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## **STUDY HABITS OF THE STUDENTS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF PRISHTINA ‘HASAN PRISHTINA’**

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### **Abstract**

*Students cannot use the study skills effectively, until they are not having good habits (Bajwa, Gujjar , Shaheen & Ramzan, 2009). This survey report identifies the main study habits of the students of the University of Prishtina (UP), and their impact on students` learning process. 100 undergraduate students of the UP were participants in this study; they were supposed to fill in a questionnaire of 25 questions. This paper outlines the most common study habits of the students of UP. Findings suggested that students possess effective study habits, and that they are aware of the impact that their study habits have in their learning achievement. The results show that students do a study schedule for each semester, and that students feel quite confident with their study habits. However, significant differences are found between the results, and what was expected. Nevertheless, further work is suggested in order to make adjustments in students` learning process.*

**Keywords:**

Undergraduate Students of University of Prishtina, Study Habits - Time Management, Class Attendance, Study Strategy, Exam Preparation, Note Taking, Cheating

## **I. Introduction**

Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary (2007) defines study habits as the "application of the mental faculties to the acquisition of knowledge. "No one can deny the importance of learning in the whole process of education. This process can only become successful when students have a clear view of their abilities, have good study habits, and are able to use effective study habits. Learning how to study involves putting away the habits and ideas which have made study unpleasant and burdensome, and talking on habits, and ideas which make study more pleasant and fruitful (Bajwa et al., 2009). Study habits are very easy to improve and good habits are very important for the acquisition of knowledge( Pillai, 2012).

According to Azikiwe (1998), good study habits are good asset to learners, because these assist students to attain mastery in areas of specialization and consequent excellent performance, while the opposite constitute constraints to learning and achievement leading to failure. Many research studies have been conducted on the current topic, and experts have agreed that great success in the field of knowledge is attributed to good and consistent study habits.

### **Need For The Study**

The situation in higher education in Kosova is very much in a continuous dilemma; it is continuously facing declination for many years. The survival of Kosova lies in the fast development of education. This development cannot be postponed further. In order to contribute to the national development, University of Prishtina plays an important role in this context. That is why the importance of adopting effective study habits by students in the whole process of learning has a great importance, and it can impact the quality of learning and teaching.

According to Edoth and Alutu (2012), many questions have been raised by teachers, parents and students themselves on why students perform so poorly academically. The teachers and students of UP have the same preoccupations, as well. This is one of the main reasons, why this survey research was taken. In order to find out what stands behind these preoccupations, we concluded that study habits of the students of UP, can give a general mirror about students' poor academic achievement. Through this research paper, the main study habits of the students of UP are identified. But, according to the findings of this research, a contrary statement was emerged. Students of UP, seem to share effective study habits; they manage their study habits very well, and they feel quite confident with their study habits. But, still they complain of failing from the exams.

But, what seems to be the real problem? Did the students answer the questions, sincerely? Do the results concord with the real situation in learning process of UP? Or there are other reasons that should be discovered.

## **II. Methodology**

For the purpose of this study a questionnaire of 25 questions was compiled. This questionnaire was revised twice, after the feedback of the teacher, colleagues, and piloting (see Appendix 1).

### **2.1. Piloting Process**

The piloting process was arranged in order to give the final revision of the questionnaire, and to make it ready for the research. The questionnaire for piloting process was distributed to 8 students of UP (see Appendix 1); 4 of them were female students from the Faculty of Economics, average age 21; 4 of them were female students from English Department(ED) of UP, average age 21. The piloting process was held on one of the dormitories of UP, and during the piloting a stop-watch was used in order to count the time used. Relying on the piloted students, the questionnaire was comprehensible, and easy to follow. The piloting process lasted around 7 minutes for each student. No correction was needed for the questionnaire, and it was ready to be distributed for the research.

### **2.2. Main Study Research**

50 questionnaires were typed in Albanian Language for the students of the Faculty of Economics, in order to fill in the questionnaire easily (as majority of them might not understand English) (see Appendix 2); half of questionnaires were typed in English Language, because the other 50 students whom were distributed the questionnaire were from the English Department (see Appendix 1).

50 questionnaires were distributed to 50 students in the Faculty of Economics residence, who were students of Faculty of Economics, Department of Finances, Management, and Economics, (students of Faculty of Economics were in target for this study, because Faculty of Economics has the largest number of the students in UP, and it was easier to get general statistics about this survey report); A permission was given to us by two professors, in order to deliver the questionnaire to the students. Then, an explanation was given to them about the topic, and extra details were given to them, in order to make them understand what was our aim.

