

Students' Study Habits and Academic Success: A Correlational Analysis



عادات الدراسة لدى الطلاب والنجاح الأكاديمي: تحليل ارتباطي

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المخلص

تبحث هذه الدراسة العلاقة بين عادات الدراسة والتحصيل الأكاديمي لدى طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في جامعة السليمانية. تهدف الدراسة بشكل أساسي إلى تحديد العلاقة بين المتغيرات المحددة، ودراسة قوة هذه العلاقات، وتحديد عادات الدراسة الأكثر ارتباطاً بالتحصيل الأكاديمي، واستكشاف تصورات الطلاب عن التحصيل الأكاديمي. استخدم تصميم بحثي ارتباطي ذو منهجية مختلطة. تم اختيار عينة عشوائية طبقية مكونة من ٢٠٠ طالب وطالبة من طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية خلال العام الدراسي ٢٠٢٥-٢٠٢٦. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، استخدمت العينة الهادفة لاختيار المشاركين في المقابلات. جمعت البيانات من خلال استبيان عادات الدراسة (SHQ) ومقياس التحصيل الأكاديمي (ASS) المكون من ثمانية بنود والذي أعده الباحث، بالإضافة إلى المقابلات شبه المنظمة. تم التحقق من صحة البيانات من خلال التحقق من صحة المحتوى واختبار ألفا كرونباخ، وتبين درجة



عالية من الاتساق الداخلي. خضعت البيانات الكمية للتحليل الإحصائي باستخدام برنامج SPSS، بينما حُللت البيانات النوعية باستخدام التحليل الموضوعي. أشارت النتائج إلى وجود ارتباط إيجابي قوي، ذي دلالة إحصائية، بين عادات الدراسة والنجاح الأكاديمي. وقد وُجد أن قوة هذا الارتباط تتراوح بين المتوسطة والعالية، مما يدل على أن عادات الدراسة ترتبط ارتباطاً وثيقاً بالنجاح الأكاديمي. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، كان تنظيم الوقت والمراجعة المنتظمة وتدوين الملاحظات من أقوى مؤشرات النجاح، بينما ارتبط ضعف التخطيط والمماثلة بانخفاض مستويات النجاح الأكاديمي. وأظهرت نتائج التحليل الموضوعي أن طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية ينظرون إلى النجاح الأكاديمي على أنه مفهوم متعدد الأبعاد لا يقتصر على الدرجات الجيدة فحسب، بل يشمل أيضاً الانضباط الذاتي، والتطوير المستمر، وأساليب التعلم الفعالة، والتحديات الأكاديمية.

Abstract

This research examines the relationship between study habits and academic success among EFL students studying at the University of Sulaimani. The main objectives of the research are to detect the correlation between the identified variables, examine the strength of these relationships, identify those study habits most associated with academic success and explore students' perceptions of academic success. A mixed-methods correlational design was employed. A stratified random sample of 200 undergraduate EFL students from the English Department during the 2025-2026 academic year was selected. In addition, purposive sampling was used to select the interviewees. Data were collected through the Study Habits Questionnaire (SHQ) and a researcher-made 8-item Academic Success Scale (ASS) and semi-structured interviews. They were checked through content validation and Cronbach's alpha test and demonstrated high internal consistency. Quantitative data were subjected to statistical analysis using SPSS, while qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The results indicated a statistically significant moderate to strong positive correlation between study habits and academic success. **The strength of the relationship was found to be moderate to high, thus demonstrating that study habits are significantly related to academic success.** In addition, time management, regular revision and organizing notes were the strongest predictors of success, while poor planning and procrastination were found to correlate with lower levels of academic success. The findings of the thematic analysis showed that the EFL students viewed academic success as a multi-dimensional construct encompassing not only good grades but



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also self-discipline, improvement, good learning techniques, and academic challenges.

1.Introduction

Higher education serves a fundamental function in helping students acquire those capabilities needed to advance personally and professionally. While universities are working hard to prepare graduates for the growing demands of today's world, promoting student success is the very essence of the system of higher education, making it essential to understand the factors affecting the success even more crucial.

