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Exploring the interrelationships between peer support self-efficacy and academic resilience among young adults

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Abstract

The current study investigates the connections among young people' academic resilience, self-efficacy, and peer support. Understanding how these elements affect college students' academic performance and well-being is crucial since they are subjected to heavy academic and psychological demands. This study explores whether peer support influences students' capacity to handle academic problems by boosting academic resilience and self-efficacy. Standardized measures, including the Academic Resilience Scale (ARS), the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE), and the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS), were used in a correlational study design. 200 college students, ages 18 to 25, made up the sample. The associations between the variables were assessed using statistical techniques, such as regression and Spearman's rho correlation. Results revealed a moderate positive correlation between self-efficacy and perceived peer support, indicating that students with higher perceived social support tend to exhibit greater self-efficacy. However, an unexpected negative correlation emerged between academic resilience and both self-efficacy and perceived social support, suggesting that excessive reliance on external validation may reduce personal resilience. Further research should examine these dynamics longitudinally to better understand their long-term implications. The study adds to educational psychology by highlighting the complex interplay between social and cognitive factors in academic persistence. These findings highlight the need for balanced interventions that foster independent coping strategies for academic resilience while enhancing self-efficacy. Peer support is helpful, but an excessive reliance on outside sources may hinder students' ability to navigate challenges autonomously.

Keywords: Peer Support; Self-Efficacy; Academic Resilience; Young Adults

1. Introduction

An individual's life undergoes significant change during their young adult years, especially when attending college. This stage is characterized by high academic expectations, changing social dynamics, and growing responsibility. High levels of stress are frequently experienced by college students as a result of their demanding courses, performance standards, and need to become independent. In order to effectively manage these difficulties, social and psychological coping strategies must be developed. Peer support, academic resilience, and self-efficacy are among the most important elements that have been shown to affect students' capacity to effectively traverse their academic journeys (Richard et al., 2022)

Students' educational experiences are greatly influenced by peer support, which offers intellectual, social, and emotional reinforcement. Having a network of supporting peers improves motivation overall, lowers academic stress, and creates a sense of belonging. According to Simmons et al. (2023), students who get support and encouragement from their peers typically demonstrate increased levels of engagement, better learning outcomes, and more perseverance in overcoming academic challenges. Peer support boosts students' self-esteem and aids in the

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development of adaptive learning mechanisms by encouraging dialogue, shared knowledge, and cooperative problem-solving. Organizations that support structured study groups and peer mentorship programs can greatly improve students' academic achievement and psychological health.

Academic accomplishment is also significantly influenced by self-efficacy, which is the conviction in one's own capacity to do tasks successfully (Bandura, 1977). Students with strong self-efficacy display better desire, tenacity, and problem-solving abilities when presented with academic problems. They have a higher propensity to establish lofty objectives, use efficient learning strategies, and see failures as chances for growth. Students who have low self-efficacy, on the other hand, frequently battle avoidance, procrastination, and self-doubt, all of which can impede their academic success. By boosting self-efficacy through skill-building workshops, mentorship, and organized academic interventions, students can become more resilient to academic pressures and take charge of their education to an individual's perception of their capabilities. It has a clear self-evaluative dimension leading to high or low perceived self-efficacy. Individual differences in perceived self-efficacy have been shown to be better predictors of performance than previous achievement or ability and seem particularly important when individuals face adversity. The study investigated the nature of the association between academic self-efficacy (ASE) and academic resilience. Undergraduate student participants were exposed to an adverse situation case vignette describing either personal or vicarious academic adversity. ASE was measured pre-exposure and academic resilience was measured post-exposure. ASE was correlated with, and a significant predictor of, academic resilience and students exhibited greater academic resilience when responding to vicarious adversity compared to personal adversity. Identifying constructs that are related to resilience and establishing the precise nature of how such constructs influence academic resilience will assist the development of interventions aimed at promoting resilience in students.

