

The Interactions among Motivation, Persistence, and Learning Abilities as They Relate to Academic Outcomes in Children

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Abstract : Motivation, persistence, and learning disability status are all associated with academic performance, but to the author's knowledge, little research has been done on how these variables interact with one another and how that interaction looks different within children with and without learning disabilities. The present study's goal was to examine the role motivation and persistence play in the academic success of children with learning disabilities and how these variables interact. Measurements were made using surveys and direct cognitive assessments on each child. Analyses were run on student's scores in motivation, persistence, and ability to learn compared to other fifth grade students. In this study, learning ability was intended as a proxy for learning disabilities (LDs). This study included a nationally representative sample of over 8,000 fifth-grade children from across the United States. Multiple interactions were found among these variables of motivation, persistence, and motivation as they relate to academic achievement. The major finding of the study was the significant role motivation played in academic achievement. This study shows the importance of measuring the within-group. One key finding was that motivation was associated with academic success and was moderated by the other variables. The interaction results were different for math and reading outcomes, suggesting that reading and math success are different and should be addressed differently. This study shows the importance of measuring the within-group differences in levels of motivation to better understand the academic success of children with and without learning disabilities. This study's findings call for further investigation into motivation and the possible need for motivational intervention for students, especially those with learning disabilities

Keywords : academic achievement, learning disabilities, motivation, persistence

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