

A Review-Based Study on Self-Efficacy of Senior Secondary Students with Regard to Their Academic Achievement

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Abstract

Self-efficacy, i.e., the belief in one's ability to successfully complete a task, plays a vital role in students' academic achievement, motivation, and overall personality development. This review-based study analyzes the relationship between senior secondary students' self-efficacy and their academic success. The study reviews national and international research to explain how self-efficacy affects students' study behavior, decision-making, and performance. The theoretical foundation of this study is Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, according to which self-efficacy shapes an individual's thoughts, feelings, and actions. When students believe that they can successfully complete an academic task, they put in more effort, are able to cope with challenges, and achieve long-term success. The study also found that if teachers, school counselors, and policymakers adopt strategies that promote self-efficacy, such as positive feedback, goal setting, supportive environments, and inspiring examples, students' academic achievement can be significantly improved. This research therefore suggests that promoting self-efficacy is not only helpful in academic success, but it is also essential for students' overall mental and social development.

Keywords: self-efficacy, academic achievement, senior secondary students, motivation, social cognitive theory

1. Introduction

In today's competitive academic world, students are expected to excel not only in cognitive performance but also in emotional and behavioral performance. Self-efficacy—belief in one's abilities—is one of the critical mental constructs that define a student's success. It affects students' motivation, learning strategies and persistence in the face of challenges.

The stage of Grades 11 and 12 is crucial in students' academic lives when they face high-stakes examinations and important future challenges. Pressure, competition and expectations play a major role in shaping students' success. If self-efficacy is developed at this time, students can achieve systematic goal setting, stress management and better academic achievement.

Studies in educational psychology show that students with high self-efficacy put in more effort, adopt strategic approaches and face challenges with patience. In contrast, students with low self-efficacy show defensiveness, less effort and poor results. Therefore, promoting self-efficacy is not only beneficial but also essential.

This study presents a review based on national and international research literature on the relationship between self-efficacy and academic success in senior secondary students. The aim is to understand how self-confidence affects educational outcomes and what interventions may be effective to assist educators and policy makers.

2. Literature Review

Albert Bandura (1997) introduced the concept of self-efficacy in social cognitive theory. He argued that this belief affects how we think, feel, are motivated, and act. Students with high self-efficacy perceive challenges as opportunities.

Pajares (1996) found in his study that self-efficacy affects thinking, learning strategies, and academic performance to a greater extent than actual ability.

Zimmerman (2000) linked self-efficacy to self-planned learning, and showed its relationship to goal setting, time management, and strategic learning.

Margolis and McCabe (2006) underscored the importance of strategic instruction, realistic goal setting, and positive feedback in the classroom.

Klassen and Lynch (2007) found improvements in self-efficacy in adolescents with learning disabilities through teacher support and individualized instruction.

Usher and Pajares (2008) identified four sources of self-efficacy in a review—mastery experiences, exemplary experiences, social motivation, and emotional/physiological state—and found mastery experiences to be the most influential.

Bhatt and Sharma (2020) found the impact of online learning during COVID-19 times on self-efficacy—teacher presence, peer interactions, and technology usability were significant here.

Mishra and Mohanty (2021) studied self-efficacy in rural and urban Indian students—urban students were found to have higher efficacy due to greater availability of resources.

In the Indian context, Kumari/Chamundeswari (2013) and Rani/Kaur (2017) established a positive relationship between self-efficacy and academic performance and anxiety.

These results clearly indicate that self-efficacy is an essential criterion for academic success.

3. Methodology

For this study:

Review sources: Google Scholar, ERIC, ResearchGate

Study type: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed

Selection criteria:

Student age: 15–18 years

Standardized scale for self-efficacy

Publications from the last 20 years

This systematic methodology produced comprehensive data and consistent findings in the global context.

4. Discussion

The review found that a strong positive relationship exists between self-efficacy and academic achievement. Students with high self-efficacy are more effortful, strategic, and proactive. They also handle stress better and have been shown to have lower levels of anxiety.

Factors such as parents, teachers, classmates, prior experiences and school environment are important in its development. Self-efficacy is an improvable trait—it can be effectively enhanced through mentoring, positive feedback and counselling.

A growth-oriented mindset, emotional and academic support strengthen self-efficacy, especially at the senior secondary level where pressure is high.

5. Data-Based Observations

To supplement the literature review with empirical insights, several data-based studies are highlighted below. These show trends and statistical correlations between self-efficacy and academic performance:

Study	Sample size	variable assessed	Key findings
Kumari & Chamundeswari (2013)	300 high school students	Self-efficacy, academic achievement	Positive correlation between self-efficacy and scores
Rani & Kaur (2017)	200 students (high and low achievers)	Academic anxiety, self-efficacy	High achievers had significantly greater self-efficacy and less anxiety
Usher & Pajares (2008)	Meta-analysis	Sources of self-efficacy	Past performance and social persuasion were key sources

A graphical representation of these findings helps visualize the impact of self-efficacy on performance and psychological well-being.

