20	30	20	14	100	
8.	Problem in reading reference materials and course modules urged by the instructor to read	*f*	8	13	14	10	2	47	3.22
		%	16	26	28	24	6	100	
9.	Trouble in finishing tests on time	*f*	5	12	11	11	8	47	3.18
		%	10	24	22	26	18	100	
10.	Organization of ideas before starting writing an essay questions	*f*	14	6	12	6	9	47	3.12
		%	28	12	24	16	20	100	
11.	Habit of predicting 50% to 60% of the questions on test using lecture notes and text materials	*f*	15	8	14	3	7	47	3.34
		%	30	16	28	10	16	100	
12.	Trouble in finishing tests on time	*f*	19	6	10	9	3	47	3.5
		%	38	12	20	22	8	100	
13.	Organization of ideas before starting writing an essay questions	*f*	16	13	8	7	3	47	3.56
		%	32	26	9	18	8	100	

Table.8 Mid examination result of respondents

No	Row Score in %					
	Amharic (1st) GMT	English (1st) SNE	English (2nd) EME	Mathematics (1st) GMT	Social Science (1st) GMT	Average
1	20	40	30	33.3	35	31.66
2	25	45	40	40	40	38
3	31.6	45	43.5	56.6	40	43.3
4	33.3	50	45	62.5	40	46.16
5	45	50	45		50	47.5
6	46.6	50	47.5		62.5	51.65
7	48.3	52.5	50		70	55.2
8	49.1		50		75	58
9	50		50			50
10	54.1		52.5			53
11	57.5		52.5			55
12	58.3		55			56.5
13	61.6		55			58.3
14	61.6		62.5			62.05
	M=45.8	M=47.5	M=48.4	M=48	M=51.5	48
	SD=12.9	SD=4	SD=7.4	SD=11.8	SD=14.2	10
	Min=20	Min=40	Min=30	Min=33	Min=35	31.66
	Max=61.6	Max=52	Max=62.5	Max=62	Max=70	62.05

NB: GMT= General Methods of Teaching; SNE=Special Needs Education and EME =Educational Measurement and Evaluation; N=47

