

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

This study aimed to investigate the study habits of first year university students. Therefore, the researcher reviewed the literature in the following categories:

- (1) The Theory of Studying
- (2) Distractions and Adjustment Problems Faced by University Students
- (3) Related Research

#### **2.1 THE THEORY OF STUDYING**

##### **2.1.1 Method of Study**

According to Armstrong (1975), the human mind performs four functions in varying degrees of proficiency. These functions are receiving, classifying, preserving, and recalling. Students should explore and find out what functions of their mind are outstanding so they can find the best study methods for themselves. With lots of practice, students could enhance every function of their mind to the point of satisfaction.

Armstrong said that study methods should be practiced every time a student sits down to study until it becomes a habit. The basic study methods can be adapted to use in all courses.

Palmer and Pope (1984) mentioned that the learning methods for everyone are different. There are popular learning methods and rare learning methods, but they are all best studying methods if they are right for the individual. If a student is studying successfully with a method or methods they are using, then that is the best method or methods for that student. Everyone must find a study method that is best for him or her.

Best and Lashley (2001) stated that learning styles are the characteristics which a student brings to studying and learning situations. These characteristics have evolved over time as a result of an individual's experiences and personality.

Devine (1987) acknowledged that "study skills are those competencies associated with acquiring, recording, organizing, synthesizing, remembering, and using information and ideas found in school. Many should be valuable in nonacademic settings, but all seem more or less indispensable for school success. All are teachable at all levels to all students."

Quinn (1999) stated that every student has his or her own learning style. The learning style can be divided into visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. Students should recognize their preferred learning style so that they can decide on what to do with their ability to get the most benefits.

Smith (1959) mentioned that carelessness and ineffective habits of study are the main reasons that caused inefficiency in learning.

### **2.1.2 Attitude Towards Studying**

Quinn (1999) explained that the brain has three parts which are the reptilian brain, the limbic system, and the neo-cortex. The reptilian brain and the limbic system acted on human's natural instinct such as when under a threat, hungry, sad, etc. The part humans use for learning is the neo-cortex. It is also the home of our long term memories which was the most important for learning. The neo-cortex works best when the person is safe and relaxed. The neo-cortex gives a person his or her abilities to think, to reason, to talk, to write and to remember.

Langan (1978) explained that the attitude about college work is more significant than any other aspect of studying. Students may not be successful at all in university if they do not have the correct frame of mind about studying.

Smith (1959) noted that students should always be optimistic when studying. Students shouldn't let the examination bother them too much. Education is about growth in appreciation, understanding, wisdom, and character. Students should also accept difficulties as challenges.

### **2.1.3 Place of Study**

Johnson (1992) pointed out that the best place to study should be where it is cool, quiet, no windows, no distractions, and convenient to reach. Studying in student's room or dormitory might not be a good location because there might be a lot of distractions. The library or an empty classroom was the best place suggested because they are free from distractions.

Smith (1959) mentioned that how successful you are in your study depends on where you do your studying. Students should consider many factors when choosing their study location such as enough lighting, proper ventilation, quietness, and easy access to studying materials. "If you are alert to what is happening, if you consider your handicaps and advantages, you will probably know your needs much better than anyone else does." (p.125)

Rickard (1964) pointed out that studying can be done anywhere but not all locations are good. It is better to study in a quiet area such as a library or in a quiet room. Students should study in the day time as much as possible and studying all subjects in the evening is not recommended. When there is free time in the day or time between classes, students should not hesitate to make it their study time. The human mind works best about ten o'clock in the morning until noon, and peaks again about one hour after lunch until before late afternoon before dinner.

Rickard (1964) also suggested that students should always prepare their study area so that it is free from any distractions. Pencils should be sharpened. Paper and text books for the subject to be studied should be right in front of you. The desk should be cleared from other materials not needed for the subject.

Quinn (1999) explained that in order to learn effectively, students must be relaxed and in a place with a sufficient supply of oxygen because the more oxygen a student's brain receives the better it operates.

