

Original Research

Self-Efficacy and Peer Pressure: Their Impact on Students' Academic Achievement

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Abstract

Peer pressure and students' perceptions of their own abilities were the foci of this investigation of the effects of Wolmera Woreda secondary school students on their academic performance. A quantitative research strategy and a correlational research design were employed in the investigation. The survey included 390 students, with 202 men and 188 females taking part. The children's academic achievements were culled from school records, while data on self-efficacy and peer pressure were collected through a questionnaire. In order to facilitate the data analysis, SPSS version 21 was utilized. After that, the percentage, mean, standard deviation, correlation coefficient, t-test, and regression were all used in the computations. The results show that students' confidence in their own abilities has a significant impact on their academic performance. Peer pressure also significantly correlated with people's academic performance. Both students' perceptions of their own abilities and the influence of their peers were determined to play significant roles in determining their level of academic achievement. School counseling and guidance programs need to be built and improved so that students can feel more capable and connect with classmates who care solely about their grades.

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INTRODUCTION

Students' belief in their own abilities to learn has a substantial bearing on how well they do in school (Zimmerman, 2000). According to Bandura (1989), the social-cognitive method hinges on the multi-faceted concept of self-efficacy, which holds that individuals are argentic, purposeful, proactive, self-evaluative, and self-regulatory. A subcategory of self-efficacy, academic self-efficacy examines how students believe they can

successfully carry out academic tasks (Schunk & Pajares, 2009).

The idea of social cognition states that self-efficacy is a driving force that encourages people to self-regulate and self-correct their behaviors, take more deliberate and long-term plans, and persevere when faced with challenges (Bandura, 2001). Across time, across situations, and different groups, self-efficacy has been shown to be a reliable predictor of motivation and performance in

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multiple meta-analyses (Bandura & Locke, 2003; Multon et al., 1991). Students' self-efficacy, which is influenced by their experiences of success and failure, is a strong predictor of their academic performance (Gore, 2006). There seems to be a crucial connection between academic achievement and the motivating aspect of self-efficacy beliefs, as stated by Chemers et al. (2001), Valentine et al. (2004), and Zajacova et al. (2005).

Students' confidence grows and their sense of personal responsibility for their work is likely to increase when they do well in school (Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 2005). Having higher aptitudes and performing better, leading to more positive evaluations, is associated with lower anxiety and higher self-confidence, according to Pajares and Johnson (1996). Students' levels of self-efficacy vary throughout the semester as a result of the continuous feedback they receive on their performance; those with lower levels of confidence report less learning value, while those with higher levels of confidence report more (Zusho et al., 2003). The complex motivational orientation of academic self-efficacy makes it a good predictor of academic performance; however, further study is needed to fully understand this motivational component.

Adolescents are especially susceptible to the damaging effects of peer pressure because they seek comfort in their friends and blindly follow their example without thinking about the consequences. According to Adeniyi and Kolawole (2015), adolescence is a period of transition for children as they go from childhood to maturity. This leaves individuals open to the allure of social contextualization

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theories. Examples of unhealthy habits that might be fostered by social interaction include drinking and dozing off in class or at work (Bonein & Denant-Boemont, 2015). Because adolescents spend so much time interacting with their peers, their teenage social environments may have an effect on them. As they hit puberty, adolescents increasingly look to their peers for guidance on important life decisions and moral principles, rather than their families (Uslu, 2013).

Students' academic performance is impacted by peer pressure in several ways. That is, the influence of their contemporaries, both positive and negative. Adolescents seek comfort in the company of others while they are among their peers since they do not yet realize the impact that their companions have on their academic performance. Thus, this study aims to determine the impact of peer pressure and self-efficacy on academic achievement among high school students.

Statement of the problem

Students may struggle because they don't know how to use their abilities well or don't believe in their own abilities, as stated in Bandura's theory of cognitive behavior (1997). Student self-efficacy may be a very good predictor of academic motivation, learning, and achievement (Bandura, 1997). In contrast, ineffectiveness may lead to passivity, avoiding tasks, low involvement at work, and eventually resignation (Bandura, 1997). Furthermore, it has been observed that several elements significantly impact students' ability to learn, such as drug use, peer interactions, globalization, interactions with others, and

Lelisa, C & Diro, A environment (Mosha, 2017). According to Mosha (2017), there are positive and negative ways in which peer groups affect academic attainment among teenagers. According to Mlowasa (2014), students who are part of negative peer networks tend to do worse in school. Consequently, the attention-seeking nature of both self-efficacy and peer pressure plays a role in students' academic progress, particularly in our nation where a large number of kids are seen to be tolerant when it comes to learning and experimenting with new behaviors.