Educational success is one of the top priorities in higher education that reflects students' academic development and institutional effectiveness. Academic success of EFL students is not defined by innate abilities alone but by many converging factors, including their motivation to learn, the quality of teaching, and habitual learning efforts. Among all these factors, study habits and learning tactics used daily by students play a crucial role. Proper scheduling, active learning, and strategic revision help to improve the results of learning, whereas procrastination and chaotic studying hinder academic success. Therefore, an investigation into the relationship between these two variables is crucial for the optimization of the educational process.

Study habits represent the set of behaviors, routines, and tactics used by students during the process of learning, including time allocation, note-taking methods, reading comprehension techniques, examination preparation, and concentration management. They shape students' academic performance by influencing achievement levels. Good study habits are associated with higher academic achievement, whereas poor habits limit it (Endawoke & Gidey, 2013). Credé and Kuncel (2008) identified study habits, skills, and attitudes as a "third pillar" of academic success alongside prior academic achievement and standardized test scores, while Elango and Manimozhi (2021) reported their positive impact on academic achievement. The key to academic success lies not only in the amount of time students devote to studying but also in the quality and effectiveness of their study habits in maximizing learning and retention.

Although the association between study habits and academic success has received considerable attention in educational psychology, further research is needed to understand how it manifests among Kurdish EFL



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learners, **yielding valuable insights for improving students' study behaviors.** The dual academic-linguistic demands on EFL learners make effective study habits particularly important and subject to systematic investigation.

Despite the importance of study habits, many students at the university level struggle with poor time management, procrastination, and ineffective learning strategies. There is limited empirical evidence in Iraqi universities, particularly at the University of Sulaimani, examining the relationship between study habits and academic success. The present study takes up this need by analyzing the relationship between study habits and academic success among University of Sulaimani EFL students, with the objectives of checking the presence and magnitude of a statistically significant correlation between the variables, and identifying which habits are most closely tied to stronger academic outcomes and investigating their perceptions of their academic success and how study habits play a role in it.

These objectives are reflected in the following research questions:

1. Is there a statistically significant correlation between the study habits of EFL students at the University of Sulaimani and their academic success?
2. What is the strength of the relationship between the identified variables?
3. Which study habits are strongly correlated with high academic success among these students?
4. What is the perception of EFL students at the University of Sulaimani toward academic success and their study habits in attaining it?

The capacity of the university to design focused programs and allocate resources efficiently for students' development is limited due to this lack of information. This research is expected to add to the current literature on the link between learning behavior and academic success of EFL students at the University of Sulaimani.



2. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for the research is anchored on the belief that study habits are critical behavioral variables that affect the academic success of the students. The independent variable in this case is study habits, while the dependent variable is academic success.

2.1 Study Habits

2.1.1 Study Habits as a Concept

Study Habits are the routine activities, techniques, and practices followed by students in the course of their studies and gaining knowledge (Xavier, 1956). These are the learned behaviors which are gained through repeated practice and experience and are seen as significant factors for academic success (Endawoke & Gidey, 2013). Study Habits involve the time spent by the students in studying and the efficiency of the techniques used by them in their learning process.

As per Good (1938), study habits can be defined as the ways through which students study in a structured and productive way. Crow & Crow (1963) view study habits as repetitive behaviors practiced by learners for gaining knowledge and improving the learning process. Likewise, Palsane & Sharma (1989) regard study habits as the behaviors formed by students in their academic activities. Credé & Kuncel (2008) define study habits as those attitudes, skills and behaviors which help learners achieve good academic performance apart from intellectual ability.

Thus, it is clear from the above-mentioned definitions that study habits are multidimensional behaviors that include behaviors of the learners related to the way they manage their academic work and information processes. Hence, effective study habits may be regarded as the organized and purposeful behaviors of the learners in the context of the learning process.

2.1.2 Characteristics of Study Habits

Study habits are associated with regularity, goal orientation, organization, adaptability, and the impact of cognitive, motivational, and environmental factors. Good study habits comprise proper time management, active reading, well-organized note-taking, self-testing, revision, and appropriate study settings. Such study techniques enable learners to cope with academic responsibilities and make the process of learning more efficient.

