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A social work study on relationship between school connection and academic failure among guided schoolchildren in city of Esfahan

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C H R O N I C L E	A B S T R A C T
	Academic failure is one of the most important issues in educational systems and there are several attempts held to prevent such issues. In this paper, we study the relationship between school connection and academic failure among some high schools students in city of Esfahan, Iran during the academic calendar of 2011-2012. The study chooses a sample of 377 students based on clustering sampling technique and using Pearson correlation test as well as stepwise multiple regression technique, the relationship between school connection and academic failure is investigated. The result of Pearson correlation ratio indicates that there is meaningful relationship between these two components. In addition, the result of regression analysis indicates that 32% of students' academic failure is determined by this ratio.

1. Introduction

Education plays an important role for the development of any society and good quality schools is considered as an important part of having healthy society (Patterson et al., 1989; Allen et al., 2000; Anderia, 2002). When there is an academic failure among schoolchildren, their parents will also get hurt emotionally and become interested in preventing such problems. According to McEvoy and Welker (2000), there are some strong correlation between antisocial behavior and academic failure among students and investigated the impact of school climate in guiding programs designed to remove academic failure as much as possible and antisocial behavior among students defined as "at risk". McGEE and Share (1988) investigated attention deficit disorder-hyperactivity and academic failure and looked to find out how we could reduce academic failure. According to their study, there are some evidences on the relationship between attention deficit disorder-hyperactivity (ADDH) and learning difficulties, which include (1) the degree of overlap between the two disorders, (2) possible

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causal directions between the two, and (3) the appropriate focus of treatment. They recommended more longitudinal research on the relationship between ADDH and learning difficulties, specifically in terms of the potential behavioral impacts of treating learning difficulties.

Pagani et al. (2003) investigated the effects of poverty on academic failure and delinquency in boys. Neff et al. (2005) studied self-compassion, achievement goals, and coping with academic failure in two different studies. In their first study, they found that self-compassion was positively correlated with mastery objectives and negatively related to performance aims. The second study indicated that self-compassion was positively related to emotion-focused coping strategies and negatively related to avoidance-oriented strategies.

Turner et al. (2002) studied the relative importance of students' goals in their emotional experience of academic failure by looking into the precursors and consequences of shame. Rhodewalt and Hill (1995) investigated self-handicapping in the classroom by looking into the effects of claimed self-handicaps on responses to academic failure. Giaconia et al. (1995) investigated traumas and posttraumatic stress disorder in a community population of older adolescents. Anderman (2003) studied academic and social perceptions as predictors of change in middle school students' sense of school belonging. Freeman et al. (2007) looked at the sense of belonging in college freshmen at the classroom and campus levels.

In this paper, we study the relationship between school connection and academic failure in some guided schools located in city of Esfahan, Iran. This paper is organized as follows. We first present details of our proposed study in section 2 while section 3 presents the results of our survey and the paper ends with concluding remarks.

2. The proposed study

This paper surveys the relationship between school connection and academic failure among students who took part in first year of high schools in city of Esfahan, Iran. The proposed study divided the city into two regions of rich and poor and in each group; we have decided to select some students from each group. Table 1 shows the number of students who were selected in our survey.

Table 1
Basic statistics on the participants

Region	Population		Sample	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Rich	1237	1238	62	62
Poor	2622	2500	130	124

We have used a standard questionnaire to study the relationship between academic failures and average scores of courses they have recently taken as well as their intelligence. Pearson correlation ratios for these two items were computed as -0.53(0.001) and -0.50(0.0001), respectively. These two options are both statistically significance and we can conclude that there are some negative relationships between academic failure and their academic performance and their intelligence. Pearson relationship was also calculated as 0.58 between Academic burnout and academic failure. Cronbach alpha was calculated at the beginning and the end of survey and they were calculated as 0.93 and 0.95, respectively, which indicate that the results are reliable. Table 2 shows details of mean and standard deviations of survey results on some the main questions associated with academic failure and Table 3 demonstrates the same results on questions associated with connection with schools.

Table 2
Mean and standard deviation of research variables associated with connection with academic failure

Research variable	Gender	Mean	Standard deviation
Selection problem and academic decisions	Male	6.15	3.13
	Female	5.71	2.77
Total		5.93	2.96
Academic preparation	Male	4.03	2.28
	Female	3.89	2.41
Total		3.96	2.84
Difficulties in creating motivation	Male	3.95	2.84
	Female	3.56	2.71
Total		3.76	2.78
Difficulties in students' habits	Male	5.08	3.29
	Female	5.00	3.18
Total		4.84	3.24
Difficulties in students' study	Male	6.02	3.22
	Female	6.46	3.25
Total		6.24	3.24
Difficulties in students' planning	Male	6.15	3.38
	Female	5.99	3.13
Total		6.07	3.26
Mental, emotional and academic problems	Male	8.06	4.49
	Female	8.39	4.48
Total		8.23	4.48
Environmental Problems and educational atmosphere	Male	3.77	2.46
	Female	3.73	3.00
Total		3.75	2.74
Exam issues	Male	4.37	2.62
	Female	4.46	2.96
Total		4.41	2.79
Physical problems	Male	3.09	2.35
	Female	2.79	2.2
Total		2.94	2.28
Total scores	Male	52.58	28.01
	Female	50.06	21.32
Total		51.33	24.93

Table 3
Mean and standard deviations of research variables associated with connection with school

Variable	Gender	Mean	Standard deviation
Commitment to school	Male	19.96	4.75
	Female	21.27	5.79
	Total	20.14	5.32
Belonging to the school	Male	22.14	5.63
	Female	21.08	5.75
	Total	20.61	5.71
Commitment to law school	Male	12.23	2.49
	Female	12.99	1.92
	Total	12.61	2.26
Relationship with peers	Male	8.5	2.87
	Female	8.6	2.80
	Total	8.55	2.80
Total	Male	62.83	10.83
	Female	63.95	11.32
	Total	63.83	11.07

In order to survey the relationships between the components of components of school connections with academic failure we have performed Pearson correlation ratios and Table 4 demonstrates the results.