Personal observations reveal that many students in Wolmera Woreda prioritize the quest for daily employment over learning, despite the fact that the town is located near Addis Ababa, the capital city of the country. The use of khat and other substances is common among teenagers. Consequently, there has been a gradual decline in pupils' performance on national exams. Therefore, it is appropriate to investigate how Wolmera Woreda pupils' levels of self-efficacy and the influence of their peers affect their academic performance (as stated in the 2010 E.C. annual report).

Research Questions

This study focuses on the following research questions:

1. *What was the relationship between the students' self-efficacy and their academic accomplishment at Wolmera Woreda secondary schools?*
2. *How much of an impact does peer pressure have on Wolmera Woreda*

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secondary school pupils' performance in the classroom?

3. *What was the impact of self-efficacy and peer pressure on students' academic progress in Wolmera Woreda secondary schools?*

The role of self-efficacy and peer pressure on academic achievement

The correlation between believing in one's own abilities and succeeding in school has been the subject of multiple investigations (Bandura, 1997; Hayat et al., 2020; Zimmerman, 2000). Researchers have highlighted self-efficacy as an important factor to examine when studying factors linked to academic performance (Hayat et al., 2020; Meral et al., 2012; Komarraju & Nadler, 2013; Torubeli, 2004). Individuals' perceptions of their own academic abilities, informed by their prior successes and failures on a given subject, are the building blocks of self-efficacy (Bong, 1998). In Bandura's (2001) theory of social cognition, self-efficacy is defined as the belief in one's own abilities to manage a given task or situation. Perceived self-efficacy drives the adoption of optimistic or pessimistic thought patterns, which in turn affects how one approaches or avoids activities (Bandura, 2001). Bong (1998), Multon et al. (1991), and Robbins et al. (2004) are just a few of the many studies that have shown a robust correlation between academic success and self-efficacy beliefs. A number of meta-analyses have also demonstrated that self-efficacy significantly affects academic performance (Robbins et al., 2004; Milton et al., 1991).

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Strong self-efficacy beliefs are associated with good academic achievement because students who believe in themselves also have a mastery attitude. Additionally, strong self-efficacy is associated with successful outcomes and resilience when challenged (Bandura et al., 2001; Komarraju & Nadler, 2013; Robbins et al., 2004). For example, students who believe in their abilities tend to try new things, put more effort into their work, and keep going even when they hit a wall. On the other hand, Vancouver et al. (2001) noted that self-efficacy and academic performance do not necessarily go hand in hand. They showed how it eventually hinders one's capacity to perform. Confidence in one's own abilities mediates the connection between past results and future aspirations. Bandura and Locke (2003) acknowledged the significance of personal ambitions from a socio-cognitive perspective, but they maintained that self-efficacy continued to play a significant role in explaining past successes and failures. Although it is not the sole component that dictates academic achievement, self-efficacy significantly influences study habits and overall success.

Similarly, it is well-known that peer pressure significantly influences adolescent behavior. The effects of peer pressure on academic performance can be positive or negative. A number of studies have examined the effects of peer pressure on students' performance in the classroom. Students who were heavily pressured by their peers to engage in risky behaviors like partying or skipping class performed worse academically than those who were not under as much peer pressure, according to research by Fortuin et al. (2016). This suggests that negative peer

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pressure can have an effect on academic achievement.

Peer group norms, which encompass behaviors and attitudes related to academic achievement, can substantially impact the academic achievements for particular students. Peer networks that praised academic success and encouraged excellent study habits were associated with higher academic performance (Double et al., 2020). This exemplifies the potential positive effects of peer pressure on academic pursuits.

The correlation between academic achievement and the influence of one's peers has several known moderating factors. The moderating role of self-esteem was highlighted, for instance, by Gebresilase and Zhao (2023). Students with low self-esteem were more likely to give in to negative peer pressure, which in turn contributed to their lower academic performance. It appears that certain personal qualities might mitigate the negative effects of peer pressure on academic achievement.

Academic engagement, defined as student involvement and active participation in academic assignments, has been shown to be significantly associated with academic success and peer pressure. Peer pressure to perform academically was associated with higher levels of intellectual engagement and better long-term academic performance in students, according to a longitudinal study by Juvonen et al. (2012).

