

The Correlation between Students' Academic Self-Efficacy and Learning Achievement

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the correlation between English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' academic self-efficacy and their learning achievement. Academic self-efficacy, derived from Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, plays a crucial role in shaping students' motivation, persistence, and academic behavior. In the Indonesian EFL context, where students must navigate both linguistic and academic challenges, understanding how self-efficacy influences academic outcomes is essential for improving learning performance. A quantitative correlational research design was employed with a sample of 36 students selected through random sampling from the 2022 and 2023 cohorts of the English Education Department at UIN Alauddin Makassar. Academic self-efficacy was measured using the College Academic Self-Efficacy Scales (CASES) adapted to a four-point Likert scale, while learning achievement was assessed using students' official Grade-Point Averages (GPA). Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS 25 through descriptive statistics, normality and linearity tests, and Spearman's rank-order correlation. The results indicated that participants generally demonstrated high to very high self-efficacy and strong academic performance. A statistically significant yet weak positive correlation was found between academic self-efficacy and learning achievement ($\rho = 0.394$, $p = 0.017$). These findings suggest that while self-efficacy contributes to academic success, other external and internal factors also play substantial roles. The study highlights the need for instructional practices that foster students' confidence to enhance academic outcomes.

Keywords: *Academic Self-Efficacy, Learning Achievement, EFL Students*

1) INTRODUCTION

Academic achievement among university students, particularly those enrolled in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) programs, is shaped by a complex interplay of cognitive, behavioral, and affective factors. In higher education settings, learning English is not only a linguistic task but also an academic challenge that demands persistence, motivation, and confidence. One of the most influential psychological constructs linked to academic performance is academic self-efficacy, a concept rooted in Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory. Academic self-efficacy refers to students' beliefs in their ability to successfully execute academic tasks and meet academic expectations. Students who possess

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high levels of self-efficacy tend to approach academic challenges with greater confidence, exert more sustained effort, and demonstrate resilience when facing difficult behaviors that contribute positively to their learning outcomes.

A substantial body of research across various educational contexts has confirmed that self-efficacy significantly influences students' learning processes, motivation, and academic success. However, despite the global recognition of its relevance, empirical studies investigating academic self-efficacy among EFL learners in Indonesian higher education remain limited. Existing studies have often concentrated on domain-specific self-efficacy, such as writing or speaking, rather than examining broader academic self-belief. Furthermore, many previous works have relied on short-term achievement indicators, such as classroom-based tests, which may not comprehensively represent long-term academic performance. This creates a gap in understanding the extent to which general academic self-efficacy corresponds with a more stable indicator of academic achievement, namely Grade-Point Average (GPA).

EFL students in Indonesia face unique challenges due to the dual burden of mastering English while simultaneously engaging with rigorous academic tasks. These challenges include limited exposure to English outside classrooms, linguistic anxiety, lack of confidence, and varying learning environments. Given these conditions, understanding the psychological factors that support or hinder their academic success becomes particularly important. Academic self-efficacy, as a belief system that shapes how students think, feel, and perform academically, may serve as a key predictor of their overall academic achievement, especially in demanding EFL programs.

The academic context at UIN Alauddin Makassar also presents a relevant setting for examining this issue. As students progress through their English Education program, they engage with increasingly complex academic tasks that require strong self-regulation and confidence. Their GPA, which reflects cumulative academic performance over several semesters, serves as a meaningful representation of their long-term academic success. Investigating whether academic self-efficacy is correlated with GPA provides valuable insights into the degree to which students' self-belief contributes to sustained academic achievement.

Therefore, this study aims to empirically examine the correlation between academic self-efficacy and learning achievement among EFL students at UIN Alauddin Makassar. Specifically, it seeks to determine whether students who exhibit higher levels of academic self-efficacy also achieve higher

academic performance as reflected in their GPA. By employing the College Academic Self-Efficacy Scales (CASES) and analyzing students' official transcripts, this study offers a comprehensive perspective on the interplay between psychological belief and academic outcome.

