



Evaluating the Effectiveness and Structure of Self-Study Periods: A Student Perspective

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Dedication

We warmly dedicate this research paper to our families, whose unwavering encouragement and support have inspired us throughout our academic journey. Our deepest gratitude goes to our esteemed mentor, Mr. Brent Gifford Econg, for his invaluable guidance, dedication, and insightful advice. Special thanks are extended to the ESL Department at Vinschool Ocean Park 2, whose collaborative spirit, resources, and supportive environment significantly contributed to the successful completion of this research. By *Mai Dai Thanh, Do Ba Phat, Nguyen Huu Trac, Mac Linh Dan*

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the effectiveness of self-study periods in fostering independent learning and academic success among Grade 12 Vinsers at Vinschool Ocean Park. Understanding how students utilize self-study periods is essential for optimizing educational strategies and improving student engagement. However, the effectiveness of these sessions depends on factors such as student satisfaction, resource availability, and scheduling convenience.

Using an exploratory quantitative approach, data was collected from 40 randomly selected Grade 12 students through an online survey distributed via QR code. The survey assessed satisfaction levels, perceived effectiveness, scheduling convenience, resource availability and academic performance. Inferential statistical and T-test methods were applied to highlight trends and compare the means in student responses, providing a clear quantitative evaluation of self-study effectiveness and the results were visualized using Python-generated bar charts from initial data harvested from Google Forms. Findings indicate that while most students find self-study periods beneficial, some report challenges related to limited study materials, inadequate quiet spaces, and scheduling misalignment with their productivity cycles. Despite these concerns, students generally recognize the value of self-study in improving focus, time management, and academic performance.

To enhance the effectiveness of self-study periods, this study recommends improving access to study resources, optimizing scheduling, and incorporating structured academic support. Future research with a larger, more diverse sample is encouraged to provide a broader perspective on the long-term academic benefits of self-study habits.

Keywords: *Self-study, Independent learning, Vinsers*

I. INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Self-study periods have become a critical component of modern education, providing students with structured independent learning time to reinforce classroom instruction and develop essential academic skills. These periods allow students to review course materials, complete assignments, and prepare for exams at their own pace. At Vinschool Ocean Park, Grade 12 students, commonly referred to as Vinsers, rely on these sessions to manage their workload effectively as they transition toward university and future careers.

Research suggests that well-structured self-study periods can lead to improved retention, time management, and academic performance (Uriah, 2024). Moreover, the effectiveness of self-study is enhanced when students have access to structured learning environments, including digital resources and well-designed study sessions, which contribute to better academic outcomes (Nurmala, Reza, & Hutagalung, 2024). However, if self-study periods are poorly structured or lack essential resources, students may struggle with distractions, inefficient study habits or decreased motivation.

Understanding how Vinsers perceive and utilize self-study periods is essential for optimizing their effectiveness. By examining student experiences at Vinschool Ocean Park, this study seeks to provide insights into whether self-study periods are meeting their intended purpose or if adjustments are needed to enhance student learning.

Statement of the Problem

Self-study periods are intended to help students take control of their own learning, yet their actual effectiveness remains uncertain. While some students thrive in independent study settings, others may struggle due to limited resources, lack of guidance or inconvenient scheduling.

At Vinschool Ocean Park, there is no existing exploratory study on how Grade 12 Vinsers perceive and utilize their self-study periods. Without this data, educators and school administrators cannot make informed decisions about whether these study sessions are effective, need improvement or whether to discontinue or not. This study addresses this gap by assessing student satisfaction, effectiveness, and the overall impact of self-study periods, aiming to determine whether they are structured in a way that maximizes learning opportunities.

Research Objectives

This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness and structure of self-study periods among Grade 12 Vinsers at Vinschool Ocean Park. Specifically, it seeks to:

1. Assess student satisfaction with the current self-study system.
2. Determine whether self-study periods effectively support academic goals.
3. Evaluate the availability and adequacy of resources (e.g., study materials, quiet spaces, teacher support).
4. Analyze the convenience of scheduling and how it affects productivity.
5. Identify the most valued aspects of self-study periods and areas that need improvement.