Sustained success in higher education requires academic resilience, or the ability to adjust and flourish in the face of academic hardship. Students that are resilient demonstrate the capacity to bounce back from setbacks, efficiently handle stress, and stay motivated in the face of adversity (Cassidy, 2015). In contrast to self-efficacy, which emphasizes self-confidence, academic resilience places more emphasis on perseverance and flexibility. In order to build resilience, children must be given coping strategies to deal with academic disappointments, a growth mentality, and encouragement to solve problems. A more encouraging learning environment that supports students' academic and personal success may be created by universities and colleges that incorporate stress-management programs, mental health services, and resilience-training efforts (Anagha & Navyashree, 2020).

This purpose of this study is to investigate the connections among college students' academic resilience, self-efficacy, and peer support. Students who feel more peer support are more likely to be more self-efficacious and academically resilient, according to the main premise. Comprehending these connections is essential for creating focused therapies that improve students' motivation, coping mechanisms, and general academic perseverance. In order to close current research gaps and advance the larger conversation on student success and well-being in higher education, the project will examine how these psychological dimensions are interrelated.

Using standardized tools like the Academic Resilience Scale (ARS), the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE), and the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS), a correlational research design is used to analyze the relationships between these variables in a sample of 200 college students. The results of this study could influence educational policies, support systems, and psychological interventions that aim to promote student achievement and resilience. By identifying important psychological and social determinants of academic success, this research offers important insights that can influence institutional practices, improve student support services, and ultimately improve academic outcomes for young adults.

2. Material and Methods

2.1. Research Design

To investigate the connections between academic resilience, self-efficacy, and peer support in young people, the study used a correlational research methodology. To gather data, standardized measures such the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support, Academic Resilience Scale, and General Self-Efficacy Scale were employed. To investigate these associations, regression analysis, correlation analysis, and descriptive statistics were used.

2.2. Statement of the Problem

The problem to be addressed through this study is whether the level of peer support and self-efficacy determines the academic resilience of young adults.

2.3. Objective of the Study

- To determine whether there is a relationship between peer support and academic resilience in young adults.
- To examine whether there is a relationship between peer support and self-efficacy in young adults.
- To analyse whether there is a relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience in young adults.
- To determine whether peer support impacts self-efficacy among young adults.

2.4. Hypothesis

- H1: There is no significant relationship between peer support and academic resilience in young adults.
- H2: There is no significant relationship between peer support and self-efficacy in young adults.
- H3: There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience in young adults.
- H4: There is no significant impact of peer support on self-efficacy among young adults.

2.5. Operational Definitions of Key Terms

2.5.1. Peer Support

Peer support is when friends, classmates, or co-workers who are in the same stage of life as us offer us emotional and mental support. It greatly influences how we view ourselves and respond to difficulties. Strong peer support makes us feel more capable of handling personal or academic challenges and increases our motivation and self-assurance.

2.5.2. Self- Efficacy

The conviction that we can complete tasks and solve challenges on our own is known as self-efficacy. Even in the face of adversity, that inner voice tells you, "I can do this."

2.5.3. Academic Resilience

The capacity to overcome obstacles in our academic pursuits is known as academic resilience. Academic resilience is more than simply putting in a lot of effort; it also involves cultivating the attitude and coping mechanisms to deal with stress, ask for assistance when necessary, and persevere in the face of adversity.

2.6. Inclusion Criteria

- **Age**: Participants who were young adults aged between 18 to 25 years were included to ensure alignment with the study's focus on young adults.
- Education: Participants had to be currently enrolled in undergraduate or postgraduate education.
- Enrollment Status: Only full-time students were considered to maintain consistency in academic exposure and peer interaction.

2.7. Exclusion Criteria

- Working Professionals: Young adults who were employed full-time were excluded to avoid variations in academic engagement and social support systems.
- Non-Student Participants: Individuals who were not enrolled in any educational institution were excluded
- International Students: Participants studying outside the country were excluded to maintain consistency in cultural and academic settings.