Table 4

The summary of Pearson correlation ratios

Academic failure	Connection with school				
	Commitment to school	Belonging to school	Commitment to law school	Relationship with peers	Total
Selection problem and academic decisions	-0.295 (.001)**	-0.194 (.001)**	-0.124 (.001)*	-0.093 (.076)	-0.290 (.001)**
Academic preparation	-0.081 (.122)	-0.097 (.063)	-0.058 (.272)	-0.136(.01)**	-0.136 (.01)**
Difficulties in creating motivation	-0.523 (.001)**	-0.396 (.001)**	-0.202 (.001)**	-0.083 (.113)	-0.518 (.001)**
Difficulties in students' habits	-0.458 (.001)**	-0.396 (.001)**	-0.202 (.001)**	-0.083 (.113)	-0.518 (.001)**
Difficulties in students' study	-0.281 (.001)**	-0.256 (.001)**	-0.079 (.131)	-0.066 (.209)	-0.300 (.001)**
Difficulties in students' planning	-0.359 (.001)**	-0.269 (.001)**	-0.206 (.001)**	0.043 (.414)	-0.342 (.001)**
Mental, emotional and academic problems	-0.450 (.001)**	-0.350 (.001)**	-0.171 (.001)**	-0.034 (.519)	-0.441 (.001)**
Environmental Problems and educational atmosphere	-0.390(.001)**	-0.358 (.001)**	-0.176 (.001)**	-0.025(.632)	-0.414 (.001)**
Exam issues	-0.307 (.001)**	-0.271 (.001)**	-0.129 (.013)*	0.031(.560)	-0.306 (.001)**
Physical problems	-0.383 (.001)**	-0.309 (.001)**	-0.139 (.008)**	0.009 (.868)	-0.370 (.001)**
Total	-0.491 (.001)**	-0.390 (.001)**	-0.216 (.001)**	-0.085 (.106)	-0.502 (.001)**

**Level of significance=1%
*Level of significance=5%

As we can observe from the results of Table 4, except of one case of academic preparation, there are some meaningful correlations between "commitment to school" and academic failure's components and between "belonging to school" and academic failure. In terms of relationships between commitment to law and components of academic failure, except two cases of academic preparation and difficulties in students' study, there are some meaningful correlations between these two items. Comparing the relationship with peers and academic failure, except the case of academic preparation, the study did not find any meaningful correlations. The total observations of relationship between connection with school and academic failure, we observe some negative correlations between these two components when the level of significance is one percent.

3. The results

In order to understand the relationship between academic failure and connection with school, we have used Pearson correlation ratio, which has been calculated as 0.563 when the level of significance is 0.001. Therefore, we use a stepwise regression analysis between these two variables where the independent variables include academic failure components and dependent variable is school connection. Table 5 shows details of results of the implementation of multiple regression analysis.

Table 5

The summary of stepwise multiple regression analysis

Variable	Beta	Std. deviation	Standard Beta	t-value	Sig.
Intercept	73.327	0.981			0.001**
Difficulties in creating motivation	-1.294	0.264	-0.324	-4.903	0.001**
Environmental Problems and educational atmosphere	-0.763	0.212	-0.187	-3.602	0.001**
Difficulties in students' habits	-0.466	0.218	-0.135	-2.139	0.033*

**Level of significance=1%
*Level of significance=5%

In addition, ANOVA test has been performed to analyze the results of regression and Table 6 shows the results.

Table 6

The summary of ANOVA test

Source of changes	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean squares	F-value	Sig.
Regression	14067.511	10	1406.751	16.143	0.001
Residuals	30238.746	347	87.143		
Total	44306.256	357			

The result of ANOVA test indicates that there is a linear relationship between independent variables and dependent variable. According to the results of Table 5, an increase of one unit in difficulties

creating motivation will reduce school connection by -0.324. In addition, a reduction of one unit in Environmental Problems and educational atmosphere and Difficulties in students' habits will reduce school connection by 0.187 and 0.135, respectively.

4. Conclusion

In this paper, we have studied the relationship between school connection and academic failure among some guided schools students in city of Esfahan, Iran during the academic calendar of 2011-2012. The study chose a sample of 377 students based on clustering sampling technique and using Pearson correlation test as well as stepwise multiple regression technique, the relationship between school connection and academic failure has been investigated. The result of Pearson correlation ratio indicates that there is meaningful relationship between these two components. In other words, an increase of one unit in difficulties creating motivation could reduce school connection by -0.324. In addition, a reduction of one unit in Environmental Problems and educational atmosphere and Difficulties in students' habits could reduce school connection by 0.187 and 0.135, respectively. In summary, we can specify that connection to school could reduce schoolchildren's anti-social behavior and the more children face are emotionally affiliated to school; the less we observe criminal behavior on their behalf. In addition, when students have difficulty in doing their homework, they may have less connection with school. The results of this survey indicate that students' social problems are closely correlated with school connections. Therefore, it is necessary to make sure training are performed properly and students have the opportunity to learn and reduce their educational problems.

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