The significance of this study lies in its potential contribution to both theoretical understanding and practical application. Theoretically, it enriches the existing literature by addressing the gap concerning general academic self-efficacy and long-term learning achievement in the Indonesian EFL context. Practically, the findings may assist educators, curriculum designers, and academic institutions in developing strategies to enhance students' academic confidence. Strengthening self-efficacy—through constructive feedback, supportive learning environments, and instructional activities that promote self-regulated learning—may serve as an effective approach to improving academic performance.

In summary, this study is grounded in the need to better understand the relationship between EFL students' academic self-efficacy and their academic achievements within the higher education landscape of Indonesia. The results are expected to provide meaningful implications for efforts to support student development and enhance learning outcomes in EFL programs.

2) METHODS

This study employed a quantitative correlational research design to investigate the relationship between academic self-efficacy and learning achievement among EFL students at UIN Alauddin Makassar. The correlational approach was selected because it allows researchers to determine the strength and direction of relationships between variables without manipulating or altering existing conditions. This design is widely used in educational and psychological research where natural variations in learners' characteristics are examined to understand their association with academic outcomes. The variables in this study—academic self-efficacy and learning achievement—were measured as they naturally occurred within the student population, making this design appropriate and aligned with previous research exploring constructs such as motivation, confidence, and academic performance in EFL contexts.

The population of this research consisted of all active students enrolled in the English Education Department at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, specifically those from the 2022 and 2023 academic cohorts. These students were selected because they had already completed several

semesters, ensuring that their learning achievement, represented through Grade-Point Averages (GPA), reflected a stable and long-term academic performance. A sample of 36 students was obtained using a random sampling technique to provide equal chances for every member of the population to participate. This sampling method also enhances representativeness and minimizes bias, while the sample size itself aligns with the commonly accepted range for correlational studies in educational research.

Data on academic self-efficacy were collected using the College Academic Self-Efficacy Scales (CASES) developed by Owen and Froman (1988). The instrument contains 33 items assessing students' confidence in performing academic tasks related to class participation, study behavior, time management, and meeting academic expectations. The scale was adapted into a four-point Likert format ranging from "Not Capable" to "Very Capable," with no neutral option provided to ensure more definitive responses. The instrument demonstrated excellent reliability, reflected by a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.957. Meanwhile, learning achievement was measured using students' official Cumulative Grade-Point Averages (GPA) obtained from academic transcripts. GPA was chosen because it provides a comprehensive indicator of students' long-term academic performance and reflects cumulative achievement across various courses.

The data collection process began with obtaining institutional permission, followed by distributing questionnaires and informed consent forms to randomly selected participants. Students completed the CASES instrument either in printed or digital form depending on convenience, and their GPA data were then retrieved confidentially from academic records. All responses were coded and analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics 25. The analysis included descriptive statistics to calculate minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation values for both academic self-efficacy and learning achievement. Normality was tested using the Shapiro–Wilk test due to the sample size being below 50, revealing that academic self-efficacy was normally distributed while GPA was not. Consequently, a non-parametric statistical test was required. Linearity was examined using an ANOVA-based test, which confirmed that the relationship between the variables was linear. Finally, Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation was used to determine the strength, direction, and significance of the relationship between academic self-efficacy and learning achievement, making it an appropriate choice for non-normal data and correlational studies in educational contexts.

3) RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Statistics Analysis

This section outlines the descriptive statistical analysis of the data collected from the students' academic self-efficacy questionnaires. The primary data were processed and analyzed using the IBM SPSS Statistics 25 software package to generate a summary of the scores. The complete results of this analysis are presented in the table below.

