What Do Students Know?
Knowledge of Effective Studying Strategies, Academic Achievement, & Self-Efficacy

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INTRODUCTION

Managing one's own learning becomes increasingly important as students move through the educational system, taking on particular importance in college. To be successful, students must not only have the capacity for learning, but also engage in particular behaviors to help them learn. The present study investigated students' knowledge of effective studying strategies and whether such knowledge has a relationship with academic achievement, academic self-efficacy, and procrastination.

Previous research on study strategies has shown the following to be most effective:

- Scheduling: Setting a monthly schedule is more effective than a daily or weekly schedule.
- Highlighting: Segmenting large assignments and assigning due dates is useful for accomplishing assignments and doing well.

METHOD

To investigate the research question asking whether students would rate study strategies shown to be more effective in research, the following data was collected:

- Participants: A total of 84 students participated in this study. 24% men and 76% women. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 23 (M = 18.98), and included 24 first-year students, 38 sophomores, 14 juniors, and 8 seniors.
- Materials: Knowledge of Effective Study Strategies Scale (KESSS)
- Procedures: A Pearson product-moment correlation was run. An r(80) = .75 suggests that knowledge of effective study strategies is associated with academic achievement. Greater knowledge of effective study strategies will be associated with less procrastination.

HYPOTHESES

The Study Skills Self-Efficacy Scale was used to assess academic self-efficacy. Students rate how much confidence they have in their learning techniques. For example, students respond on a 1 (very little) to 5 (quite a lot) scale to questions such as "How much confidence do you have in doing these behaviors...maintaining a daily schedule of study hours?"

- Procrastination: Lay et al. (18) item procrastination scale was used to measure procrastination. The scale asks respondents to report on their behavior with questions such as "I am continually saying 'I'll do it tomorrow' on a 1 (extremely uncharacteristic) to 5 (extremely characteristic) scale.

Characteristics: To test the hypothesis that greater knowledge of effective study strategies would be associated with greater academic achievement, a Pearson product-moment correlation was run. An r(80) = .75 suggests that knowledge of effective study strategies is associated with academic achievement. Greater knowledge of effective study strategies will be associated with less procrastination.

RESULTS

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CONCLUSIONS

In this study, we expected that the knowledge of effective study strategies would be associated with greater academic achievement, higher academic self-efficacy, and less procrastination. The results did not support the hypotheses. It is possible that knowledge of effective strategies is not associated with these variables. However, given the wide range of years and grade level differences, it may be that any connections were hard to see because of the variability among the participants.

Although this study did not show a relationship between knowledge of effective study strategies and academic achievement, such knowledge may still be desirable for students to help them study more efficiently and have more confidence in their abilities.

REFERENCES