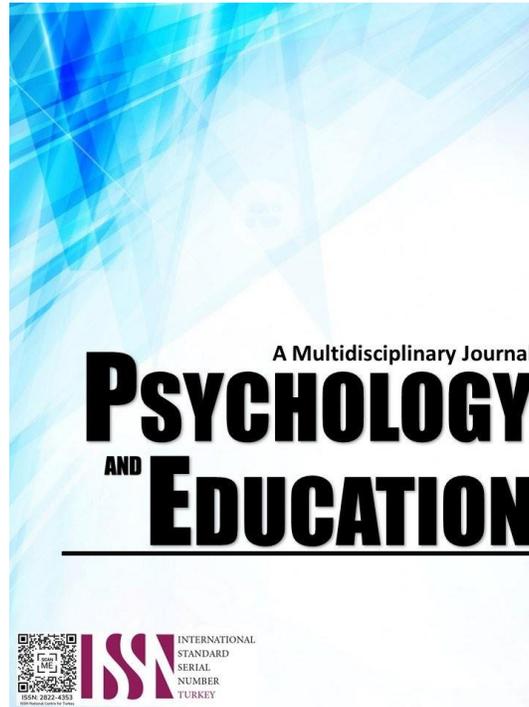


**SELF-EFFICACY, ACADEMIC MOTIVATION, AND CAREER ASPIRATION
AMONG SELECTED GENERAL ACADEMIC STRAND STUDENTS
FROM PRIVATE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN IMUS CITY**



PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATION: A MULTIDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL

Volume: 34

Issue 3

Pages: 370-374

Document ID: 2025PEMJ3262

DOI: 10.70838/pemj.340306

Manuscript Accepted: 02-28-2025

Self-Efficacy, Academic Motivation, and Career Aspiration among Selected General Academic Strand Students from Private Senior High Schools in Imus City

Danna Elena E. Obias,* Analiza G. Cosain, Kyle Russelle P. Paredes, Jervin D. Quicho, Almica B. Rapal
For affiliations and correspondence, see the last page.

Abstract

The study examined how self-efficacy, academic motivation, and career aspirations relate among General Academic Strand students in four private senior high schools in Imus, Cavite. Using surveys with 122 students, the researchers found that students had moderate self-efficacy, high academic motivation, and strong career aspirations. Significant correlations emerged especially between self-efficacy and career aspirations, and between academic motivation and achievement aspirations. Based on these findings, the researchers developed the "Ignite Your Potential" program, a four-module initiative designed to boost self-efficacy, academic motivation, and career readiness.

Keywords: *self-efficacy, academic motivation, career readiness, General Academic Strand*

Introduction

Life is a journey composed of many chapters, with education serving as one of the most important beginnings. Self-efficacy is the belief in our ability to overcome challenges and achieve our goals which is fundamental for navigating life's twists and turns. Albert Bandura (1977) defines self-efficacy as the personal belief in one's capacity to execute actions required to manage prospective situations and control events that impact life. This idea aligns with the saying, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step," where that first step is often education.

In our fast-changing world, education not only fuels personal growth but also shapes academic motivation and career aspirations. As Solomon Ortiz famously noted, "Education is the key to success," since it equips individuals with the knowledge, skills, and perspectives needed for both professional and personal achievement. Academic motivation, which reflects a student's desire, persistence, and interest in learning, is crucial for meeting academic standards and excelling in life. After education, the next major step involves choosing a career, where long-term hopes and ambitions—our career aspirations—are informed by personal experiences, talents, and values (Ballard, 2021).

In the Philippines, the K-12 program, implemented in 2012, lays the foundation for a student's academic and professional journey. Covering kindergarten through senior high school, it prepares students for college, vocational training, or direct entry into the workforce. Among the academic tracks available, the General Academic Strand (GAS) stands out by offering a flexible curriculum for students who have yet to commit to a specific career path. Notably, GAS students in private schools in Imus, Cavite, face distinct challenges, as indicated by various performance metrics in the region. This study seeks to determine the levels of self-efficacy, academic motivation, and career aspirations among these students, exploring how these factors interact and providing recommendations for programs designed to boost student readiness for the future.