According to the data set, peer pressure has a significant impact on students' performance in the classroom. Peer pressure, especially the kind that encourages participation in extracurricular activities, can have a negative impact on academic

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performance. Conversely, when it promotes healthy study habits and aligns with academic goals, constructive peer pressure has the potential to boost academic achievement. Academic curiosity and self-esteem are mediating traits that considerably reduce the detrimental effects of peer pressure on academic performance. Although it isn't the sole determinant of academic performance, self-efficacy significantly influences study habits and overall success.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Site

Researchers at Woomera and Woreda carried out the study. Woreda people live in the western part of Finfine, in the Oromia Special Zone. Wolmara is bounded by the following entities: the Sebeta Hawas to the south, the Sheo Zone to the west, the Mulo district to the north, the Sululta to the northeast, and the Town of Burayu to the east.

Research Design

Research designs are the blueprints and strategies that researchers follow to address research questions (Kerlinger, 2004). This study used a correlational research method to examine the relationship between academic performance, a dependent variable, and the independent factors of self-efficacy and peer pressure among secondary school students. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (1996), a correlation research explains the preexisting relationship between two or more variables.

Population and sample

Wolmera Woreda secondary school pupils made up the study's population. The five

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secondary schools on Earth are Asgori Subba, Burka Hara, Holeta, Kolobo, and Burka Harbu. There were 4,858 secondary school pupils in the five schools that took part in the study. The required sample size was determined using Yamane's (1967) formula. Consequently, 390 students were chosen to take part in the study using a combination of random and proportional sampling.

Instruments of the Study

The data was collected using two instruments: the Peer Pressure Inventory (PPI), which was developed in 1985 by Clasen and Brown, and the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE), which was developed in 1995 by Schwarzer and Jerusalem. The General Skills Exam (GSE) had ten items and a four-point scale from 1 (totally false) to 4 (totally true), with possible scores ranging from 10 to forty. With the middle score acting as the cut-off point, higher scores indicated stronger self-efficacy and lower scores indicated lesser self-efficacy. According to what Schwarzer and Jerusalem found, the reliability measurements of the scale varied between 0.76 and 0.90 Cronbach's alphas.

Before data collection began, the instruments were thoroughly examined to make sure they were applicable to the given situation. Afterwards, the instruments' face validity was evaluated by two experienced English teachers. A certified language instructor subsequently translated the instruments into Afan Oromo. The next step was to give 100 students each of the two sets of tests. The following day, the identical group of students (52 men and 48 women) were used for pilot testing of the Afan Oromo versions of

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the tests. After that, we calculated the reliability of both measures and found that the general self-efficacy scale had a reliability coefficient of 0.78 and the peer pressure scale had a reliability coefficient of 0.81. Prior to their usage in the last data collection phase, the instruments underwent a series of adjustments aimed at improving their effectiveness.

On the other hand, the 53-item, 5-dimension Peer Pressure Inventory had a Cronbach's alpha reliability of 0.75. On top of that, the average first-semester 2021 academic scores were provided by the school's official records.

Data collection procedures and ethical considerations

After receiving the letter from Wollega University's School of Graduate Studies, it was sent to Woreda's headquarters. From there, the Education Office sent copies to all Wolmera Woreda secondary schools. In order to arrange for the distribution and timing of the surveys, we contacted the directors of each selected school. The next step was to introduce the study to the responders at each school on a separate day. The next step, with the help of the school administration, was to provide the instruments to the chosen participants in a school hall. The instruments were completed and collected with the help of two data collectors. The students were made

Table 1

Background of the respondents

Variables	Categories	Frequency	%
Age	Less than 15	0	0
	15-20	375	96.2

aware that taking part in the research was entirely optional. The data processing process could begin once the collected instruments were anonymously input into the computer.

Methods of Data Analysis

Numerous operations were performed on the gathered data, including coding, editing, sorting, categorization, and computer entry. Data cleansing was carried out to guarantee precision. In order to evaluate the data in accordance with the study goals, SPSS version 21 was utilized. To give a bird's-eye view of the data, we calculated and displayed descriptive statistics like percentages, means, medians, and standard deviations. The importance of the relationships between the variables was also ascertained by examining the correlation. To find out if there was a significant correlation between gender and peer pressure, we used the Independent Samples Test. Lastly, the impact of self-efficacy and peer pressure on students' academic performance was examined by multiple regression analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The variables presented for background analysis were age, gender, and grade as indicated in Table 1.

