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Research Article

Investigating The Relationship Of Educational Dynamics To Classroom Absenteeism And Self-Efficacy Beliefs Of Medical Students

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ABSTRACT

The present study probed into the relationship of educational dynamics to medical students' tendency to be absent from classes and their self-efficacy beliefs. This study enjoyed a descriptive-correlational design, and its results were applied. The statistical population of the research involved all students of medical sciences faculties in Kermanshah city. Concerning the extensiveness of the Nursing, Midwifery, Medical, Paramedical, and Health Faculties of the Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences, 384 students were selected and explored according to Morgan Table (the highest number of this scale). The sampling method was cluster random sampling. The instruments employed in this research consisted of the educational dynamics questionnaire of Shafiepour et al. (2018), researcher-made questionnaire of absenteeism from specialized classes, and self-efficacy scale of Sherer et al. (1982). For data analysis, the researchers employed the descriptive statistics indices (frequency, mean, standard deviation, and graphs) and the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test to examine data distribution. The PLS software was also used for the test of hypotheses. All relationships present in the research model were confirmed ($t \geq 1.96$). It meant that educational dynamics significantly associated with a tendency to absenteeism and self-efficacy beliefs.

Keywords: Educational Dynamics, A Tendency to Absenteeism, Self-efficacy Beliefs, Medical Students,

Introduction

Classrooms are suitable places for the exchange and transference of the experiences and skills from professors to students as well as a better perception and understanding of the materials in higher education centers and universities (Madarshahian, 2014). Attendance in the classroom not only helps students appropriately understand and perceive the subject matters, but also sets them in proper and better conditions and situations for dealing with the subject matters, understanding their professors' attitudes, and figuring out solutions to problems. Recurrent absenteeism, non-participation in the classroom programs, and the fade presence of students in classrooms can lead to educational failure and reduced learning, which is a symptom of the amotivation and disinterest of students in academic fields and materials (Azmoudeh et al. 2013). In the same vein, those students that are recurrently absent and do not attend classes achieve less academic success and may obtain lower scores in their subject-matter examinations and assessments. All in all, not attending programs and classes without a defendable reason is reckoned as absenteeism, and all teachers and professors recognize it as an educational disorder and problem due to the incremented number of absences and their originating consequences and effects (Karimi et al. 2013). With the appropriate and deserving presence of students in classrooms, a large volume of materials are exchanged and transferred among students, and they can acquire their golden knowledge and reach accomplishment (Rezaei et al. 2017). We can state that those who care and value their attendance in classes are more successful in the conduction of future activities relegated to them.

Students are rationally and qualifiedly interested in participating and attending their classes; however, the teaching methods of teachers and professors are one of the main factors that define the rate and level of their presence in classes and course continuation (Bahrami et al. 2013). Furthermore, there are many reasons that impact the absence of students from classes. They include the self-confidence level of teachers, usefulness and effectiveness of subject matters presented in classes, classroom crowdedness, traditional strategies of classroom management, students' lack of participation and role-play in subjects, and their disinterest or low interest in materials (Nazari et al. (2013; Rezaei et al. 2017). In this regard, the study of Mazloomy et al. (2010) illuminated that the improper teaching method and insufficient mastery of teachers over materials and educational concepts were the most paramount factors in the non-attendance of students in classes.

Similarly, some factors, including creating a sense of curiosity in classes and an interest in the professor and course content, trigger a decreased number of absences and, as a result, an increased number of attendances. Moreover, some factors such as indifference to the field of study, improper teaching method, jobs and occupations, familial factors, the ineffectiveness of materials, and traditional methods of classroom management are among the factors leading to class absenteeism (Mazloomy et al. 2010). Nabavi et al. (2011), in their research, found that the performance of professors and teachers had the most and highest effect on the absence and non-attendance of students in classrooms, and educational problems were in the second order. In their study aiming to investigate the effective factors in the attendance of students in educational classes from the prospects of students in the Medical Sciences University of Kermanshah, Rezaei et al. (2017) claimed that there was a relationship between the demographic factors of students and their presence in educational programs. In the teachers' dimensions, there was also a significant relationship between the educational environment and students. Noticing these factors can upsurge the tendency and inclination of students to attend classes.