The other half of the questionnaires were distributed to the students of English Department, by the other two members of the group, in the hall of the ED. From one hundred students, 70 of them were females, whereas 30 of them were males. The average of their age is 21. Then, the questionnaires were collected, and there was no problem during the distribution of the questionnaires.

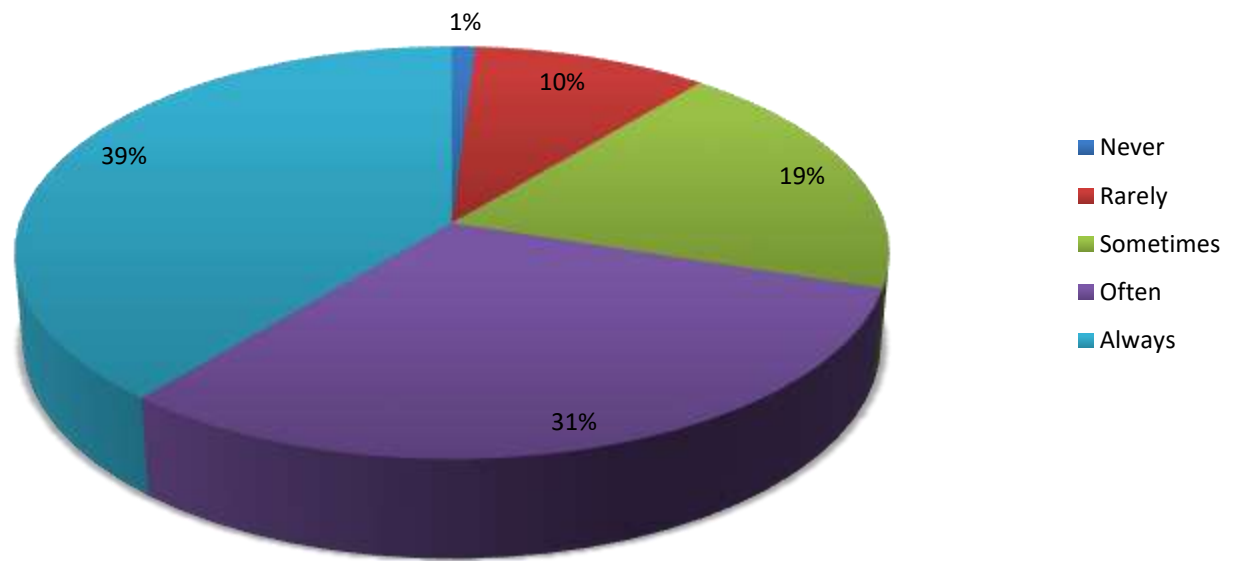
### **III. Results**

This chapter deals with results and analysis of findings. This was based on the information collected from respondents. We are using charts, graphs, in order to show the results in a more visualized form. Some of the findings drawn out from the data analysis are given below.