<i>Table.1 continues...</i>			
	Greater than 20	15	3.8
	Total	390	100
Gender	Male	202	51.8
	Female	188	48.2
	Total	390	100
Grade Level	10	203	52.1
	11	94	24.1
	12	93	23.8
	Total	390	100

Respondents' ages varied from fifteen to twenty-one and beyond twenty-one years old. According to the age distribution, almost all of the responders (96.2% to be exact) were in the 15–20 age bracket. 3.8% of the people who filled out the survey were older than 20 years old, and at least one person was 15 years old. There were more males than females among the student responses (51.8% vs. 48.2%). The nearly equal representation of male and female perspectives is reflected in the 3.6% difference between the percentages of the two genders. A total of 52.1% of the student body was in tenth grade, with 24.1% in eleventh

and 23.8% in twelfth grades. Most of the people who filled out the survey were probably in the tenth grade. Regarding the respondents' backgrounds, they can provide useful information.

The influences of self-efficacy and peer pressure on academic achievement

Table 2 shows the association between each independent variable and academic accomplishment. Then, we will discuss how self-efficacy and peer pressure affect academic achievement.

Table 2

The association between self-efficacy and academic achievement

Variables	academic achievement
Academic achievement	1
Self-efficacy	.81**

Table 2 shows the relationship between self-efficacy and academic achievement. The Pearson product-moment correlation was utilized for this investigation. The results showed that there was a significant relationship ($r = 0.81$, $n = 390$, $p < 0.01$) between students' assurance in their abilities and their academic performance. This

suggests that students' confidence in their own abilities to succeed academically grows as their confidence grows. Students' levels of self-efficacy are significantly correlated with their academic success, according to the data. In Table 3, we can see that there is a correlation between students' levels of peer pressure and their academic performance.

Table 3*The association between peer pressure and academic achievement of students*

Variables	Students' academic achievement
Students' academic achievement	1
Peer pressure	.59**

Table 3 displays the results of a statistically significant positive correlation ($r = 0.59$, $p < 0.01$) between students' academic achievement and peer pressure. Students' academic performance improves in response to increased peer pressure, and the reverse is also true. According to the findings, there is a moderate correlation between pupils' academic performance and the influence of their peers. Table 4 shows how much of an impact students' sense of self-efficacy and the influence of their peers had on their academic performance.

Regression analysis on the contribution of self-efficacy and peer pressure on academic achievement

Confirmation of the assumptions was followed by regression analysis. An interval scale was

used to depict continuous data on academic success. In order to get continuous data, the measuring equipment' Likert scale frequencies were averaged. By comparing it to a normal probability plot, we were able to determine that the data was distributed normally. The model summary table shows a Durbin-Watson value of 2.13, which falls between 1.5 and 2.5, indicating that the independent and residual variables were not correlated. All of the study's variables appeared to have followed a normal distribution, according to the Shapiro-Wilk test results (0.071), which showed p-values greater than 0.05. There was no multicollinearity since the correlation between the two independent variables was 0.53, which is less than 0.70.

Table 4*Multiple regression ANOVA table*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	45637.022	2	22818.511	370.691	.000 ^b
	Residual	23822.452	387	61.557		
	Total	69459.475	389			

a. Dependent Variable: Academic achievement of students; b. Predictors: (Constant), peer pressure, self-efficacy

The results were also below 10 according to the VIF test. Since the box plot test did not reveal any extreme values at the extremes of

the graph, we may conclude that there are no outliers. The scatter plot did not show any clear patterns, which would indicate that

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heteroscedasticity was not present. We can conclude that the data met the criteria for regression analysis. You can see the results of the multiple regression analysis in the tables below. With a 95% confidence interval, Table 4 displays the results of the regression analysis ANOVA. The considerable relevance of the independent variables in explaining the

fluctuation of the dependent variable was demonstrated by the evaluated significant model summary fit ($F(2, 387) = 370.691, p < 0.001$). Additionally, the results suggest that the selected variables, specifically self-efficacy and peer pressure, significantly affect students' academic achievement.

Table 5

Multiple regression model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.811 ^a	.657	.655	7.84581

a. Predictors: (Constant), peer pressure, Self-efficacy

The coefficient of determination (R²), as shown in Table 5, shows that self-efficacy and peer pressure, as independent factors, explain 65.7% of the total variation in students' academic performance. This indicates that

factors beyond the scope of this research account for the remaining 34.3% of the variance in Wolmera Woreda pupils' academic performance.

