



EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SELF-REGULATED LEARNING ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MEEZAM

Lum Bobga Jacqueline Achiri

Guidance Counselor & Educational Psychologist
Department of Educational Psychology, Faculty of Education
University Of Bamenda.
Email: lumja6268@yahoo.com

Abstract

The study was set out to evaluate the effectiveness of self-regulated learning on students' academic achievement in selected secondary schools in Mezam Division. Two specific research questions were formulated to investigate how goal setting and study habits influence students' academic achievement. Literature was reviewed from conceptual, theoretical, and empirical perspectives. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design and randomly sampled 120 students from two selected secondary schools; GBHS Bayelle and CKHS Nkwen. A structured questionnaire with a reliability coefficient of 0.811 was used to collect quantitative data. Data were coded, cleaned, and analysed using SPSS Version 27 and Microsoft Excel 2021. Descriptive statistics; frequency table, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used to describe students' responses and answer the research questions, while hypotheses were tested using simple linear regression at the 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that goal setting has a statistically significant ($p = 0.001$) positive effect on students' academic achievement and accounted for 23.7% of the variation ($R^2 = 0.237$). Similarly, study habits showed a statistically significant ($p = 0.001$) positive effect on academic achievement and explained 28.8% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.288$). The results indicated that students who set clear academic goals and practice effective study habits tend to perform better academically. Relying on these findings, the study concluded that self-regulated learning, particularly goal setting and effective study habits, play important role in improving students' academic achievement. The study recommended that teachers and parent should guide students in setting clear academic goals and developing good study habits. Additionally, School administrators should intensify compulsory self-regulated learning practices among students by providing libraries and quiet study spaces in schools and setting aside specific time for students to study while in school.

Keywords:

Self-Regulated Learning, Academic Achievement, Goal Setting, Study Habits, Secondary School Students, Mezam Division.

INTRODUCTION

Education in the 21st century is no longer only about what students learn, but also about how they learn. Modern education systems reiterate on the development of independent learners who can take responsibility for their own academic success. One of the most important approaches that supports this goal is self-regulated learning (SRL). Self-regulated learning refers to the process through which students actively control their thoughts, behaviors, and emotions in order to achieve their academic goals (Zimmerman, 2002; Pintrich, 2000; Winne & Perry, 2000). It also includes the regulation of motivation, cognition, and behavior, which are critical for academic success (Boekaerts, 1999; Schunk, 2005). This means that rather than depending entirely on teachers, students who practice self-regulation can become active participants in their own learning process.

According to Pintrich (2000) and Zimmerman (2002), self-regulated learning is not simply a skill but a cyclical process involving three main phases: planning (forethought), performance, and self-reflection. In the planning stage, learners set goals and decide how to approach tasks. During performance, they monitor their progress and apply learning strategies. Finally, during self-reflection, they evaluate their outcomes and make adjustments for future learning. This process can therefore make students more effective learners because in this way they are constantly improving their strategies based on feedback and experience, they go through. Studies have shown that students who set goals, manage their time effectively, monitor their understanding, and evaluate their performance tend to perform better in school than those who do not (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2011). These students become more motivated, more disciplined, and more capable of overcoming academic challenges. In contrast, students who lack self-regulation often struggle with poor study habits, lack of focus, and low academic performance.

Looking at the secondary schools, especially within Mezam Division in the North West Region of Cameroon, student academic performance remains a major concern. Although challenges have often been identified to stem from overcrowded classrooms, limited teaching resources and diverse student abilities (Tambo, 2012), there are also possibilities that the way students become aware of themselves and how they study, can have a major role to play in their learning as a whole. In such a context, self-regulated learning can become particularly important because it shifts part of the responsibility for learning from the teacher to the student. Self-regulated learning often includes key practices such as goal setting, study planning, development of effective study habits, and self-evaluation. Goal setting helps students focus on what they want to achieve. Study planning allows them to organize their learning activities. Study habits determine how effectively they learn, while self-evaluation helps them identify their strengths and weaknesses. Together, these elements can play a key role in their learning and achievement, therefore, explaining why the paper seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of self-regulated learning on students' academic achievement in secondary schools in Mezam Division.