Literature Review

Self-efficacy is an individual's belief in their ability to execute tasks and overcome challenges (Bandura, 1997). It develops through four primary sources: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological states. People with strong self-efficacy tend to persist through difficulties, regulate their behaviors effectively, and shape their environments to align with their goals. Studies indicate that self-efficacy plays a crucial role in decision-making, motivation, and career development. While universally beneficial, its formation and application vary across cultures.

Academic motivation, defined as a student's desire to engage in learning, consists of intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and amotivation. Intrinsic motivation stems from personal interest and enjoyment in learning, leading to deep engagement and long-term academic success (Sutton, 2021; Santos-Longhurst, 2019). Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is driven by external rewards such as grades, recognition, or financial incentives, which can enhance performance but may not sustain long-term engagement (Suman, 2023). Amotivation, the absence of motivation, is linked to disengagement, passive classroom behavior, and poor academic performance (Cheon & Reeve, 2015). Research highlights that intrinsic motivation fosters creativity and persistence, while extrinsic motivation can boost short-term performance but may weaken when rewards are removed. Self-regulation plays a role in maintaining motivation, as students who effectively manage their emotions and behaviors tend to remain engaged in learning (Daryanto et al., 2020).

Career aspirations reflect an individual's long-term goals and ambitions, influenced by personal experiences, values, and education. High aspirations are linked to strong academic performance and career success (Poudel & Maharjan, 2017). Leadership aspirations, a subset of career goals, are shaped by self-efficacy and motivation, with individuals who have higher self-efficacy being more likely to take on leadership roles (Cziraki et al., 2017). Student involvement in leadership activities positively impacts academic and professional

development, preparing them for future career challenges (Nguyen, 2016). However, students with low self-confidence or limited resources may struggle with forming strong aspirations, affecting their long-term career success (Chen & Hesketh, 2021).

The connection between self-efficacy, academic motivation, and career aspirations is well-documented. Students with high self-efficacy exhibit greater motivation, persistence, and goal-setting behaviors, which contribute to academic achievement and career ambition (Komarraju & Nadler, 2013). Motivation also plays a key role in career decision-making, as intrinsic motivation drives personal satisfaction, while extrinsic motivation influences choices based on external rewards such as financial stability and social recognition (Yahya, 2016). Research further suggests that self-efficacy enhances employability and career success, as confident individuals are more likely to take initiative, adapt to challenges, and pursue higher career goals (Mau & Li, 2018).

While these studies establish the relationship among self-efficacy, academic motivation, and career aspirations, there remains a gap in understanding how these variables manifest among General Academic Strand (GAS) students in Imus City, Cavite. The Philippine education system, particularly the K-12 program, was designed to equip students with the necessary skills for higher education and employment. GAS, however, is a non-specialized strand intended for students who are still exploring their career options, making them more susceptible to uncertainty regarding their academic and professional paths (Cruz, 2014). Unlike other strands with direct career alignments, GAS students may struggle with motivation and goal-setting due to the lack of a defined trajectory.

Additionally, Imus City presents unique educational challenges, as evidenced by the Cavite Ecological Profile. Data from the 2019-2020 academic year indicate that Imus has lower completion, promotion, and graduation rates compared to other cities in Cavite, as well as the highest repetition rate in the province. Furthermore, a significant portion of elementary graduates do not proceed to high school, highlighting educational gaps that may affect students' self-efficacy, academic motivation, and career aspirations. Given these statistics, understanding these psychological and motivational factors among GAS students in private senior high schools in Imus becomes critical in addressing potential academic and career uncertainties.

Thus, despite the well-established relationship among the three variables, this study aims to fill the gap by exploring how self-efficacy, academic motivation, and career aspirations interact specifically within this context. By focusing on GAS students in Imus, this research seeks to provide insights that can inform interventions designed to enhance students' self-belief, learning motivation, and career direction, ultimately preparing them for academic success and future employment.

Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research design using a descriptive-correlational method to examine the relationship between self-efficacy, academic motivation, and career aspirations among General Academic Strand (GAS) students in selected private senior high schools in Imus City, Cavite. The descriptive approach analyzed respondents' demographic profiles, while the correlational method determined the significance of relationships between the three key variables.

The study was conducted in four selected private senior high schools in Imus City. The respondents were Grade 11 and 12 GAS students aged 16-24 years old. A purposive sampling technique was applied to select participants who met the study's criteria, ensuring they could provide relevant insights into the relationship between self-efficacy, academic motivation, and career aspirations.

