

**“THE IMPACT OF GARRISON’S MODEL OF SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING ON IMPROVING ACADEMIC SELF- CONCEPT FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS”
“AUE AS A MODEL”**

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ABSTRACT: *The aim of this study was to investigate the impact of Garrison’s Model of Self-directed Learning on improving Academic Self- concept for AUE Undergraduate Students. The study was carried out with (58) students consisting of 30 males and 28 females out of (115) psychology students, selected randomly and divided into two groups: experimental and control group. The data was collected based on the results of the Academic Self-concept Scale (the reliability coefficient of the scale was calculated by the researcher as (0.93). ANCOVA test, means and Standard deviation were used to analyze the data. The analysis of the data revealed a discrepancy between the means for both the experimental and the control groups that constitutes the study participants. The study also showed a more significant mean for the experimental group than the control group. The “F” value for post-test reflected Garrison’s model high impact in improving Academic Self-concept for AUE Undergraduate students.*

KEYWORDS: Garrison’s Model, Self-directed Learning, Academic Self-Concept, AUE Undergraduate students.

INTRODUCTION

Self-concept is typically defined as a person’s general composite or collective view of themselves across multidimensional sets of domain specific- perceptions, based on self-knowledge and evaluation of value or worth of one’s own capabilities formed through experiences with and interpretations of the environment (Ordaz & Reyes 2014). The Researchers Bong & Skaalvik (2003) defined academic self-concept as the degree of an individual’s perception of his or her own proficiency in academic subjects. The study of Academic Self-concept has attracted the interest of educational psychologists. “Self-concept as a construct has had a long history within psychology and education because it provides an estimate to determine the effects of academic and social functioning on the emotional well-being of the individual Jen & Chien, (2008). The concept of Self-Directed Learning (SDL) is one which educators have investigated and discussed for many years.

Self-Directed Learning (SDL) considers learners as monitors of their own learning process. SDL combines self-management (management of the context, including the social setting, resources, and actions) with self-monitoring (the process whereby the learners monitor, evaluate and regulate their learning strategies) (Song, L & Hill, J, 2007). SDL recognizes the significant role

of motivation in enhancing the learners' efforts. Motivation drives the decision of the student to participate (Corno, 1992). Research has proved that Self-directed learners demonstrate a greater awareness of their responsibility in making learning meaningful and monitoring themselves. Garrison defines Self-directed Learning as a central concept in the study and practice of adult education, with three overlapping dimensions: Self-management, Self-monitoring and motivation (Garrison, 1997). In the school context, Academic self-concept is a central component of educational success, constituting a direct and indirect predictor of academic performance and with particularly strong influence on school adjustment (Tan & Yates 2007). Michelle & Bracken (1994) supported that achievement has an effect on Self-concept and that Academic Self-concept has an effect on achievement.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Self-directed Learning

More than 30 years ago, Knowles (1975), defined Self-directed Learning as a process in which individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, to diagnose their learning needs, formulate learning goals, identify human and material resources for learning, choose and implement appropriate learning strategies, and evaluate learning outcomes. Long (1998) identified three aspects of Self-directed Learning: the Sociological, Pedagogical, and Psychological. Long contended that much of the discussion around Self-directed Learning has focused on the Sociological (independent task management) and Pedagogical (application in educational contexts).

Costa and Kallick (2004) described the Self-directed Learners as being **1) Self-Managing**, (the willingness to be engaged in activities with awareness of the results for their learning and the academic load, and essential information they need, and use of prior experiences, looking forward to signs of achievement, and generating substitutes for accomplishment), **2) Self-Monitoring** (having adequate self-awareness about what is effective, employing cognitive and metacognitive strategies to assess their learning), and **3) Self-Modifying** (thinking over, assessing, and constructing meaning from experience and utilizing their knowledge to future activities, and tasks).

Parasafar (2012) defined Self-directed Learning as a kind of learning that has characteristics like self-planned, self-initiated, and independent learning. The Self-directed Learning (SDL) Model views learners as responsible owners and managers of their own learning process and integrates self-management (management of the context, including the social setting, resources, and actions) with self-monitoring (the process whereby the learners monitor, evaluate and regulate their cognitive learning strategies) (Brockett, 2002).

Garrison's Three-dimensional Model of Self-directed Learning

Garrison (1997) proposed a SDL model which integrated Self-management (contextual control), Self-Monitoring and motivation. According to "Garrison" **Self-management** is concerned with

task control issues. It focuses on the social and behavioral implementation of learning intentions that is, the external activities associated with the learning process. The term Self-management is used in this paper to indicate an aspect of external task control specific to the management of learning activities, which are intimately linked with goal setting and meta-cognitive strategies. In the same context “Garrison” indicates that **Self-monitoring** (cognitive responsibility) is monitoring the repertoire of learning strategies as well as an awareness of and an ability to think about our thinking. Self-monitoring is the process whereby the learner takes responsibility for the construction of personal meanings for the student’s learning.

