



# A comparative study of Academic self-efficacy level of secondary school students in Rural and Urban Areas of District Peshawar, Pakistan

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The study at hand was designed to compare the academic self-efficacy level of students in rural and urban area schools of district Peshawar at secondary level. The null hypothesis of the study was that there is no significant difference of academic self-efficacy level of students studying at secondary level in rural and urban areas schools of district Peshawar. The study employed a quantitative research approach. The descriptive research design was used. All the secondary school students of high and higher secondary schools for boys of district Peshawar in the public sector were the population of the study. Stratified random sampling technique was used for the distribution of the sample size and its allocation. The population was categorized into two broad groups (strata) with reference to urban and rural region schools of district Peshawar. 300 students were selected from each stratum i.e. urban and rural areas of the said district. In order to collect data on academic self-efficacy level, a standardized tool established by Forman and Owen was used. Data was analyzed by applying a statistical test i.e. the t-test was used to compare academic self-efficacy level of the students of urban and rural areas of district Peshawar. The study found that in the majority of both rural and urban areas, students liked to participate in a class discussion. They agreed with the statement that essay type tests are harder for them than objective type tests. They avoided facing difficulties in their studies and had problems to listening carefully during a lesson on a difficult topic. The majority of the students from urban and rural areas thought that it is a very rewarding experience being a student. They assumed that if they study enough, they can perform better academically. The result of the hypothesis testing showed that there was no significant difference between the academic self-efficacy level of secondary school students in urban and rural areas schools of district Peshawar by applying the sample t-test.

**Key words:** *self-efficacy, academic self-efficacy, academic achievement, high and higher secondary schools.*

## INTRODUCTION

Most of the students have a keen interest towards learning and perform better academically in comparison to those who find themselves as disinterested and de-motivated. Despite sharing the same learning environment which has always being a major concern for teachers, no single statement can justify responses to this query. Giving sound results at the secondary level is defined concerning many elements among which the academic self-efficacy level of the students plays a prior role (Trautwein *et al.*, 2006).

School students must be actively involved in their learning process and the most important goal of a student is a positive academic performance which can be affected by various factors. One of these factors may be their belief in being successful in getting good grades. The belief of a person about being good on a specific task or achieving a goal may influence the performance on that task. Bandura (1997) named this belief as self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is also defined in terms of having confidence in an individual's ability which influences task performance (Köseoğlu, 2015).

Self-efficacy is defined as one's belief in their abilities to complete any certain assignment or task. In addition, perceived self-efficacy concerns the beliefs of individuals in his/her own abilities to achieve such successes (Bandura, 2006). Self-efficacy is explained in the theoretical frame work of social cognitive theory by Bandura's (1986, 1997) cited by (Mahyuddin, Elias, Loh, Muhamad, Noordin & Abdullah, 2006) which stated that human achievement depends on interactions between one's behavior's, attitudes, personal factors, and environmental conditions. In brief, self-efficacy is said to have a measure of control over an individual's thoughts, feelings, and actions. In other words, the beliefs that individuals hold about their abilities and the outcome of their efforts influence in great ways how they will behave.

Academic self-efficacy refers to the convictions of students about their ability to learn new skills and tasks, often in a specific academic area. (Nasiriyani, Azar, Noruzy & Dalvand, 2011). On the other hand, Yusuf (2011) argues that academic self-efficacy makes students often think of the most productive ways to accomplish each assignment. It relates to a student's level of trust and self-belief in completing an assignment and achieving something at its best in accordance with their respective capabilities. In all fields studied by students, including academics, self-efficacy is also a key component in achieving outstanding achievement. Many studies have shown in many ways, including the academic performance of students, self-efficacy, or optimism (self-confidence) may have a positive effect. (Kluemper, Little & DeGroot, 2009). The learners' who are conscious about their academic potentials have internal fulfilment and interest in many ways, such as academic achievement. Self-efficacy is not just a skill or a motivation but it has an inextricable link with it (Dierdorff, *et al.*, 2010). It is therefore not surprising that many studies showed that academic

self-efficacy influences academic motivation, learning, and academic achievement (Mahyuddin, Elias, Loh, Muhamad, Noordin & Abdullah, 2006).