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Tracing the historical evolution of teaching and learning, it is easy to find that most systems in many parts of the world, have once relied heavily on teacher-centered approaches, where the teacher is the main source of knowledge and students are expected to listen, memorize, and reproduce information. According to (MINEDUB, 2019), while this technique often ensures that syllabuses are covered, it does not adequately address the issue with individual learning

needs of students. As a result, many students struggle academically because they are not actively involved in their learning process. As time went on, most educators began to see that students learn more effectively when they are actively engaged in the learning process. This led to the development of learner-centered approaches, among which self-regulated learning has gained significant attention. The concept of self-regulated learning is grounded in social cognitive theory, developed by Albert Bandura (1977), which explains the interaction between personal factors, behavior, and the learning environment. According to Bandura, learners are not passive recipients of knowledge but active agents who can control their learning through self-reflection and self-motivation.

Barry Zimmerman (2000), one of the leading scholars in this field, expanded on Bandura's ideas and developed a comprehensive model of self-regulated learning. He described self-regulation as a process in which learners generate thoughts, feelings, and actions that are directed toward achieving their goals. His explanation of this concept pointed the importance of cognitive, motivational, and behavioral aspects of learning. Other researchers have identified that, students who engage in goal setting are more likely to stay focused and motivated. Those who develop effective study plans are better able to manage their time and complete tasks efficiently, while good study habits, such as regular revision and active note-taking, help improve understanding and retention of information. These processes can be very important to academic achievement because they help students become independent learners.

Pintrich (2000) also contributed to the understanding of self-regulated learning by pointing the role of motivation and metacognition. According to him, students must not only use cognitive strategies but also regulate their motivation and emotions in order to succeed academically. This means that students must believe in their ability to succeed (self-efficacy), stay motivated, and manage distractions. Yet the story is not always the same especially in some secondary schools within our local African context, where many educational systems still face some challenges such as, large class sizes, and lack of access to modern teaching tools. These challenges sometimes make it difficult to implement effective teaching strategies that cater to all students. These issues become more evident in local situation like secondary schools in Mezam division where many students often depend heavily on teachers and may lack the skills needed to manage their own learning effectively (Tambo, 2012).

In some cases, it becomes worst when students find it difficult to understand assignments, manage their time, or choose the right study methods. According to Ngwen (2016) such students often delay in doing their work, forget assignments, or prefer doing other activities instead of studying hence, showing signs of procrastination and lack of discipline. This often make the students to lose focus easily, become discouraged and sometimes achieve poorly in test. Also, teachers often rely heavily on note-giving and may fail to guide students on how to learn independently, hence leaving the students to remain passive and dependent. The introduction of self-regulated learning in such a situation can serve as a panacea to these students' challenges.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite efforts by educational stakeholders to improve academic performance in Mezam Division, many students continue to underperform. The reliance on traditional instructional methods has failed to meet the diverse learning needs of students. Self-regulated learning offers

a promising alternative; however, its implementation and effectiveness in this specific context remain largely unexplored. Observations by the researcher and anecdotal evidence from schools suggest that students who are engaged in setting personal learning goals and cultivating effective study habits, and regularly assessing their progress tend to perform better. This raises the question: does self-regulation truly enhance academic achievement among secondary school students in Mezam Division?

SPECIFIC RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

To examine the effect of goal setting on students' academic achievement.

To investigate how study habits influence students' academic achievement.

SPECIFIC RESEARCH QUESTIONS

How does goal setting affect students' academic achievement?

How do study habits influence students' academic achievement?

SPECIFIC HYPOTHESES

H₀₁: Goal setting has no significant effect on students' academic achievement.

H_{a1}: Goal setting has a significant effect on students' academic achievement.

H₀₃: Study habits have no significant effect on students' academic achievement.

H_{a3}: Study habits have a significant effect on students' academic achievement.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Self-Regulated Learning (SRL)

