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Assessment of Study Skills Among Senior Secondary Students in Mizoram: Identifying Strengths and Areas for Improvement

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Abstract
This study explores the study skills of senior secondary students in Mizoram, with the aim of identifying their strengths and weaknesses across the identified key learning dimensions. A descriptive survey was conducted among 369 students using a self developed Study Skills Scale. The tool assessed eleven core dimensions: skills in using electronic resources, critical thinking, study strategies, concentration, self motivation, memorization, stress management, time management, test management, reading and writing. Findings revealed that the majority of students demonstrated average level study skills in all dimensions. A relatively small proportion (ranging from 7.59% to 16.80%) exhibited good study skills, while a considerable percentage of students showed poor proficiency in time management (30.08%) and stress management (29.81%) followed by self-motivation, test management, study strategies, writing and memorization. In contrast, fewer students displayed poor performance in areas like reading skills, concentration, and use of electronic resources. These findings suggest the need for structured programs that focus on improving specific aspects of students' study techniques. The study gives important insights for generating interventions to assist learners in developing more efficient and balanced study strategies.

Keywords: Study skills, Senior Secondary Students, Mizoram, Strength, Improvement.

1. Introduction

Study skills refer to the various strategies and practices that enhance students' ability to organize, absorb, and recall information effectively (Gettinger & Seibert, 2002). These include reading, writing, time and stress management, motivation, concentration, study strategies, critical thinking, and the use of electronic resources. According to Zimmerman (2000), effective study skills are essential not only for managing content-heavy curricula but also for fostering independent learning habits. At the senior secondary level, where students face increasingly complex academic tasks and mounting performance expectations, the ability to apply structured study strategies becomes particularly essential.

2. Rationale of the Study

In Mizoram, despite increasing enrollment and literacy rates, the actual study practices and preparation skills of senior secondary students remain largely undocumented. Understanding these behaviors is crucial for educators, counselors, and policymakers to design evidence-based interventions that support

effective learning. By assessing strengths and weaknesses across multiple study skill dimensions, this study aims to fill a critical gap and provide actionable insights to improve self-regulated learning and optimize student preparedness for challenges at the secondary and post-secondary levels.

3. Objectives of the Study

- To assess the level of study skills among senior secondary students in Mizoram.
- To identify the strengths and weaknesses across various dimensions of study skills.

4. Review of Related Literatures

Sansgiry and Sail (2006) in their study found that students who perceived their academic workload as high experienced significantly greater test anxiety, particularly when they lacked effective time management skills. The study emphasized that poor time management contributed to elevated stress levels, which in turn negatively impacted academic performance. Their findings support the idea that time-related and emotional factors are crucial components of effective study habits, especially in high-pressure academic environments.

Rahim and Meon (2013) measured eight (8) skills which include note taking, test taking, textbook study, concentration and memory, time management, analytical thinking and problem solving, nutrition and vocabulary using Study Skill Inventory instrument. The result revealed that out of the eight skills measured vocabulary skill scored the highest while nutrition scored the lowest.

A cross-sectional descriptive study by Shahidi et al. (2014) examine the study skills of students through a questionnaire which composed of 19 special items on such domains as time management, concentration, class note-taking, studying and taking exams. The results of the study indicated that the students' study skills fell under the category of below normal where the highest mean belonged to concentration, but the lowest mean was that of time management.

Didarloo and Khalkhali (2014) conducted a cross-sectional study using Study Skills Assessment Questionnaire of Counseling Center of Houston University (SSAQ-CCHU) which comprised of eight domains namely time management and procrastination, concentration and memory, study aids and note taking, test strategies and test anxiety, organizing and processing information, motivation and attitude, reading and selecting the main idea, and writing. The result of the study revealed that 1.2% participants had good study skills, 86.8% had moderate study skills and 12% had poor study skills. Among the areas of study skills, the highest scores were in time management and procrastination skills and concentration and memory skills.

5. Methodology

5.1. Research Design.

The study adopted a descriptive survey design, suitable for collecting data on the existing levels of study skills among students.

5.2. Sample

The sample comprised of 369 senior secondary students of science stream were selected using stratified random sampling from different districts in Mizoram.

5.3. Tool Used

For the purpose of the present study, a Study Skills Scale was constructed and standardized by the researcher. The Scale consisted of eleven dimensions:

- Use of electronic resources
- Critical thinking
- Study strategies
- Concentration
- Self-motivation
- Memorization
- Stress management
- Time management
- Test management
- Reading
- Writing

5.4. Statistical Techniques Used

For data analysis, descriptive statistics, primarily percentage analysis, were used to interpret the data.