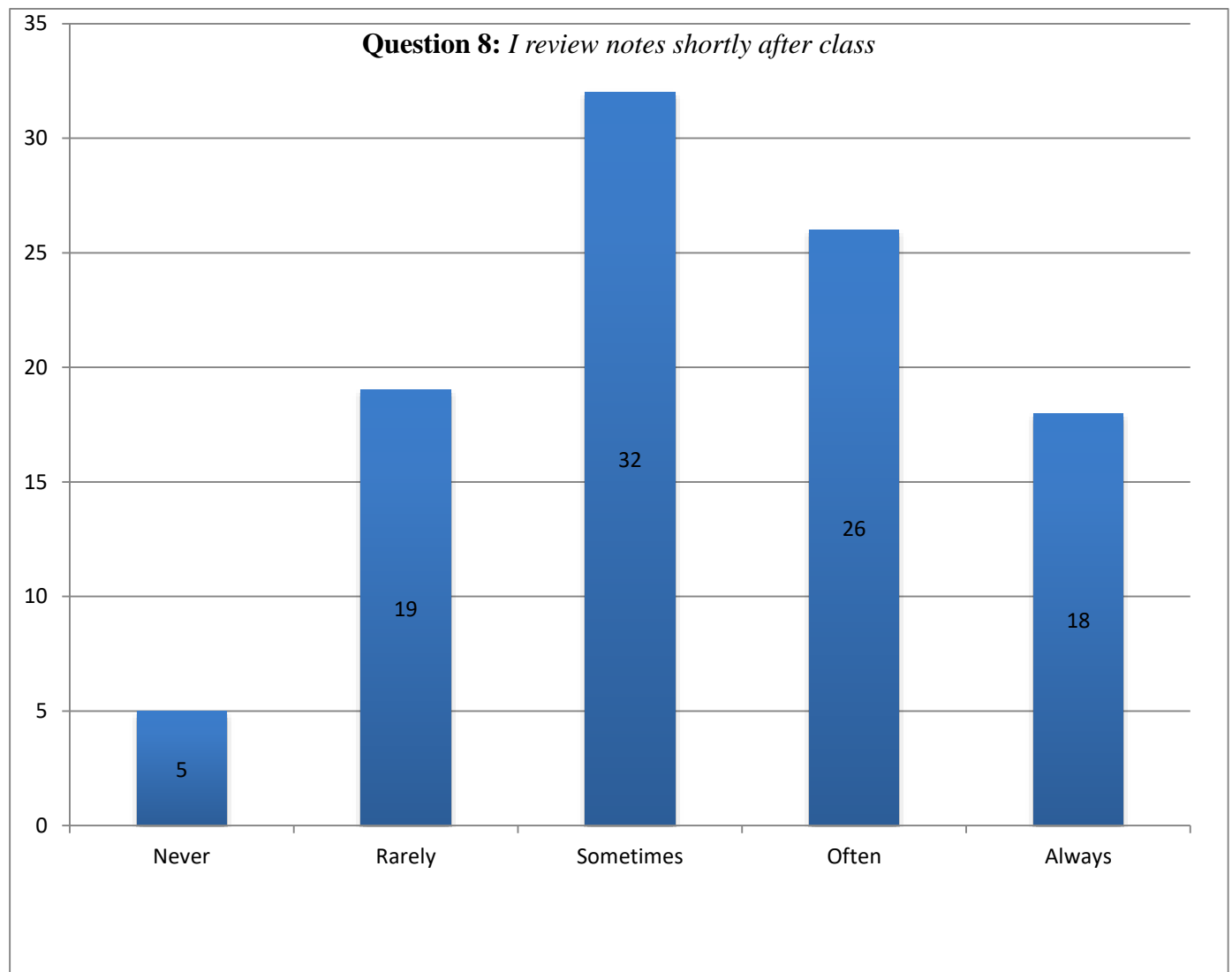
#### **3.1. Main Points Of The Results**

The findings of this study show that students of UP share effective study habits. The majority of the students make a study schedule for each semester, and they stick to it; then 90 % of the students attend lectures regularly, while 50 % of them take notes during the lectures. Most of the students follow the instructions given by teachers, and they finish their assignments before the deadline; whereas the minority of the students cheat during the exams. What is important about this study, is that majority of the students of University of Prishtina feel confident with their study habits, and most of them enjoy learning. Some of the data will be described through the following charts:

**Question 4:** *I have enough time during the week to study*

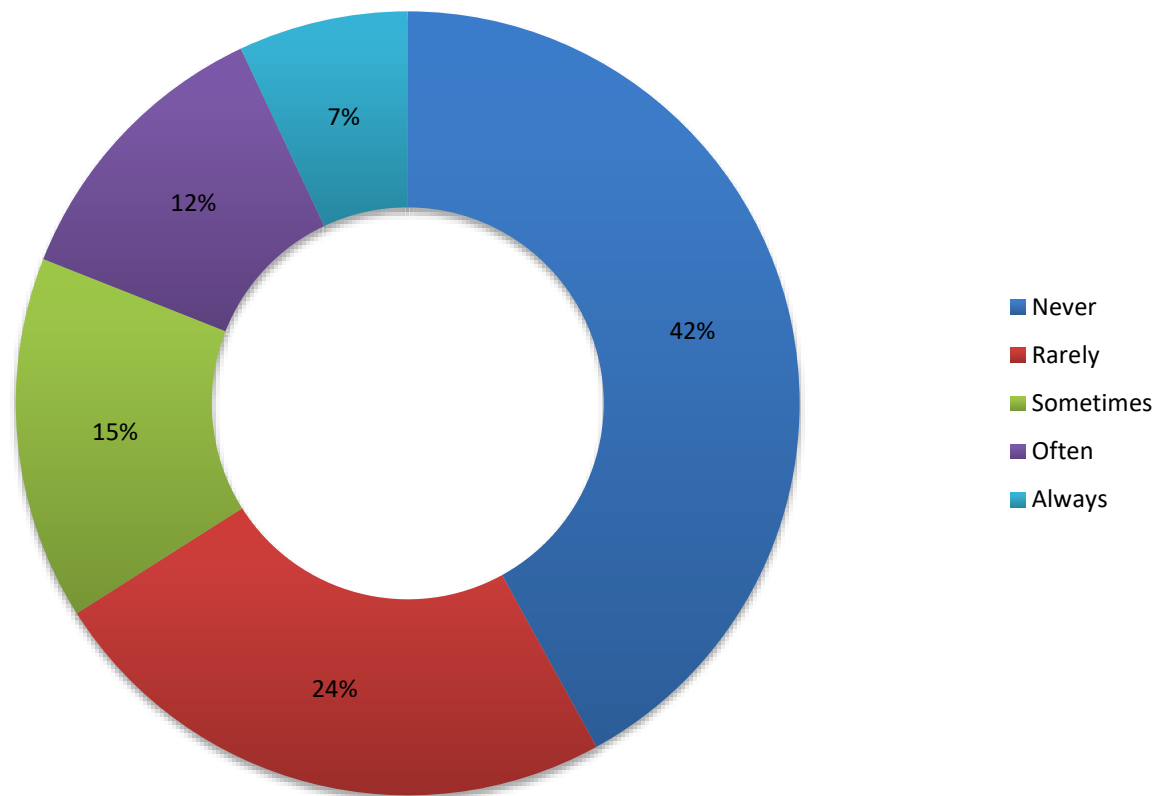


**Fig. 1.** *The percentage of answers