The concept of self-regulated learning (SRL) has been explained from different perspective. Pintrich (2000) defines self-regulated learning as an active and constructive process where learners set goals, monitor their cognition, motivation, and behavior, and adjust their learning strategies to reach their goals, meaning students who regulate themselves are better at planning and monitoring and thus can achieve better academically. Panadero (2017) on the other hand explains self-regulated learning as a combination of cognitive, metacognitive, motivational, emotional, and behavioral processes that students initiate to improve their understanding, suggesting that learners who use these processes more effectively tend to achieve higher learning outcomes because they are more able to control their effort and strategy use. Zimmerman and Schunk (1989) go further to describe self-regulated learning as a cyclical process in which students take initiative in goal setting, execution, and reflection phases, helping them improve achievement over time as they learn from past results. From a cognitive perspective, Boekaerts (1999) views self-regulated learning as involving both cognitive regulation and emotional regulation, pointing that learners who can manage both their study strategies and emotions are more persistent and effective in reaching academic goals. Winne and Perry (2000) focus on self-regulated learning as involving task definition, strategy application, and adaptation, meaning self-regulated learners are skilled at choosing and changing strategies based on task demands, which leads to better achievement. According to the integrative model discussed in educational research, self-regulated learning includes metacognitive awareness and regulation of motivation and behavior, meaning students who actively plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning are more autonomous and academically successful (Mercadal, 2021). Therefore, putting these together, self-regulated learning can also be understood to be a stage at which learners are able to take responsibility for their learning

environment through self-awareness and responsible study habits; which in turn may improve their ability to overcome learning challenges and achieve higher outcomes.

Goal Setting

According to *goal-setting theory*, a goal is the aim or outcome that a learner intends to accomplish, and setting specific, clear, and challenging goals motivates individuals to focus their attention and effort on goal-relevant tasks (Locke & Latham, 2002). When learners set well-defined goals, they are more likely to commit effort, persist longer, and use effective learning strategies, all of which support better academic outcomes (Locke et al., 1981). Social-cognitive models of learning also explain that goal setting is a key part of how students regulate their own learning, because setting goals gives learners a target against which they can monitor progress and adjust their study behaviour (Pintrich, 2000 as cited in Panadero, 2017; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002). Studies suggest that goals that are specific, attainable, and appropriately challenging increase motivation and enhance performance because they encourage students to stay focused and evaluate their progress frequently (Locke & Latham, 2002; Epton et al., 2017). In addition to general goal-setting theory, *achievement goal theory* describes how different types of goals; such as mastery goals that focus on understanding and improving competence, and performance goals that focus on demonstrating ability relative to others, influence students' engagement and achievement outcomes (Meece et al., 2006; Hulleman et al., 2010). Studies show that mastery goals are often associated with deeper learning, persistence, and better understanding, which can contribute positively to academic success (Meece et al., 2006). Additionally, studies on daily and proximal goals (small short-term goals) indicate that when students set specific study goals, such as completing a chapter by a certain time, they tend to perform better and earn higher grades than when they do not set such goals (Acee et al., 2012). Goal setting is also explained with respect to self-efficacy, as learners who believe they can achieve their goals are more likely to engage in and persist with challenging tasks, which in turn enhances academic performance (Bandura, 1997; Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2021). These therefore explanations go a long way to indicate that, goal setting can play an essential role in helping students organize their effort, stay motivated, and achieve higher academic outcomes.

Study Habits

Study habits are the regular actions, methods, and routines that students use when learning and preparing for their schoolwork, and these habits influence how well students perform academically. Pane et al. (2015) describe study habits as the individual behaviours students show while studying, such as scheduling study time, managing time, taking notes, choosing a good place to study, and using effective learning techniques, all of which can help students learn more and perform better in tests and exams. According to Credé and Kuncel (2008), study habits involve a variety of techniques and practices that increase motivation and improve learning. Good study habits help learners stay focused, understand material more deeply, and remain organized, and these habits are linked with higher academic success because they encourage consistent effort and better preparation. Other research defines study habits as ways of behaving that a student develops over time, such as reading regularly, reviewing notes, working with peers, or structuring time effectively, which also support learning. Jafari et al. (2019) found that there is a significant relationship between study habits and academic achievement, and students who show strong study habits tend to score higher academically than those without such routines. Muhammad et al. (2023) argue that study habits are the regular practices and behaviours students exhibit during their study sessions, while Rabia et al. (2017)

explain that study habits can include both effective actions like focused reading and counterproductive actions like skipping study tasks, all of which can contribute to academic performance. From these viewpoints, researchers agree that study habits are not just about the quantity of time spent studying, but also about the quality, consistency, and effectiveness of study behaviours, meaning that students who develop disciplined, purposeful study routines are more likely to achieve better academic outcomes.