Research Questions

To guide this study, the following research questions were formulated:

1. *How satisfied are Grade 12 Vinsers with the structure and duration of self-study periods?* (Fig.1)
2. *To what extent do these periods help students focus on their academic goals?* (Fig. 2)
3. *How do Vinsers perceive the availability of resources during self-study?* (Fig. 3)
4. *Are self-study periods scheduled at convenient times within the school day?* (Fig. 4)
5. *What aspects of self-study periods do Vinsers find most helpful?* Fig. 5)
 - a. *Choosing Study Time*
 - b. *Different Materials*
 - c. *Learning at own pace*
6. *How has your GPA changed over the last semester?* (Fig. 6)
7. *Correlation Comparison of Self-Study Effectiveness vs GPAs* (Fig.7)

Significance of the Study

The findings of this research will be valuable for students, educators, and school administrators. By understanding how Vinsers perceive self-study periods, the school can make data-driven improvements to enhance their structure and effectiveness.

- For Vinsers – Identifies challenges they face and potential improvements to make self-study periods more productive.
- For Educators – Provides insights into how Vinsers use self-study time and whether additional teacher support is needed.
- For School Administrators – Offers evidence-based recommendations on improving self-study policies, scheduling, and resource allocation to support student learning.

By evaluating the effectiveness of self-study periods, this research will contribute to enhancing student academic performance and fostering independent learning skills at Vinschool Ocean Park.

Scope and Limitations

This study focuses on Grade 12 Vinsers at Vinschool Ocean Park, looking at their experiences with self-study periods—how they feel about the structure, effectiveness, and overall impact. Since the research is based on survey responses from a single school and grade level, the findings may not fully reflect the experiences of younger students or those in different academic settings. The study also relies on self-reported data, meaning students' answers are based on their personal perceptions, which may not always align with actual study habits. With a sample size of 40 students, the insights provide a good snapshot but may not represent the entire grade. Even with these limitations, the study offers valuable takeaways that can help improve self-study sessions and support students' learning experiences.

II. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

We used a descriptive quantitative survey to explore how Grade 12 students at Vinschool Ocean Park experience and perceive their self-study periods. Surveys are great for capturing students' opinions and attitudes clearly, helping us understand their experiences in detail (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Participants

Our study involved 40 randomly selected Grade 12 students from Vinschool Ocean Park. Random selection ensures each student had an equal chance of participating, making our findings more representative of all Grade 12 students at the school (Taherdoost, 2016).

Data Collection Instrument

We created an easy-to-use online survey distributed via a QR code. Students answered questions about:

- How satisfied they were with the current self-study setup.
- Whether self-study helped them achieve academic goals.
- If they had adequate access to resources, such as study materials, quiet spaces, or teacher support.
- Whether the scheduling of these periods matched their personal productivity cycles.
- Suggestions for improving self-study sessions.

The survey had both closed-ended questions for clear numerical insights and open-ended ones to let students express their ideas and concerns in their own words.

Data Collection Procedure

Students easily accessed our survey by scanning a QR code displayed prominently at Vinschool Ocean Park and on frequently visited online platforms. This straightforward approach helped students feel comfortable and confident that their responses remained anonymous, enabling them to share their genuine thoughts without hesitation. To give students sufficient flexibility and avoid pressure, the survey was available for one full week, ensuring broad participation and reliable data collection.

Data Analysis

We thoughtfully analyzed the students' responses using descriptive statistics, focusing primarily on frequency distributions and percentages to uncover clear trends and meaningful patterns. To make our findings more engaging and user-friendly, we converted the initial infographic results from Google Forms into clearer visualizations using Python. These improved graphics allowed stakeholders to easily understand and connect with the insights gathered from the students' experiences.

Ethical Considerations

Maintaining ethical standards was essential throughout our study. We ensured participation was entirely voluntary and clearly communicated the study's purpose, procedures, and benefits to all students. Informed consent was obtained from each participant, emphasizing our respect for their choices and privacy. Strict confidentiality and anonymity were rigorously upheld, making certain students felt safe and comfortable openly sharing their authentic experiences.