Table 1: *Descriptive Statistics of EFL Students' Academic Self-Efficacy*

Descriptive Statistics						
	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Students Academic Self-Efficacy	36	52.00	79.00	131.00	105.6944	11.32840
Valid N (listwise)	36					

The table above presents the findings from the 36 students who participated in the study (N=36). An analysis of the scores reveals that the minimum score obtained by a student was 79.00, while the maximum score was 131.00. The difference between these two scores results in a range of 52.00, which indicates a notable spread in the levels of academic self-efficacy reported by the participants.

Furthermore, the central tendency of the data is represented by the mean score, which was calculated to be 105.70. This average score provides a general indication of the typical self-efficacy level for the group as a whole. To understand the variability of the scores around this average, the standard deviation was calculated to be 11.33. This value suggests a moderate dispersion of scores, meaning that while many students scored near the average, there was still a fair amount of variation in individual students' confidence in their academic abilities.

To further interpret the overall results, the students' individual scores were categorized into five distinct levels: very high, high, average, low, and very low. The frequency and percentage of students falling into each classification are presented in Table.

Table 2: *Classification of EFL Students' Academic Self-Efficacy*

Score	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
$X > 107$	Very High	14	38.89%
$91 < X \leq 107$	High	20	55.56%
$74 < X \leq 91$	Average	2	5.56%
$58 < X \leq 74$	Low	0	0%
$X \leq 58$	Very Low	0	0%
Total		36	100%

a strong sense of academic self-efficacy. Specifically, the largest group, consisting of 20 students (55.56%), was classified as having a 'High' level of self-efficacy. Following closely, 14 students (38.89%) were found to be in the 'Very High' category. A much smaller portion of the sample, just 2 students (5.56%), fell into the 'Average' classification. Notably, there were no students (0%) whose scores were in the 'Low' or 'Very Low' categories.

Collectively, these results demonstrate a predominantly positive level of academic self-efficacy among the participants. With the overall mean score for the group being 105.70 (as established in the previous section), which falls within the score range for the 'High' classification ($91 < X \leq 107$), it can be inferred that the general academic self-efficacy of the students in this study is high.

Descriptive Statistics of Students' Learning Achievement

The second major variable investigated in this research was the students' learning achievement. To obtain the data for this variable, the researcher collected the students' official GPA from the college's records.

After the data was compiled, it was analyzed to determine its descriptive properties. The statistical scores, including the range, minimum and maximum values, mean, and standard deviation, were calculated using SPSS. The summary of these findings is presented in the table below.

Table 3: *Descriptive Statistics of EFL Students' Academic Self-Efficacy*

Descriptive Statistics						
	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Students Academic Self-Efficacy	36	52.00	79.00	131.00	105.6944	11.32840
Valid N (listwise)	36					

As shown in the table, data were successfully collected from all 36 participants. The analysis reveals that the students' scores ranged from a minimum of 3.11 to a maximum of 3.99. This results in a very narrow range of 0.88, which indicates that the academic performance levels across the student sample were quite consistent.

The mean score for learning achievement was 3.75, representing the central point of the students' performance. Furthermore, the standard deviation was found to be 0.21. This extremely low value signifies that most of the students' achievement scores are tightly clustered around the average score, confirming that there was very little variation in academic performance among the participants in this study.

To provide a more detailed interpretation of the students' performance, the learning achievement scores were grouped into five distinct categories. The classification of these scores was adapted from the standard academic assessment scale used at UIN Alauddin Makassar. The complete distribution of students across these categories is displayed in the table below.

Table 4: *Classification of Learning Achievement*

Classification of Learning Achievement			
Score	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
3.55 – 4.00	Very Good	31	86,11%
2.51 - 3.54	Good	5	13,89%
1.76 - 2.50	Mediocre	0	0,00%
0.01 - 1.75	Poor	0	0,00%
0	Very Poor	0	0,00%
Total		36	100%

A prerequisite analysis was conducted to determine if the data for the two variables, Academic Self-Efficacy and Learning Achievement, were normally distributed. This test is essential as it determines the appropriate statistical method to be used for the correlation analysis—either a parametric test (like Pearson's r) if the data are normal, or a non-parametric test (like Spearman's ρ) if they are not.

a. The Normality Test

The decision for normality is based on the significance value (Sig.). If the significance value is greater than 0.05 (Sig. > 0.05), the data are considered to be normally distributed. If the value is less than 0.05 (Sig. < 0.05), the data are not normally distributed. Given that the sample size is 36 ($N <$

50), the Shapiro-Wilk test is considered more appropriate and reliable for this analysis. The results are presented in the table below.

