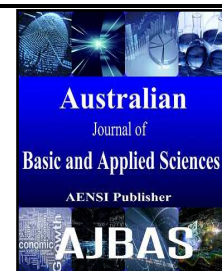




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# Time Management, Self- Esteem & Academic Performance Of International Students From Iraq In Universiti Putra Malaysia

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### ABSTRACT

**Background :**Time management, test competence, academic competence, and study techniques are some of the factors that affect an individuals' academic performance (Sangiry *et al.*, 2006). The relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement has been highlighted in the literature (Harris, 2009; Mohammad, 2010; Sadaat, Ghasemzadeh & Soleimani, 2012; Rosli, *et al.*, 2011). However, no studies addressed how self-esteem and time management combine to predict academic success. **Objective:**This study examines the relationship between time management, self-esteem and academic performance of Iraqi graduate students studying in Universiti Putra Malaysia. **Method:**Data on time management and self-esteem were collected from 169 subjects using instruments developed by Griffin & Van Fleet, (2013) and Blascovich & Tomaka (1991). **Results:**Results showed that majority of subjects (74.1%) had good time management skills and moderate level of self-esteem (77.7%). In terms of the relationship between time management and GPA, the results report no significant relationship ( $r = -0.03$ ,  $p = 0.698$ ). Also there is no significant relationship between self- esteem and GPA ( $r = -0.096$ ,  $p = 0.221$ ). **Conclusion:**This study showed there were no significant relationship between academic performance and time management skills and self-esteem of Iraqi students studying in Malaysia. The results also showed majority of students studying in Malaysia had very good and excellent results (GPA above 3.30). For the small number of Iraqis with poor academic results, there are many factors besides self-esteem and time management skills which could act as barriers to students attaining and maintaining a high GPA.

## INTRODUCTION

The goal of most universities is to produce students who have excellent academic performance as well as those who have the capability, talent and potential to contribute significantly to the development of a nation. However poor time management skills and low self-esteem of students can act as barriers to academic performance of university students (Oyelade, Oladipupo, & Obagbuwa, 2010). In the literature, time management has been cited as integral to academic success (Wolters & Hussain, 2015; MacCann, Fogarty & Roberts, 2012). Many university students find the academic experience very stressful (Swick, 1987) and one potential coping strategy frequently offered by university counseling services is time management. Poor time management led students to procrastinate and students are often distracted by all kinds of entertainment such as video games, social network and media. Studying, is the last thing that a student would think to do. Higher academic performance may be achieved by making an effective balance between time management and study techniques (Ping, Subramaniam, & Krishnaswamy, 2008). Swick (1987) suggests students who perceived control of their time reported significantly greater evaluations of their performance, greater work and life satisfaction, less role ambiguity, less role overload, and fewer job-induced and somatic tensions. On the other

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hand, poor time and failing to meet academic deadlines are frequently cited as a major source of poor academic performance (MacCann., Fogarty & Roberts, 2012).

Self-esteem is one of the psychological variables or individual differences that have been investigated in the field of education. Self-esteem is about the amount of realistic respect that you have for yourself. It is substantial for a student to have good self-esteem to enable him or her to live a happy and successful life. Thus, self-esteem serves as a relatively permanent positive or negative feeling about self that may become more or less positive and negative when individuals experience and define success and failures throughout their lives (Eid *et al.*, 2015). Even though the relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement has been highlighted in the literature (Harris, 2009; Mohammad, 2010; Sadaat, Ghasemzadeh & Soleimani, 2012; Rosli, *et al.*, 2011), no studies addressed how self-esteem and time management combine to predict academic success.

In Malaysia, internationalization of higher education led to many foreign students pursuing higher education in the country (Noraseela, Yusof & Shah, 2016). Malaysia is not only accepting international students at the undergraduate level, but also a large number of international students is pursuing graduate level education in the country. Some international students in Malaysia have poor academic performance (Taleboo and Basri, 2015) and poor time management and low self-esteem have been suggested as factors that lead to poor academic performance. The current study seeks to determine the relationship between time management skills and self-esteem on academic performance among Iraqi graduate students in Universiti Putra Malaysia. Specifically this study seeks to answer the following research question: What are the relationships between time management skills, self-esteem and academic performance among Iraqi graduate students in Universiti Putra Malaysia?

#### **Methods and instruments:**

This descriptive cross-sectional study examines academic performance as the dependent variable, while time management and self-esteem were the independent variables. The study was conducted in Universiti Putra Malaysia and data were collected from 169 subjects. Questionnaires were developed to collect socio-demographic data namely Age, Gender, Level of study (Master, PHD), Field of study and GPA. The instrument also used the student's time management skills questionnaire by (Griffin & Van Fleet, 2013) with 25 questions using a 3-point scale ranging from (2) for Always, (1) for Sometimes, (0) for Never. The total score ranging from 45-50 points indicates excellent time management skills, 30-44 points indicate that the time is managed fairly well and 0-30 points would mean that the time management is poor and should be improved. The Students' Self-Esteem Scale was adopted from (Blascovich & Tomaka, 1991) consisting of 10 questions based on a 4-point Likert scale. Total scores are from 10 to 50 and scores ranging from 10 to 19 indicate that the students have a low level of self-esteem, while scores ranging from 20 to 35 indicate students having a moderate level of self-esteem and scores from 36 to 50 would suggest a high level of self-esteem.

#### **Results:**

The statistical analysis was performed using statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS Version 22). Pearson's correlation test was used to measure the relationship between time management skills and self-esteem, and academic performance. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics for the demographic variables.

