

## EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF HABIT REVERSAL AND CONTINGENCY MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES ON IMPROVING STUDY HABITS AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ILORIN WEST.

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### Abstract

*The study used quantitative methods to examine how Habit Reversal Technique (HRT) and Contingency Management Technique (CMT) impacted study habits among secondary school students. Its objective was to assess HRT's effect on study habits and establish the effectiveness of CMT. Using secondary empirical data, the research demonstrated that HRT significantly improved students' study habits. Furthermore, it indicated a positive impact of CMT on these habits. These findings led to the conclusion that HRT effectively shifts negative behaviours, like poor study habits, towards positive ones in children. Additionally, the study noted that CMT positively influences both academic and non-academic activities, including study habits. Consequently, the study recommended authorizing school counsellors to utilize HRT in addressing students with poor study habits, aiming to guide them towards more positive behaviours. It also suggested implementing CMT as a reinforcement strategy, like offering tokens, to motivate students lacking effective study habits to adopt and maintain better study behaviours.*

**Key Words:** Contingency Management Training, Habit Reversal Training, Secondary School Students, Study Habit Behaviour.

### Introduction

It's becoming increasingly uncommon to find students dedicating substantial time to studying, both in school and at home. Instead, many prefer spending extended periods engaged with phones, watching TV, or listening to music—activities largely unrelated to their academic pursuits. This behaviour might explain the rising failure rates and the tendency of students to resort to examination malpractice. The existing study habits among students are notably inadequate and require a change, which could be tackled through counselling methodologies such as habit reversal and contingency management training. Habit Reversal Training is a counselling approach used to reduce undesirable study habits in students. This method is also skilled at managing problematic behaviours, specifically targeting poor study habits. Furthermore, Contingency Management (CMT) is an approach that supplements strategies to cultivate positive study habits. CMT, as a counselling method, strives to reduce negative behaviours by encouraging positive motivation among students (Buffo, 2022). This intervention

employs rewards or consequences to encourage behavioural changes in students. This particular study emphasizes utilizing positive reinforcement, such as a token economy involving recharge cards, to enhance students' study habits. Previous research has indicated that Contingency Management Techniques (CMT) effectively shift behaviour from negative to positive by reducing undesirable behaviours. (Pringsheim et al., 2019). Similarly, this same technique is also enhancing the positive behaviour (Alwahbi, 2020). To the researcher's understanding, there hasn't been any study integrating both counselling techniques concerning students' study habits in Ilorin West. This represents an information void. Therefore, the study aims to investigate how the application of habit reversal and contingency management trainings influences the study habits of secondary school students in Ilorin West.

This topic holds importance as it assesses real-world methods like habit reversal and contingency management, potentially improving study habits among secondary school students. It provides insights into which approach might be more impactful, or if using both together could produce superior outcomes. Ultimately, this research might shape educational methods focused on enhancing study habits and academic achievements in students.

### Literature Review

Habit Reversal and Contingency Management are separate yet harmonizing tactics employed in behavioural interventions (Wiese et al., 2023; Moritz et al., 2023). Habit Reversal is an approach that focuses on identifying, interrupting, and replacing unwanted habits or behaviours with more desirable ones. It involves several steps (Hassan et al., 2020)

1. Awareness Training: Helping individuals become more aware of their habits and the triggers that initiate them.
2. Competing Response: Encouraging the development of an alternative response that is incompatible with the unwanted behaviour.
3. Contingency Management: Implementing consequences or rewards to reinforce the desired behaviour and discourage the unwanted behaviour (Viefhaus et al., 2020).

Contingency Management at the other hand is the method involves utilizing rewards or punishments to reinforce or deter certain behaviours. It's based on the principle that behaviour is influenced by its consequences. Key elements include (Ribeiro et al., 2023; Kohandel et al., 2023)

1. Positive Reinforcement: Offering rewards or incentives for desirable behaviours to increase their occurrence.
2. Negative Reinforcement: Removing aversive stimuli when a desired behaviour is performed, also aiming to increase that behaviour.
3. Punishment: Imposing consequences to decrease the likelihood of undesirable behaviours.