To measure the variables, three standardized instruments in both English and Filipino versions were used. The General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE) or "Panukat ng Pangkalahatang Kakayahang Pansarili" assessed students' belief in their ability to handle challenges. The Academic Motivation Scale (AMS-HS 28) or "Panukat ng Pang-Akademikong Motibasyon" measured different types of motivation, including intrinsic, extrinsic, and amotivation. Lastly, the Career Aspiration Scale-Revised (CAS-R) or "Panukat ng Hangarin sa Karera" evaluated students' aspirations in achievement, leadership, and education. A demographic profile sheet was also included to collect information on the respondents' age, sex, and grade level. The CAS-R questionnaire was translated into Filipino and validated through linguistic and pilot testing.

The data gathering procedure followed several steps. Initially, a review of related literature was conducted to establish the study's foundation. Permission was secured from the original authors of the standardized instruments, and the CAS-R questionnaire was translated into Filipino and validated by linguistic experts before undergoing pilot testing. Approval letters were then obtained from school administrators, and informed consent was sought from the respondents to ensure voluntary participation. The final data collection was conducted in person using a paper-and-pencil format, allowing respondents to complete the surveys without a time limit.

For data analysis and interpretation, both descriptive and inferential statistics were applied. Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, and mean, were used to summarize respondents' profiles and levels of self-efficacy, academic motivation, and career aspirations. Inferential statistics, specifically Pearson's correlation coefficient (Pearson r), was used to determine the strength and direction of relationships between the three main variables, assessing whether self-efficacy significantly influenced academic motivation and career aspirations.

To ensure ethical compliance, the study followed strict ethical guidelines. Confidentiality and data privacy were maintained in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012, ensuring that all collected information remained secure. Voluntary participation was emphasized, with respondents given the right to withdraw at any point without consequences. Lastly, accuracy and integrity were

upheld, ensuring that all findings were based on actual data without fabrication or misrepresentation.

Results and Discussion

The study assessed the levels of self-efficacy, academic motivation, and career aspirations among General Academic Strand (GAS) students in selected private senior high schools in Imus City. A total of 122 respondents participated, and the data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation to examine relationships among the three variables.

Findings showed that 50% of students exhibited moderate self-efficacy, while 45.9% demonstrated high self-efficacy. Only 4.1% had low self-efficacy, indicating that most students had confidence in their ability to manage challenges.

In terms of academic motivation, a significant portion of students exhibited high intrinsic motivation, with 51.6% demonstrating a strong interest in learning for knowledge, 55.7% showing motivation driven by achievement and accomplishment, and 54.9% actively engaging in learning activities. These results suggest that most students possess a genuine desire to learn and succeed academically. Additionally, extrinsic motivation played a crucial role, as 63.1% of students displayed high motivation influenced by external rewards, such as recognition or tangible benefits. Interestingly, 59.8% also scored high in amotivation, indicating that a considerable number of students struggle to see the connection between their academic efforts and long-term success. This imbalance suggests that while many students are driven by intrinsic and extrinsic factors, a notable portion experiences motivational deficits that could impact their academic and career development.

The study also examined students' career aspirations, revealing that a majority expressed strong ambitions in various aspects. Specifically, 51.6% demonstrated high achievement aspirations, reflecting their drive to set and pursue challenging academic and professional goals. Leadership aspirations were also prominent, with 50.8% of students showing a strong desire to take on leadership roles in their future careers. Additionally, 56.6% had high educational aspirations, highlighting a commitment to pursuing further studies or professional development opportunities. These findings suggest that students, in general, have a forward-thinking approach to their careers, aiming for personal and professional growth.

Correlation analysis further supported the connection between self-efficacy, academic motivation, and career aspirations. The results indicated a significant positive relationship between self-efficacy and career aspirations, meaning that students who exhibited higher confidence in their abilities were more likely to have strong career ambitions. Similarly, intrinsic motivation was positively correlated with both achievement and leadership aspirations, suggesting that students who engage in learning for personal fulfillment tend to set ambitious career goals. Extrinsic motivation also played a role, particularly in leadership aspirations, implying that students driven by external rewards may be more inclined to pursue influential roles in their future careers. Conversely, amotivation negatively correlates with career aspirations, reinforcing the idea that students who lack motivation struggle to establish clear professional goals. These findings highlight the importance of fostering both self-efficacy and motivation to help students develop strong career aspirations and ensure long-term academic and professional success.