for the question number 4*



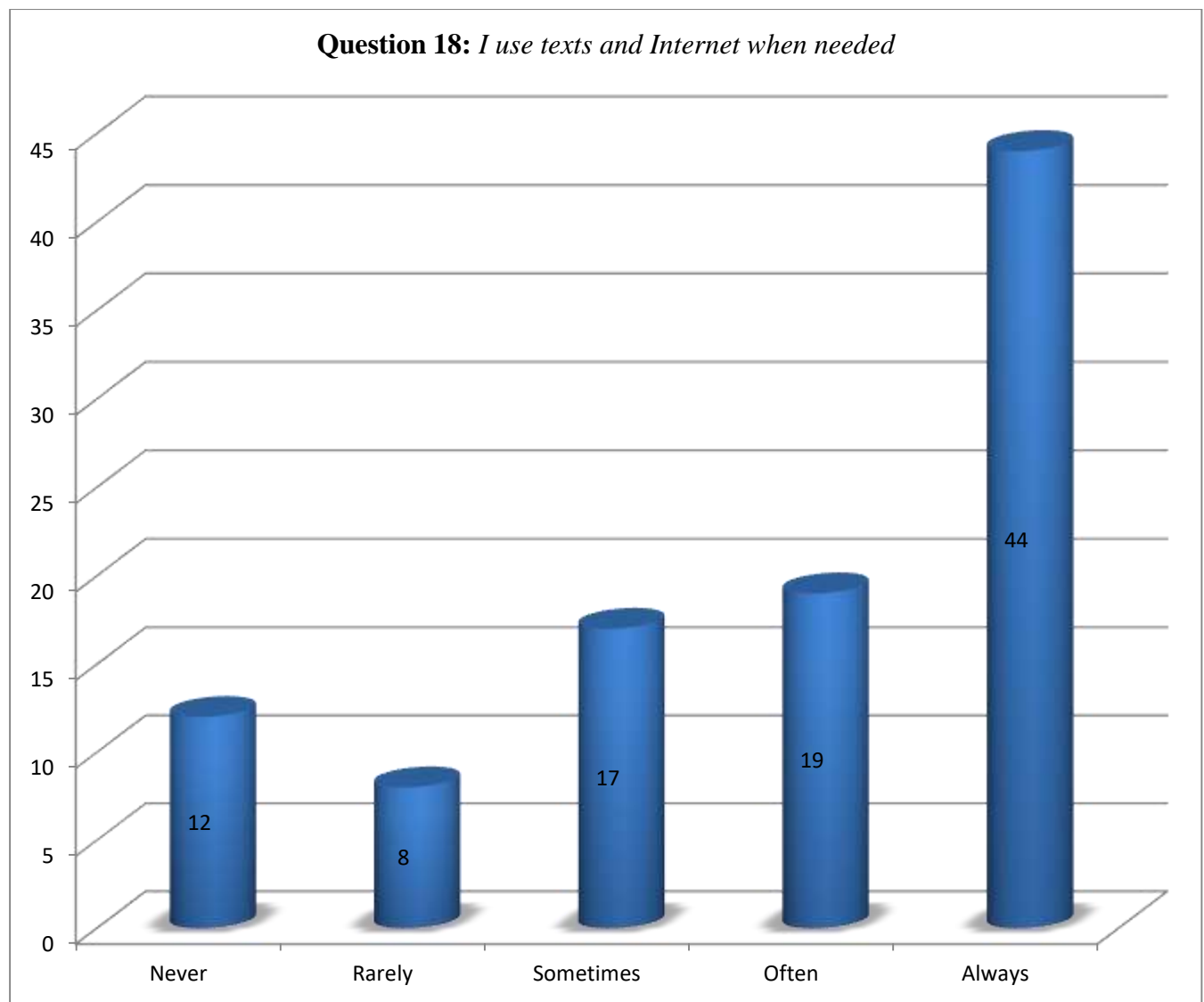
**Fig. 2.** *The schematic view of the answers for the question number 8*