On the other hand, poor study habits, like procrastination, memorizing too much, and last-minute preparation for exams, can affect the academic performance of students because they minimize learning chances and the possibility of retaining learned information

(Steel, 2007; Dunlosky et al., 2013). Development of study habits is affected by experience, learning environment, motivation, self-discipline, family involvement, institutional setting, pedagogical approach, academic load, and distraction.

2.1 3 Dimensions of Study Habits

Study habits include a number of dimensions that affect the way students acquire knowledge. According to Weinstein et al. (2016), Pintrich (2004), Dunlosky et al. (2013), Macan et al. (1990) and other researchers, they include:

- Time management: The skill to create a schedule for studying, make priorities, make academic objectives, and not procrastinate.
- Note-taking skills: The skill to structure, synthesize, and evaluate significant data from the study sources.
- Reading skills: Utilizing the methods of active and critical reading in order to comprehend the academic material.
- Concentration: The ability to concentrate on the task at hand and control distractions both internally and externally.
- Examination preparation: The use of different examination preparation techniques is involved. They include the use of distributed practice method.
- Study environment: This is the environment that will facilitate learning.
- Regular revision: This refers to the consistent revisiting of already learned material.

2.1.4 Importance of Study Habits

The development of effective study practices is vital for students to perform well academically. Studies have shown that the use of proper study techniques, such as time management and learning practices, has a positive effect on performance (Credé & Kuncel, 2008; Richardson et al., 2012). Learning practices like spaced repetition and self-testing promote knowledge retention and learning (Dunlosky et al., 2013).

Additionally, good study skills enable students to build self-discipline, independence, and confidence when taking care of their studies. Good study skills also encourage students to engage actively with study material and enhance their problem-solving skills.

2.2 Academic Success

2.2.1 Academic Success as a Concept

Academic success is defined as a measure of the extent to which a person succeeds in meeting his/her educational aims through academic



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achievement, knowledge, skills, and personal development (Fitzpatrick & Bruer, 2008). Traditionally, the concept of academic success has been limited to measuring achievements in an academic field like examination results, grades, and other academic performance indices (York et al., 2015). Modern views of academic success consider it a broader term that includes not only academic success but also skill and competency development necessary for future academic endeavors and professional success (York, Gibson, & Rankin, 2015). Academic success can thus be viewed as an individual's ability to meet the desired education aims through proper learning and adaptation.

2.1.2 Features of Academic Success

Academic success is a complicated and multidimensional phenomenon involving cognitive, behavioral, emotional, and social aspects rather than only academic abilities of students (York et al., 2015). The process is considered to be continuous since students acquire knowledge, skills, and abilities throughout the learning process.

It is possible to examine academic success from two perspectives – short-term and long-term success. Students' success in the short-term perspective is reflected in receiving good grades, accomplishing assignments and examinations, while long-term success implies gaining transferable skills and abilities, learning independently, and preparing for future careers (Biggs & Tang, 2011).

Successful learners possess some specific features including self-discipline, responsibility, persistence, goal setting, organization, and time management. Self-discipline allows students to concentrate on academic activities (Duckworth & Seligman, 2005); responsibility stimulates taking ownership of the process of studying (Pintrich, 2000); persistence facilitates overcoming difficulties in the academic process (Tinto, 1993); and organization and time management allow efficient studying (Zimmerman, 2002; Misra & McKean, 2000).

2.3 Study Habits and Academic Success: Relationship

There is a close connection between study habits and academic achievement since students' learning behaviors play an important role in determining the efficiency of knowledge acquisition and application. Effective study habits offer students certain ways of handling academic work and preparing for exams. Consequently, students with effective study habits will be able to gain good academic results.

The relationship between study habits and academic achievement can be revealed from the perspective of the role of learning behaviors in



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enhancing knowledge retention, time management, concentration, and academic self-management of students. Those students who revise their studying materials and organize their learning process have more chances to succeed academically.

Some studies have already found a significant connection between study habits and academic success of students (Credé & Kuncel, 2008; Nonis & Hudson, 2010). Nevertheless, there is a lack of research on this connection in the context of developing countries, especially among university students in particular environments. Therefore, additional studies are required to examine the relationship between study habits and academic success of the University of Sulaimani students.