Table 1. *Summary of the findings on Self-efficacy, Academic Motivation and Career Aspiration among selected General Academic Students in private Senior High Schools in Imus City*

Category	Key Findings	Interpretation
Self-Efficacy Levels	- 50% Moderate - 45.9% High - 4.1% Low	Most students have moderate to high self-efficacy.
Intrinsic Motivation	51.6% High (Learning) 55.7% High (Achievements) 54.9% High (Engagement)	Majority of students are intrinsically motivated.
Extrinsic Motivation	54.1% High (Rewards & Constraints) 53.3% High (Self-Regulation) 45.9% High (Internalization)	Extrinsic motivators also influence students.
Amotivation	- 59.8% High - 40.2% Low	A significant portion of students experience amotivation.
Career Aspirations	51.6% High (Achievement) 51.6% High (Education) 48.4% High (Leadership)	Slightly more students aspire to academic and professional success.
Correlation Results	Intrinsic & Extrinsic Motivation positively correlate with Career Aspiration. Amotivation negatively correlates with Career Aspiration.	Motivation plays a key role in shaping career goals.

The study findings revealed that most students exhibit moderate to high levels of self-efficacy, indicating a strong belief in their ability to succeed academically. Academic motivation was predominantly high, particularly in intrinsic aspects such as the desire to learn, achieve, and engage in stimulating activities. However, extrinsic motivation—such as rewards and external recognition—also played

a significant role in driving students' efforts.

The results also highlighted that while many students demonstrated high motivation, a considerable portion experienced amotivation, meaning they struggled to connect their academic efforts with meaningful outcomes. This lack of motivation could negatively impact their career aspirations and overall academic performance. Moreover, the study found strong correlations between motivation and career aspirations. Students with higher levels of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation were more likely to set ambitious career goals, whereas those with higher amotivation had lower career aspirations.

These findings emphasize the need for schools to implement strategies that enhance students' motivation and career readiness. Programs that incorporate mentorship, experiential learning, and structured goal-setting can help students develop clearer career paths. Additionally, fostering self-efficacy through positive reinforcement and academic support can significantly improve students' motivation, ultimately leading to better educational and professional outcomes. Overall, the study underscores the importance of balancing both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to ensure students remain engaged in their academic journey and prepared for their future careers.

Conclusions

The study revealed significant correlations among self-efficacy, academic motivation, and career aspirations. Students with higher self-efficacy exhibited stronger career aspirations, while those with greater academic motivation tended to have clearer career goals. These results highlight the importance of fostering confidence and motivation to positively influence students' academic and professional trajectories. To address these findings, the researchers developed a structured program titled "Ignite Your Potential: Enhancing Students' Self-Efficacy, Academic Motivation, and Career-Ready Skills." This initiative consists of four integrated modules: Unleash Your Inner Powerhouse: Cultivating Self-Efficacy for Success, which focuses on overcoming self-doubt and fostering resilience; Academic Fire: Keeping the Flame Burning, which enhances motivation through goal-setting and engagement; Ignite Your Future: A Roadmap to Success, which provides career exploration and decision-making guidance; and Aspiration to Action: Lead the Way, which builds leadership skills and confidence for real-world applications.

The researchers recommend further exploration of these module programs to assess their effectiveness in different educational settings. Further studies could refine and expand these interventions by incorporating mentorship programs, psychological techniques, or school-based career development initiatives. Educators and policymakers may also integrate these strategies into school curricula to better equip students for higher education and professional careers.

Overall, the study underscores the crucial role of self-efficacy and motivation in shaping students' career aspirations. By implementing targeted programs that enhance these factors, students can develop stronger confidence, clearer goals, and a greater readiness for academic and career challenges.

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Affiliations and Corresponding Information

Danna Elena E. Obias, CHRA

Cavite State University – Philippines

Analiza G. Cosain

Cavite State University – Philippines

Kyle Russelle P. Paredes, RPm, LPT, MASD

Cavite State University – Philippines

Jervin D. Quicho, MAED, RGC, RPm, RSW, LPT, CHRA

Cavite State University – Philippines

Almica B. Rapal

Cavite State University – Philippines