#### **2.1.4 Reading**

Peelo (1994) believed that an effective reading means students can read with an improved capacity to control panic, are able to select what to read, can get an overall sense of a text, can understand complex detail, are able to overcome difficult language barriers, are able to cope with practical matters, and able to approach reading with a critical mind.

Devine (1987) mentioned that teachers can not tell by the students expression as they are reading whether students are learning or not. However, successful students underscore, circle words and phrases, and jot down notes as they are reading. Human memory is sensitive and sometimes undependable. Even the best students cannot memorize everything that they hear or read.

Devine also suggested that students must have a general plan of the author's objective and organization. Students should form questions as they are reading. While actively reading, students must try to discover how the author answers their questions. Finally, students should respond afterward to what they read.

Smith (1959) explained the three main types of reading as:

1. The Quick Reference Types – to obtain information to answer questions, or to follow directions.
2. The Study Type (Critical Reading) – to master ideas and to organize interpret, and evaluate facts.
3. The Aesthetic type – to derive enjoyment and appreciation.

Smith (1959) also mentioned that there are ways students could improve their reading ability. He categorized the different possible ways students could maximize their reading ability as follows:

1. Preparation – Students should decide beforehand of what to read and how much to read. They should know the purpose for reading also.

2. Speed of Reading – Reading speed is crucial because faster readers will be able to cover more materials within the time permitted. Faster readers will also have more time to review the materials after they have read it. The best way to increase student's reading speed is by practicing.

3. Review – Reviewing is important because it will help you connect what was read to your past experience for better understanding. In some books, students just need to glance through the text to review.

4. Careful Study – It is restating the idea in your own words or trying to put the whole chapter into a few sentence of your own. This way will give students a new center of reference for further study.

### **2.1.5 Time Management and Planning**

Barnes (1992) stated that the ability to manage your time effectively is one of the most important habits in studying at the university level. Your employer in the future will give you a high score if you can manage your time effectively. Making a plan of what to do in the week or the month is better than making a yearly plan because when seeing a yearly plan, students may get discouraged or procrastinate. On the other hand, deadlines for essay and examination should be noted for the whole year, because they can not be rescheduled or put off.

Johnson (1992) pointed out that the key to success when studying at university level is to schedule the time productively. Lack of time management will leave students rushing to finish their work and frustration.

Good study time is different with each student. Students should find the time when they feel best during the day to study. Studying for a few minutes before class is also recommended. Studying hard late in the evening is not recommended because people can not learn very well when they are tired. Before a student goes to bed, they should review just the important parts because that is the first thing they will remember in the morning. Free periods between classes are also a good study time that should not be wasted.

Armstrong (1975) said that time is a valuable gift to college students if they choose to use it wisely. Many students are wasting their gift of time because they are disorganized. Many students also use their time in an unproductive ways. The two main villains that rob students of their time are procrastination and disorder.

Rickard (1964) said that students should have a regular study time and place for each course so that it becomes a habit. The study time should be when the student is feeling fresh and not exhausted from extra curricular activities.

Palmer and Pope (1984) said that rest and recuperation are a must for every student to study successfully. When making your study plan, students must include resting time or relaxing time as part of their plan. Sometimes, inspiration or new ideas could come during your break time from studying.

### **2.1.6 Underlining, Outlining, and Note Taking**

Pickford and Smith (1969) said that note taking is a big part of college learning. Students should always have objectives every time they are writing notes. Do not note materials that are irrelevant no matter how interesting they may be. Good note taking can save you time and unnecessary work.

The four methods of note taking mentioned are:

1. Spaced Listening – The best time to use this method is in formal lectures. After listening to a lecture for a period, take a short time to write down the summary of what was said.
2. Block Listening – This method is best during informal talks, seminars, and discussions or tutorials. Only write down the important facts, dates, names, or statistical materials.
3. The Outline Method – This is best when writing notes on text books. This system emphasizes using headings, divisions, and sub-divisions marked by lettering and numbering. This system may not be suitable for lecture because it will get too complicated.
4. The Recall Method – This method is useful for the informal, unorganized, or disorganized talk. Jot down only important words when listening and when there is time, expand those words into your notes.

