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Academic motivation and previous academic achievement in higher education

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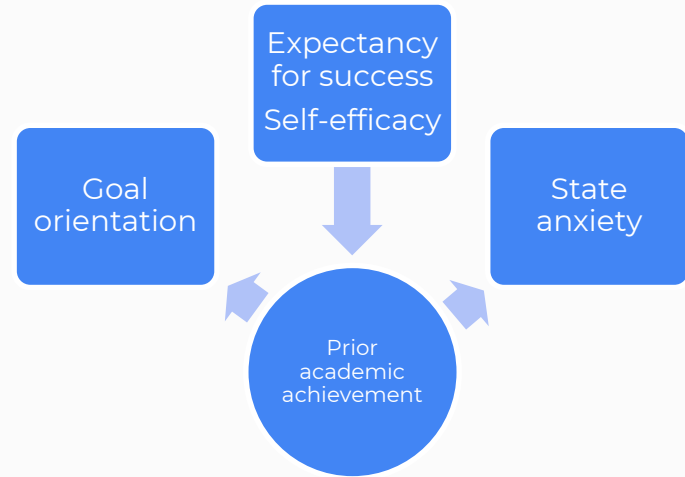
OBJECTIVES OF THE PAPER

The aim of this research is to examine the relationship between higher education students' prior academic achievement and their academic motivation.

APPROACH USED

Quality education is key to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (ODS). In this broad context, academic motivation would be a major indicator to measure education's quality. Although more people access higher education, a significant percentage drop out.

- Several studies have shown the impact of previous academic experiences, such as academic achievement, on motivation, especially at compulsory education levels.

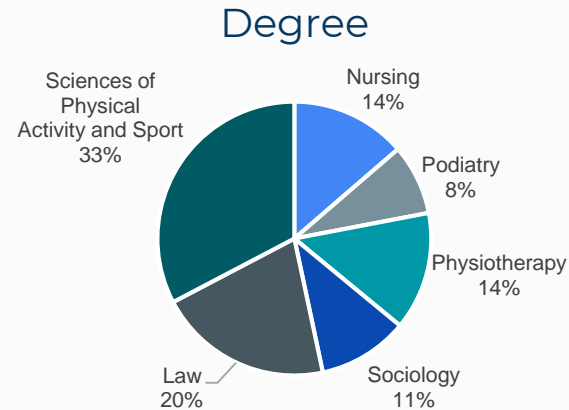


METHOD

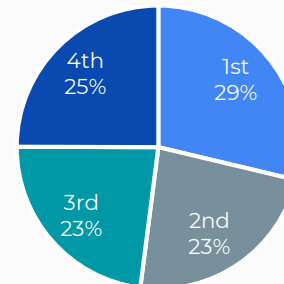
The study was developed using a quantitative correlational research design. The data collection was carried out via survey.

Participants:

The sample consisted of 982 Spanish higher education students, 57% of whom were girls. The age range was between 18 and 52 years old ($M = 21.7$, $DT = 4.30$).



Academic year



METHOD

Variables and instruments:

- *Self-efficacy*. Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ).
- *Expectancy for success*. Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ).
- *Mastery goal orientation and Performance goal orientation*. Goal Scale by Skaalvik (1997).
- *State anxiety*. The Spanish adaptation of the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI).
- *Previous academic achievement*. Self-reported students' past qualifications.

KEY RESULTS

Students with excellent prior achievement might engage for performance reasons. Those with good prior achievement might also adopt performance approximation goals. Students who acknowledge poor performance in previous courses would be more likely to adopt mastery avoidance goals.

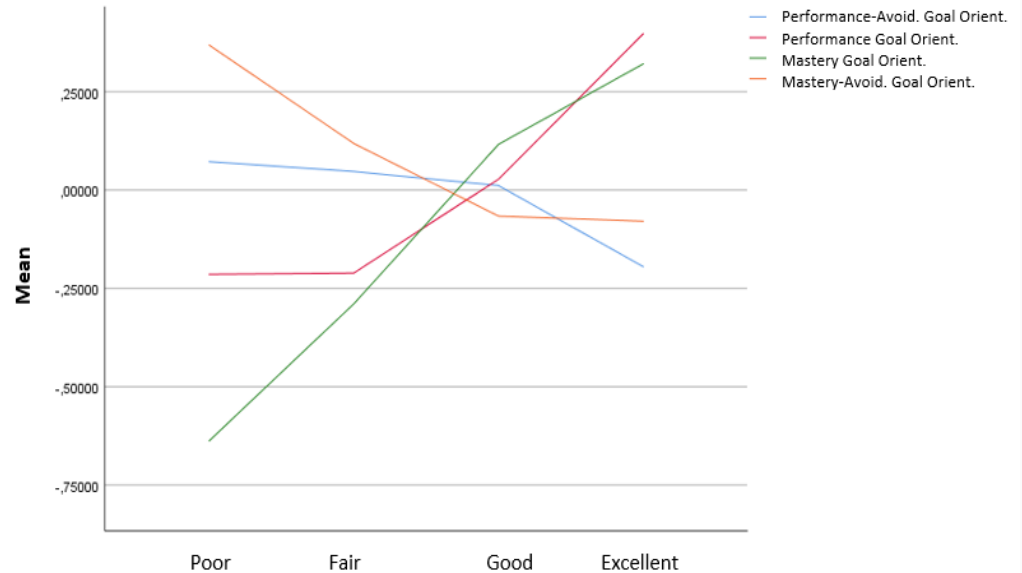


Figure 1. Student's goal orientation according to prior academic achievement

KEY RESULTS

Higher education students with previous poor or fair academic achievement had significant lower expectations for success than those with good prior qualifications. Perceived self-efficacy may be less linked to the level of self-reported prior performance.