**Question 19:** *I study only for the period of exams*

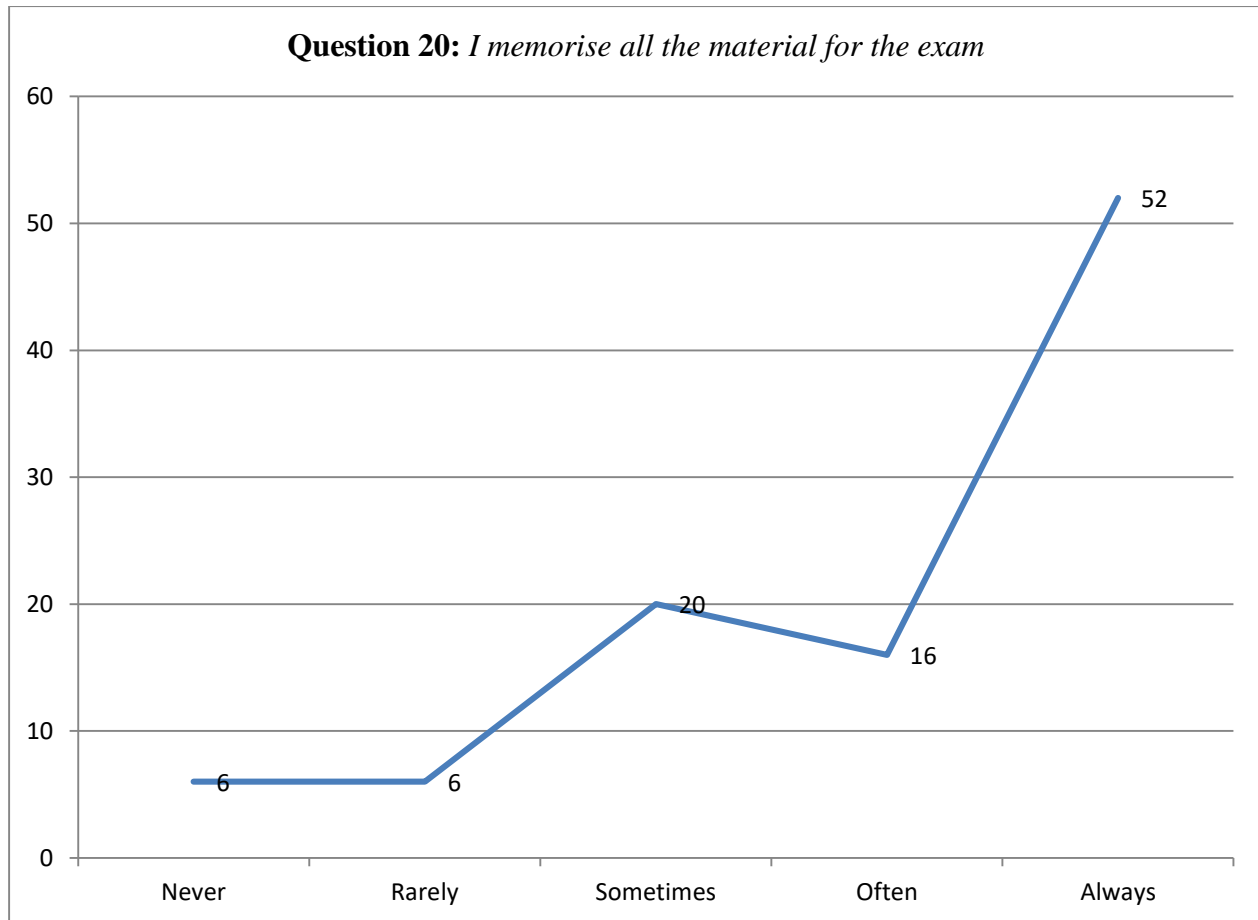


**Fig. 3.** *The percentage of answers for the question number 19*





**Fig. 4.** *The index of answers for the question number 18*



**Fig. 5.** *The interval of the answers for the question number 20*

## **V. Discussion/ Reflection**

The results for study habits of the students of UP are close to what is expected if one takes into account the University regulations. According to findings, the students of UP contribute to their knowledge by using striking and effective study habits, and this appears to be a very positive side of their learning process.

Planning is the key of getting organized, and you should start from the beginning of the semester (Learning Guide, The University of Adelaide, 2009); and the majority of students of the University of Prishtina, who make a study schedule for each semester seem to be aware for the time that they have to study each week. A similar research on effective students' study time has been conducted by Dolton, Marcenaro & Navarro (2001), with the students of Economics and

Education Faculty in Spain. According to this paper, if students use effectively their study time, the exam performance will be more favorable, and they might achieve better grades.

According to Hunter and Tetley (1999), the major argument against lectures is that they are bad educationally because they are teacher-centered and the students are passive, but they according to them lectures lead to the achievement of “thinking goals” and the “changing of students’ attitudes”. Also, a study made by Williams & Fardon (2007), suggests that attending lectures leads students to higher academic performance. Students of UP give a great importance to the attendance of lectures, because they have noticed the benefits of attending them, as according to the results, the majority of them attend lectures regularly. However, students attendance, or more accurately students lack of attendance, at university lectures is a fervently debated topic. Students may still simply see lectures as a source of notes (Hunter & Tetley 1999), but even though students of UP prioritize attending classes, they do not always use that time to take notes; when they take notes, they do not consistently summarize or reorganize those notes to more clearly encode the material. Research on note taking indicates that taking notes in class and reviewing those notes (either in class or afterward) have a positive impact on student learning.

One of these research papers has been conducted by DeZure, Kaplan & Deerman (2001), who emphasize that in summary, note taking facilitates both recall of factual material and the synthesis and application of new knowledge, particularly when notes are reviewed prior to exams. Students of UP have to bear in mind that taking notes during the lectures, and afterwards, is very useful for their knowledge achievement.

Some other significant habits of the students of UP may be that they consider very important the concentration while studying; then they give special attention to difficult courses by studying the least enjoyable subject.

A considerable part of the students of UP, claim that they meet the deadlines of homework, which is not proper. However this phenomena does not seem surprising, because it was expected to get out of this research, according to the experience of teachers, and students. Homework help students to improve their time management and organizational skills and develop perseverance, responsibility, self-confidence, and self-discipline (Blazer, 2009). For over 100 years, U.S. educators have debated the importance of homework and the amount of homework students should be assigned, but nobody can deny the importance of them in the students' academic

achievements. According to the Geiger(2005), homework are considered as "Increasing students' skill proficiency".

The instructions given by teachers, seem to be very comprehensible for the students of UP, as majority of them follow those instructions. This may reflect good, as in this way, the collaboration between students and teachers advances.

Students of UP feel free to ask for help when they struggle with a problem, whether contacting with the teacher or using Internet. This leads us to comprehend that students of UP use Internet for study purposes, which is a good appearance. A similar study has been conducted by Muniandy (2010) in Malaysia, and who supported the idea of by Laurillard (1992) that Internet-based learning can increase understanding of theoretical and critical concepts.

