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Exploring the use of the LASSI-HS as a developmental learner support tool in the targeting talent pre-university programme

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ABSTRACT

The current study sought to investigate the utility of the Learning and Study Strategies Inventory-High School (LASSI-HS) as a developmental learner support tool within the context of the Targeting Talent Programme (TTP) at the University of the Witwatersrand. Learners' scores on the LASSI-HS and their levels of academic performance (captured across four measures) were investigated. An understanding was sought regarding the relationships between learners' scores on the LASSI-HS and their performance in English, mathematics, life/natural science and overall academic performance. This study also examined the differences between learners' scores on the LASSI-HS based on parental level of education. A number of non-parametric statistical procedures were applied in the study. The results of these procedures indicated that learners within this sample performed in the above average range (70-80%) across three subjects (English, mathematics and life/natural science). Their scores on the LASSI-HS suggest that they have adequate learning and study strategies in place. There were only a few significant relationships found between the learning strategies/academic skills assessed by the LASSI-HS and academic performance. The subscales that were found to be statistically related to academic performance in certain subjects were the motivation, information processing, test strategies and self-testing subscales. Negative relationships were reported between the information processing subscale and overall academic performance as well as the self-testing subscale and overall academic performance. These results highlight the learning strategies that contributed to the high levels of academic performance within this sample.

Keywords: Learning and study strategies, academic performance, Targeting Talent Programme (TTP), Learners from disadvantaged backgrounds, Learning and Study Strategies Inventory-High School (LASSI-HS), tertiary education, pre-university programmes.