On one hand, one of the main and foremost human attributes for attaining the goals and values ahead of him is self-belief. The possession of a strong will, high self-confidence, decision-making power, creativity, innovation, and mental and psychological health are among the factors that stem from self-belief (Hassani et al. 2015). Self-belief for impacting the environment is the main and most significant mechanism and approach to human recognition. Without a belief in creating desirable effects and preventing undesirable and unqualified ones, individuals lose their motivation to carry out their activities. It means that a belief in action is more important than the action itself. A belief in the power and creation of proper and desirable effects is the infrastructure of reform, change, evolution, and forward movement in individuals (Sandars, et al. 2009). Self-belief is defined as the judgment of individuals about competencies and skills in organizing and controlling successfully the execution stages of a responsibility. Adherence to self-belief impacts the works and responsibilities a person selects and chooses, the domain and limits of the efforts and attempts he expects from himself, his rate of tolerance against problems and difficulties, level and rate of stress, and rate and level of acquired success. Self-belief refers to a person's belief in his skills and strengths for performing a specific and unique behavior (Sadi et al. 2014). When all individuals and humans of society possess realistic and proper self-confidence concerning their values, skills, and thoughts and feel safe in themselves, they will be able to react to the problems, challenges, and situations thoroughly and competently. Self-belief is an energy-rich stimulator and booster encouraging and persuading us to succeed. It is because a self-believing and respectful person sees weakness and incapability beyond his dignity. Self-belief confers us with the enjoyment of exploitation and the use of successes (Hassani et al. 2015). Sangui et al. (2017) perceived that self-belief influenced academic achievement. Noori et al. (2015), in their research, figured out that relationship of self-belief significantly related to perseverance and academic achievement. Having investigated the male and female students in the Payam-e-Noor University of Bojnourd city in their research, Sadipour and Shojaei (2014) discovered that there was a significant relationship between self-belief and academic motivation. In a study exploring the effect of self-belief on students' eagerness, Flores (2015) found that self-belief, mediated by the enhanced self-confidence of students, developed and improved their rate of school eagerness. Nevertheless, the recognition of the different dimensions of academic self-belief and the factors that affect them necessities further investigation. Dynamic and efficient educational systems are based on progress and developments that emerge in the area of educational technology. Educational dynamics is presented in the two categories of educational technology and learning strategies. By making the learning strategies prepared and flexible, it diversifies learning strategies for students concerning the realization of their learning goals (Shafipour et al. 2018).

Educational dynamics builds experience and capacity for students. Educational dynamics is based on a flexible and dynamic environment and provides learners with the requisite educational facilities, such that their required courage for creativity and innovation improves. In a dynamic learning environment, the educational goals are compiled according to the learners' expectations and needs. Learning-based educational dynamics is tricyclic. It means that the teacher or trainer, in this kind of learning, helps the students and learners shape, revise, improve, or develop their mental frameworks as well as intellectual assumptions and models (Shafipour et al. 2016).

The study of Afroz (2007) showed that dynamism in an educational environment made it happier and more reliable, flexible, and intimate. Shafipour et al. (2016), in a study, discovered that there were positive and significant relationships among educational justice (distributive, exchange, procedural, and informational), educational dynamics (educational technology and learning styles), and an improvement in the perceived

educational ethic. In their research, Shafipour et al. concluded that educational dynamics significantly predicted the perceived educational trust. The investigations and text studies reveal that few researchers have documented the class absenteeism reasons and self-belief of medical students. There is also a research gap regarding educational dynamics. Thus, this study aims to fill this gap and explore the relationship of educational dynamics to a tendency to class absenteeism and self-efficacy beliefs among medical students. Therefore, the researchers seek to answer the following question:
Is there any relationship of educational dynamics to the tendency to class absenteeism and self-efficacy beliefs of medical students?

Methodology

Population, sample, and sampling method

The present study is descriptive-correlational, and its results are applied. The population of the study comprised all students in the medical sciences faculties of Kermanshah. Concerning the extensiveness of the Nursing, Midwifery, Medical, Paramedical, and Health Faculties of the Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences, 384 students were selected and explored according to Morgan Table (the highest number of this scale). The sampling method was cluster random sampling.

