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Encouraging School Planner Use to Improve the Academic Performance of Secondary Students

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Abstract

- Previous research has suggested that planner use can improve homework completion for students who fail to turn in their assignments.
- The study's first phase examined the effects of planner use and materials organization on the grades of 7th and 8th-grade students in student advisory classes.
- The second phase investigated the effects of planner use and a peer-mediated self-management procedure on the grades of low-achieving students enrolled in a 9th-grade algebra class.
- Current results suggest that students who are capable but low-achieving may simply lack the organizational skills to turn assignments in on time.

Research Aim

To improve students' time management, homework completion, and academic grades as a result of using the planner and applying organizational skills.

Results & Discussion

Phase One

The Classwide Intervention didn't appear to help students over the long term, but may have prevented a decline in performance.

Low-achieving students who received the Individualized Intervention experienced improved outcomes.

Phase Two

Differences in the on-task behavior of the two students were less noticeable following intervention.

Differences in the test scores of the low-achieving student (Student A) and the high-achieving peer (Student M) significantly decreased following the implementation of the self-management intervention.

Participants & Setting

- Phase One
  - Classwide Intervention: Forty-two 7th or 8th grade students in 3 advisory classrooms; approximately 20 students participating from each class.
  - Individualized Intervention: Two students in each advisory classroom received intensive individualized intervention including 1:1 adult support and behavior contracting at least two times per week.
- Phase Two
  - Three Caucasian males in 8th or 9th grade, capable of doing the work but receiving D's and F's in math class.
  - Selected for participation by their teacher.
- School
  - Located in rural community of approximately 12,000 residents.
  - Low SES < 40%.
  - ELL - 5%.
  - Caucasian - 85%.
  - Hispanic - 11%.
  - Other - 4%.

Independent Variable

- Phase One - Planner Intervention
  - Four 15-20 minute sessions across three time periods.
  - Lessons delivered classwide.
  - Four follow-up “booster” lessons.
  - Positive reinforcement in student advisory classes.
  - Individual contracting with individual students.
  - Staggered intervention over time.
- Phase Two - Peer Mediated Self-Management
  - One hour of initial training with low-achieving student and high-achieving peer.
  - Students fill out self-management cards daily.
  - Daily points recorded and tallied.
  - Token reinforcement.

Data Sources

- Phase One
  - Periodic Access to Academic Grades.
  - Written Narratives.
- Phase Two
  - Self-Management Card.
  - Daily Access to Teacher’s Grade Book Retrieved Online.
  - Student Assignments.
  - School Planner.
  - Teacher’s Behavior Ratings.

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