Table 5: *Tests of Normality*

	Tests of Normality					
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Students Academic Self-Efficacy	.122	36	.197	.970	36	.426
Learning Achievement	.159	36	.021	.875	36	.001

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The analysis of the table reveals the following:

1. For the Students' Academic Self-Efficacy variable, the Shapiro-Wilk test yielded a significance value of 0.426. Since this value is greater than 0.05, it is concluded that the data for academic self-efficacy are normally distributed.
2. For the Learning Achievement variable, the Shapiro-Wilk test yielded a significance value of 0.001. Since this value is less than 0.05, it is concluded that the data for learning achievement are not normally distributed.

Because one of the variables (Learning Achievement) did not meet the assumption of normality, the requirements for using a parametric test are not fulfilled. Therefore, the research will proceed using a non-parametric statistical test, specifically the Spearman's rank-order correlation, to analyze the relationship between the two variables.

b. The Linearity Test

The final prerequisite test conducted was the linearity test. Its purpose is to determine whether a linear (straight-line) relationship exists between the independent variable (Students' Academic Self-Efficacy) and the dependent variable (Learning Achievement). This analysis confirms that the assumptions for correlation are met.

The interpretation is based on the significance value (Sig.) in the ANOVA table for the "Deviation from Linearity" row. If this value is greater than 0.05, the relationship is considered linear.

Table 6: *Tests of Linearity*

ANOVA Table			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Learning Achievement * Students Academic Self-Efficacy	Between Groups	(Combined)	,926	24	,039	,622	,840
		Linearity	,102	1	,102	1,645	,226
		Deviation from Linearity	,824	23	,036	,578	,871
	Within Groups		,682	11	,062		
	Total		1,608	35			

As shown in the ANOVA table, the significance value (Sig.) for the "Deviation from Linearity" row is .871. Since this value is significantly greater than the standard alpha level of 0.05 ($.871 > 0.05$), the null hypothesis is accepted.

This result indicates that the assumption of linearity has been met. Therefore, it is concluded that there is a linear relationship between students' academic self-efficacy and their learning achievement.

c. The Correlation Analysis

To investigate the relationship between students' academic self-efficacy and their learning achievement, a non-parametric correlation analysis was conducted. As the data for learning achievement did not meet the assumption of normality, the Spearman's rank-order correlation (ρ) was used. The analysis was performed using SPSS Statistics, and the results are presented below.

Table 7: *Correlation Analysis*

			Learning Achievement	Students Academic Self-Efficacy
Spearman's rho	Learning Achievement	Correlation Coefficient	1,000	,394*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	,017
		N	36	36
	Students Academic Self-Efficacy	Correlation Coefficient	,394*	1,000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,017	.
		N	36	36

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The analysis was conducted to test the null hypothesis (H_0), which states that there is no significant correlation between the two variables. The decision is based on the significance value (p-value).

1. The significance value (Sig. 2-tailed) for the correlation is 0.017. Since this value is less than 0.05, the result is statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected.
2. The Spearman's rho correlation coefficient (ρ) is 0.394. This indicates a weak positive correlation between the two variables. The positive nature of the correlation means that as students' academic self-efficacy increases, their learning achievement also tends to increase.

