

ACADEMIC CONFIDENCE, EFFORT AND ACHIEVEMENT OF SELECTED STUDENTS AT THE LAGUNA STATE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY, LOS BAÑOS CAMPUS, LOS BAÑOS, LAGUNA

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Abstract This study looked at the relationship between the academic confidence, academic effort and academic achievement of the University students at the Laguna State Polytechnic University, Los Baños Campus, during the Academic Year 2013-2014. Significant differences on the academic confidence, academic effort and academic achievement across age, gender, course and year level were also determined. One hundred eighty three (183) College students were randomly selected to be the sample of the study. The research instrument used in this study was the Academic Confidence and Academic Effort Scales by Liu and Wang (2005). The data were analyzed using frequency counts, percentage, mean, standard deviation, Chi-square test, and Pearson r.

The result of the findings showed that there is a low positive correlation between students' academic achievement and academic confidence. A moderate positive correlation was found between academic achievement and academic effort and academic confidence and academic effort. There is a significant difference on: academic confidence across ages; academic effort across age and course; and academic achievement across respondents' age, sex, course and year level. The researchers conclude that someone with a high academic confidence and effort is expected to perform well academically or the other way around. Respondents' sex, course and year level do not predict ones' level of academic confidence. Students' age and course predict ones' level of academic effort. Students' age, sex, course and year level are predictors of students' academic achievement.

It is therefore suggested that the Office of Students Affairs of the University need to offer academic confidence and effort enhancement programs to sustain students' self-concept in general. These would allow the students to examine their thoughts, feelings and abilities as an individual and become more

positive about themselves. Teachers should provide situations of success for all students; this will improve students' sense of confidence, with all the benefits that could arise from such a case which might include perseverance to strive harder in their studies. Students should involve themselves to various activities that would further enhance their level of confidence. They should always go extra miles to acquire better academic achievement

Index Terms— Academic Confidence, Academic Effort, Academic Achievement

I. INTRODUCTION

Self-confidence is an individual's characteristic (a self-construct) which enables a person to have a positive or realistic view of themselves or situations that they are in (Sieler, 1998). It refers to a person's expectation of his or her ability to achieve a goal in a given situation and is a very influential factor in ensuring a person's potential is realized (Stevens, 2005). In other words, a person with a high self-confidence has a realistic view of themselves and their capability which makes them persistent in their endeavors. In educational setting, academic confidence refers to one's belief in his ability to perform well in school. It describes whether one is an optimist or a pessimist when it comes to school works.

A confident attitude, a belief and a faith in oneself and one's ideas are essential in getting ahead but it should also be remembered that self-confidence grows with success that means it is desirable to develop those qualities within oneself that makes for success. It has been found that the child who perceives himself to be able, confident, adequate and a person of worth has more energy to spend on academic achievement and will use his intelligence to be utmost on the other hand, the child who perceives himself as worthless incapable and

less confident may not come up to the optimum level of attainment.

Academic effort is the amount of time and energy that students spend in meeting the formal academic requirements established by their teacher and/or school. It is goal-oriented, and different students may exert the same level of effort in meeting some goals but different levels of effort in meeting others. Often these goals are hierarchical, and some require little more than tacit compliance, while others demand greater commitments of time and/or thought.

Numerous studies have found that students' effort is related to academic achievement. Studies of "engagement" have typically relied heavily on measures of effort, such as the completion of homework, attentiveness, and preparedness. Generally, the findings of such studies have indicated that students who are more engaged learn more in school (Johnson et al. 2001). Farkas et al. (1990) found that students' "work habits," as measured by teachers' reports of homework, class participation, effort, and organization, were positively related to students' mastery of courses and grade point averages (GPAs). Rosenbaum (2001) also found that students' "preparedness" and absenteeism was related to their GPAs.

Although researches on students' academic confidence and effort have yielded interesting insights, researchers have paid little attention to the possible connection between academic confidence, academic effort and academic achievement. Only few studies have been done to highlight whether there is a difference in the academic confidence, academic effort and academic achievement across age, gender, course and year level of the students, hence this study.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employed the descriptive-correlational research design. The respondents of this study were the 183 college students enrolled during the Second Semester, Academic Year 2014 – 2015 at the Laguna State Polytechnic University, Los Baños Campus Los Baños, Laguna.

The research instrument used in this study was the Academic Confidence and Academic Effort Scales by Liu and Wang (2005). The items included both negatively and positively worded items to avoid the same answer from the students. Both academic confidence and academic effort items were mixed in the scale; academic confidence items were placed on odd numbers while academic effort items were placed on even numbers. In the same questionnaire, the respondents were requested to write their current General Weighted Average which served as the measure of their academic achievement. They also stated their age, gender, course and year level. Frequency counts, percentage, mean, standard deviation, Chi-square test and Pearson r were used as statistical tools to treat the gathered data.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

There are 82 or 44.8% college students who are within the age bracket of 16 – 17, 61 or 33.3% are in the age bracket of 18 – 19, 25 or 13.7% belong to 20 – 21, 9 or 4.9% have an age ranging from 24 and above, while the remaining 6 or 3.3% constitute the age range of 22 – 23 years old. The results indicate that almost 92% of the respondents are in their typical age while 8% of the total respondents are older than the common age range of college students.