2.3 Previous Related Studies

Study 1: Credé and Kuncel (2008)

In order to explore the correlation between study habits, study skills, academic attitudes and academic performance among university students, Credé and Kuncel (2008) carried out a meta-analysis study. This study employed a quantitative research design through the analysis of past empirical studies. The data for this study were gathered from empirical literature and the academic performance of the studies that were reviewed. Meta-analytic statistical techniques were employed by the researchers to identify the predictive effect of study habits, study skills and academic attitudes on academic performance. The study found that study habits, study skills and academic attitudes are important predictors of academic performance.

Study 2: Richardson, Abraham, and Bond (2012)

Richardson et al. (2012) carried out a systematic review and meta-analysis study through a quantitative approach to find the psychological determinants that affect university students' academic performance. The authors reviewed some previous empirical studies on factors connected with the academic success of students such as self-regulation, conscientiousness, motivation, and learning strategies. Information was obtained from existing literature, and meta-analysis was done to assess the connection between psychological determinants and academic results. Some determinants like self-regulation, conscientiousness, and good learning strategies were found to be influential.

Study 3: Zimmerman (2002)



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In a conceptual and empirical study performed by Zimmerman (2002), the emphasis was made on self-regulated learning and its connections with academic success. In order to carry out this research, a conceptual approach was applied. It was based on the analysis of the existing empirical literature on the learning behavior of students. The data were gathered through studying and observing the self-regulated learning process. Specifically, the influence of such behaviors as planning, monitoring, and self-evaluation on the results of learning was analyzed. It was revealed that self-regulated learners have better academic performance.

Study 4: Duckworth and Seligman (2005)

This study is an empirical work by Duckworth and Seligman (2005), which sought to identify the connection between self-discipline and academic performance among the learners. Data in this study were gathered through psychometric tests on self-discipline and the connection between the results of the tests and the academic performance of the students. Statistical analysis of the data was performed in order to test the connection between self-discipline and academic performance. It was found that self-discipline was a significant predictor of performance.

Study 5: Dunlosky et al. (2013)

A review study was done by Dunlosky et al. (2013) to assess the effectiveness of various learning methods and the impact on the students' performance. Literature review was used as the research methodology and the data were collected from prior experiments and educational psychology studies. Various methods of learning were assessed through analysis of the existing information in terms of their effectiveness. It was found that active learning methods, such as practice testing and spacing, were better than passive methods.

The present study is in line with earlier research that investigates the link between study habits and academic achievement. Earlier studies emphasized the need for self-regulation, self-discipline, and learning skills to enhance academic performance. But most of these studies have been carried out in Western settings. This renders them irrelevant to different cultures. Hence, the present study aims to bridge this gap by

studying the link between study habits and academic performance among university students of Iraqi Kurdistan.

3. Methodology

The methodology adopted in the current study, which aims to investigate the relationship between study habits and academic success among EFL students at the University of Sulaimani is as follows:

3.1 Research Design

A research design outlines the procedures to be followed to address the research questions or objectives efficiently. The design used in the present study was a mixed- methods correlational research design. The design was applied to explore the nature and strength of the relationship between two variables without establishing causation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), thereby allowing the researchers to draw conclusions that may inform policy and practice (Cohen et al., 2018). It is considered as a form of descriptive research as it examines an association between two variables in their natural settings.

3.2 Study Setting and Population

The University of Sulaimani, a public institution in Sulaymaniyah, Kurdistan Region of Iraq, served as the research setting. It provides undergraduate and graduate programs in different fields of study. The population consisted of all undergraduate EFL students who were studying in the four stages of the English Department at the University of Sulaimani for the academic year 2025–2026.

3.2 Participants and Sampling Techniques

This research used a mixed-methods design consisting of a survey (comprising a questionnaire and a researcher-developed scale) and semi-structured interviews.

•**Survey participants:** A total of 200 respondents participated in the survey. The sampling process involved the use of stratified random sampling, whereby participants were selected to ensure the representation of all strata of the target population. In this technique, the population was first categorized into four different strata representing the four academic stages. Participants were then randomly selected from each stratum. This





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ensured that none of the stages was over- or underrepresented and allowed for more reliable statistical analysis.