Motivational factor (entering and task) plays a very significant role in the initiation and maintenance of effort toward learning and the achievement of learning goals. According to “Garrison” motivation is the process of selecting goals and intentions and deciding to participate to academic tasks. It’s worth to mention that, these factors associated with learning in an educational context, emphasize Garrison’s definition to SDL as an approach where learners are motivated to assume personal responsibility, and control of the cognitive (Self-monitoring) and contextual (Self-management) processes in constructing and confirming meaningful for learning outcomes (motivation).

Researches on SDL have focused on two main areas: (1) the verification of SDL among University students, and (2) descriptions of models for understanding SDL (Brockett, 2002). Some scholars have recognized the importance of the learning context for SDL and its association with Academic Self-concept. Candy (1991) noted that learners may exhibit different levels of Self-direction in different learning situations due to different levels of Academic Self-concept.

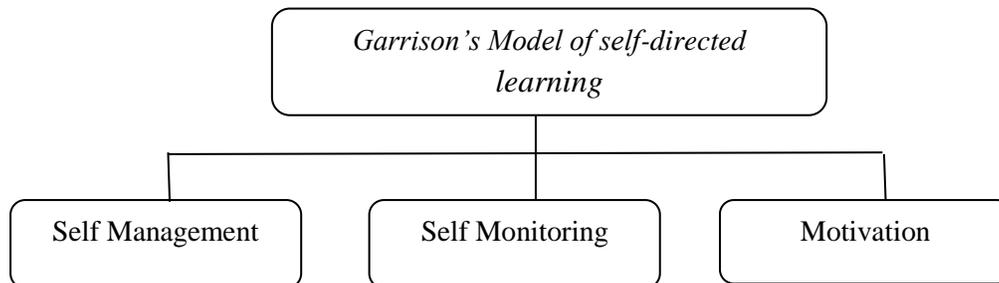


Figure 1: Garrison’s Model of Self-directed Learning

Academic Self-concept

According to Marsh (2005), Academic Self-concept is the perception and evaluation that a student has or does about his or her academic abilities. In his definition to Students’ Academic Self-concept, Houston (2007) emphasized that Academic Self-concept is significantly correlated with student’s future goals. Similarly Zimmerman (2000) indicates that the Academic Self-

concept directly affects learning processes, achievement, and expectations of students. Additionally, it helps to create various cognitive and self-regulative strategies.

Statement of the problem

Academic Self-concept is a very important key for students' success, and is considered as a stimulus for excellent academic performance. Academic Self-concept influences students' later achievement (Marsh, Byrne, & Yeung, 1999) and affects students' future goals. Students with low academic Self-concept are less likely to choose difficult academic coursework, engage in challenging educational opportunities, and apply for highly selective programs. Thus, Academic Self-concept may have significant consequences on students' Academic goals. The researcher believes that the potential implementation of Garrison's model of Self-directed Learning is subject to the American university in the emirates (AUE) Academic context, students' receptivity and faculty engagement.

Research Question

To achieve the objectives of this study, the following core research question was formulated to guide the study:

Does Garrison's Model of Self-directed Learning (external management, internal monitoring, and motivational factors) impact on improving the Academic Self- concept among AUE undergraduate students?

METHOD

Participants

Participants of this study were (58) consisting of 30 males and 28 females psychology students studying in the American University in the Emirates (AUE). The participants were selected through random sampling (simple) wherein each participant has equal probability (Chance) to be a part of the sample population. The participants sample represents a larger population of students in UAE. The researcher did not include any criteria to breakdown the participants, except for gender. The sample was divided into two groups: experimental and control. The experimental group is the actual group on which the research will be carried out, whereas the control group is distinct group, and not a part of the research. This division is made to ease out the complexity of the research conditions. It is worth to mention that the two groups were homogenized based on the academic year level (Second Academic year).

Table (1) illustrates the distribution of participants to the study.

Table 1: Participants distribution

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	30	51.7	51.7	51.7
Female	28	48.3	48.3	100.0
Total	58	100.0	100.0	

Instrument

To answer the research question, the “Academic Self-concept Scale developed by Ordaz and Reyes (2014) was applied. The scale included (28) statements representing Academic Self-concept. The researcher adopts this scale for the purpose of appropriateness. It has been found in a pilot study that the Cronbach alpha coefficient was (0.87). Experts’ opinions were taken into consideration to assess the validity of the scale.

Procedure

The experimental groups (29 students) were trained to practice Garrison’s Self-directed Learning Model in 6-weeks of general psychology class. The class met twice per week for a total of 6 weeks, with each class meeting for about (45) minutes, for a total duration of (90) minutes weekly. Whereas the control group (29 students) did not receive any training and no practice on the Garrison’s Self-directed Learning Model. After the training of the experimental group was over, students from both the experimental and control groups completed the Academic Self-concept scale. The data gathered by the experiment of the study was analyzed using SPSS software following the below statistical methods: Means and Std. deviation and Analysis of Covariance (ANOVA).

Reliability

In order to test the reliability of the data collected from the student population, a Cronbach alpha test was executed. The reliability coefficient of the scale was calculated by the researcher as (0.87). The alpha value represents a high internal consistency in the data collected.