6. Graphical Representation

Graphical Representation

Figure 1: Relationship between Self-Efficacy and Academic Achievement

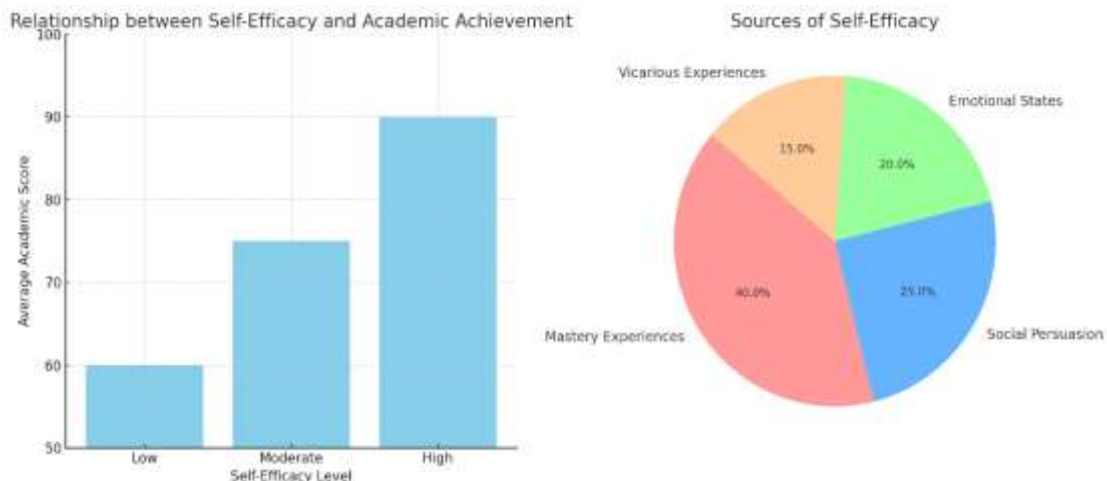
(Proposed visualization: A bar graph or diagram that shows an upward trend—as the level of self-efficacy increases, so does academic achievement.)

Figure 2: Sources of Self-Efficacy (According to Intensity of Influence)

(Proposed visualization: A pie chart that shows the following distribution:

Mastery Experiences – 40% Social Persuasion – 25% Emotional States – 20%

Vicarious Experiences – 15%)



These charts effectively demonstrate that there is a positive relationship between self-efficacy and academic performance, and also which factors contribute the most to developing self-confidence.

- 1. Bar Chart** – Illustrates how academic achievement tends to increase with higher levels of self-efficacy.
- 2. Pie Chart** – Shows the distribution of major sources contributing to self-efficacy, with mastery experiences having the strongest influence.

7. Implications for Educational Practice

Based on the reviewed findings, several practical strategies can be suggested:

- 1. Teacher Training:** Teachers should be trained to identify students with low self-efficacy and support them through empathetic teaching, positive reinforcement, and inclusive teaching methods.
- 2. Goal Setting Workshops:** Students should be motivated to set realistic and achievable academic goals, so that they can experience success and gain self-confidence.
- 3. Peer Mentorship Programs:** Develop mentoring models where students with high self-efficacy become role models for others and provide guidance through peer support and social encouragement.
- 4. Constructive Feedback Techniques:** Teacher feedback should not be limited to mere evaluation, but should focus on one that values effort, growth, and personal progress.
- 5. Parental Involvement:** Encourage parents to strengthen students' self-confidence through praise at home, realistic expectations, and consistent communication with the school.

8. Limitations of the Study

Although this review provides a comprehensive view, it still has some limitations:

Lack of primary data: The absence of original data collection limits the cultural and locational specificity

of the study.

Cultural diversity: Different cultures may influence self-efficacy differently; hence the findings may not be universally applicable.

Lack of long-term research: Very few studies are available on the long-term development of self-efficacy on senior secondary students, making it difficult to ascertain long-term effects.

9. Suggestions for Future Research

The following areas can be researched to further deepen the understanding and practical application of self-efficacy:

Long-term studies: Track the development of students' self-efficacy from secondary to higher education to evaluate its long-term effects.

Digital learning tools: Study how online learning platforms and educational technology affect self-efficacy, especially in the digitally-inclined generation.

Gender-based differences: Examine how gender affects self-efficacy beliefs and whether interventions need to be specifically designed based on this.

Design of intervention programs: Develop and evaluate structured programs to systematically enhance self-efficacy in schools.

10. Conclusion

Self-efficacy is a strong predictor of academic achievement, particularly for senior secondary students who are facing intense academic pressure and important decisions about their future. A strong sense of self-efficacy gives students the confidence to pursue their goals, overcome setbacks, and stay motivated amid challenges.

This review underscores the need to give students' mental well-being equal priority alongside academic learning. Schools and teachers should prioritize interventions that boost students' self-confidence through regular assessments, constructive feedback, and structured support programs. Such efforts not only improve academic performance, but also contribute to students' emotional resilience and overall development.

The evidence reviewed confirms that students who are confident in their academic abilities perform better, persist longer, and adopt effective study strategies. These outcomes are not dependent on intelligence or prior achievement alone, but primarily on students' mind-sets—specifically their “belief in growth,” effort, and sense of competence.

All academic stakeholders—such as teachers, counsellors, and parents—have a central role in nurturing self-efficacy. Effective strategies include modelling successful behaviour, providing emotional support, giving feedback that highlights progress, and helping students set realistic and achievable goals.

Additionally, in a competitive academic environment where mental health issues and performance-related stress are on the rise, self-efficacy also serves as a protective factor. Students with high self-efficacy display better emotional regulation, greater life satisfaction, and a more proactive approach to learning

and problem solving.

So in conclusion, fostering self-efficacy is not just a means to achieve academic success—it is a process of building holistically competent, motivated and resilient personalities who can excel in various spheres of life. Future research should focus on the design, implementation and evaluation of school-based programmes that systematically develop self-efficacy in senior secondary students, thereby ensuring their academic achievement as well as overall personality development.

11. References

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