•**Interview participants:** In addition, 8 participants were also chosen for the in-depth semi-structured interviews using the purposive sampling method. The process ensured that individuals with relevant knowledge or experience related to the research topic were sampled.

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the undergraduate EFL students who took part in the research.

Table 1
Participant Demographic Composition

Variable	Category	Questionnaire Respondents (N=200)	%	Interview Participants (N=8)
Gender	Male	82	41.0	4
	Female	118	59.0	4
Academic Stage	First Year	50	25.0	2
	Second Year	50	25.0	2
	Third Year	50	25.0	2
	Fourth Year	50	25.0	2
Age	18-20 Years	64	32.0	2
	21-23 Years	108	54.0	5
	24 Years and Above	28	14.0	1

Table 1 presents the demographic details of the 200 EFL undergraduate students who took part in the survey and the 8 students who participated in the interviews. Out of the survey participants, 59% were female, whereas 41% were male. The sample included an even number of students from all four academic stages of the English Department, with 50 students each from the four academic levels. 54% of the respondents belonged to the age group of 21-23 years. In the qualitative phase, the interview participants were chosen using a purposive sampling technique with equal gender distribution (4 males and 4 females) and 2 participants each from the four academic levels.

3.4 Instruments

Research instruments are tools used by researchers to gather the needed data. In the current study, three instruments were used for data collection. The Study Habits Questionnaire (SHQ) was adapted and modified from established study habits and learning behavior research frameworks,



including the Study Habit Inventory (SHI) developed by Palsane and Sharma (1989), along with other studies in educational psychology examining study skills and habits (Credé & Kuncel, 2008), specific academic behaviors (Walck-Shannon et al., 2021) and development and use of study habit inventories (Nixon & Frost, 1990). It evaluated six aspects of study behavior, including time management (5 items), note-taking (4 items), concentration (5 items), reading practices (4 items), exam preparation (5 items), and study environment (4 items).

The Academic Success Scale (ASS) was developed by the researchers and comprised eight items measuring perceived academic success. These two instruments used a 5-point Likert scale, which is, as a psychometric rating scale, commonly used to measure respondents' opinions, preferences or satisfaction levels toward statements.

A semi-structured interview was utilized to gather qualitative data about the perceptions of the students concerning academic success and the role of study habits in academic success. The questions were prepared in light of the study's objectives and current literature on study habits and academic success. The questions revolved around what students considered academic success to be, which study habits they regarded as important for success, any difficulties faced in following up on such good study habits, and how they viewed study habits affecting their performance. The interviews were carried out with eight EFL students at the English Department of the University of Sulaimani, representing different academic levels and providing diverse perspectives regarding their study techniques and academic success.

The research instruments were administered between the fifth and eighth weeks of the second semester, allowing students to have sufficient regular study routines while avoiding examination period stress. During their regular class sessions, participants received paper copies of the survey and researchers were on-site to answer any questions.

Each interview was held in a proper environment with prior consent of the respondent. The collected data was then transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis to uncover patterns connected to students' perception of academic success and study practices.

3.5 Validity and Reliability

Content validity of the quantitative data collection tools was assessed through expert review. The questionnaire, together with the researcher-developed scale, was evaluated by three experts holding PhDs and having research experience in education and applied linguistics to ascertain that



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they were clear, relevant, and appropriate. Internal consistency reliability was then estimated using Cronbach's alpha with 30 students not included in the main sample. The instruments showed good internal consistency, with the pilot data producing Cronbach's alpha coefficients of $\alpha = 0.87$ for the SHQ and $\alpha = 0.85$ for the ASS; both coefficients were above the 0.70 benchmark recommended (DeVellis, 2017).

The content validity of the interview protocol was also assessed through expert review by the same set of experts. The interview protocol was pilot-tested with four students to assess their clarity, appropriateness and relevance of the questions before conducting the actual interviews.

The pilot interview was carried out using four students since the objective of the pilot study was not to reach data saturation but to assess the clarity and relevance of the interview questions. A few participants are deemed appropriate in carrying out the pilot study of qualitative interview guides since the objective of the pilot study is to determine the unclear aspects of the questions before the actual interview (Turner, 2010; Kallio et al., 2016).