The two strategies aim to modify behaviour, but while Habit Reversal targets specific habits or behaviours and replaces them with alternatives, Contingency Management focuses on utilizing consequences to reinforce desired behaviours or deter undesirable ones. Combining these strategies can be effective in promoting positive behavioural changes in various contexts, including improving study habits among students (Getty et al., 2023).

Viefhaus et al. (2020) quasi-experimental study evaluated Habit Reversal technique (HRT) using 27 samples. Multilevel modeling was the analysis methods. Results showed that HRT improved self-efficacy among the participants. Also, China et al. (2020) survey study used a structured questionnaire for data collection administered to 120 samples examined the effects

of examination malpractices on students' future in Bambili-Bamenda colleges. Frequency and percentage was used. The results revealed that a decrease in the impersonation behaviour which was negatively related to student's future.

In Lee et al.'s (2019) research, they introduced Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) as a potential treatment for Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders (OCDs) within the DSM-5 framework. Their study, an experimental investigation, involved a review of 8 randomized controlled trials. The findings indicated that the implementation of HRT led to a decrease in Trichotillomania or excoriation behaviours among the participants. Nissen et al. (2019) use HRT counselling techniques for the treatment of tic among adolescents using 66.7% of participants. It was an experimental study. The study showed a significant reduction of the total tic among adolescents in the experimental group than those in the control with larger (36/59) percent of the adolescents. In the like manner, Seragni et al. (2018) tested Habit Reversal technique (HRT) in reducing tic severity among Italian children and adolescents. It was an experimental research using 21 patients, 11 in the experimental group and 10 controlled groups. Results showed that 85 percent of the participants have decreased tics and improved global functioning in terms of quality of life.

Moreover, Spieler (2015) experimental research evaluated the effectiveness of awareness training for the reduction of three nervous habits that manifest in public speaking among university students. Findings showed low levels of reduction in the nervous habits among the participants. Dutta and Cavanna (2013) evaluated the effects of HRT in TS and other chronic tic disorders (CTDs). This was an experimental research design. Sample was 353. The study showed that HRT can significantly reduce tic severity in both adults and children. Woitecki and Kinder (2012) Hwang et al. (2012) studies were on the Habit Reversal technique effectiveness on chronic tic disorders. It was an experimental study. 16 children were the participants in the study. Results showed positive results for the acceptance and efficacy of the programme.

In view of this, concerning the effectiveness of HRT in reducing negative behaviour, it can be deduced that HRT is highly effective in decreasing bad behaviour such as; tic, nervous habits and bad study habit among children and as well as adolescent students.

### ***Empirically establish main effect of Contingency Management Technique on Study Habits among secondary school students***

Alwahbi (2020) conducted a literature review on contingency management (CMT) in education, revealing its efficacy in teaching students with diverse characteristics. Irons et al. (2013) conducted an experimental study with 145 college students, using CMT to encourage exercise. The sessions involved exercise contingency payments, resulting in a significant increase in participants' exercise duration per week, from 3 to 30 minutes.

Josephine (2014) explored the effectiveness of CMT and cognitive restructuring in reducing truancy among 144 secondary school adolescents in Edo State. The research found a reduction in truant behaviour among students subjected to CMT compared to those in the control group. Additionally, CMT participants exhibited improved attendance compared to students undergoing cognitive restructuring.

In another study, Oliha (2013) assessed the effectiveness of CMT and Systematic Desensitization (SD) on truant behaviour among 704 students from four co-educational schools in Edo State, Nigeria. The analysis revealed that CMT was more effective in addressing truancy compared to SD. Josephine and Audu (2013) investigated the impact of CMT in reducing

truancy among 50 selected truants in senior secondary schools in Benin metropolis, Edo state. The results from t-test statistics indicated a reduction in truancy among both male and female students due to CMT.