In general, academic self-efficacy is influenced by four main sources: mastery experience which refers to one's own past achievements, vicarious experiences which means the success of others, verbal persuasion like teachers' and parents' appraisal or feedback and physiological and affective states i.e. anxiety, feeling, frame of mind and weakness (Hodges, 2008).

The majority of researchers investigating the relationship between academic self-efficiency and performance reported successful correspondence, in contrast with students who lack such confidence; students with a clear sense of self-efficacy appear to engage in difficult assignments, exert more effort and persistence, and display excellent academic success (Nasiriyani, Azar & Noruzy, Dalvand, 2011). According to Heidari, Izadi, & Ahmadian (2012) students with a high level of self-efficacy have a statistically significant and positive relationship with the vocabulary learning technique and the memorizing method. The value of the development of self-confidence in students to ensure the effectiveness of learning and its accomplishments was shown by these findings. Research by Bembenutty (2011) also revealed that there is a positive relationship between teachers' homework assignments and self-confidence. He claimed that self-regulated learning can assist the academic performance of students. Dullas (2010) conducted correlative research on student's performance in the subjects of English and mathematics with academic self-efficacy and found that they are significantly related. The result also found that academic self-efficacy is one of the efficient forecasters of academic achievements for the above-mentioned subjects. Choi (2005) conducted research on self-efficacy and self-concept as predictors of academic performance among college students, while working on different forms of the two concepts i.e. general self-efficacy and academic self-efficacy along with academic self-concept. The study found academic self-concept related positively to the academic performance of the students in the form of their grade point average, (GPA). However, no significant influence of general and academic self-efficacy was found on the GPA of participants. Areepattamannil & Freeman (2008) conducted research to find the relationship among academic self-concept, academic self-efficacy and achievement of students in secondary schools including 573 immigrant and non-immigrant students. The findings of this research reported that the self-concepts along with academic self-efficacy were found to be predicting GPA for both adolescent samples; school self-concept was found to be a more significant predictor of GPA in the case of non-immigrant adolescents.

### **Objective of the study**

- i. To compare the academic self-efficacy level of students studying at secondary level in rural and urban areas schools of district Peshawar.



## **Hypothesis of the study**

- i. There is no significant difference between the academic self-efficacy level of secondary school students in rural and urban areas schools of district Peshawar.

## **Methods and Procedure**

### **Nature of the Study**

This study used the quantitative research approach, the descriptive research design. The research method was seeking to investigate whether a difference exists between the two variables. It dialed with the difference between variables, the testing of hypothesis and the development of generalization.

### **Population of the Study**

All the secondary school students in the government high and higher secondary schools of district Peshawar were the population of the study. There were 77 high and 30 higher secondary schools for boys in district Peshawar where the numbers of students are 17385 at the secondary level (ASR IMU, 2017-18).

### **Sample Size and Sample Techniques**

A stratified random sampling technique was utilized for the distribution of the sample size and its allocation. The population was categorized into two broad groups (strata) with reference to urban and rural region schools. Seven high and three higher secondary schools were selected randomly from each stratum (urban and rural). The researcher set twenty substrata. These sub-strata have a sample size of 600 students being distributed among them. 30 Students from every substratum were selected randomly.

### **Instrument Used**

In terms of gathering information on academic self-efficacy of secondary school learners, the acclimated kind of the standardized tool was established by Froman and Owen which is "College Academic Self-Efficacy Scale" (CASES). It evaluates self-efficacy for academics particularly.