Table 6

Regression coefficients

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	T	Sig.	95.0% Confidence	
	Coefficients					Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
(Constant)	9.856	3.343		2.948	.003	3.282	16.430
1 Self-efficacy	1.605	.060	.802	26.919	.000	1.488	1.722
Peer pressure	.056	.021	.080	2.688	.038	1.015	1.097

a. Dependent Variable: Academic Achievement

The results shown in Table 6 indicate that the student's academic performance was significantly and positively affected by their self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.80, t = 26.919, p < 0.000$). Moreover, the results demonstrated that students' academic performance was

phenomenally and significantly affected by peer stress ($\beta = 0.080, t = 2.688, p < 0.038$). The data also revealed that self-efficacy was more important for college students' academic growth than peer pressure. Children who have confidence in their academic abilities are more

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likely to engage in learning activities and achieve better grades.

The study findings

Findings from studies taken place in secondary schools in Wolmera Woreda show a strong relationship between students' self-efficacy and their academic performance. Peer pressure also has a positive and strong link with academic success, according to the research. The results showed that in Wolmera Woreda secondary schools, self-efficacy and peer pressure were the two most important factors in determining academic achievement. It was shown that self-efficacy, rather than peer pressure, was the most important factor in academic success.

Discussion

Students' belief in their own abilities to succeed academically is strongly correlated with their actual performance in school, according to the results of this study. This is in line with earlier research that has also drawn attention to the positive correlation between self-efficacy, academic success, and self-regulation of learning (Bandura, 1997; Denissen et al., 2007; Hayat et al., 2020; Pajares & Miller, 1994). The substantial and positive correlation between students' perceptions of their own abilities and their academic achievement has been highlighted by Komarraju and Nadler (2013). The strong correlation between self-efficacy and academic achievement has been repeatedly found by Torubeli (2004). Furthermore, research by Zimmerman and Bandura (1994) has shown that self-efficacy is an important factor in setting goals that affect academic performance. Thus, one could say that

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students' sense of self-efficacy is the most crucial factor in determining their academic success.

Also, a plethora of research has shown that students' academic performance is significantly impacted by peer pressure (Crockett et al., 2006; Jamison & Myers, 2008; Santor et al., 2000; Studer et al., 2014). Therefore, this study's results corroborate those of previous research showing that positive peer pressure improves students' academic performance. On the other side, research has shown that negative peer pressure might hinder academic performance (Gebresilase & Zhao, 2023). Recent studies have demonstrated that self-efficacy and peer pressure have a significant role in secondary school students' academic performance. These two variables explained 65.7% of the variance in academic performance, according to the research. Mediating factors between parenting styles and academic achievement, as highlighted in prior research by Liorca et al. (2017), are academic self-efficacy and peer interactions. The importance of studying how students' academic growth is influenced by peer pressure and self-efficacy is highlighted by these findings. Students who have high levels of self-efficacy are better able to resist negative peer pressure, make their own judgments about their schoolwork, and ultimately succeed academically. Consequently, dealing with these aspects is crucial if we want to improve students' academic performance.

CONCLUSIONS

Studies both old and new show that students' beliefs in their own abilities and the influence

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of their peers have a major impact on how well they do in school. Improved academic performance is associated with higher levels of self-efficacy and positive peer interactions. However, there is also the opposite side of the coin: negative peer pressure can hurt academic performance. Given the correlation between low self-efficacy and negative peer pressure, it is critical to implement treatments that help students develop positive self-efficacy beliefs and learn to resist negative peer pressure.

Recommendations

Next, we formulated the recommendations based on the research findings.

1. It's crucial for secondary schools to make building students' academic self-efficacy a top priority and help them choose peers who can support them as they learn.
2. Second, in order for pupils to improve their academic performance, teachers should observe the relationships that kids develop with their peers and work to foster healthier ones.
3. It is important for parents to closely monitor their children's social interactions and academic performance so they can intervene in an appropriate way, in collaboration with schools and teachers.
4. Parents and teachers can help kids overcome peer pressure and develop a strong belief in their own abilities so that they can do better in school. Methods that have been shown effective include fostering an attitude that is growth-oriented, providing helpful criticism and praise, promoting cooperative learning among students,

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and establishing a safe space for students to learn from one another.

5. The Woreda Education Office, the Bureau of Education, and schools in particular need to launch and enhance school-based counseling and guidance programs to assist students in developing a sense of self-efficacy and forming friendships with people who share this goal of academic success.

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DECLARATION

The authors declare that there is no competing interest.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The necessary data are available from the corresponding author on request.

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