Theoretical Perspective

The main concepts of this study, were explained by Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2017) and Constructivist Learning Theory (Vygotsky, 1978) because together they show how students become motivated and how they actively build knowledge. Self-Determination Theory suggests that motivation is central to learning, and students are most motivated when their psychological needs for autonomy (feeling in control of their learning), competence (feeling capable of mastering tasks), and relatedness (feeling connected to others) are satisfied, which helps them engage deeply and persist in learning activities (Ryan & Deci, 2017; Deci & Ryan, 2000). When students feel that they have control over their learning, understand their progress, and experience supportive relationships with teachers and peers, they are more likely to adopt self-regulated behaviours and sustain effort toward academic success (Ryan & Deci, 2017; Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Additionally, Constructivist Learning Theory explains that learners do not absorb knowledge passively; instead, they actively build understanding through experience, interactions, and social activity, especially when supported by others (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) shows that optimal learning happens when students are challenged just beyond what they can do alone and receive help from teachers or peers, which helps them internalize knowledge and eventually perform tasks independently (Vygotsky, 1978). This theoretical explanation supports the idea that learning involves active engagement, concept internalization and problem solving, all of which can encourage students to think about their learning, apply strategies, and adjust their behaviour in response to challenges.

Methodology

Design and Sample

The study adopted a quantitative research design, specifically the descriptive survey method, because it allows for the collection and analysis of numerical data in an objective and systematic way. This design was considered appropriate for examining students' experiences and determining how self-regulated learning influences academic achievement in secondary schools. The population of the study consisted of approximately 9,500 students drawn from Form One to Upper Sixth in selected secondary schools in Mezam Division, with a particular focus on Form Three students, as they are at an intermediate level and are capable of reflecting on their learning behaviours. From this, the target population included about 7,000 Form Three students in one public and one private secondary school in Bamenda III, comprising both male and female students. The accessible population was further narrowed down to 800 Form Three students who were present during data collection and selected based on attendance records. From this group, a sample size of 120 students was obtained using stratified and simple random sampling techniques to ensure fair representation by gender and school type. The sample size was guided by the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table, while simple random sampling ensured

that each student had an equal chance of being selected, making the sample reliable for the study.

Table 1: Sample Size Distribution

S/N	Category	Boys	Girls	Total
1	Population	2100	2400	4500
2	Target Population	1400	1600	3000
3	Accessible Population	180	220	400
4	Sample Size	55	65	120

Instrumentation and Data Analysis Procedures

The study used a structured questionnaire as the main instrument for data collection, which was divided into two sections: Section A collected demographic information such as age, gender, and school type, while Section B contained 18 items based on the study objectives, measured using a four-point Likert scale (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree). The instrument was validated through face, construct and content validity techniques and its reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha. With a reliability coefficient of 0.811, the instrument was very reliable to measure the internal consistency of the items and ensured that they produce stable and consistent results. The questionnaires were administered personally by the researcher using a fair selection method, and responses were collected over a two-week period. For data analysis, both descriptive and inferential statistics were used: descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used to summarize the data, while simple linear regression analysis was employed to verify the null hypothesis. All hypothesis were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Table 2: Students' Level of Academic Achievements

Items	SA	A	D	SD	SA/A	D/SD	Mean	Std
Self-regulated learning helps me perform better in exams	43	67	4	5	110 (92.4%)	9 (7.6%)	3.24	0.713
My academic performance has increased due to self-regulated learning	32	71	10	6	103 (86.6%)	16 (13.4%)	3.08	0.743
Self-regulated learning has helped me understand subject matter	27	73	16	3	100 (84.0%)	19 (16.0%)	3.04	0.681
I meet the academic tasks I set for my self	35	68	13	3	103 (86.6%)	16 (13.4%)	3.13	0.70
I have seen an improvement in my academic goals since implementing self-regulated learning	34	65	16	4	99 (83.2%)	20 (16.8%)	3.08	0.743
I feel more confident in my ability to achieve academic success since implementing self-regulated learning	39	56	16	6	95 (79.8%)	22 (18.5%)	3.423729	3.67343
Mean Response Score	35	67	12	6	102 (85.4%)	17.0 (14.3%)	3.17	1.209

The table shows that most students have a positive view of how self-regulated learning improves their academic achievement. A very high percentage, 92.4%, agreed that it helps them perform better in exams, while only 7.6% disagreed. Also, 86.6% said their academic performance has improved, with 13.4% disagreeing. Similarly, 84.0% agreed that it helps them understand their subjects better, while 16.0% did not agree. In terms of completing tasks, 86.6% agreed that they meet the academic tasks they set for themselves, compared to 13.4% who disagreed. Furthermore, 83.2% reported improvement in their academic goals, while 16.8% disagreed. Confidence levels were also high, as 79.8% felt more confident in achieving academic success, although 18.5% did not feel the same. In summary, 85.4% of students agreed with the statements, while only 14.3% disagreed, with a mean score of 3.17, showing a strong positive impact. This means that most students believe self-regulated learning supports their learning, improves their achievement, and also boost their confidence.

