

What Is The Relationship Between Academic Achievement And Self-Esteem Among Latina College Students?

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Abstract

The goal of the current study was to examine the relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement among Latina college students. It is hypothesized that Latina college students with increased academic achievements demonstrate higher rates of self-esteem. Secondary analysis of data from the University of Washington-Beyond High School (UW-BHS) was used for the current study. The current study utilized a subsample of participants from the original study. The current study consisted of 299 respondents, who were female and of Latina ethnicity. This study was also limited to data retrieved from the 1-year follow-up surveys, which looked at Latinas in their first year in college. The current study found a positive and statistically significant association between academic achievement and self-esteem, and among grades and self-esteem. The current study affirmed prior research studies exploring the relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement among students. Findings from this study will have implications for social workers as this study provides insight into understanding the positive correlations between academic achievement and self-esteem to help Latina students succeed in attaining higher education.

Introduction

Significance of Study:

- Latinas are underrepresented in baccalaureate attainment. Latinas achieve less than four percent of the baccalaureate degrees granted to women (Perez, 2017).
- The current study found a positive and statistically significant association between academic achievement, grades, and self-esteem.
- Younger Latina college students with higher grades who were never held back a grade growing up had higher self-esteem than other study participants.

Purpose of Study:

The purpose of this study is to increase knowledge related to self-esteem among Latina college students.

Research Question:

This study aims to address the following question, what is the relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement among Latina college students?

Hypothesis:

It is hypothesized that Latina college students with increased academic achievements demonstrate higher rates of self-esteem.

Literature Review

Research has found that high self-esteem plays a major role in personal and social responsibility and academic achievement among individuals (Aryana, 2010).

Latina/o Studies:

Latina/o undergraduate students with positive views of the world positively supported academic success outcomes (Crisp et al., 2015).

Cerezo and Chang's (2013) study's results revealed that cultural factors such as connection to ethnic peers and cultural congruity were predictors to the student's GPA. However, ethnic identity did not predict college GPA.

Studies on Different Educational Attainment Levels:

Aryana (2010) investigated the connection between self-esteem and academic achievement among pre-university students. The study concluded that there was a positive relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement among students.

Arshad et al. (2015) examined the connection between self-esteem and academic performance among students completing their master's degree programs. The study indicated a significant positive correlation between self-esteem and academic performance.

Methods

Research Design:

The current study is a secondary analysis of data collected from the UW-BHS. A cross-sectional survey study design is used for the current study to analyze the relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement among Latina college students. Only 299 respondents were used for the current study, while the original study contained almost 10,000 respondents.

Sampling Method:

The current study utilized a subsample of participants from the original UW-BHS study. Study participants who failed to fully complete all of the self-esteem and academic achievement questions were excluded from the current study. This study's sample was focused and limited to all study participants who were female and of Latina ethnicity. This study was also limited to data retrieved from the one-year follow-up surveys.

Measures:

Academic achievement was identified as the respondent's readiness in school. A 10-item scale was used to measure academic achievement.

Self-esteem was defined as the individual's overall sense of ability and self-worth. The respondents were required to self-report their self-esteem using a traditional paper and pencil questionnaire. A 7-item scale measured the respondent's self-esteem.

Results

- An independent-samples *t* test was calculated comparing the mean self-esteem score of participants who were ever held back a grade to the mean self-esteem score of participants who were never held back a grade. A significant difference was found ($t(297) = -3.81, p < .001$). The mean self-esteem of Latina college students who were ever held back a grade growing up ($M = 12.63, SD = 3.73$) was significantly different from the mean self-esteem of Latina college students who were never held back a grade growing up ($M = 15.16, SD = 3.54$).
- An independent-samples *t* test was calculated comparing the mean self-esteem score of participants who had high grades to the mean self-esteem score of participants who did not have high grades. A significant difference was found ($t(297) = 4.20, p < .001$). The mean self-esteem of Latina college students who had high grades ($M = 15.53, SD = 3.63$) was significantly different from the mean self-esteem of Latina college students who did not have high grades ($M = 13.72, SD = 3.40$).
- This study found that in particular, younger Latina college students with higher grades who were never held back a grade growing up have higher self-esteem than other study participants. The study did not intend to find any relationships among the participant's age.

Table 2
Academic Achievement and Self-esteem

		Mean Self-esteem (SD)	Mean Difference	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Held Back a Grade	Yes	12.63 (3.73)	2.53	3.81	< .001
	No	15.16 (3.54)			
High Grades	Yes	15.53 (3.63)	1.81	4.20	< .001
	No	13.72 (3.40)			

Comparisons made using independent *t* tests.

Conclusion

The study concluded that self-esteem and academic achievement are important factors to consider in the planning of interventions that will help students' educational progress. The current study contributes to improving interventions for strategies and programs that will help students gain self-esteem and enhance their academic performance.

Implications for Future Research:

- Future research could address gaps in the current literature to build on what is already known. It can focus on how self-esteem and academic achievement directly affects Latina college students.
- Because Latina/o is not a homogeneous culture, another research focus can be on the relationship between self-esteem and academic attainment among different Latina/o countries.
- Future research can also explore the relationship between self-esteem and academic attainment among Latina/o immigrant communities.

Self-esteem

References

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