Data collection instruments

The three questionnaires below are used for the study conduction.
In this research, the demographic, class absenteeism, educational dynamics, and self-efficacy questionnaires were used.
The demographic questionnaire of the research samples, including age, gender, and marital status

A) Educational dynamics questionnaire: This study employs Shafiepour et al.'s (2018) questionnaire. This scale has been developed and compiled according to the theories of dynamic systems. It possesses 12 items in its initial design. This scale has two domains, including educational technology, 6 items, and learning styles, 6 items, and is based on a five-point Likert scale (too much, much, average, little, too little). Shafiepour et al. reported the reliability of this questionnaire at 0.95.
B) A tendency to absenteeism questionnaire: In this study, the researcher-made questionnaire of a tendency to be absent from specialized classes is utilized. This inventory has 15 questions and is based on a five-point Likert scale (too much, much, average, little, too little).
C) The self-efficacy scale of Sherer et al. (1982): This questionnaire possesses 17 items measuring the three aspects of behavior. They include a tendency to initiate behavior (items 1-6), a tendency to expand efforts for task completion (items 7-11), and a difference in confronting obstacles (items 12-17). With respect to the perspectives of the respectful professors and numerous uses of this scale by researchers, like Kimiyaei (2013) and Hayati (2012), the validity of this questionnaire indicates its acceptability and ability in evaluating self-efficacy. The reliability coefficient of the self-efficacy scale of Sherer et al. was calculated at 0.87 in the Kimiaei's (2013) study entitled the effectiveness of Beck's cognitive therapy on students' self-efficacy. The validities of all three scales were confirmed by 10 professors.

Data analysis: In this process, the data are refined both conceptually and empirically. Different statistical techniques are employed for the deduction of data and generalization of the results. After data collection, they are analyzed by structural equation modeling and PLS software. In the following, we investigate the results of every hypothesis.

Results and findings

According to the descriptive findings, the numbers of female and male respondents were 189 (49.2%) and 195 (50.8%), respectively. Concerning the age distribution of the students, many of them (37.2%) were below 20 years old, and their age range was between 20 and 40 years. Out of this number, 63 students (11.1%) were married, and 341 ones (88.9%) were single.
This study uses the four-rule measurement models of Jarvis et al. In the constructive model, the questions do not have necessarily similar predictors and consequences while they have surely the same predictors and consequences in the reflective model. A measurement model associates with some part of the general model, which involves a variable and its relevant questions. For the examination of measurement model fit, the three criteria of reliability, convergent validity, and divergent validity are exploited. In the study's model, we delve into the factor loading coefficients of every question related to the three main variables.
As illustrated by the below table, the value related to these criteria, i.e., the Cronbach alpha and composite reliability of the three variables are >0.7, indicating the proper reliability of the model. The reliabilities of the variables are at desirable levels in this research. The table below shows that the composite reliability and Cronbach alpha for all four indices of the questionnaire are proportional and desirable. Since the reliability is confirmed, we can embark on investigating the hypotheses by structural equations modeling, and the results can be generalized to the whole population.

Table 1.Composite Reliability and Cronbach Alpha of Research Variables

	Composite Reliability	*Cronbach Alpha*
Educational Dynamics	0.905164	0.859384
A tendency to Absenteeism	0.878592	0.809943
Self-efficacy Beliefs	0.830780	0.760207

Concerning the below table and Fornell and Larcker's method, who estimated the appropriate average value extracted (AVE) at >0.4, the AVE for all variables is ≥0.4.

Table 2. Investigating Convergent Validity of Research Variables

	AVE
Educational Dynamics	0.706475
A tendency to Absenteeism	0.648352
Self-efficacy Beliefs	0.454938

Since the proper values of Cronbach alpha, composite reliability, and AVE are 0.7, 0.7, and 0.4, respectively, and all criteria have suitable factor loading values in the measurement section, we can confirm the appropriateness of the reliability and convergent validity of the research.

Table 3. Investigating Divergent Validity (2)

	Educational Dynamics	*Tendency to Absenteeism*	*Self-efficacy Beliefs*
Educational Dynamics	1.000000		
A tendency to Absenteeism	0.574987	1.000000	
Self-efficacy Beliefs	0.315838	0.466618	1.000000

For the investigation of matrix divergent validity, Fornell and Larcker's method suggest that this matrix is similar to the above matrix. The mere difference is that the chief diameter of the matrix includes the square root of AVEs that are related to each one of the four variables. In the above table, the values of the chief diameter are illustrated by 1; thus, Fornells and Larcker's matrix is drawn below for divergent validity examination.