**Table 1:** Demographic Variables

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	125	75.3
	Female	41	24.7
Age	22-30	41	24.7
	31-40	90	54.2
	41-50	30	18.1
	51<	5	3
Marital status	Married	114	68.7
	Unmarried	52	31.3
Level of study	Master	79	47.6
	Ph.D.	87	52.4
Faculty	Modern languages	18	10.8
	Engineering	68	41
	Mathematics	5	3
	Agriculture	7	4.2
	Medicine	2	1.2
	Science	27	16.3
	Computer sciences	19	11.4
	Education	6	3.6
	Human ecology	1	0.6
	Economics	2	1.2
	Food sciences	1	0.6
	Design and architecture	1	0.6
	Veterinary medicine	5	3

	Forestry	2	1.2
	Management	2	1.2
Total		166	100

Table 2 reports the results for time management skills. Results show only a small percentage of subjects (6.6%) has excellent time management skills while more than half of the subjects has a fairly well by (67.5%) time management skills followed by those who needs to improve their time management (25.9%).

**Table 2:** Time Management Skills

Time Management Level	Frequency	Percent
45-50 Excellent	11	6.6
30-44 Fairly Well	112	67.5
0-30 Should be Improved	43	25.9
Total	166	100

Table 3 shows the frequency of the study sample self- esteem total scores, with the majority of the subjects reporting moderate level of self-esteem (77.7%). Those with low self-esteem comprised 18.1% of the sample while only 4.2% of the subjects reported the highest level of self-esteem.

**Table 3:**Self-esteem scores

Self- Esteem Level	Frequency	Percent
10-19 Low	30	18.1
20-35 Moderate	129	77.7
36-50 High	7	4.2
Total	166	100

Table 4 reports academic performance in terms of GPA scores. Results show majority of subjects had an excellent (29.5%) and very good GPA (34.9%). Only a small percentage reported a GPA below 2.50 (7.2%).

**Table 4:**GPA scores

GPA	Frequency	Percent	
Poor	Less than 2.5	12	7.2
Pass	2.50-2.99	8	4.8
Good	3.0-3.29	39	23.5
Very good	3.3-3.69	58	34.9
Excellent	3.7-4.0	49	29.5
Total		166	100

In terms of the relationship between time management and GPA, the results (Table 5) report no significant relationship ( $r = -0.03$ ,  $p = 0.698$ ). Also there is no significance relationship between self- esteem and GPA ( $r = -0.096$ ,  $p = 0.221$ ).

**Table 5:** Correlation between level of time management, level of self- esteem and GPA of students

	Time Management	Total Self- Esteem
	R	P value
GPA	-0.03	0.698
	R	P value
	-0.096	0.221

### Discussion:

Time management, test competence, academic competence, and study techniques are some of the factors that affect an individuals' academic performance (Sansgiry *et al.*, 2006). Time management is the development of processes and tools that increase efficiency, productivity and have an impact on the success of student (Misra & McKean, 2000). Poor time management and low self-esteem have been suggested as factors that lead to poor to academic performance of Iraqi students studying in Malaysia. However, the results of the study showed only a small number of Iraqi students performed poorly (7.2%) in their studies. Additionally, only a small number of students from Iraq had low self-esteem (18.1%) or poor time management skills (25.9%). According to McKenzie and Schweitzer (2001), skills in managing how to spend time allows a person to prioritize and accomplish more goals in life, resulting in a sense of well-being because he is able to see the fruits of his labor. It gives a person a chance to achieve a balance between work and personal life that can be more satisfying, as opposed to restricting activities to one arena at the expense of the other.

This study showed there was no significant relationship between academic performance and time management skills and self-esteem of Iraqi students studying in Malaysia. The results also showed majority of students studying in Malaysia had very good and excellent results (GPA above 3.30). For the small number of

Iraqis with poor academic results, there are many factors besides self-esteem and time management skills which could act as barriers to students attaining and maintaining a high GPA. The present study suggests a positive correlation between students' self-esteem and their GPA but the result is not significant. Hisken (2011) showed that there is a positive correlation between self-esteem and academic achievement while Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, and Vohs (2003) suggest the relationship involving self-esteem and academic results does not signify that high self-esteem, contributes to high academic results.

This study contributes to the body of knowledge by being the first to examine how self-esteem and time management combine to predict academic success. Even though the results showed no significant relationship between academic performance and time management skills and self-esteem of Iraqi students studying in Malaysia, the findings provide preliminary evidence that that high self-esteem may be due to high academic performance and the other variables such social interactions and life events affecting this performance. According to Astin (1993) and Chuan, Yusof & Shah (2013) academic involvement such as time spent studying and time spent attending classes are positively related with academic performance. Pascarella & Tenzini (1991) reported a positive relationship between students and faculty interaction with academic performance of students. Since these variables are not studied in this research, it is crucial that future investigation examine how these factors influence the academic performance of foreign students in Malaysia.

Future research could also expand on this study by making comparisons between different groups of foreign students studying in Malaysia on factors that influence their academic performance. This is important because one of the strategic plans of the Malaysian national higher education is to establish Malaysia as an international hub for higher education excellence (Noraseela, Yusof & Shah, 2016). According to Yusoff & Celliah (2010), socio-cultural adjustment by international students in a foreign country such as Malaysia requires both social and language skills. Due to communication problems, Taleboo and Basri (2015) also indicated that all international students had communication problems with their lecturers which can affect their academic performance. Yusoff & Chelliah (2010) also pointed out the stress experienced by foreign students adjusting to higher learning institution life in Malaysia. Thus future research is needed to study the experience of foreign students in adjusting to a higher learning institution is important. For international students, adjusting to a new life in a foreign country is important not only to academic performances and life functions, but also to students' general wellbeing.

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