FINDINGS

To answer the research question of the study, means and Std. deviation were calculated, the group statistics displayed differences in the means between experimental and control group. For the control group, the mean was (67.6552), whereas for the experimental group the mean was (117, 3103).

Table (2) displays the means and Std. deviation for both experimental and control groups.

Table 2: Means and Std. Deviations for experimental and control groups

Test	GROUP	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
POST	experimental	29	117.3103	9.69574	1.80045
	Control	29	67.6552	9.02883	1.67661

The results in table (2) demonstrate a discrepancy between the means for both experimental and control groups. To verify the existing differences, Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to evaluate the impact of Garrison's Model of Self-directed Learning on improving Academic Self-concept of the participants during the pre-test and post-test.

Table (3) illustrates the test results from the comparison in experimental and control groups pre and post-tests

Table 3: ANCOVA test results from the comparison in experimental and control groups pre and post-tests

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Intercept	381.274	1	381.274	4.826	.032
POST	1282.966	1	1282.966	16.238	.000
GROUP	436.574	1	436.574	5.526	.000
Error	4345.448	55	79.008		
Total	317212.000	58			
Corrected Total	6960.897	57			

a. R Squared = .376 (Adjusted R Squared = .353)

As per the results displayed in Table (3), the "F" value for post-test is (16.238) with a significance (.000), which reflects the real impact for the Garrison's Model. The "F" value for both groups is (5.526) with significance (.000). Therefore, the results clearly justify Garrison's model high impact in improving Academic Self-concept.

DISCUSSION

The mean for the experimental group (students trained following Garrison's Model) is higher than the mean for the Control group. This can be justified by students' developed Self-

monitoring, Self-management and motivation, which are Garrison's Model components responsible for improving the Academic Self-concept.

If AUE adopts Garrison's Model, the impact will be clear in improving Academic Self-concept through 1) increasing students' awareness (students with a low CGPA, for example, will strive to raise their CGPA independently); 2) converting students' learning process from concrete to abstract conceptualization (students will no longer rely on tangible/concrete materials to learn, but can go beyond this traditional learning to absorb knowledge and concepts).

IMPLICATIONS

For AUE faculty, implementing Garrison's Model will help 1) establish an interesting and inspiring instructor/student interaction/teaching, 2) will facilitate the instructors teaching efforts to smoothly achieve the required learning outcomes, 3) will enhance Academic quality and excellence. In their research paper (Chou & Chen, 2008) found out that there is a reasonable link exists between self-directed learning and academic success.

Intervention

If AUE adopts and implements the Garrison's model on the university students, it will be the most versatile and effective intervention to increase academic learning and performance. As per the literature review, it is found that students need assistance and support from the university and instructors in order to improve their academic performance and learning. However, poor engagement restricts student persistence towards learning, which can be developed through a system such as the Garrisons model of self-direction learning. To promote early integration of this system in the university curriculum, the university needs to build efforts to apply it in the initial stages, such as the first year program. This will allow the students to understand the system carefully and adapt to it to use it better.

CONCLUSION

This research defines Garrison's Model of Self-directed Learning with its three components. The researcher elaborated an Academic Self-concept Scale which he circulated to AUE undergraduate students to assess and illustrate the impact of Garrison's Model on enhancing students' Academic Self-concept. The implementation of Garrison's Model will help the University Undergraduate students enhance and improve Academic Self-concept, become actively engaged in the learning process, achievable, motivated, and optimistic in their academic life. AUE faculty will be able to apply the Garrison's Model of Self-directed Learning in their teaching, which will facilitate their efforts to fulfill the required learning outcomes and enhance Academic quality and excellence.

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Appendix**Academic self concept scale for undergraduate students**

	Statement	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Very often	Always
1	Before I start a new academic task, I analyze the different options to perform it					
2	I can repeat word by word or a material I have been told.					
3	When I want to improve my academic performance, I make some decisions and stick to them until I reach the goal.					
4	I complete my homework within the period of time I establish.					
5	I express my ideas more clearly verbally.					
6	I practice activities that I like most to improve my academic performance.					
7	I read texts several times to find main ideas.					
8	When I have a problem, I search for new strategies to solve it.					
9	I can reinvent new concepts into my own words.					
10	I find it difficult to memorize material.					
11	I like to track the origin of a problem in order to find the best solution.					
12	I analyze my grades to see if they correspond to what I did.					
13	I try to do the best academic work of my class.					
14	I don't need many instructions to know how to do my homework.					
15	I can predict the consequences an event is going to have.					
16	I like to do my homework in my own terms and with my ideas.					
17	I like to be given the chance to participate to classroom group activities.					
18	I have more than one option to solve a problem.					
19	I review the curriculum before a semester begins.					

20	I can mentally calculate material easily.					
21	When I participate in a group activity, I do my best to excel					
22	I like situations where I can compare and identify different points of views or opposed ideas.					
23	I like to learn by free exploration.					
24	Before starting a task or project, I look into it in order to know what strategy to use.					
25	I can generate new ideas without having deep knowledge on a topic.					
26	To solve a problem, I find ways others don't think of.					