Table 4. Investigating Divergent Validity by Fornell & Larcker's Matirx

	Educational Dynamics	*Tendency to Absenteeism*	*Self-efficacy Beliefs*
Educational Dynamics	0.856321		
A tendency to Absenteeism	0.574987	0.745842	
Self-efficacy Beliefs	0.315838	0.466618	0.732654

As the table illuminates, the square root magnitude of the AVE for every variable is more than the correlation value of the two variables.

Structural model fit: After investigating the fitness of measurement models, we examine the fitness of the study's structural model. As aforementioned, in contrast to measurement models, the structural model does not consider the questions (observable variables); rather, it probes into the latent variables and their interrelationships.

We use several criteria to look into the fitness of the understudy structural model. The first and most fundamental criterion is the significance coefficients or t-values. The most primitive criterion for measuring the relationship among variables (structural part) is the significant t-values. A t-value of >0.95 indicates the accuracy of a relationship between two variables. Consequently, the research hypotheses are confirmed at the 1.96 confidence level. Of course, we should notice that the values solely display the relationship accuracy, and they cannot measure the strength of the relationship between two variables.

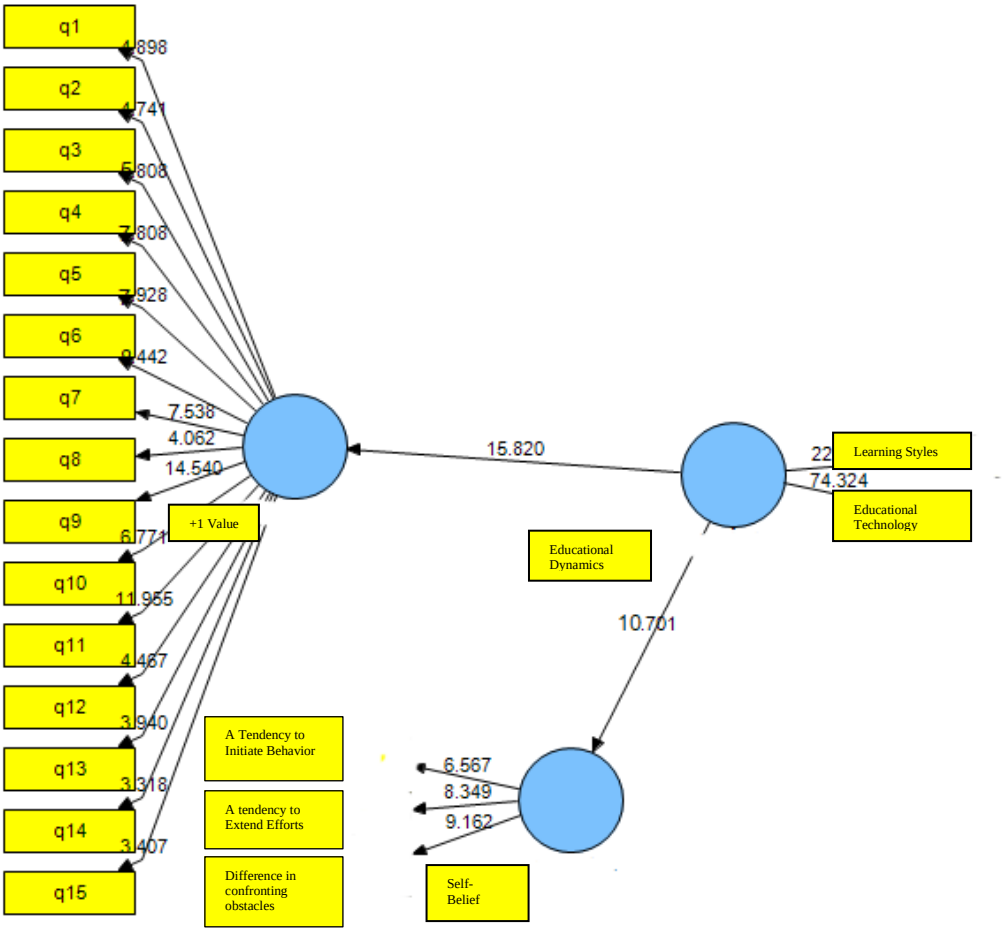

Figure 1. T Significance Coefficients (t-values)

Concerning the two tables above, the T-value for the two relationships associated with research hypotheses is >0.95. Thus, all correlations are confirmed, indicating the appropriate fitness of the model.

