

Locus of Control, Metacognitive Knowledge, Metacognitive Regulation, and Student Performance in an Introductory Economics Course

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Abstract : In the principles of Microeconomics course taught during the Fall Semester 2019, 158 out of 179 students participated in the completion of two questionnaires and a survey describing their demographic and academic profiles. The two questionnaires include the 29 items of the Rotter Locus of Control Scale and the 52 items of the Schraw and Dennison Metacognitive Awareness Scale. The 52 items consist of 17 items describing knowledge of cognition and 37 items describing the regulation of cognition. The paper is intended to show the combined influence of locus of control, metacognitive knowledge, and metacognitive regulation on student performance. The survey covers variables that have been tested and recognized in economic education literature, which include GPA, gender, age, course level, race, student classification, whether the course was required or elective, employment, whether a high school economic course was taken, and attendance. Regression results show that of the economic education variables, GPA, classification, whether the course was required or elective, and attendance are the only significant variables in their influence on student grade. Of the educational psychology variables, the regression results show that the locus of control variable has a negative and significant effect, while the metacognitive knowledge variable has a positive and significant effect on student grade. Also, the adjusted R square value increased markedly with the addition of the locus of control, metacognitive knowledge, and metacognitive regulation variables to the regression equation. The t test results also show that students who are internally oriented and are high on the metacognitive knowledge scale significantly outperform students who are externally oriented and are low on the metacognitive knowledge scale. The implication of these results for educators is discussed in the paper.

Keywords : locus of control, metacognitive knowledge, metacognitive regulation, student performance, economic education

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