2.8. Description of Tools

2.8.1. Multidimensional scale of perceived social support (MSPSS)

The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS), developed by Zimet et al. (1988), measures perceived social support from family, friends, and significant others using 12 items on a 7-point Likert scale. It has high reliability (Cronbach's alpha: 0.88–0.93) and strong validity, making it widely used in research on mental health, well-being, and academic success.

2.9. General self-efficacy scale (GSE)

The General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE), created by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995), assesses belief in one's ability to overcome challenges using 10 items on a 4-point Likert scale. It has high reliability (Cronbach's alpha: 0.76–0.90) and is linked to motivation, resilience, and problem-solving skills, making it valuable for understanding self-confidence in academic and personal contexts.

2.10. Academic resilience scale (ARS)

The Academic Resilience Scale (ARS), developed by Martin and Marsh (2008), measures a student's ability to persist through academic difficulties using 20 items on a 5-point Likert scale. It has high internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha: 0.80–0.90) and is widely used to assess resilience, motivation, and stress management in educational settings.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1. Overview

The present study aimed to investigate the relationship between peer support, self-efficacy, and academic resilience among young adults. This chapter presents the results and discussion based on the data collected through validated tools. The data was analyzed using the Jamovi statistical software (version 2.5.6). A normality test was conducted, and the data was identified as normally distributed, allowing for the use of parametric tests.

Table 1 Correlation for peer support, self-efficacy and academic resilience

Correlation Matrix

		GSE	MSPSS	ARS
GSE	Spearman's rho	—		
	df	—		
	p-value	—		
	N	—		
MSPSS	Spearman's rho	0.445 ***	—	
	df	198	—	
	p-value	< .001	—	
	N	200	—	
ARS	Spearman's rho	-0.497 ***	-0.429 ***	—
	df	198	198	—
	p-value	< .001	< .001	—
	N	200	200	—

Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

This correlation matrix suggests significant relationships between the variables General Self-Efficacy (GSE), Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS), and Academic Resilience Scale (ARS). The positive correlation between GSE and MSPSS (ρ=0.445\rho = 0.445ρ=0.445, p<0.001p < 0.001p<0.001) indicates that higher perceived social support is associated with higher self-efficacy among participants. Conversely, GSE has a negative correlation with ARS (ρ=−0.497\rho = -0.497ρ=−0.497, p<0.001p < 0.001p<0.001), suggesting that as self-efficacy

increases, academic resilience as measured in this study decreases, though this may reflect unique measurement dynamics in ARS. Similarly, MSPSS and ARS are negatively correlated (ρ=−0.429\rho = -0.429ρ=−0.429, p<0.001p < 0.001p<0.001), indicating that higher perceived social support may correspond to lower scores in academic resilience. These relationships are statistically significant, indicating that self-efficacy and social support play notable roles in participants' perceived resilience, but further investigation might be needed to fully understand the negative relationships with ARS.

Table 2 Model summary for linear regression of peer support and self-efficacy

Model Fit Measures

Model	R	R^2
1	0.445	0.198

Note. Models estimated using sample size of N=200

Model Coefficients - GSE

Predictor	Estimate	SE	t	p
Intercept	19.96	1.360	14.68	< .001
MSPSS	1.76	0.252	7.00	< .001

The regression results indicate that the model accounts for approximately 19.8% of the variance in General Self-Efficacy (GSE) (R=0.445R = 0.445R=0.445, R2=0.198R^2 = 0.198R2=0.198) in a sample of 200 participants. The intercept is estimated at 19.96, which represents the baseline GSE level when Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) is zero, with a standard error of 1.360. This intercept is highly significant (t=14.68t = 14.68t=14.68, p<0.001p < 0.001p<0.001). Additionally, the MSPSS coefficient of 1.76 indicates that each one-unit increase in MSPSS is associated with an increase of 1.76 units in GSE. This positive relationship between social support and self-efficacy is statistically significant (t=7.00t = 7.00t=7.00, p<0.001p < 0.001p<0.001), underscoring the impact of perceived social support on self-efficacy.

