

Dimensional Analysis of Academic Volition in Student Teachers

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Abstract: This study tried to find the existence of significant difference in the dimensions of the construct academic volition. For this purpose, the Academic Volitional Strategy Inventory, prepared by McCann and Garcia (2000), was administered on student teachers and student teacher educators of B.Ed. and M.Ed. courses from Ghulam Ahmed College of Education, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad city, Telangana, India. For descriptive analysis, mean and standard deviation were used. As part of the use of inferential statistics, One-way Repeated Measures ANOVA was carried out and the level of significance was chosen to be 0.05, using SPSS ver.20. Significant differences were found among the dimensions of the construct academic volition.

Keywords: Academic Volition, Academic Volitional Strategy, Dimensions of Academic Volition, Student Teachers, Student Teacher Educators

I. Introduction

1.1 Introduction:

It is important to direct and maintain one's focus and efforts towards the attainment of goals to ensure positive outcomes in learning [1]. The ability to stay focused and keep one's motivation levels high, especially when there are constant distractions in the attainment of the goal for longer duration of time, is conceptualized as volitional, and is an important self regulatory strategy [2],[3].

Very few studies exist on the role of self regulation of emotions and motivation amidst difficult and distractive situations of long duration [4]. The present study tried to delve further into this aspect in academic context.

Since the two years B.Ed. and M.Ed. courses are now a reality across India as per the recommendations of Justice Verma Committee [5], it is now worthy enough to take up a study to determine the presence of academic volition and its dimensions in the student teachers who have enrolled in these courses of longer duration.

Revelation of any significant differences among the dimensions of this vital construct can help the teacher educators to effectively facilitate their students to preserve their intention to learn throughout the entire duration of the teacher education courses.

1.2 Volition: It is defined as the "tendency to maintain focus and effort toward goals despite potential distractions" [1],[2],[3].

1.3 Statement Of The Problem: Dimensional Analysis of Academic Volitional Strategy in Student Teachers.

II. Research Objective

- To study the presence of any significant difference amongst the domains or dimensions of the construct academic volition in student teachers.

III. Research Hypothesis

- H_0 : There is no significant difference amongst the dimensions of academic volition in student teachers.

IV. Population For The Study

The student teachers and student teacher educators pursuing their two years B.Ed. and M.Ed. teacher education courses in the city of Hyderabad, constituted the population of this study.

V. Sample For The Study

Student teachers and student teacher educators from B.Ed. and M.Ed. courses of Ghulam Ahmed College of Education, were the samples for this study.

VI. Tool Used In The Study

"The Academic Volitional Strategy Inventory (AVSI) is a self-report instrument designed to assess the management of emotion and motivation by college students during the goal-striving process", [6].

Any goal-striving process involves two vital stages, namely, initial decision making stage and the action stage[7]. The items of this instrument assess both these aspects in line with the theoretical framework.

There are 30 items. The dimensions covered by the tool are *self-efficacy enhancement, stress reducing actions and negative-based incentives*, which represent the strategic methods associated with positive learning outcomes, when confronted with obstacles in academics.

The self-efficacy or belief in one's own abilities can be increased through reassuring thoughts, stress can be reduced by taking calming actions like listening to music, taking deep breaths or spending time with friends and thoughts about the consequences which would follow due to poor performance comprise the third dimension negative-based incentives.

The items 2, 6, 9, 10, 14, 17, 19, 21, 23, 26, 27, 28 and 30 measure self-efficacy enhancement. The items 1, 3, 7, 8, 12, 15, 16, 22, 24 and 29 measure stress reducing actions. The items 4, 5, 11, 13, 18, 20 and 25 measure negative-based incentives.

The internal consistency of the tool measured using Cronbach's alpha is 0.87 and test-retest reliability for four weeks gap is 0.72. The responses are obtained in a five point Likert scale ranging from (1 = "I never do this" and 5 = "I always do this"). The tool has content validity and construct validity [6].