### **Data Analysis**

Data was analyzed by applying a statistical test i.e. The t-test was used to compare academic self-efficacy level of the students of urban and rural areas of district Peshawar regarding

academics. Findings and conclusions were drawn after analyzing the data. Suggestions and recommendations were proposed based on findings and conclusion.

## Results and Discussion

### There is no significant difference of academic self-efficacy level of students studying at secondary level in Rural and Urban Areas Schools.

	Location	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t. value	Df	P-value
self-efficacy	Urban area	300	3.4854	.41089	.149	598	.770
	Rural area	300	3.4803	.43583			

An independent sample t-test was used to test the hypothesis; the mean of the urban area is 3.485 and the rural area is 3.480, the standard deviation of the urban area is .41089, and the rural area is .43583. The t-test model value is .149 with p-value is .770. So the result of the test indicates that there is no significant difference in the academic self-efficacy level of students studying at secondary level in rural and urban areas schools of district Peshawar.

## Discussion

The study revealed that there was no significant difference found in the academic self-efficacy level of the participants on the basis rural and urban region of district Peshawar.

Bandura (1994) stated that the self-efficacy level may be high among students through mastery experiences performed well which strengthen the sense of self-efficacy in students; on the other hand, bad performance academically can weaken the self-efficacy level of the students. The findings of the study show that both the rural and urban school students have weakened their self-efficacy.

Steinke (2010) also did not find any meaning full deference of the level of self-efficacy by location in his research study on the relationship of self-concept and self-efficacy with academic engagement to each other and school outcomes of students with disabilities. Similarly, Hardré& Hennessey (2010) revealed that students from rural areas had the same self-efficacy level, perceived ability and success expectations to urban and suburban area's students. It is reported that students of rural and urban areas were quite similar in their levels of self-efficacy in the subject of math.Both the students of urban and rural area depend greatly on mastery experiences to enhance their general math self-efficacy (Usher & Weidner, 2019).

The possible reason of the similarity in the self-efficacy level of students may be due to the fact that cultural and social realities are the same in the rural and urban region of Peshawar

Pakistan. One of the other reasons may be that the students of secondary level, of this region are also having very less awareness and knowledge about their self-efficacy, and the teachers and parents are unable to provide opportunities to the students to enhance their knowledge of self and to be aware about their strengths and weaknesses which may have influenced their self-concept and belief in their potentials.

## Conclusion

The study result concluded that the majority of both rural and urban areas students liked to participate in a class discussion, willing to answer a question in a large class; the objective type tests are easy for them while the essay type tests were hard for them; instead of an objective type test, they avoid facing difficulties in their studies. They have a problem to listen carefully during a lesson on a difficult topic, reported that whenever problems occur in their studies, they do not handle them well and also assumed that explaining a concept to another student is easy; they can ask a teacher in class to review a concept they don't understand. They also feel insecure about their ability to study and they like to participate in co-curricular activities. Failure just makes them try harder; they also agreed to the statement that they must attend the class regularly. They understand most ideas presented in class, they also master most content in a math course. Finally, this study did not find any significant difference statistically between academic self-efficacy level of students studying at secondary level in urban and rural areas of district Peshawar.

## Recommendations

1. The study's results can lead to teachers being trained to implement teaching techniques to increase the self-efficacy of students, such as collaborative teaching, peer learning with subject-specific techniques.
2. The education administration and curriculum wing may review the courses of secondary classes and make them interesting for the students as much as possible.
3. Paying attention in the classroom is one of the important factors for the learning of students; the teacher needs to make the students attentive during the lesson by using different teaching and motivating techniques.
4. Teachers and parents need to be aware of the students about their strengths and academic goals, make them think that what will be their plan, and guide them accordingly.
5. Future research can work with an enlarged sample size by including college and university students to determine academic self-efficacy levels and correlate with different variables i.e. academic achievement, student motivation, academic self-concept and socio-economic status. Future researches might address the same issues, including a larger representative population of female students of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.



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