Table 3: Research Question 1: How goal setting affects students' academic achievement.

Items	SA	A	D	SD	SA/A	D/SD	Mean	Std
I set specific academic goal for each subject	28	60	22	9	88 (73.9%)	31 (26.1%)	2.94	0.845
I write down my academic goals and track them	32	64	19	4	96 (80.7%)	23 (19.3%)	3.0	0.752
I break larger goals in to smaller achievable tasks	32	58	21	8	90 (75.6%)	29 (24.4%)	2.95	0.848
Setting goals motivate me to study more effectively	41	59	16	3	100 (84.0%)	19 (16.0%)	3.26	0.748
I regularly update my goals based on my academic progress	23	77	16	3	100 (84.0%)	19 (16.0%)	3.01	0.657
My academic goals are aligned with my personal strength	31	57	27	4	88 (73.9%)	31 (26.1%)	2.97	0.798
Mean Response Score	31	63	20	5	96 (78.7%)	25 (21.3%)	3.01	0.774

The table shows that a large number of students 73.9%, agreed that they set specific academic goals for each subject, while 26.1% disagreed. Also, 80.7% reported that they write down and track their academic goals, compared to 19.3% who do not. Similarly, 75.6% agreed that they break larger goals into smaller achievable tasks, while 24.4% disagreed. Goal setting was also seen as motivating, as 84.0% agreed that it helps them study more effectively, with only 16.0% disagreeing. The same percentage, 84.0%, reported that they regularly update their goals based on their academic progress, while 16.0% did not. In addition, 73.9% agreed that their academic goals are aligned with their personal strengths, while 26.1% disagreed. In summary, 78.7% of students agreed with the goal-setting practices, while 21.3% disagreed, with a mean score of 3.01 on a scale of 4, indicating a generally positive response. This means that the practices of setting goals as students; was helpful for motivation and important for improving their academic achievement.

Testing Hypothesis one at 0.05

H01: Goal setting has no significant effect on students' academic achievement.

Ha1: Goal setting has a significant effect on students' academic achievement.

Table 4: Model Summary table for Goal Setting and Academic Achievement

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.487 ^a	.237	.230	2.337
a. Predictors: (Constant), Goal Setting				

From the table, an R-value of 0.487 indicates a moderate positive correlation between goal setting and the academic achievement. The R Square value of 0.237 signifies that approximately 23.7% of the variance in students’ academic achievement can be predicted by goal setting practices.

Table 5: Coefficients^a table for Goal Setting and Academic Achievement

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	9.572	1.528		6.263	.000
	Goal Setting	.506	.084	.487	6.025	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Academic Achievement						

From table 5, above an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.506, indicates that for every one-unit increase in goal setting practices, academic achievement is predicted to increase by 0.506 units but when foal setting is absent, students’ academic achievement is at a constant of 9.572 units. The standardized coefficient (Beta) is 0.487, shows the relative strength of the relationship. With a t-value of 6.025 and a p value (Sig.) of 0.000, the effect of goal setting on academic achievement is statistically significant, suggesting a strong positive effect.

Table 6: ANOVA table for Goal Setting and Academic Achievement

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	198.301	1	198.301	36.298	.000 ^b
	Residual	639.195	117	5.463		
	Total	837.496	118			
a. Dependent Variable: Academic Achievement						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Goal Setting						

From table 6, with an F-statistic of 36.298 at a degree of freedom of 118, a p value of 0.000, was obtained. Given that the p-value (0.000) is less than the conventional alpha level of 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis (H₀: Goal setting has no significant effect on students’ academic achievement) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H_a: Goal setting has a significant effect on students’ academic achievement) for this specific relationship.