The analysis reveals that there is a statistically significant, weak positive correlation between students' academic self-efficacy and their learning achievement ($\rho = 0.394$, $p = 0.017$). This finding suggests that higher levels of academic self-efficacy are associated with higher levels of learning achievement among the participants in this study.

d. Coefficient of Determination

To determine how much influence the independent variable (Academic Self-Efficacy) has on the dependent variable (Learning Achievement), the Coefficient of Determination (R^2) was calculated. This value explains the proportion of variance in one variable that can be predicted from the other.

$$R^2 = (\rho)^2 \times 100\%$$

$$R^2 = (0.394)^2 \times 100\%$$

$$R^2 = 0.155236 \times 100\%$$

$$R^2 = 15.52\%$$

The result of the calculation is 15.52%. This means that 15.52% of the variation in students' learning achievement can be explained by the variation in their academic self-efficacy.

The remaining 84.48% (100% - 15.52%) is influenced by other factors that were not covered in this particular study.

Discussion

This study aimed to explore the correlation between EFL students' academic self-efficacy and their learning achievement, guided by the main research question: "Is there any significant correlation between EFL students' academic self-efficacy and learning achievement?" This section discusses and

interprets the findings presented earlier, connecting them to relevant theories and previous studies while considering their implications.

The primary finding of this study is that there is a statistically significant, weak positive correlation between academic self-efficacy and learning achievement among the EFL students who participated. The statistical analysis yielded a Spearman's rho coefficient of $\rho = 0.394$ with a significance value of $p = 0.017$. Because the p-value is less than the conventional threshold of 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected. This result directly answers the research question, confirming that a significant relationship does indeed exist.

The positive nature of the correlation indicates that as students' belief in their academic capabilities (self-efficacy) increases, their academic performance (learning achievement) also tends to increase. This aligns with the core tenets of Social Cognitive Theory, proposed by Albert Bandura, which posits that self-efficacy is a key determinant of human motivation and achievement. An individual with high self-efficacy is more likely to set challenging goals, exert effort, and persevere through difficulties, all of which are conducive to higher academic success.

While the relationship was statistically significant, the correlation coefficient of 0.394 suggests the strength of this relationship is weak to moderate. This is an important nuance. It implies that while self-efficacy is a relevant factor, it is not the sole determinant of academic success. The Coefficient of Determination (R^2) further clarifies this point. The calculation revealed that 15.52% of the variance in learning achievement could be explained by academic self-efficacy. This confirms that self-efficacy plays a meaningful role, but the remaining 84.48% of student performance is influenced by a host of other variables not measured in this study, such as teaching methods, learning environment, intrinsic motivation, study habits, and socioeconomic factors.

The descriptive findings also paint a clear picture of the sample group. The participants generally reported high to very high levels of academic self-efficacy, and their learning achievement was predominantly classified as 'Very Good'. This suggests that the study was conducted with a cohort of capable and confident students.

The findings of this study are consistent with a large body of existing literature that has established a positive link between self-efficacy and academic achievement across various disciplines and educational levels (e.g., Pajares & Schunk, 2001; Zimmerman, 2000). For example, a study by Tasha et al. (2023) in a similar EFL context also found a moderate positive correlation between students'

academic self-efficacy and their English learning achievement at SMAN 1 Pekanbaru. The current research contributes to this field by confirming this relationship within the specific context of EFL students at UIN Alauddin Makassar.

4) CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research findings, the level of academic self-efficacy among the EFL student participants was predominantly high. The majority of students (94.45%) were classified in the 'High' or 'Very High' categories, with a mean score of 105.70. The level of learning achievement among the participants was very good. A majority of students (86.11%) were classified in the 'Very Good' category, with a mean achievement score of 3.75. The primary finding of this research is that there is a statistically significant, weak positive correlation between academic self-efficacy and learning achievement. The Spearman's correlation analysis resulted in a coefficient (ρ) of 0.394 and a significance value (p) of 0.017. Since the p -value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected, confirming that a significant relationship exists. In summary, the research concludes that higher academic self-efficacy is significantly associated with higher learning achievement in the context of the EFL students studied.

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