VII. Sampling Method

Simple random selection was used as the sampling technique to choose 47 B.Ed. and M.Ed. students from Ghulam Ahmed College of Education, Hyderabad.

VIII. Data Collection

The Principal of the Ghulam Ahmed College of Education was approached to seek the formal permission to administer a test on student teachers to measure their academic volitional strategies. After receiving the permission, the researcher administered the Academic Volitional Strategy Inventory by McCann and Garcia (2000) on the subjects.

IX. Results

9.1 Descriptive Statistics

S.No.	Dimension of Academic Volition	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
1.	Self-efficacy Enhancement	3.7329	0.6967	47
2.	Stress Reduction	3.1438	0.7085	47
3.	Negative-based Incentives	3.2715	0.8018	47

Interpretation: The mean of the first dimension, Self-efficacy enhancement, was higher than the means of rest of the two dimensions.

9.2 Multivariate Test for Significance

Determination of Significance Difference between the Dimensions of Academic Volition using Wilks' Lambda:						
Value of Wilks' Lambda	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	η^2	Result
0.442	28.419	2	45	0.000	0.558	<i>H₀: Rejected</i>

Interpretation: A one-way repeated measured analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate the null hypothesis that there is no difference in the scores of the student teachers with respect to the three specific dimensions of the construct academic volition (N=47), using SPSS ver.20. The result of the ANOVA indicated a significant difference in the dimensions, Wilks' Lambda = 0.442, F(2,45) = 28.419, p < 0.05 and the partial eta squared = 0.558. Thus, under these significant evidences, null hypothesis is rejected. There is significant difference amongst the dimensions of academic volition in student teachers.

9.3 Pair-wise Comparisons of the Significance

(I) AV Dims	(J) AV Dims	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.**
1	2	0.589*	0.097	0.000
	3	0.461*	0.101	0.000
2	1	-0.589*	0.097	0.000

(I) AV Dims	(J) AV Dims	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.**
	3	-0.128	0.141	1.000
3	1	-0.461*	0.101	0.000
	2	0.128	0.141	1.000

*- The mean difference is significant at the level of 0.05

** - Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferonni.

Interpretation: Follow up comparisons indicated that each pair-wise difference was significant, $p < 0.05$. The first dimension, self-efficacy enhancement, was higher and significantly different from the rest of the two dimensions.

X. Conclusion

According to Kuhl's theory of action control [3], self-regulated learners succeed in academics due to the employment of volitional strategies which regulate their emotions and motivation amidst distraction [8].

The newly enrolled student teachers into two years B.Ed. and M.Ed. courses across India, have to display academic volition at some stage of their course perusal. In such situations, they can look up to their teacher educators or professors for guidance. They can seek the help of the most knowledgeable others to keep their emotions and motivation well regulated.

Moreover, Constructivism based teacher education strives for the development of self regulated and humane educators to serve the society and the county. Awareness of the construct academic volition, its dimensions and the role it plays in self regulated learning becomes essential to the teacher educators for implementation in their academic practice.

The present study found the dimension self-efficacy enhancement to be the most important dimension, significantly different from the rest of the two dimensions, namely, the negative-based incentives and stress reducing actions.

There are four ways to promote self-efficacy perceptions, namely, enactive mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion and physiological or affective states [9].

Enactive mastery experience is the successful completion of an exit behavior. Vicarious experience is seeing a classmate perform a task and then appraising one's own ability to do that task in comparison to the other. Verbal persuasion involves expression of faith by others on the person. Physiological or affective states involve reduction of negative emotional emotions and correction of misinterpretations in the states of the body[10].

All the above mentioned ways of promotion of self-efficacy can in turn lead to the promotion of academic volition in student teachers, leading to successful completion and excellent learning outcomes by the end of the two years B.Ed. and M.Ed. teacher education courses.

The sample of the study is very small due to the constraints like time and money. Also, most of the students were females in this study. Similar studies with larger samples, in multiple contexts and with subjects from both the genders, are required to increase the edifice of literature on academic volition and its dimensions.

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