Table 7: Research Question 2: How Study Habits affect students’ academic achievement

Items	SA	A	D	SD	SA/A	D/SD	Mean	Std
I maintain a regular study routine	23	69	18	9	92 (77.3%)	27 (22.7%)	2.89	0.800
I used study methods that benefits my learning style	35	61	20	3	96 (80.7%)	23 (19.3%)	3.075	0.749

I stay away from distraction why studying	39	58	16	6	97 (81.5%)	22 (18.5%)	3.09	0.813
I used effective leaning techniques such as summarizing	36	68	12	3	104 (87.4%)	15 (12.6%)	3.15	0.697
I stay in and environment that helps me concentrate	44	50	16	9	94 (79.0%)	25 (21.0%)	3.08	0.899
I take short breaks to stay focused doing long study session	31	69	19	0	100 (84.0%)	19 (16.0%)	3.10	0.643
Mean Response Score	34.7	62.5	16.8	5	97.2 (81.7%)	21.8 (18.3%)	3.07	0.767

The table shows that most students who practice good study habits turn to support their academic achievement. From the table, 77.3%, agreed that they maintain a regular study routine, while 22.7% disagreed. Also, 80.7% reported that they use study methods that suit their learning style, compared to 19.3% who do not. Similarly, 81.5% agreed that they stay away from distractions while studying, while 18.5% disagreed. The highest agreement was seen in the use of effective learning techniques, where 87.4% agreed that they use methods like summarizing, while only 12.6% disagreed. In addition, 79.0% agreed that they study in an environment that helps them concentrate, while 21.0% disagreed. Also, 84.0% reported that they take short breaks to stay focused during long study sessions, while 16.0% did not. In summary, 81.7% of students showed positive responses while 18.3% disagreed, with a mean score of 3.07, indicating that good study habit improves their academic achievement as it helps them stay focused and learn better.

Testing Hypothesis two at 0.05

H02: Study habits have no significant effect on students’ academic achievement.

Ha2: Study habits have a significant effect on students’ academic achievement.

Table 8: Model Summary table for Study Habits and Academic Achievement

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.536 ^a	.288	.282	2.258
a. Predictors: (Constant), <i>Study Habits</i>				

From table 8, an R-value of 0.536 indicates a moderate positive relationship between study habits and the academic achievement. The R Square value of 0.288 indicates that approximately 28.8% of the variance in the students’ academic achievement can be explained by study habits. The Adjusted R Square of 0.282 offers a slightly more conservative estimate of the explained variance, accounting for the number of predictors in the model.

Table 9: Coefficients table for Study Habits and Academic Achievement

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	8.850	1.446		6.121	.000
	Study Habits	.535	.078	.536	6.876	.000
a. Dependent Variable: <i>Academic Achievement</i>						

From the coefficients table, a beta value (B) of 0.603, indicates that for every one-unit increase in study habits, academic achievement is predicted to increase by 0.603 units. But when students do not practice good study habit, their academic achievement is at a constant of 8.850. The standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.536, shows the relative strength of the positive relationship and a t-value of 6.786 and a sip value (Sig.) of 0.000, shows that the effect of study habits on academic achievement is statistically significant.

Table 15: ANOVA table for Study Habits and Academic Achievement

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	241.030	1	241.030	47.279	.000 ^b
	Residual	596.466	117	5.098		
	Total	837.496	118			
a. Dependent Variable: <i>Academic Achievement</i>						
b. Predictors: (Constant), <i>Study Habits</i>						

The ANOVA table shows that the F-statistic at df (118) is 47.279 and the p value (Sig.) is 0.000. Since the p-value (0.000) < 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis retained. Therefore, study habits have a significant positive effect on students' academic achievement.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Results from research Question one shows that 96 (78.7%) of student with a mean score of 3.17 on a 4-point scale agreed that goal setting improves their academic achievement while 25 (21.3%) of the student do not get affected. Additionally, inferential statistics found that, goal setting has a significant positive effect on student academic achievement ($F(1,117) = 36.298$, $p = 0.001$) and goal setting predicts 23.7% of the variation in students' academic achievement ($R^2 = 0.237$)

Findings from research question two shows that 97(81.7%) students with a mean score of 3.01 indicated that study habits such as regular study routines, short breaks, study methods, positively affect their academic achievements while 22(18%) disagreed. Inferentially, the study found that study habits have statistically significant positive effect on student academic achievement ($F(1,117) = 47.279$, $p = 0.001^b$) and study habits predicts 28.8% of the variation in students' academic achievement ($R^2 = 0.288$).