III. RESULTS

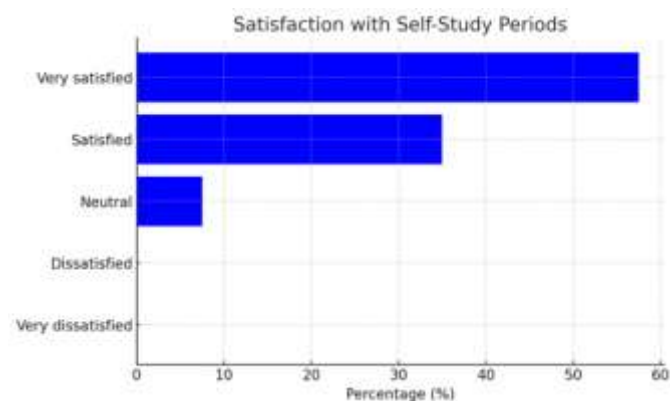


Figure 1

Most students are happy with the structure and duration of their self-study periods, with 57.5% saying they are *very satisfied* and 35% feeling *satisfied*. This shows that the system is generally working well for students. However, 7.5% of students were neutral, meaning they don't have strong feelings either way. While there are no major complaints, this suggests there might be small ways to improve the experience for everyone.

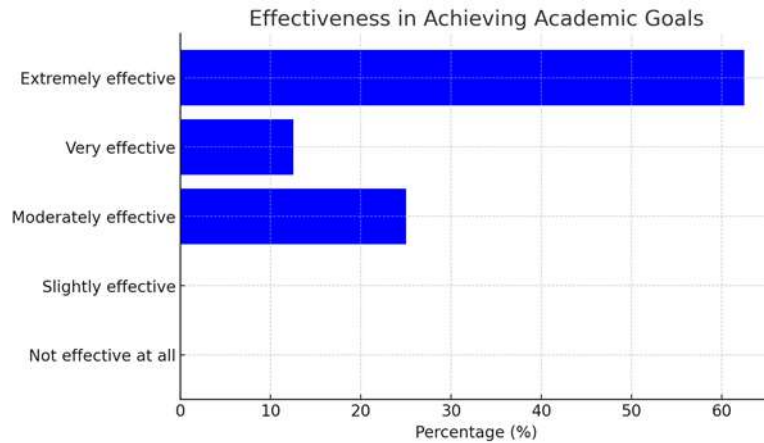


Figure 2

When it comes to how well self-study helps students reach their academic goals, 62.5% believe it is *extremely effective*, and another 12.5% find it *very effective*. However, 25% rated it as only *moderately effective*, meaning some students feel they could be getting more out of these study sessions. No one found them ineffective, which is a great sign, but the fact that a quarter of students feel they're only somewhat helpful suggests that adding a bit more structure or guidance could make self-study even more beneficial.

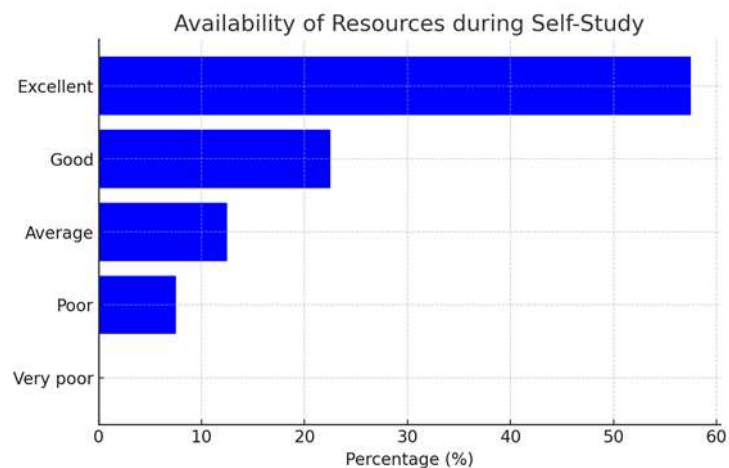


Figure 3

Most students feel they have what they need during self-study, with 57.5% rating resource availability as *excellent* and 22.5% as *good*. However, 12.5% said resources were just *average*, and 7.5% felt they were *poor*. This means that while the majority of students have access to the materials, space, and support they need, a small group may struggle with limited resources—whether that's a quiet place to work, teacher guidance, or study materials.