Even that the above results told us that students of UP in general possess effective study habits, when they were asked if they study only for the period of exams, majority of them claimed to do so. In this way, students are more exposed to stress, depression, and they may easily fall from the exam, or they lose the possibility to get higher grades. Also, this occurrence makes students cheat during the exams, as according to the results, an average of UP students claim that they help the other students, during the exams, and they receive help from the others. This phenomenon is be supported by a study made by Batool, Abbas & Naeemi (2011), who claim that cheating has become a disturbing phenomenon for many undergraduate universities around the world, and that the factors taken in to account for cheating are parental pressure, lack of preparation for a particular exam, student's time consumed in extracurricular activities etc. However, according to the results, UP students feel confident about their study habits, and enjoy learning.

Although, there is a significant difference between the real situation in higher education in UP and the results. Teachers complain that UP students have poor academic achievements, whereas students complain for failing from the exams. But, as results show that students possess effective study habits, which make them very good students, where is the problem? It seems that UP students were not honest while filling up the questionnaire, or there might be other occurrences, which obstruct students in their learning process.

## **V. Conclusion**

This research paper intended to investigate the most common study habits of UP students. The results, which got out of this research, in general told us that UP students obtain

efficient study habits. This paper may be considered very successful, because it reached to find out the habits of UP students, and it made possible the recognition with those habits.

However, at the end of this paper it would be safe to say that, according to teachers and students' complaints, there is a convincing contrast between the reality of higher education in UP, and results. Depending on this statement, the question was raised if students were honest when they filled in the questionnaire, or there may be other circumstances, which prevent learning process.

## **VII. Recommendations**

In the light of the analyzed data and on the basis of findings, following recommendations are made for UP students:

- Students should learn continuously, not only for the period of exams, and in this way they will avoid stress, cheating, and they will get higher grades.
- Students should pay more attention to their study schedule, and in this way they will manage their study time more efficiently.
- Students should not memorize the whole material for the exam.
- Students are required to implement new techniques for study, and to improve the old ones.
- Students should take notes during the lectures, and they should review them after the class, and their learning process will be much easier.
- Students should be motivated for adopting good study habits.
- Students should be appreciated in their classes for using good techniques of study so that they may be an example for other students.

## Appendix 1

## Questionnaire

The aim of this study is to explore the issue of study habits, with the students of University of Prishtina. Results will be used for the purpose of this assignment only. Your answers will remain confidential.

It will take 7 minutes to answer the questions.

Please, firstly give some information about yourself.

**Age:** \_\_\_\_\_ (Please write down your age).

**Gender:** F M ( Please circle your gender).

**Study field:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Please write down your Faculty and Department you belong to)

**Please, continue answering each question using the 5-point scale:**

1 =Never    2 = Rarely    3 = Sometimes    4 = Often    5 =Always

**Please circle the appropriate number which best reflects what you actually do as a student**

(example): *I eat healthy food.* 1 2 3 4 5

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I enjoy learning.                          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. I make a study schedule for each semester. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. I stick to the study schedule.             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

4. I have enough time during the week to study. 1 2 3 4 5

**1 =Never 2 = Rarely 3 = Sometimes 4 = Often 5 =Always**

5. I attend lectures regularly. 1 2 3 4 5

6. I listen attentively in class. 1 2 3 4 5

7. I take notes during the lectures. 1 2 3 4 5

8. I review notes shortly after class. 1 2 3 4 5

9. I concentrate well when studying. 1 2 3 4 5

10. While learning I spend more time on difficult courses. 1 2 3 4 5

11. I am able to study subjects that I do not really like. 1 2 3 4 5

12. I finish homework on deadline. 1 2 3 4 5

13. While reading, I read the chapter outlines first. 1 2 3 4 5

14. I try to personally relate to information I am learning. 1 2 3 4 5

15. I use pre- writing strategies (Brainstorming, Outlining .etc) 1 2 3 4 5

16. I follow the instructions given by teachers. 1 2 3 4 5

17. I am able and willing to ask for help when I need it. 1 2 3 4 5





**Fusha e studimit:** \_\_\_\_\_ (

Ju lutem shkruani drejtimin të cilit i përkisni, fakultetin, departamentin)