Regarding the findings, the studies demonstrated the efficacy of habit reversal techniques in improving habits among students. Previous research highlighted its effectiveness in reducing chronic tic disorders (Seragni et al., 2018; Hwang et al., 2012; Woitecki and Kinder, 2012) and enhancing self-efficacy and public speaking abilities (Viefhaus et al., 2020; Spieler, 2015). Furthermore, the research indicated the impact of Contingency Management Technique (CMT) on students' study habits. Empirical evidence supported CMT's effectiveness in promoting both academic and non-academic activities among students (Alwahbi, 2020; Irons et al., 2013). Additionally, CMT proved effective in reducing truancy, which could influence students' study habits in school (Josephine, 2014; Oliha, 2013; Josephine & Audu, 2013).

### **Purpose of the Study**

The primary purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of habit reversal and contingency management trainings on study habit behaviour among Secondary School Students in Ilorin west. The specific objectives are:

- 1.) To empirically determine the main impact of Habit Reversal Technique (HRT) on the study habits of secondary school students in Ilorin West.
- 2.) To empirically ascertain the main impact of Contingency Management Technique (CMT) on the study habits of secondary school students in Ilorin West.

### **Methodology**

This study employed a pre-test, post-test control experimental research design to investigate the impact of habit reversal and contingency management technique in improving study habit of secondary school students in Ilorin West Local Government Area of Kwara State. The population of the study included all senior secondary school students in the LGA. Purposive sampling technique was used to select three senior 10 SSS I and 10 SSSII students. The sample of the study consisted of 30 SSS I and 30 SSS II students selected from three secondary schools within Ilorin-west L.G.A. The selected secondary schools are CAIS Secondary School, Adewole; Government Day Secondary School, Adeta; and St. Micheal Secondary School, Oloje for experimental group I; experimental group II and control group respectively. Experimental group I were exposed to five week intervention treatment using habit reversal training, experimental group II were exposed to five week intervention treatment using contingency management techniques and control group were exposed to placebo. Akinade's (2018) Student Study Habit Inventory was the instrument used. Student t. test statistical procedure was used to analyse the generated data and the hypotheses of the study were tested at 0.05 critical region.

### **Results**

#### **Hypothesis Testing**

**Hypothesis one:** There was no significant difference in the study habit of the participants in the experimental group I and the control group.

**Table 1**  
**t-Test Table Showing Difference in Study-habit of the Participants in Experimental I and Control Groups**

Group	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Df	t. Cal	Sig.	P
Experimental Group I	20	37.00	4.29	38	3.69	0.02	**
Control Group	20	33.96	4.43				

\*\* (Significant at 0.05 critical region)

The table I shows the result obtained from testing hypothesis one. From the table, it is shown that t. calculated is 3.69, degree of freedom is 38 and significant level is 0.02. Since the significant level (0.02) is less than 0.05, The null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there was a significant difference in the study habit behaviour of the participant in the experimental group I and the control group.

### Hypothesis Two

There was no significant difference in the study habit of the participants in the experimental group II and the control group.

**Table 1**  
**t-Test Table Showing Difference in Study-habit of the Participants in Experimental I and Control Groups**

Group	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Df	t. Cal	Sig.	P
Experimental Group II	20	37.00	4.29	38	3.69	0.02	**
Control Group	20	33.96	4.43				

\*\* (Significant at 0.05 critical region)

The table 2 shows the result obtained from testing hypothesis two. From the table, it is shown that t. calculated is 4.29, degree of freedom is 38 and significant level is 0.00. Since the significant level (0.00) is less than 0.05, The null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there was a significant difference in the study habit behaviour of the participant in the experimental group II and the control group.

### Conclusion

According to the research outcomes, it was concluded that Habit Reversal Technique (HRT) is impactful in transforming adverse behaviours, including study habits, from negative to positive among children. Additionally, the study established that Contingency Management Technique (CMT) effectively influences both academic and non-academic activities, including students' study habits.

### Recommendations

The study's conclusion suggested that empowering school counsellors to utilize Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) could assist students with inadequate study habits in improving their behaviour towards studying. Furthermore, the recommendation included implementing Cognitive Modification Therapy (CMT) by the school counsellor, structured as a reinforcement system such as providing tokens to incentivize students with poor study habits. This strategy aims to motivate them to embrace and apply better study techniques and habits.

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