Table 5.T-values of Relationships in Structural Model

Relationships	*T-value*
Educational dynamics – A tendency to class absenteeism	15.820
Educational dynamics – Self-efficacy beliefs	10.701

Regarding the above two figures, the T-value for the two relationships related to the research hypotheses is >0.95, and all relationships are confirmed. This means the appropriate fitness of the model.
R Squares (R^2) criterion: In investigating a structural model fit in a study, R^2 coefficients relate to the endogenous latent (dependent) variables of a model. R^2 is a criterion that hints at the effect of an exogenous variable on an endogenous one. Furthermore, the three values of 0.19, 0.33, and 0.67 are earmarked as the criteria for weak, average, and strong values. The R^2 values of the exogenous or independent variables are equal to zero. The results of R^2 values are reported in Tables 4-13.

Table 6. R^2 Values

	R^2
Tendency to class absenteeism	0.491
Self-efficacy beliefs	0.513

Q^2 criterion: This criterion specifies the prediction strength of the model. If the Q^2 value equals 0.02, 0.15, and 0.32 respecting one of the endogenous variables, it will imply the weak, average, and strong predictive power of its associated exogenous variable(s).

Table 7. Examining Q^2

Total	*SSO*	*SSE*	*SSE/SSO-1*
Tendency to class absenteeism	640.000000	281.156455	0.560693
Self-efficacy beliefs	640.000000	217.546104	0.660084

As observed in the table, this criterion is >0.32 for both endogenous variables of the study. It means that the exogenous (independent) variables are the strong predictors of dependent variables, and the appropriate structural model fit of this research is confirmed again.
Redundancy: The mean of redundancies is related to the dependent variables of the model. No standard is determined for this criterion; however, the larger values of it are more desirable.

Table 8. Examining Redundancy Criterion

	R-square (R^2)	*Communality*	*Redundancy*
A tendency to class absenteeism	0.491	0.706	0.315
Self-efficacy beliefs	0.513	0.648	0.451

Overall model fit: The overall model consists of both the measurement model and the structural model. The investigation of a model fit is completed when its fitness is confirmed.
The goodness of fit (GOF) criterion: The GOF criterion relates to the general part of the structural equation modeling. Using this criterion, the researcher can also control the overall model fit after examining the fitness of measurement and structural components of his overall understudy model. The GOF criterion was first introduced by Tenenhaus et al. in 2004, and its formula is presented in the following:
Communality values – These values are obtained from the mean root square of the factor loadings of every variable.

$$GOF = \sqrt{\overline{R^2} * \overline{Communality}}$$

$\overline{Communality}$: It is calculated by the communality values of every endogenous variable of the model.

$\overline{R^2}$: It is the mean R Square values of the endogenous variables of the model.
The fit values of 0.01, 0.25, and 0.36 are introduced as the weak, average, and strong values for this index.

Table 9. Overall Model Fit

	R Square(R^2)	*Communality*	*GOF*
A tendency to class absenteeism	0.491	0.706	0.748
Self-efficacy beliefs	0.513	0.648	0.452

Concerning the 0.01, 0.25, and 0.36 magnitudes, introduced as the weak, average, and strong values for GOF, the attainment of the values that are >0.36 indicates the average fitness of the overall model. On the whole, all relationships of the research model are confirmed (t≥1.96). Hence, there is a significant relationship between educational dynamics and tendency to class absenteeism and educational dynamics and self-efficacy beliefs.

Discussion

This study enjoyed a descriptive-correlational design, and its results were applied. The statistical population of the research involved all students of medical sciences faculties in Kermanshah city. Concerning the extensiveness of the Nursing, Midwifery, Medical, Paramedical, and Health Faculties of the Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences, 384 students were selected and explored according to Morgan Table (the highest number of this scale). The sampling method was cluster random sampling. One group was selected and explored in every field of study. Thus, sampling was conducted in the Nursing, Midwifery, Medical, Paramedical, and Health Faculties of the Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences. The instruments employed in this research consisted of the educational dynamics questionnaire of Shafiepour et al. (2018), researcher-made questionnaire of absenteeism from specialized classes, and self-efficacy scale of Sherer et al. (1982). For data analysis, the researchers employed the descriptive statistics indices (frequency, mean, standard deviation, and graphs) and the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test to examine data distribution. The PLS software was also used for the test of hypotheses. All relationships present in the research model were

confirmed (t ≥ 1.96). It meant that there was a significant relationship between educational dynamics and a tendency to absenteeism and educational dynamics and self-efficacy beliefs.