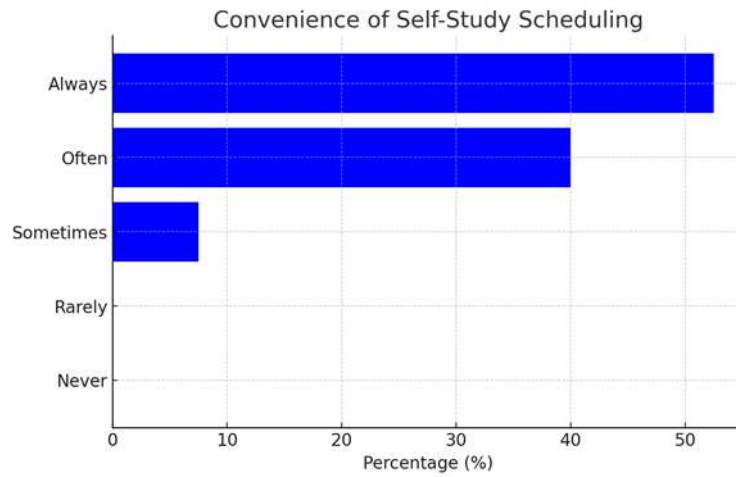


Figure 4

For most students, self-study periods are scheduled at convenient times, with 52.5% saying they are *always well-timed* and 40% saying they are *often convenient*. However, 7.5% of students feel the timing is only *sometimes convenient*, which suggests that while the scheduling generally works well, there might be a few students who find it clashes with other responsibilities or their personal study preferences.

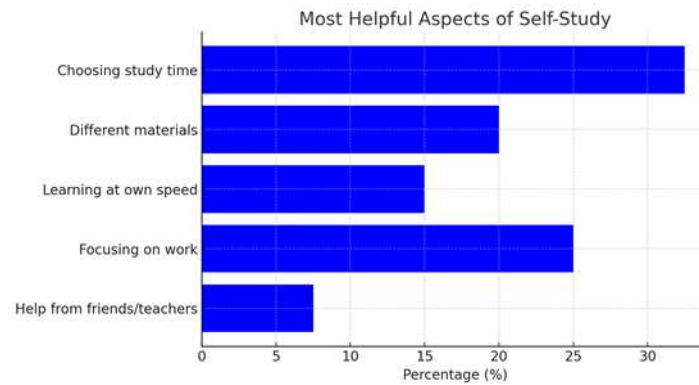


Figure 5

When asked what they find most helpful about self-study periods, 32.5% of students said they *value choosing their own study time*, while 25% appreciate *having a quiet, distraction-free environment*. Others highlighted *access to different learning materials* (20%) and *being able to learn at their own pace* (15%). Interestingly, only 7.5% said *help from teachers or friends* was the most helpful aspect. This suggests that most students prefer to work independently and appreciate having control over their study time, though some may still benefit from occasional guidance.

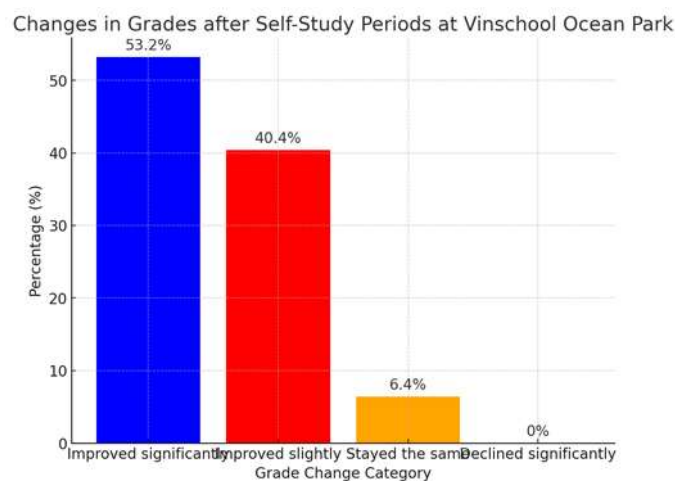


Figure 6

The chart indicates that self-study periods at Vinschool Ocean Park had a predominantly positive impact on students' grades, with 53.2% improving significantly and 40.4% improving slightly, while only 6.4% saw no change and 0% experienced a decline. These results suggest that self-study is an effective strategy for academic growth, likely due to enhanced focus, self-regulation, and structured study environments. However, factors such as selection bias and external academic support could have contributed to these outcomes.