The results from these processes ensure that the data collection tools are appropriate and ready for the main research.

3.6 Data Analysis Techniques

The techniques used for analyzing the quantitative and qualitative data are provided below:

- The quantitative data collected were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).
- Descriptive statistics, including frequency distributions, percentages, means and standard deviations were used to summarize the study habits and academic success of the respondents.
- In order to investigate the association between study habits and academic success and to test the magnitude and direction of such associations, statistical analyses were performed through the use of Pearson correlation coefficients (r). They were also computed for all the dimensions of the study habits questionnaire in order to establish those dimensions of study habits that have significant correlations with academic success. Statistical significance was set at $p < .05$.
- Qualitative data were analyzed by using thematic analysis according to the methodological guidelines provided by Braun and Clarke (2006). Analysis entailed becoming familiar with the data, coding of units of

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meaning, looking for patterns, developing and refining themes, and interpretation of views of the respondents about academic success and study habits. The identified themes were utilized in order to give more depth to the research results.

4. Results

Initially, descriptive statistics were calculated for summarizing the variables under study. The findings are shown in the table below.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics for Study Habits and Academic Success

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Study Habits	200	3.76	0.54	2.21	4.92
Academic Success	200	3.81	0.59	2.13	5.00

As seen from Table 2, the participants demonstrated high levels of both study habits ($M = 3.76$, $SD = 0.54$) and academic success ($M = 3.81$, $SD = 0.59$), indicating generally positive study behaviors and satisfactory academic success among the participants.

Subsequently, appropriate statistical analysis was done to establish the nature, degree, and direction of the relationship between the variables. These results are shown below, in line with the research objectives.

The first objective of this study was to find out if there exists a significant relationship between study habits and academic success of EFL students at the University of Sulaimani. For this purpose, the correlation between these two variables was analyzed using the Pearson's correlation coefficient

Table 3
Pearson Correlation Between Overall Study Habits and Academic Success

Variables	Mean	SD	<i>r</i>	<i>P</i>
Study Habits	3.76	0.54	0.68	< .001
Academic Success	3.81	0.59		

The analysis revealed a statistically significant positive correlation between study habits and academic success with $r = 0.68$ and $p < .001$. This implies that students who had more positive study habits were likely to report greater academic success.



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The second objective aimed to figure out the strength of the relationship between study habits and academic success. The correlation coefficient obtained ($r = 0.68$) was used to determine the strength and direction of the association. The calculated value for correlation ($r = 0.68$, Table 3) shows a strong association between the two variables. According to Cohen (1988), this correlation ($r = 0.68$) signifies a large effect size. This implies that effective study skills are linked to academic success. Consequently, the results show a strong connection between study habits and academic success of the students.

The third objective was to determine which dimensions of study habits were most strongly correlated with academic success. To address this objective, Pearson's correlation analysis was performed to test the extent and significance of the relationship between each study habit dimension and academic success. The results are shown below:

Table 4
Relationship Between Study Habit Dimensions and Academic

Study Habit Dimensions	Items	Mean	SD	r	P	Interpretation
Time Management	5	3.89	0.62	.72	< .001	Strong Positive
Exam Preparation	5	3.84	0.60	.69	< .001	Moderate- Strong Positive
Note- Taking	4	3.78	0.65	.65	< .001	Moderate- Strong Positive
Reading Practices	4	3.72	0.63	.61	< .001	Moderate Positive
Concentration	5	3.67	0.69	.58	< .001	Moderate Positive
Study Environment	4	3.63	0.71	.49	< .001	Moderate Positive

Success

As seen in Table 4, all study habits dimensions were positively and significantly correlated with academic success ($p < .001$). The dimension that correlated most strongly and positively with academic success was Time Management ($r = 0.72$) followed by Exam Preparation ($r = 0.69$) and Note-Taking ($r = 0.65$). The other dimensions that correlated

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positively with academic success were Reading Practices ($r = 0.61$), Concentration ($r = 0.58$) and Study Environment ($r = 0.49$).

