

Impact of Study Skills and Self-Efficacy on Academic Performance

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BACKGROUND

Previous research suggests that there are many facets of academic performance. The relationship between self-efficacy and academic performance gained significant attention in educational psychology following the development of Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura 1977b). Self-efficacy has been consistently linked to higher academic achievement (e.g., Doménech-Betoret et al., 2017; Usher & Pajares, 2008; Lei et al. 2022; Bandura, 1977a).

Similarly, study skills, like self-testing and rewording, have also been heavily researched and shown to be positively related to academic performance (West & Sadoski, 2011). Additionally, research shows that the type of study method can have different impacts on performance. Ineffective study habits can create the perception that studying is aversive, difficult, or useless (Svartdal et al., 2021).

Little research has been conducted examining the intertwined relationship between self-efficacy, study skills, and academic performance as well as the extent to which one variable may predict the other.

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VARIABLES DEFINED

ACADEMIC SELF-EFFICACY – a person's belief that they can accomplish academic tasks or succeed in academic endeavors.

- Directly related to the amount of *time and effort* one spends in situations
- Sources of self-efficacy include *mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological feedback* (Bandura, 1977a)
 - *Mastery experiences*, which are personal achievements and success, and *vicarious experiences*, which involve observing others succeed, are the two primary sources of academic self-efficacy.

STUDY SKILLS— strategies used by students in order to learn, organize, or retain information or to prepare for exams.

- *Effective Strategies*: self-testing, rewording, distributed practice (Biwer et al., 2023; West & Sadoski, 2011)
- *Ineffective Strategies*: highlighting, rereading, cramming (Dunlosky & Rawson 2015)

RESEARCH AIMS

The aim of this research is to investigate how effective study skills and self-efficacy contribute to academic performance through the use of hierarchical analysis. The goal of this research is to identify the extent to which self-efficacy adds to the prediction of academic performance when controlling for study skills.

QUESTION & HYPOTHESES

Are a student's study skills and level of academic self-efficacy predictive of their academic performance?

- 1) There will be a positive correlation between academic self-efficacy and self-reported GPA.
- 2) There will be a positive correlation between academic self-efficacy and effective study skills.
- 3) There will be a positive correlation between effective study skills and self-reported GPA.
- 4) Academic self-efficacy predicts a significant amount of variance in academic performance above and beyond what is predicted by study skills.

PARTICIPANTS & PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

Participants in this study will be people over the age of 18 who are currently attending college or other higher education. Prerequisites for participants include actively living in the United States and having completed at least 12 credit hours. Participants can access the survey through SONA or through Social Psychology Network. Participants will be asked to complete a survey with questions relating to demographics, status in higher education, study habits, and their perceived abilities and confidence in academic tasks. They will complete the Approaches and Study Skills Inventory for Students (ASSIST; Entwistle et al., 2013) and the General Academic Self-Efficacy (GASE) scale (Nielsen et al., 2018). These measures use Likert scales for participants to mark the extent to which they agree or disagree to a statement about their study skills or their perceived academic capabilities.

IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH & PRACTICE

- Understand how different facets of academics impact academic performance
- Contribute insight on various aspects of academic functioning and inform interventions and strategies that promote and enhance student outcomes
- Identify common effective or ineffective study skills used by college students
- Further investigate predictors of academic performance as well as the impact of effective versus ineffective studying on performance on academic tasks