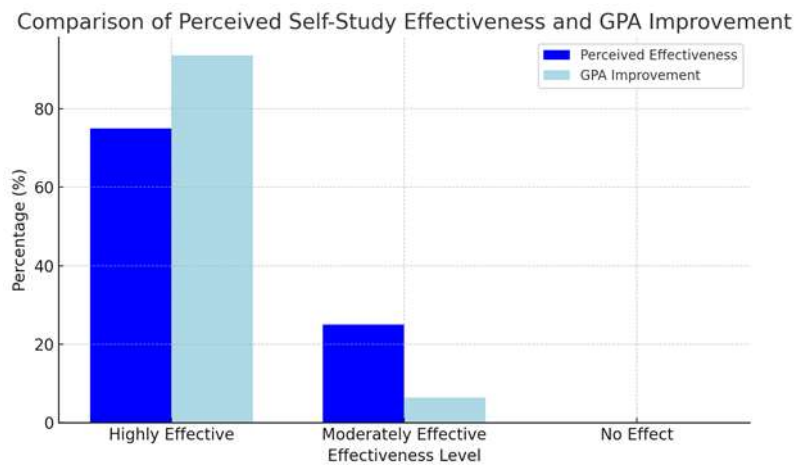


Figure 7 (Comparison of Figure 2 & Figure 6- Perceived Effectiveness vs. GPA improvement)

When it comes to academic success, self-study seems to be a game-changer for most students. About 75% believe it helps them stay on track with their goals, and that lines up with the 93.6% who actually saw their grades improve. However, for the 25% who only found it “moderately effective,” the results weren’t as dramatic.

The pattern is clear—students who fully commit to self-study tend to see real improvements. Those who rated it as “highly effective” not only believed in its benefits but also experienced the biggest GPA gains, proving that a well-structured study approach really does pay off. Even those who weren’t entirely convinced still saw some benefits, just not as much. And since no one reported that self-study had no effect at all, the key takeaway is simple: when done right, self-study almost always leads to better results.

This finding aligns with research by Bonsaksen et al. (2017), who stated that “*engagement in structured self-study activities was strongly correlated with academic performance improvements across multiple education levels*” (p. 6). Their study reinforces the idea that effective self-study isn’t just about putting in hours—it’s about having a plan, staying disciplined, and using the right strategies. When students approach independent learning with focus and structure, the impact on their academic performance becomes undeniable.

III. DISCUSSIONS

Summary of Key Findings

The findings of this study suggest that Grade 12 Vinsers at Vinschool Ocean Park generally perceive self-study periods as beneficial, although there are areas that require improvement. A majority of students reported high satisfaction with the structure and duration of self-study sessions. The effectiveness of self-study in helping students achieve academic goals was also rated positively, with most students finding these periods useful for concentration and task completion. This aligns with research by Silva et al. (2023), who found that increased and structured self-study time significantly enhances academic performance, especially when students employ self-regulated learning strategies. However, our study also identified challenges related to resource availability and scheduling. While some students found the resources sufficient, a portion of respondents indicated that limited access to study materials, quiet spaces, or teacher guidance affected their productivity. Additionally, although most students considered the scheduling of self-study periods convenient, a small percentage found it misaligned with their learning habits.