The correlation coefficients from Table 4 have been graphically compared using Figure 1. The results indicate that the study habits Time Management, Exam Preparation, and Note-Taking were stronger predictors of academic success than the rest of the study habits dimensions.

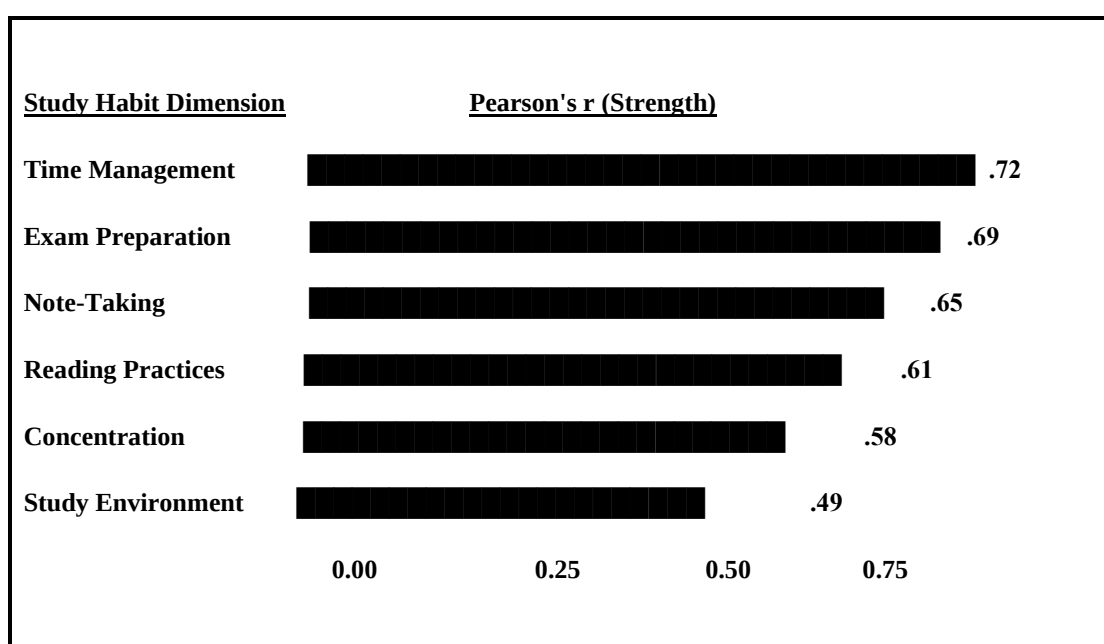


Figure 1: Correlation Strength Between Study Habit Dimensions and Academic Success

Overall, the quantitative results clearly show that those students who can organize their study time well, who are well prepared for examinations and whose notes are properly organized perform better academically than those students who exhibit poor study habits.

The fourth research objective aimed at identifying and analyzing the perceptions of EFL students of the University of Sulaimani concerning academic success and the importance of study habits in achieving it. The analysis of the semi-structured interviews revealed four major themes: (1) Academic Success as Personal Growth; (2) Importance of Study Habits; (3) Barriers to Effectiveness of Study Habits; (4) Self-discipline and Motivation.

Theme 1: Academic Success as Personal Growth



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Participants understood academic success in more complex terms than just high marks on exams. Academic success was defined by participants as good learning skills, personal traits development, and lifelong learning. Thus, for the participants, academic success is connected with such notions as dedication, responsibility, and personal development, but not only high examination scores.

As one of the participants put it:

"For me, academic success is not just about having good scores in exams. I think that to be successful in studying, a student needs to develop himself/herself and become a better person. Successful students are always growing and making themselves better."

Therefore, we can conclude that participants saw academic success as a compound notion, including both academic achievement and personal development.

Theme 2: Significance of Study Habits

Additionally, the interviews showed that students had a great perception that academic success was linked to good study habits. These included time management, regular revision of lessons and organizing of study materials. Students perceived that such study habits helped them comprehend their course materials and excel in their studies.

As one interviewee remarked:

"The effective study habits ensure that students meet their goals since it becomes easy to comprehend the lesson and perform well in tests when there is proper management of time and revision of the lesson."