Majority of the respondents are female with 112 or 61.2% of the total respondents. There are 71 (38.8%) male college respondents. This result shows that the University is dominated by female college students.

Among 183 student-respondents, 17 or 9.3% are taking Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd) and Bachelor of Science in Criminology (BSC); 48 or 26.2% are pursuing Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSEd). For Bachelor of Science in Accountancy (BSA), there are 19 (10.4%); 10 or 5.5% are Bachelor of Science in Fisheries (BSF) and Bachelor of Science in Tourism (BST) students. 33 or 18% come from Bachelor of Science in Fishery Education (BSFEd). Bachelor of Science in Food Technology (BSFT) students comprises the smallest percentage with three or 1.6%. Bachelor of Science in Nutrition and Dietetics (BSND) has 4 or 2.2%. 13 or 7.1% come from Bachelor of Science in Information Technology (BSIT) while the remaining nine or 4.9% are from the Bachelor of Science in Hotel and Restaurant Management (BSHRM).

Majority of the respondents or 116 (63.4%) are freshmen. 34 (18.6%) are sophomores. There are 17 (9.3%) third year college students while the remaining 16 (8.7%) constitute the fourth year students.

There are 12 (6.6%) students obtained a General Weighted Average of 96 – 98 which is the highest academic achievement in this set of respondents. 44 (24%) with an average of 93 – 95 while most of them got an average grade of 90 – 92 with 75 (41.0%). 33 (18%) received a grade of 87 – 89 while 15 (8.2%) earned 84 – 86. Only four students (2.2%) incurred 81 – 83 which is the lowest academic performance in this set of college students.

Generally, 12 (6.6%) students have an excellent academic performance; 119 (65%) have very satisfactory rating; 48 (26.2%) students performed satisfactorily; while only four (2.2%) have fair academic performance.

The respondents "moderately agreed" that: most of their course mates are smarter than they are (mean = 3.35, SD = .99); they often forget what they have learned (mean = 2.95, SD = .97); they get frightened when they are asked a question by the professors (mean = 2.85, SD = 1.05); they are good in most of their subjects (mean = 3.44, SD = .77); and they are able to do better than their friends in most subjects (mean = 3.34, SD = .83). Further, they "agreed" that they can follow the lectures easily (mean = 3.95, SD = .58) and they are able to help their classmates in their school work (mean = 3.68, SD = .71). They "strongly agreed" that if they work hard, they can

get better grades. However, they “disagreed” that they always do poorly in course works and tests (mean = 2.18, SD = .92).

Majority of the respondents have an average level of academic confidence with 129 or 70.5% while there are 54 (29.5%) students with high level of academic confidence. This result implies that all student-respondents are confident that they can do better in their subjects.

The respondents “moderately agreed” on these statements: *I day-dream a lot during lectures* (mean = 2.75, SD = .99); *I often do my coursework without thinking* (mean = 2.52, SD = .98); and *I am always waiting for the lecture to end and go home* (mean = 3.09, SD = 1.19). The student-respondents “agreed” on: *I pay attention to the lessons during lectures* (mean = 4.06, SD = .80); *I study hard for my test* (mean = 3.97, SD = .87); *I am usually interested in my course work* (mean = 4.03, SD = .83); and *I do not give up easily when I am faced with a difficult question in my course work* (mean = 4.04, SD = .89). They “strongly agree” on: *I will do my best to pass all the subjects this semester* (mean = 4.56, SD = .71). Moreover, they “disagreed” on these two items: *I often feel like quitting the degree course* and *I am not willing to put in more effort in my course work*.

There are 103 (56.3%) students who have high level of academic effort while the remaining 80 (45.7%) have an average level of academic effort. This result only means that the student-respondents believe that they are giving their best to succeed in their chosen course.

It can be seen from Table 10 that out of 12 student-respondents who have an excellent performance, ten or 5.5% have high level of academic confidence and two or 1.1% have an average academic confidence. In 119 students who have satisfactory academic performance, 32 or 17.5% have high confidence while 87 or 47.5 have an average confidence.

Among the 48 students with satisfactory performance, 11 of them have high confidence while 37 have an average academic confidence. One student with fair performance has high level of academic confidence while there are three who have an average confidence.

There are 11 or 6% student-respondents who excellently performed in their academics have a high level of academic effort. 72 or 39.3% students who have a very satisfactory academic achievement possess high academic effort. 30 or 16.4% students who have a satisfactory performance exhibit an average academic effort.

Table I describes the correlation between academic confidence, academic effort and academic achievement.