4. Summary

The first table provides a correlation matrix showing relationships among Generalized Self-Efficacy (GSE), Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS), and Academic Resilience Scale (ARS) using Spearman's rho, a non-parametric correlation measure. Between GSE and MSPSS, there is a moderate positive correlation (ρ=0.445\rho = 0.445ρ=0.445), indicating that individuals with higher self-efficacy also tend to report higher perceived social support. This correlation is statistically significant (p<0.001p < 0.001p<0.001), supported by a sample size of 200 and degrees of freedom (df) of 198, which underscores a strong confidence in this relationship.

In contrast, GSE and ARS are negatively correlated (ρ=−0.497\rho = -0.497ρ=−0.497, p<0.001p < 0.001p<0.001), suggesting that as self-efficacy increases, scores on the ARS variable decrease, indicating an inverse association. This significant relationship implies that higher self-efficacy may coincide with lower ARS scores, though the nature of the inverse connection warrants further exploration. The reason for the result that got is might be because of the overconfidence of the students. High levels of general self-efficacy may make kids think they can overcome obstacles with ease, which might weaken the resilience needed to persevere through academic losses. Similarly, there are many other external factors which can leads to negative relation, such as: motivation and stress levels, coping styles, and self-critical attitude. Academic expectations may be higher for students who have strong self-efficacy, which might make them more stressed when they fail. On the other hand, High self-efficacy individuals may be more likely to adopt proactive or problem-focused coping strategies, which may restrict the adaptive coping mechanisms frequently linked to resilience. Also, People with high levels of self-efficacy may be more critical of themselves in the classroom, which might make them less resilient when they think they aren't doing well.

Similarly, MSPSS and ARS share a negative relation (ρ=−0.429\rho = -0.429ρ=−0.429, p<0.001p < 0.001p<0.001), suggesting that increased social support perception correlates with lower ARS scores, indicating a meaningful inverse association. Together, these correlations suggest positive associations between self-efficacy and social support, while both are inversely related to the ARS variable. These findings can be the result of a number of causes, one of which being dependence on outside assistance. Students who believe they have a strong support system of friends, family, or significant others may feel at ease asking for help when they encounter practical or emotional difficulties. This dependence may lessen the need for individuals to acquire self-sufficient resilience abilities as they could rely on others instead of their own coping strategies when they face academic challenges. Another factor might be a diminished need for resilience. By offering constant support and encouragement, strong social support networks frequently aid people in coping with the demands of their academic lives. As a result, students could steer clear of circumstances that would normally promote resilience because this outside assistance lessens the need to deal with such difficulties on their own.

A regression analysis was conducted with a sample size of N=200 exploring if there is an impact of peer support on self-efficacy among young adults. The model revealed an R value of 0.445, indicating a moderate positive association between MSPSS and GSE. The R2 value of 0.198 shows that approximately 19.8% of the variance in GSE can be explained by perceived social support. Examining the coefficients, the intercept was found to be 19.96 (SE = 1.36, t=14.68t=14.68, p<0.001p<0.001), indicating a baseline level of self-efficacy even when MSPSS is zero. The MSPSS predictor had a coefficient estimate of 1.76 (SE = 0.252, t=7.00t=7.00, p<0.001p<0.001), suggesting that for every unit increase in perceived social support, GSE increases by 1.76 units. The significant p-values (< 0.001) for both the intercept and MSPSS indicate strong statistical support for these findings. Overall, these results suggest that perceived social support is a significant predictor of self-efficacy, accounting for nearly 20% of its variance and underscoring the positive impact of social support on self-efficacy levels within this sample.

5. Discussion

This study investigated how academic resilience, self-efficacy, and peer support relate to one another among young people, particularly college students. Finding relationships between these characteristics and determining if peer support has a substantial influence on self-efficacy were the goals of the study. The General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE), the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS), and the Academic Resilience Scale (ARS) were among the standardized measures used to gather data from a sample of 200 students.