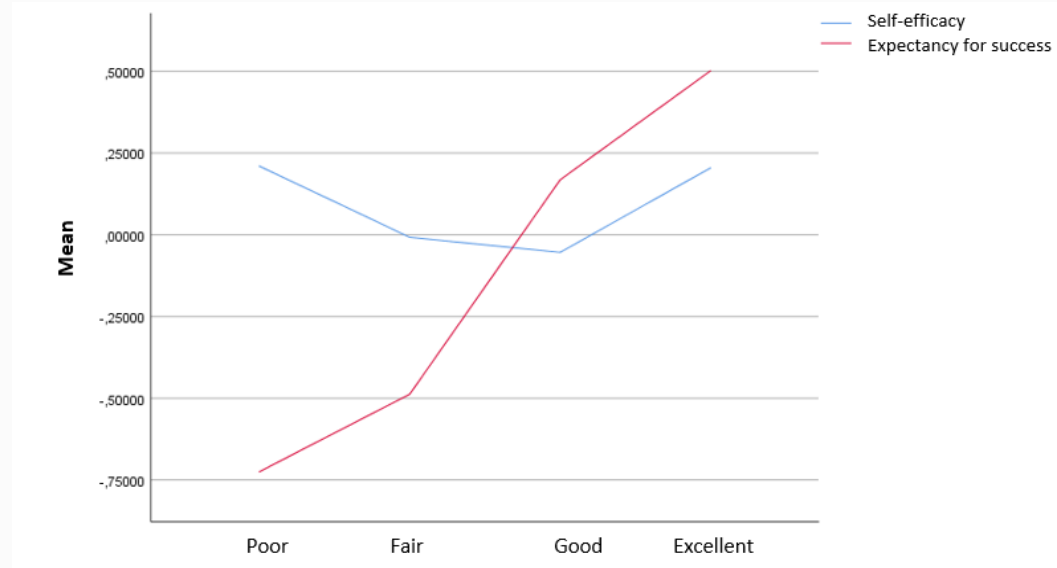


Figure 2. Student's expectancy for success and self-efficacy perceptions according to prior academic achievement

KEY RESULTS

The students who displayed the worst emotional well-being, in terms of negative state anxiety, were those with a previous academic performance reported as fair.

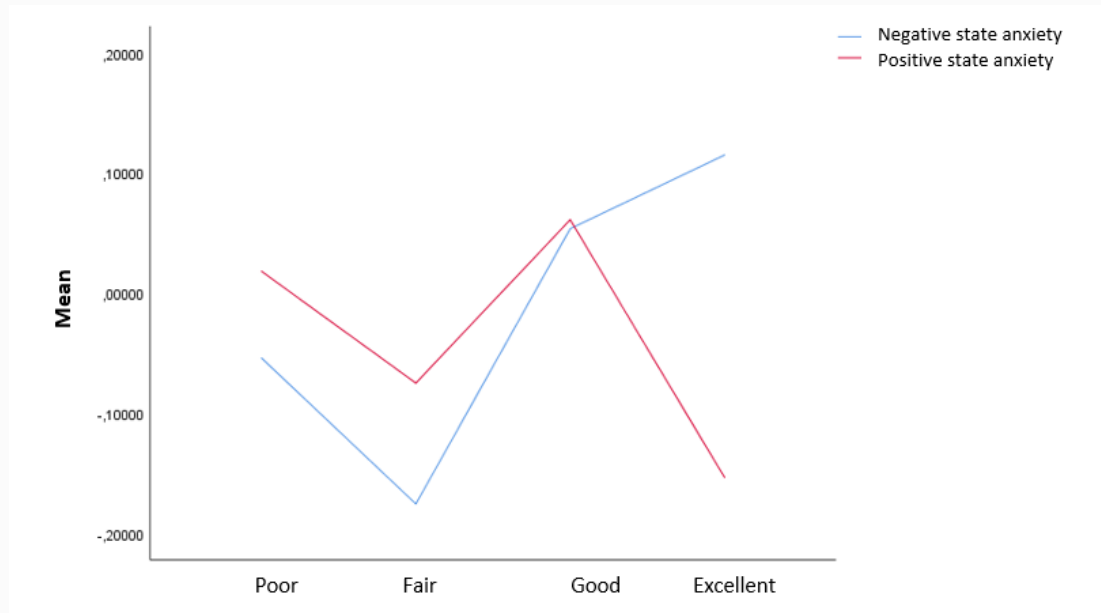


Figure 3. Student's state anxiety according to prior academic achievement

MAIN CONCLUSIONS

Previous good or excellent academic university achievers might be more likely to display a mastery goal orientation, alongside more optimistic thoughts of their future results than those with fair or low qualifications. On the other hand, higher education students with the lowest emotional well-being could be previous fair academic achievers.

In order to upgrade education's quality, it is highly necessary to implement educational programs that foster students' academic motivation. This programmes should be specifically designed for those students with the highest rates of anxiety, mastery-avoidance goal orientation, and inaccurate self-efficacy perception according to their academic results.

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