Table I. Correlation between Academic Confidence, Effort and Achievement

Variables	r-value	Verbal Description	p-value	Remarks
Academic Confidence and Academic Achievement	.349*	Low	.000	Significant
Academic Effort and Academic Achievement	.409*	Moderate	.000	Significant
Academic Confidence and Academic Effort	.515*	Moderate	.000	Significant

* Correlation is significant at .05 level of significance

Based on the results in Table I, there is a low positive correlation between students’ academic achievement and academic confidence (r = .349). A moderate positive correlation was found between academic achievement and academic effort (r = .409) and academic confidence and academic effort (r = .515). These relationships were significant at .05 level of significance. This result indicates that as the academic confidence of students get higher, an increase also in their academic performance. The more efforts they exerted to their course, the higher their confidence to obtain a better performance.

Tables II, III and IV present the significant differences on academic confidence, effort and achievement across age, sex, course and year level.

Table II. Significant Differences on Academic Confidence across Age, Sex, Course and Year Level

Variables	X ² Value	p-value	Remarks
Age	35.612*	.001	Significant
Sex	.100	.752	Not Significant
Course	8.975	.535	Not Significant
Year Level	6.084	.108	Not Significant

* Difference is significant at .05 level of significance

With X² value of 35.612 (p = .001), there is a significant difference on academic confidence across ages. As the respondents get older, their confidence becomes stronger.

Table III. Significant Differences between Academic Effort across Age, Sex, Course and Year Level

Variables	X ² Value	p-value	Remarks
Age	76.865*	.000	Significant
Sex	9.851*	.020	Significant
Course	78.380*	.000	Significant
Year Level	28.685*	.001	Significant

*Difference is significant at .05 level of significance

There is a significant difference on academic effort across age and course with computed X² values of 29.918 (p = .007) and 21.926 (.015) respectively. As their ages get older, their confidence becomes stronger. Moreover, the effort exerted by the respondents from each course differs significantly since they came from different colleges where the academic requirements vary enormously.

Table 1V. Significant Differences between Academic Achievement across Age, Sex, Course and Year Level

Variables	X ² Value	p-value	Remarks
Age	28.918*	.007	Significant
Sex	.360	.549	Not Significant
Course	21.926*	.015	Significant
Year Level	4.584	.205	Not Significant

*Difference is significant at .05 level of significance

These results revealed that there exist a significant difference on academic achievement across respondents' age, sex, course and year level. This result indicates that more matured student-respondents get higher grades than their younger counterparts. More female respondents obtained a higher academic achievement than male respondents. Since each department has its own academic policies and requirements, respondents' achievement also differs significantly across courses. As the respondents proceed to the next year level, they become more responsible, hence results to better academic achievement.

IV. SUMMARY CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The statistical treatment of data revealed that: almost 92% of the respondents are in their typical age while 8% of the total respondents are older than the common age range of college students; The University is dominated by female college students.; College of Teacher Education outnumbered the rest of the courses; There are more first year college students than other year levels.

Generally, 12 (6.6%) students have an excellent academic performance; 119 (65%) have very satisfactory rating; 48 (26.2%) students performed satisfactorily; while only four (2.2%) have fair academic performance.

Majority of the respondents have an average level of academic confidence with 129 or 70.5%. More than 50% of the total number student-respondents who have high level of academic effort.

There is a low positive correlation between students' academic achievement and academic confidence (r = .349). A moderate positive correlation was found between academic achievement and academic effort (r = .409) and academic confidence and academic effort (r = .515).

There is a significant difference on: academic confidence across ages; academic effort across age and course; and academic achievement across respondents' age, sex, course and year level.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the salient findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between academic confidence, academic effort and academic achievement is hereby rejected. From the present data, the researchers conclude that someone with a high academic confidence and effort is expected to perform well academically or the other way around.
2. Since only respondents' age was found to have significant difference, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference on academic confidence across age, sex, course and year level is accepted. The researchers conclude that sex, course and year level do not predict ones' level of academic confidence.
3. Since respondents' academic effort was found to have significant differences across age and course, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference on academic effort across age, sex, course and year level is partially rejected. The researchers conclude that age and course predict ones' level of academic effort.
4. The null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference on academic achievement across age, sex, course and year level is hereby rejected. From the present data, the researchers conclude that these variables predict one's academic achievement.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of the study yield the following recommendations:

1. The Office of Students Affairs of the University should offer academic confidence and effort enhancement programs to sustain students' self-concept in general. These would allow the students to examine their thoughts, feelings and abilities as an individual and become more positive about themselves.
2. Teachers should provide situations of success for all students; this will improve students' sense of confidence, with all the benefits that could arise from such a case which might include perseverance to strive harder in their studies.
3. Students should involve themselves to various activities that would further enhance their level of confidence. They should always go extra miles to acquire better academic achievement.
4. Parents should guide their children properly and provide the love and support they deserve so that their academic confidence and effort will be reinforced. Consequently, the students' academic achievement will be improved.
5. Future researchers are encouraged to conduct a study on the factors affecting one's level of academic confidence and effort.

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