Self-efficacy and perceived social support were shown to be somewhat positively correlated ($r = 0.445$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that students who feel more supported by their peers are more likely to be self-efficacious. However, academic resilience was negatively correlated with both peer support and self-efficacy. The correlation between academic resilience and self-efficacy ($r = -0.497$, $p < 0.001$) implies that resilience may not necessarily follow from self-efficacy, maybe because overconfidence lessens the need for adaptive coping strategies. Peer support and academic resilience also have a negative link ($r = -0.429$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that students who have a lot of social support may become less independent in overcoming academic obstacles and more dependent on outside help.

According to regression research, self-efficacy is substantially predicted by perceived social support, which accounts for around 19.8% of its variation. This research highlights how peer support might help students feel more confident about their academic skills, even if it doesn't always improve resilience.

The study's findings have a number of ramifications for educational establishments and student assistance programs. First, the positive relationship between self-efficacy and peer support emphasizes how crucial it is to help students build robust social networks. To help students feel more confident about their academic ability, universities can offer counselling services, peer support groups, and mentoring programs. However, the negative link between resilience and self-efficacy implies that therapies should strike a balance between developing adaptive coping mechanisms and boosting confidence. Programs that encourage self-reflection, stress management, and problem-solving skills can help students develop resilience without over-relying on their perceived abilities. Additionally, the negative correlation between peer support and resilience indicates that while social support is beneficial, it should be coupled with training in independent problem-solving to ensure that students can handle academic setbacks effectively.

5.1. Implication of the Research

The findings of this study are important for comprehending the intricate relationships among academic resilience, self-efficacy, and peer support. Peer support has been demonstrated to have a negative correlation with academic resilience but a good correlation with self-efficacy; hence, treatments that aim to promote both resilience and confidence must take both dynamics into account. Students who participate in educational programs that promote peer cooperation

while also teaching them autonomous coping mechanisms may be able to strike a balance between their own development and social dependence. Furthermore, the negative link between resilience and self-efficacy highlights the necessity of tactics that increase students' self-confidence while making sure they acquire flexible coping mechanisms for dealing with academic difficulties. Future initiatives could incorporate structured resilience training, self-reflection exercises, and mentorship programs that emphasize both personal agency and external support.

Furthermore, it is crucial to create student support networks that promote autonomy in addition to social participation, as evidenced by the found inverse relationship between peer support and academic resilience. Strong support systems are helpful, but they should be designed to prevent kids from becoming unduly dependent on outside help at the expense of their own resilience. Policies that promote independence while striking a balance between academic and emotional assistance can be put in place by universities and other educational institutions. Future studies should examine the fundamental causes of these connections, including using qualitative approaches to document students' real-life experiences negotiating social support networks and academic stress.

5.2. Limitations

The study has several limitations in spite of its contributions. First, social desirability bias may have been introduced by the use of self-report measures, as participants may have given their resilience and self-efficacy higher ratings. Second, causal inferences cannot be made because of the cross-sectional nature of the study. To ascertain the long-term effects of these factors on one another, longitudinal research is required. Third, the results cannot be applied to other age groups or professional contexts because the sample was restricted to college students. Future studies should examine other moderating factors, such academic achievement and personality qualities, and take into account a variety of populations.

6. Conclusion

Conclusively, this research offers valuable insight about the intricate relationship among young people between academic resilience, self-efficacy, and peer solidarity. Peer support promotes self-efficacy in a favourable way, but its link to academic resilience indicates that social support and independence need to be fostered in a balanced way. The inverse relationship between resilience and self-efficacy also emphasizes how critical it is to help kids develop both adaptive coping strategies and confidence. According to these results, comprehensive student support systems that combine resilience-building techniques with self-efficacy training are essential for fostering both academic achievement and psychological health. In order to create educational interventions that are more successful, future research should investigate these associations in more detail across time and in many circumstances.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest

Statement of informed consent

Participants provided online informed consent before their involvement, acknowledging their awareness of the study's purpose, procedures and voluntary participation rights.

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