Chibnall (1987) stated that note-taking is a critical part of college learning that is difficult to teach. Students must learn to take notes efficiently because they need to record ideas and information, react to and develop those ideas, and retrieve them later on.

Johnson (1992) asserted that underlining while reading helps to comprehend if it is done correctly because it forces the readers to focus on what they are reading.

Smith (1959) Mentioned that students should take notes so they can remember important points when reading or listening to a lecture. When noting a fact, make sure that the note is understandable. When it's time to review that particular note later on, the note should be clear and concise.

A good underlining will differentiate between the fundamental idea and the extra information. Students must be careful not to underline excessively or else the underlined items will be useless.

## **2.2 DISTRACTIONS AND ADJUSTMENT PROBLEMS FACED BY UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

Rickard (1964) believed that university students get interrupted by many outside factors. Working too much is one of the top distractions that contribute to college students' failure. Students who are working too much will eventually lose sight of what their priorities are. Students will be more successful in life if they just concentrate on getting high grades in university, and put off working until after they graduate. Students should either work few hours and study full time or take few classes if they want to work a lot. There are plenty of places where they can get student loans. If students don't want to borrow and prefer to work, then it might be smarter to just put off college for a year or two.

## **2.3 RELATED RESEARCH**

According to the research on the Study Habits of Nigerian University Students by Love M. Nneji (2002), it showed that 35% of the respondents read mostly at weekends while 65% read mostly during the weekdays. Again, 60% indicated that they read mostly at night, 32% early morning and 8 % during their free time in the day. For duration of study, 50% read mostly for 2-4 hours, 20% read for just 2-4 hours while no students read for less than one hour.

On methods used for studying, a majority 40% of the respondents used the technique of whole reading, 29% still adopted the memorization technique, 25% summarized while only 6% used self-testing. Only 8% planned their reading to cover all subjects by using a time-table most of the time, 21% read choice subjects, while

71% read subjects that needed immediate attention. Also, 45% preferred to read in a classroom, 37% read in their rooms, while only 15% read in the library.

On content of studies, 86% read their lecture handout most, 10% read lecture-notes, 1% read textbooks and 3% read periodicals. 62% read mostly to absorb information as given by the lecturers in the handout or notes, 23% read in order to solve a given problem, 9% to confirm given information, 5% read with the purpose of searching for new information and 1% read for leisure. 90% of the respondents' main drive for reading is examination, while 1% read for personal learning.

The study of Phatcharin Kittiwacharanon (2008) on the Factors Affecting Reading Habits of English Major Undergraduates at Phetchaburi Rajabhat University with Regard to English Language Material found that undergraduate students mainly read from text books. Moderate amounts of students in her study read brochures/pamphlets, magazines/journals, newspapers, and cartoon books other than their textbooks. The reading habits of undergraduate English major students were highly affected by the interest in the material such as whether the material had illustrations, was fun to read, whether difficult to comprehend, and whether compact in size.

However, the competency in English and the reading environment did not affect their reading habits. Interestingly the result showed that the different background did not have any affect on the reading habits either.

The study of the Adjustment Problems of Freshmen at Thammasat University by Haruethai Petcharatip (2003) stated that male students had more adjustment problems in finances, living conditions employment and curriculum, and teaching procedure than female students. The study also showed that there was a significantly positive relationship between family condition and finances, living conditions and employment adjustment problems.

According to the study on adjustment problems and the mental health of freshmen at Burapha University, the most problems students had were the Adjustment to College Work (ACW) 81.81%, followed by Curriculum and Teaching Procedure (CTP) 75.71%, and Social and Recreational Activities (SRA) 73.75% (ประภาวดี เหล่าพูลสุข, 2539)