In addition, students viewed academic success as being aided through the application of appropriate study methods and adaptability in the academic environment. Learners viewed successful students as actively participating in learning, improving their skills and developing ways of studying which were more suited to their learning styles.

As one participant noted:

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"Each student has his/her way of studying, but successful students are those who learn the ways of study that suit them and improve themselves."

Theme 3: Obstacles to Effective Study Skills

The respondents also provided information about several obstacles to effective study skills. The most common obstacles named were procrastination, absence of a study plan, and absence of motivation. According to the interviewed individuals, procrastination in doing homework and not being able to study regularly led to academic stress and low academic achievements.

One respondent said:

"Some students know what they have to do, but they put off their studying until the very last moment. This is stressful and makes the studying process difficult."

These responses suggest that the participants understood that poor study skills were an important factor affecting their academic success.

Theme 4: Self-Discipline and Motivation

The fourth theme that came up in the course of the interviews concerned the importance of self-discipline and motivation in order to have good study patterns. It was stressed that keeping to one's schedule, being responsible for one's actions and time management skills were key factors towards successful learning and academic success. In addition, participants felt that consistent studying works better than preparing for exams.

As one of the participants stated:

"Even if a student is capable of good results, without self-discipline and good planning he/she cannot do anything."

As such, the overall findings from the interviews indicated that the EFL students view academic success as a multifaceted concept, which is associated with good study habits, self-control, motivation, and continuous personal development. The above qualitative findings have helped to elaborate on the quantitative findings on the connection between study habits and academic success.

5. Discussion

In this research, the relationship between study habits and academic success was explored among undergraduate EFL students at the University of Sulaimani. It was found that there was a substantial relationship between study habits and academic achievement; however, some study habits had more impact than others.





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The first objective was to find out whether there was any statistically significant relationship between study habits and academic success. The results have shown that there is a significant positive correlation between the two variables, which means that the students who had more effective study habits had higher levels of academic success. This confirms the idea that academic success does not depend on the intellectual capacities of students alone but rather is affected by their learning behavior as well. This result is supported by Credé & Kuncel (2008) as well as by Endawoke & Gidey (2013), who reported that effective study habits positively relate to students' academic success.

The second objective was to ascertain the intensity and nature of the above relationship. From the correlation coefficient, there appeared to be a moderate to strong positive correlation between study habits and academic success. Even though the correlational method of research design cannot make any causal assumptions about the observed relationships, the results seem to indicate that those students who have good study habits will most likely excel in their academic pursuits. This finding conforms to Elango and Manimozhi (2021), who highlighted the status of operative learning strategies in enhancing students' academic success.

Objective three investigated the connection between certain learning habits and academic success. Of all six dimensions, time management had the highest positive correlation, then examination preparation, and note taking. Students with good time management skills, proper examination preparation techniques, and proper note taking tend to perform well academically.

Objective four identified the students' perception about academic success. The results indicated that EFL students at the University of Sulaimani perceive academic success not just as scoring good grades, but as learning constantly, growing personally, and becoming effective learners. It was stated that positive study behaviors such as managing time effectively, constant revision, discipline, and consistency lead to academic success while procrastination, bad planning, and lack of discipline prevent it. These results support the theories of self-regulation by Bandura (1997) and the self-regulated learning theory by Zimmerman (2002), which highlight the importance of self-management and self-responsibility for academic success.

Conclusions

The current research focused on the association between study habits and academic performance among EFL students at the University of

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Sulaimani. The conclusions made from the analysis of the data are as follows:

- 1.The results demonstrated a statistically significant moderate to strong positive association between the study variables among the participating students at the University of Sulaimani. It shows that the more efficient the study habits of students, the more possible it is for them to demonstrate high academic success.
- 2.Of all the six dimensions of study habits, the strongest positive associations with academic success were shown by the dimensions of time management, exam preparation, and note taking. Reading habits, concentration, and study environment were also positively related to academic success, but they showed relatively weaker associations.
- 3.The results show that effective study habits, especially efficient time management while studying, systematic preparation for exams, and proper note taking are significantly associated with academic success among EFL students.
- 4.It has also been found that EFL students regard academic success as a multidimensional concept, based on good study habits, self-control, self-development, and proper learning techniques.

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