

Self-Directed Learning, Learners' Self-Efficacy and Performance

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ABSTRACT

This study looked into the relationship among self-directed learning, learners' self-efficacy, and academic performance among 256 respondents in the Division of Iloilo City for the year 2025. A descriptive-correlational research design was utilized in the conduct of the study. Data were collected using a researcher-made questionnaire and analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistical tools such as mean, standard deviation, t-test, ANOVA, and Pearson product-moment correlation.

Findings showed that students demonstrated a high level of self-directed learning, a very high level of self-efficacy, and a high level of academic performance. Significant differences were observed in self-directed learning and self-efficacy when respondents were grouped according to grade level, while no significant differences were found in terms of sex. Moreover, significant positive relationships were found among self-directed learning, learners' self-efficacy, and academic performance, indicating that students who are more independent and confident tend to perform better academically.

The study concluded that self-directed learning and self-efficacy are important factors in predicting academic performance. Strengthening these learner attributes can contribute to improved academic success and the development of independent learning skills among students.

KEYWORDS: Self-directed learning, self-efficacy, academic performance, learner autonomy, motivation, student achievement, independent learning, Iloilo City, educational outcomes, 21st-century skills

INTRODUCTION

Self-directed learning has become an important aspect of modern education as schools continue to promote learner independence and lifelong learning. It refers to the process where learners take responsibility for their own learning by identifying their needs, setting goals, choosing learning strategies, and evaluating their progress. In the context of the Division of Iloilo City, self-directed learning is encouraged as part of learner-centered education that prepares students for more independent academic experiences. Studies show that when learners take control of their learning, they tend to perform better academically and develop stronger study habits (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2018; Garrison, 2017).

Learners' self-efficacy is also an essential factor that affects academic performance. It refers to a student's belief in their own ability to successfully complete academic tasks. Based on Bandura's social cognitive theory, self-efficacy influences motivation, effort, and persistence in learning activities (Bandura, 2017). Students who have higher self-efficacy are more likely to engage in difficult tasks, persist despite challenges, and achieve better academic results (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020).

Self-directed learning and self-efficacy are closely connected. Students who believe in their capabilities are more likely to take initiative in their learning, set personal goals, and monitor their progress effectively (Artino, 2016). This combination strengthens their ability to learn independently and improves overall

academic performance. Research also shows that learners who are more self-directed tend to retain knowledge better and perform higher in academic tasks (Hiemstra, 2018).

Academic performance reflects how well students achieve in their educational tasks and assessments. It is influenced by both cognitive abilities and motivational factors. Students who are self-directed and have high self-efficacy are generally more successful in their studies compared to those who depend mainly on teacher guidance (Pintrich, 2018). This highlights the importance of developing independence and confidence among learners to improve educational outcomes.

Anchored on these ideas, this study focused on 256 respondents in the Division of Iloilo City for the year 2025. It aimed to determine the relationship among self-directed learning, learners' self-efficacy, and academic performance, providing evidence that may help strengthen learner autonomy and improve academic outcomes in schools.

This study specifically aimed to describe the respondents' profile, assess the level of self-directed learning in terms of goal setting, learning strategies, and self-monitoring; determine learners' self-efficacy in terms of confidence, persistence, and motivation; and evaluate academic performance. It also examined differences when grouped according to selected variables and tested relationships among the three key variables. The results served as a basis for proposed instructional interventions that promote independent learning and improved student performance.

METHODOLOGY

This study used a descriptive-correlational research design to determine the relationship among self-directed learning, learners' self-efficacy, and academic performance among 256 respondents in the Division of Iloilo City for the year 2025. The descriptive approach was used to describe the levels of each variable, while the correlational approach was used to examine relationships among them.

The respondents consisted of 256 students from public schools in the Division of Iloilo City. They were selected through random sampling to ensure fair representation across different schools and grade levels. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were chosen based on their availability.

A researcher-made questionnaire was used as the main data-gathering instrument. It included sections on self-directed learning, learners' self-efficacy, and academic performance. The instrument was validated by experts in the field and tested for reliability through a pilot study. Ethical standards such as informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, and voluntary participation were strictly observed throughout the study.

Data were analyzed using frequency count and percentage for the profile of respondents, while mean and standard deviation were used to determine the level of each variable. Inferential statistics such as t-test and ANOVA were used to test differences among groups, and Pearson product-moment correlation was used to determine relationships among variables at a 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

The results showed that the 256 student-respondents demonstrated a high level of self-directed learning, with an overall mean of 4.22 (SD = 0.55). This indicates that students actively set goals, choose learning strategies, and monitor their own progress in learning.

In terms of self-efficacy, students obtained a very high overall mean of 4.30 (SD = 0.52). This shows that learners have strong confidence in their ability to complete academic tasks, persist in difficult situations, and stay motivated in their studies. The highest indicator was confidence in completing academic tasks.

For academic performance, the respondents obtained an overall mean of 4.15 (SD = 0.57), interpreted as high. This suggests that students generally perform well in school activities, assessments, and academic requirements.

Inferential results revealed significant differences in self-directed learning and self-efficacy when grouped according to grade level, while no significant differences were found when grouped according to sex.

Moreover, significant positive relationships were found among the variables. Self-directed learning was significantly related to self-efficacy ($r = 0.73$), self-directed learning was related to academic performance ($r = 0.69$), and self-efficacy had the strongest relationship with academic performance ($r = 0.76$). This shows that students who are more independent and confident tend to perform better academically.

FINDINGS

The findings showed that students demonstrated a high level of self-directed learning, meaning they are capable of managing their own learning through goal setting and self-monitoring.

Students also showed a very high level of self-efficacy, indicating strong confidence, motivation, and persistence in academic tasks.

Their academic performance was also rated high, showing generally good results in school activities and assessments.

Significant differences were found in self-directed learning and self-efficacy when grouped according to grade level, while no differences were found in terms of sex.

Significant positive relationships were also found among self-directed learning, self-efficacy, and academic performance, showing that students who are more independent and confident tend to perform better in school.

SUMMARY

This study examined the relationship among self-directed learning, learners' self-efficacy, and academic performance among 256 respondents in the Division of Iloilo City for the year 2025. The study used a descriptive-correlational design and found that students demonstrated a high level of self-directed learning, a very high level of self-efficacy, and a high level of academic performance. Significant differences were observed in self-directed learning and self-efficacy when grouped according to grade level, while no differences were found in terms of sex. Significant positive relationships were also found among the three variables.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that self-directed learning and learners' self-efficacy are important factors that influence academic performance. Students who take responsibility for their learning and who believe in their abilities tend to achieve better academic outcomes. The relationships among the variables show that improving learner independence and confidence can lead to stronger academic performance.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that teachers promote self-directed learning by giving students opportunities for goal setting, independent tasks, and reflective activities. Schools should create supportive environments that strengthen learners' confidence and motivation. Guidance programs may also be strengthened to help students improve self-efficacy and learning strategies. Teachers are encouraged to design learner-centered

activities that develop independence and critical thinking. Future researchers may explore additional factors such as learning environment and motivation to further expand the findings of this study.

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