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study show clearly that self-regulated learning, especially goal setting and study habits, play important role in improving students' academic achievement. Firstly, from the results, a good number of students (78.7%) agreed that goal setting helps them perform better, and the regression analysis confirmed that goal setting has a significant positive effect on achievement ($R^2 = 0.237$, $p < 0.05$). This means that students who set clear academic goals are more focused and perform better in school. This finding agrees with earlier studies by Zimmerman and Schunk (2011), who explained that goal setting helps students control their learning and improve performance. It also supports Locke and Latham (2002), who found that students who set specific and challenging goals tend to achieve higher results. In practical terms, when students set goals such as completing assignments on time or improving their

grades, they become more serious, organized, and motivated. This helps them manage their time well and stay committed to their studies, which leads to better academic outcomes.

In the same way, the study found that study habits also have a strong positive effect on students' academic achievement. A high percentage of students (81.7%) agreed that good study habits improve their achievement, and the regression results showed that study habits significantly predict achievement ($R^2 = 0.288$, $p < 0.05$). This means that students who follow regular study routines, avoid distractions, and use effective learning methods achieve better academically. These findings are in line with that of Credé and Kuncel (2008), who stated that study habits are strong predictors of academic success, even more than intelligence. Similarly, Jafari et al. (2019) found that students with good study habits achieve higher academic results. In real school situations, students who read regularly, take notes, revise their work, and study in a quiet environment tend to understand better and remember what they learn. Therefore, the study shows that when students develop good study habits and set clear goals, they are more likely to succeed academically.

CONCLUSION

The study set out to evaluate the effectiveness of self-regulated learning on students' academic achievement in selected secondary schools in Mezam Division. Specifically, the study examined how goal setting and study habits influence students' academic achievement. Based on the findings, it was concluded that goal setting has a significant positive effect on students' academic achievement. Students who set clear academic goals were more focused, motivated, and able to manage their learning effectively, which led to better performance.

In addition, the study revealed that study habits also have a significant positive effect on academic achievement. Students who maintained regular study routines, used effective learning strategies, avoided distractions, and studied in conducive environments performed better academically. Therefore, the study concluded that self-regulated learning, through goal setting and effective study habits, play important role in improving students' academic achievement in secondary schools in Mezam Division. Hence, promoting self-regulated learning strategies can greatly improve students' learning outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Dependent on these findings, the following recommendations were made:

- Parents and teachers should encourage students to set clear and realistic academic goals and regularly monitor their progress, as this will help them stay focused and improve their performance.
- Teachers and parent should guide students on how to develop effective study habits by teaching them practical study techniques such as time management, note-taking, and regular revision.
- Schools should intensify self-regulated learning by providing resources such as libraries and quiet study spaces in schools and set aside specific time for students to study while in school.

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QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

Dear respondents, I am currently carrying out study on evaluating the effectiveness of self-regulated learning on student achievement in some secondary school in Mezam division Your responses to the items in this questionnaire would go a long way to help me achieve my goal. Be assured that all the answers that you provided shall remain confidential.

Section A: Demographic Information Instruction:

Tick the appropriate respons

- 1) Gender: male (A) female(B)
- 2) Age Group: 12-13years (A) 14years and above(B)
- 3) School: (A)GBHS bayelle (B) CKHS NKWEN

Section B

Please tick the choice (box) that best describes you on the scale by indicating whether you; 1. Strongly Disagree (SD), 2. Disagree (D), 3. Agree (A), or 4. Strongly Agree (SA)

S/N	(A) Goal setting	SD	D	A	SA
1	I set specific academic goal for each subject				
2	I write down my academic goals and track them				
3	I break larger goals in to smaller achievable tasks				
4	Setting goals motivate me to study more effectively				
5	I regularly update my goals based on my academic progress				
6	My academic goals are aligned with my personal strength				

S/N	(B) Study habit	SD	D	A	SA
7	I maintain a regular study routine				
8	I used study methods that benefits my learning style				
9	I stay away from distraction when studying				
10	I used effective learning techniques such as summarizing				
11	I stay in an environment that helps me concentrate				
12	I take short breaks to stay focused during long study sessions				

S/N	(E) Academic achievement	SD	D	A	SA
13	Self-regulated learning helps me perform better in exams				
14	My academic performance has increased due to self-regulated learning				
15	Self-regulated learning has helped me understand subject matter				
16	I meet the academic tasks I set for myself				
17	I have seen an improvement in my academic goals since implementing self-regulated learning				
18	I feel more confident in my ability to achieve academic success since implementing self-regulated learning				