**Tani, ju lutem plotësoni çdo pyetje të pyetsorit, duke përdorur 5 pikat e mëposhtme :**

1= Asnjëherë    2= Rrallë    3= Nganjëherë    4= Shpesh    5= Gjithmonë

**Ju lutem rrumbullaksoni numrin adekuat që më së shumti përshtatet me shprehitë e juaja të të mësuarit (shembull) :**

*Unë ha ushqim të shëndetshëm*    1 <sup>○</sup> 2 3 4 5

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Unë kënaqem duke mësuar.   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2. Unë për çdo semestër përpiloj një orar të mësimit.                       | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3. Unë i përmbahem orarit tim mësimor.                                      | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 4. Gjatë javës gjej kohë të mjaftueshme për të mësuar.                      | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5. I ndjek ligjëratat me rregull.   | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 6. Unë i dëgjoj me vëmendje ligjëratat.                                     | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 7. Marr shënime gjatë ligjëratave.  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 8. Pas ligjëratës unë i rishikoj shënimet që kam marrë.                     | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 9. Unë koncentrohem shumë kur mësoj.  | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 10. Gjatë mësimit përqendrohem më shumë në lëndët e vështira.               | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 11. Jam në gjendje t'i mësoj lëndët të cilat nuk më pëlqejnë .              | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 12. Gjatë mësimit i parashtroj vetes pyetje rreth asaj se çfarë kam mësuar. | 1 2 3 4 5 |

13.Unë i kryej detyrat në momentin e fundit.	1	2	3	4	5
14.Kur filloj të lexoj një libër, së pari lexoj kapitujt e tij.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Unë përdor strategji të ndryshme para se të shkruaj( Brainstorming)	1	2	3	4	5
16 .I përmbahem udhëzimeve që i marrim nga profesorët.	1	2	3	4	5
17.Jam i/e gatshme të kërkoj ndihmë nga të tjerët kur kam nevojë	1	2	3	4	5
18.Përdor tekste të ndryshme dhe Internetin, kur kam nevojë.	1	2	3	4	5
19.Unë mësoj vetëm gjatë periudhës së provimeve.	1	2	3	4	5
20.Unë mësoj përmendësh të gjithë materialin e nevojshëm për provim.	1	2	3	4	5
21.Kur jam në provim, fillimisht u përgjigjem pyetjeve që i di më së miri.	1	2	3	4	5
22.Gjatë provimit, shpenzoj mjaft kohë për të kuptuar se çka kërkohet të bëj.	1	2	3	4	5
23.Gjatë provimit u ndihmoj studentëve të tjerë.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Gjatë provimit unë kërkoj ndihmë nga të tjerët.	1	2	3	4	5
25. Unë ndjehem rehat me shprehitë e mia të të mësuarit.	1	2	3	4	5

*Faleminderit!*

### Appendix 3

**Table 1.** *Showing the results of the students` responses*

Questions of the survey	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always	TOTAL
1.I enjoy learning.	1	3	27	34	35	100
2.I make a study schedule for each semester.	5	13	30	20	32	100
3.I stick to the study schedule.	5	14	30	27	24	100
4.I have enough time during the week to study.	1	10	19	31	39	100
5.I attend lectures regularly.	1	5	10	28	56	100
6.I listen attentively in class.	0	1	14	33	52	100

7.I take notes during the lectures.	4	5	32	27	32	100
8.I review notes shortly after class.	5	19	32	26	18	100
9.I concentrate well when studying.	1	1	4	36	58	100
10.While learning I spend more time on difficult courses.	3	1	15	35	46	100
11.I am able to study subjects that I do not really like.	2	9	24	33	32	100
12.I finish homework on deadline.	2	8	17	34	39	100
13.While reading, I read the chapter outlines first.	19	27	22	13	19	100
14.I use pre-writing strategies, like: brainstorming , outlining.	14	14	22	25	25	100
15.I try to personally relate to information I am learning.	1	3	23	28	45	100
16.I follow the instructions given by teacher.	1	3	6	32	58	100
17.I am able and willing to ask for help when I need it.	1	3	13	32	51	100
18 I use texts and Internet when needed.	12	8	17	19	44	100
19.I study only for the period of exams.	42	24	15	12	7	100
20. I memorize all the material for the exam.	6	6	20	16	52	100
21. I answer the exam questions I know best, first.	0	7	14	17	62	100
22. I take enough time to understand what the problem asks.	11	11	35	25	18	100
23. I help friends during the exams.	32	25	29	7	7	100
24.While in an exam, I ask for help from the other students.	22	20	10	11	37	100
25. I feel confident with my study habits.	7	9	23	30	31	100

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