Hypothesis 1: There is a significant relationship between educational dynamics and a tendency to classroom absenteeism among medical students.

This result corresponds to the results of Afroz (2007), Shafipour et al. (2016), Rezaei et al. (2017), Shafipour et al. (2018), Hudson (2005), and Kane (2013). The study of Afroz shows that dynamism in an educational environment makes it happier and more intimate, reliable, and flexible. Shafipour et al. (2016), in a study, discovered that there were positive and significant relationships among educational justice (distributive, exchange, procedural, and informational), educational dynamics (educational technology and learning styles), and an improvement in the perceived educational ethic. In their study aiming to investigate the effective factors in the attendance of students in educational classes from the prospects of students in the Medical Sciences University of Kermanshah, Rezaei et al. (2017) claimed that there was a relationship between the demographic factors of students and their presence in educational programs. In the teachers' dimensions, there was also a significant relationship between the educational environment and students. Noticing these factors can upsurge the tendency and inclination of students for classroom attendance. Shafipour et al. (2018), in a study, discovered that educational dynamics could significantly predict the perceived educational trust.

Hudson (2005) declares that educational goals are compiled according to the learners' expectations and needs in a dynamic learning environment. Kane' s (2013) studies reveal that teachers can improve effective, dynamic, and efficient learning, enhance the learning system, and gain learners' trust in learning processes by exploiting learning styles.

Educational dynamics is experience-making and capacity-building for students. Educational dynamics is based on flexible and dynamic space and provides learners with the necessary learning facilities, such that their required courage for creativity and innovation is enhanced. In a dynamic learning environment, educational goals are compiled according to learners' expectations and needs. Learning-based educational dynamics is tricyclic. It means that the teacher or trainer, in this kind of learning, helps the students and learners shape, revise, improve, or develop their mental frameworks as well as intellectual assumptions and models.

Hypothesis 2: There is a significant relationship between educational dynamics and the self-efficacy of medical students.

This result is in line with the results of Jahanian et al. (2016) and Rich John (2006). Jahanian et al. (2016) conducted a study entitled the educational effect of the effective classroom management strategies on the academic self-efficacy and emotional intelligence of students. Their findings showed that there were significant relationships among the effective and dynamic classroom strategies, self-efficacy, and its dimensions, including confidence in academic performance in the class, confidence in one's ability to interact with others in the school, confidence in one's ability to interact with others out of school. Rich John (2006) explored the effect of technology-centered methods in education on heightened academic achievement. The results demonstrated that the teaching methods that were based on modern technologies reinforced the motivation and self-efficacy of students. These studies imply that a flexible learning environment noticeably impacts the dynamism, actions, and efforts of learners. Dynamic education is achievable through improving and developing processes and enhancing their quality levels. Educational dynamics is experience-making and capacity building for students and learners. To create educational dynamics, we should provide learners with learning styles. Accordingly, based on their experiences and knowledge, they can employ them in learning activities to realize their considered goals and reach self-efficacy.

Furthermore, according to Bandura's view, self-efficacy can impact ambitious and enterprising anticipations. Thus, individuals with high self-efficacy usually yield positive and successful results, and those with low self-efficacy yield poor performance and negative results. This performance also holds true in the academic domain, and students with high self-efficacy and better-acquired results experience higher academic satisfaction. However, in contrast, better results and performance may not lead to high self-efficacy. Self-efficacy may be influenced by an individual's interpretation of a situation, repeated successes, victorious models, social support, psycho-cognitive conditions of the individual, teaching and learning methods, educational technology exploitation, etc. Thus, it is capable of impacting an individual's academic performance and triggers his academic self-efficacy. Moreover, educational dynamics affects academic self-efficacy in three respects: 1) Developing positive cerebral processes, because the cerebral and intellectual functions and activities, similar to other parts of the body, are influenced by internal emotional and cognitive messages, 2) Developing motivation, improving the level of interest and tendency, and increasing effort and endeavor in educational activities, and 3) shaping the decisive resistance of an individual against problems and, probably, academic failures. However, self-efficacy and a belief in competencies and capabilities can affect academic performance and achievement, desirable task completion, and the selection of appropriate educational goals and enhance an individual's academic achievement.

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