6. Analysis of Study skills of Students

The distribution of students across three levels: Good, Average, and Poor was analyzed for each dimension of study skills. The summary is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Dimension-wise Level of Study Skills of Senior Secondary Students of Mizoram. (N=369)

Sl. No	Dimensions of study skills	Good study skills	Average study skills	Poor study skills
1	Skills in using electronic resources	29 (7.85%)	314 (85.09%)	26 (7.04%)
2	Critical thinking skills	37 (10.02%)	301 (81.57%)	31 (8.4%)
3	Study strategies	33 (8.94%)	310 (84.01%)	85 (23.03%)
4	Concentration skills	41 (11.11%)	292 (79.13%)	36 (9.76%)
5	Self-Motivation skills	47 (12.73%)	294 (79.68%)	93 (25.2%)
6	Memorization skills	30 (10.08%)	299 (81.02%)	80 (21.68%)
7	Stress management skills	62 (16.8%)	272 (73.71%)	110 (29.81%)
8	Time management skills	28 (7.59%)	322 (87.26%)	111 (30.08%)
9	Test management skills	51 (13.82%)	286 (77.51%)	86 (23.3%)
10	Reading skills	42 (11.38%)	292 (79.13%)	35 (9.49%)
11	Writing skill	44 (11.92%)	287	81 (21.95%)

			(77.78%)	

From the above table, the study skills level of students based on each dimension are as follows:

- Skills in Using Electronic Resources: Out of 369 students, 85.09% show Average skills in using electronic resources, while only 7.85% have good skills and 7.04% have poor skills.
- Critical Thinking Skills: In this dimension, 81.57% of students are at the average level, 10.02% show good skills, and 8.4% are at the poor level.
- Study Strategies: 84.01% of students show average study strategies, while 8.94% are in the good category and 23.03% fall into the poor category.
- Concentration Skills: Here, 79.13% of students demonstrate average concentration, 11.11% show good concentration, and 9.76% fall under poor.
- Self-Motivation Skills: 79.68% of students fall in the average category, while 12.73% demonstrate high self - motivation. However, 25.2% show poor self-motivation skills.
- Memorization Skills: A large number of students (81.02%) have average memorization skills. 10.08% are good at it, but 21.68% fall under the poor category.
- Stress Management Skills: 73.71% have average stress management skills, while 16.8% perform well. However, 29.81% of students report poor skills in handling stress.
- Time Management Skills: Only 7.59% of students demonstrate good time management, while 87.26% fall into the average group. Alarmingly, 30.08% report poor time management, the highest among all dimensions, indicating a strong need for support in this area.
- Test Management Skills: 77.51% of students are average in handling tests, 13.82% are good, but 23.3% show poor test management.
- Reading Skills: In this area, 79.13% of students have average reading skills, 11.38% are good, and 9.49% are poor.
- Writing Skills: 77.78% of students fall under the average category, 11.92% show good writing skills, while 21.95% fall under the poor level.

7. Identification of Strength and Weaknesses across Various Dimensions of Study Skills.

The majority of senior secondary students in Mizoram are in the average group across all eleven study skill aspects, as shown in table no. 1. This implies that although students demonstrate a fundamental understanding of productive study techniques, they frequently lack the consistency and strategic depth required for academic success.

Among the dimensions analyzed, time management and stress management recorded the highest percentage of students in the poor category. The result aligns with the findings of Shahidi et al. (2014) where time management being the most challenging area among the dimensions of study skills measured. These findings highlight persistent challenges in organizing time and coping with academic pressure, which are critical for balancing coursework, examinations, and personal responsibilities. This result supports the findings of Sansgiry and Sail (2006), who found that poor time management and inefficient stress coping ability are major causes of students' poor performance, especially when they are overburdened with workload. Additionally, the observation table shows that self-motivation, test management, study strategies, memorization and writing also had a notable number of students scoring in the poor range. These indicates that students who lack intrinsic motivation often fail to develop and

apply effective strategies for learning and preparing for examinations, while poor writing and remembering abilities hinder the capacity to successfully retain and convey taught material.

On the other hand, dimensions such as skills in using electronic resources, critical thinking, concentration, and reading skills had relatively fewer students in the poor category. This demonstrates relative strengths in using digital learning tools, staying focused throughout study sessions, and basic reading comprehension. These findings may reflect pupils' increased exposure to digital platforms and structured educational environments that promote core literacy and attentiveness. Previous studies done by Didarloo & Khalkhali (2014) and Shahidi et al. (2014) revealed that students excelled at concentration skills.

8. Conclusion

The study found that most senior secondary students in Mizoram demonstrate average study skills, but a considerable number struggle with time management, stress management, self-motivation, and test-taking strategies. These areas require targeted support through structured, curriculum-based interventions. In contrast, students showed relative strengths in reading, concentration, and use of electronic resources. Integrating study skill programs rooted in self-regulated learning can help improve both academic performance and independent learning abilities, particularly in underserved educational settings.

It is advised that schools incorporate structured study skills programs into their curricula in light of the cognitive demands placed on students and the increasingly competitive academic environment. With methods based on self-regulated learning theory, these programs ought to improve time and stress management, strategic learning, and motivational control. Empowering pupils with such tools can improve not just their academic achievement but also their lifelong learning skills.

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