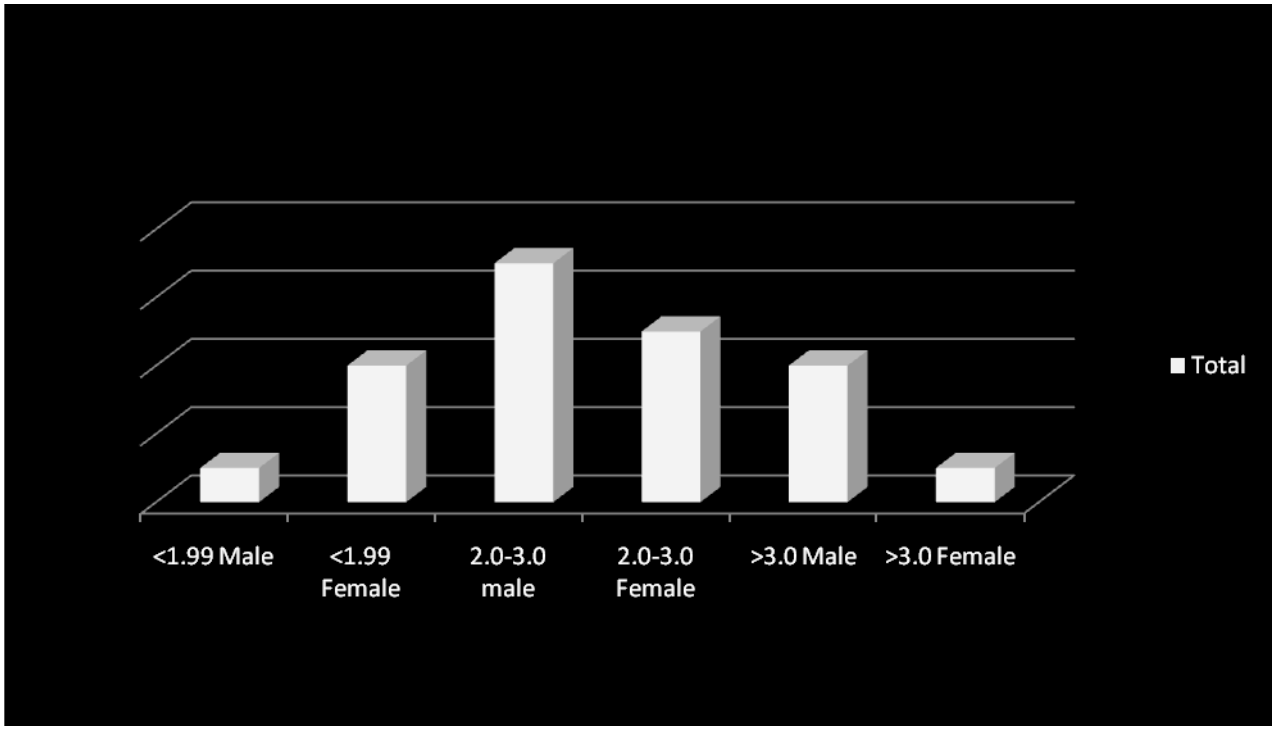
Table.9 Training time table

Date	Training Topic	Time	Participants		Trainers/ Facilitators	Remark
			Expected	Trained		
2011,06,08	General Introduction	4:00-4:20	52	47	Tamirat Y.	
	Concept and Meaning of Study Skills	4:20-4:30	52	47	Tamirat G Endale B.	
	Time Management	4:30-5:30	52	47	Fiseha M.	
2011,06,09	Listening and Note-Taking	4:00-4:30	52	47	Tamirat Y.	
	Concentration	4:30-5:00	52	47	Tamirat G.	
	Study strategy/Reading Strategy	5:00-5:30	52	47	Fiseha M. Endale B.	
2011,06,10	Memory/retention Mechanisms	4:00-4:30	52	47	Tamirat Y.	
	Preparation for Exams and Taking Exams	4:30-5:15	52	47	Tamirat G. Endale B.	
	Summary	5:15-5:40	52	47	Fiseha M.	

Table.10 Female student's final examination result

No	Row Score in %					
	Amharic (1st) GMT	English (1st) SNE	English (2nd) EME	Mathematics (1st) GMT	Social Science (1st) GMT	Average
1	35	40	36.6	35	40.8	37.48
2	40	50	40	65	46.6	48.32
3	42.5	53.3	44.6	70	50	52.08
4	45	53.3	45	70	54.1	53.48
5	57.5	56.6	53.3		56.6	56
6	60	58.3	58.3		63.3	59.9
7	70	60	60		70	65
8	75		60		83.3	72.76
9	75		60			67.5
10	75		60			67.5
11	85		63.3			74.15
12	85		63.3			74.15
13	95		66.6			80.8
14	95		68.3			84.15
	M=67	M=53	M=55.66	M=60	M=58	59.4
	SD=20	SD=6	SD=9.4	SD=14.5	SD=12.8	15
	Min=35	Min=40	Min=36.6	Min=35	Min=40	37.48
	Max=100	Max=60	Max=68.3	Max=70	Max=83	84.15

NB: GMT= General Methods of Teaching; SNE=Special Needs Education and EME =Educational Measurement and Evaluation; N=47



Conclusion

It is impossible to completely attach the obtained result to the training provided alone, this is because the study was not conducted in a totally closed environment, and some of the results might be attached to teaching approach change between mid-term and final examination or other unspecified factors. In order to clearly identify the effects of training on study skills on female students' academic achievement, further studies with large sample size, with sophisticated statistical methods and for a longer period of time is needed. However, for the purpose of this study the results surely justified that the designed intervention study skills training had profound effect on female students' academic achievement.

Recommendations

Taking measures to improve academic performance and outcome starts with improving the behavior of students in the classroom. Although it can seem challenging, teachers play a large role in creating an environment that encourages learning, improve student behavior and create better academic performance at every level of education. Teachers can accomplish amazing feats when the appropriate strategies are implemented to improve the behavior in the classroom.

Focusing on the achievement of students in the classroom will require a comprehensive strategy of setting high educational standards, challenging students to meet the requirements, encouraging students to ask questions, and making adjustments to meet the needs of every pupil to improve student achievement. Behavioral problems within the classroom can seem distracting at first, but classroom management rewards that are combined with high expectations can make students interested in the material.

Incorporating several learning styles into the coursework will make it easier for students to remain engaged. Each student has a different learning style and traditional instruction might not engage every student. Providing hands-on learning options and assignments will give students something different and encourage movement that can help reduce behavioral problems related to boredom, attention disorders or similar situations.

Differentiating the assignments is a simple way to gain student attention and keep it focused on the classroom. Behavior academic outcomes can change when students become motivated to participate and learn.

Improving the behavior of students in the classroom is part of a teacher's job. By taking measures to support students, offering different teaching strategies and focusing on rigorous educational standards, teachers are keeping the class motivated and encouraging better academic performance.

Specifically, educators should analyze data on achievement and on discipline and social factors. Striving to determine the root of the achievement gap in a school is needed before implementing a single-sex program. Educators should closely analyze achievement data by gender in order to examine strengths and weaknesses. While analyzing alone will not impact the achievement gap, it will provide a starting point for determining areas of focus for improvement that may be based in programmatic ideals or teaching styles.

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