Interpretation & Comparison with Literature

These findings reinforce previous studies that emphasize structured self-study as a driver of academic success (Uriah, 2024). Independent learning fosters self-discipline, time management, and retention of information, all of which are essential for high school students preparing for major exams. Moreover, studies show that the effectiveness of self-study is significantly enhanced when students have access to structured learning environments, including digital resources and well-designed study materials (Nurmala, Reza, & Hutagalung, 2024). The identified issue regarding resource availability reflects similar concerns found in educational studies. A lack of adequate resources can negatively impact study efficiency and engagement, particularly if students struggle to find a quiet and conducive learning space (Nurmala et al., 2024). Furthermore, research suggests that personalized and flexible study schedules are crucial for maximizing learning efficiency, which may explain why some students in this study expressed concerns about the timing of self-study periods.

Implications of the Study

The findings of this study highlight important takeaways for students, teachers, and school administrators at Vinschool Ocean Park.

For Students:

Understanding how self-study impacts learning can help students take a more active role in shaping their study habits. Since most students found self-study effective but some struggled with resources or scheduling, adopting personalized strategies—such as time-blocking, setting clear study goals, or utilizing digital resources—can make independent learning even more productive.

For Teachers:

While students generally appreciate the flexibility of self-study, some still feel they need more guidance. Teachers can play a key role by providing structured study materials, offering optional consultation hours during self-study periods, or integrating digital resources that students can access independently. By giving students more direction without micromanaging their study time, educators can help them make the most of these sessions.

For School Administrators:

The school can enhance self-study effectiveness by making small but impactful adjustments.

- Creating more designated quiet study zones, such as in libraries or classrooms, can ensure that students have a conducive learning environment.
- Ensuring that teachers or academic staff are available for occasional check-ins could help students who need extra support without making self-study feel like a supervised class.
- Adjusting the timing of self-study sessions to better fit students' peak focus periods or providing some flexibility could make these sessions more effective for different learning styles.

By refining these areas, Vinschool Ocean Park can ensure that self-study not only remains a flexible and empowering tool for students but also provides the structure and support needed for everyone to benefit.

Limitations of the Study

While this study provides valuable insights into how Grade 12 students experience self-study, a few limitations should be considered. The research focused on 40 students from a single school, which may not fully represent the experiences of students in different grades or educational settings. Future studies could expand the sample to include various grade levels or schools to explore whether self-study effectiveness varies across student demographics. Additionally, because the study relied on self-reported data including GPA improvements, responses may have been influenced by personal perception rather than actual academic performance. Combining survey insights with objective performance metrics, such as GPA tracking over time, would provide a more precise measurement of self-study's impact.

Another limitation is that this study focused on general self-study effectiveness rather than the specific study techniques students used. Since different strategies—such as active recall, note-taking, or digital learning tools—can impact learning outcomes in different ways, future research could explore which methods work best for different types of learners. Despite these limitations, this study lays an important foundation for understanding how structured self-study contributes to academic success and highlights areas where students and educators can optimize independent learning.

Conclusion & Recommendations

This study shows that Grade 12 students at Vinschool Ocean Park generally find self-study periods helpful and effective. Most students appreciate the flexibility and structure, allowing them to choose when and how to study in a quiet environment. This freedom helps them stay focused and manage their academic goals, and importantly, no students reported self-study as completely ineffective, proving its value in their school experience.

That said, there's still room for improvement. Some students mentioned that finding quiet study spaces, accessing study materials, or getting support from teachers can be challenging. While the scheduling of self-study sessions works well for most, a few students feel it doesn't always match their study habits or workload. Additionally, about 25% of students found self-study only moderately effective, which suggests that some might benefit from more structured guidance on study techniques.

To make self-study even more beneficial, Vinschool Ocean Park could consider a few key improvements: (1) Setting up more dedicated study zones like library spaces or quiet classrooms, (2) Ensuring teachers or academic staff are available during self-study sessions for extra support, (3) Offering optional study workshops to help students refine their study methods, and (4) Adjusting schedules or allowing more flexibility for those who need structured study time.

By implementing these enhancements, Vinschool Ocean Park can ensure that self-study periods become an even more valuable tool for students, catering to different learning preferences while maintaining academic excellence. Strengthening these sessions will not only help students feel more prepared for exams but also equip them with the independent learning skills they need to succeed in higher education and beyond.

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