Self-Efficacy and First-Generation Students in a Physician Assistant Program

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Abstract
Purpose: The purpose of this mixed method study was to determine if a relationship existed between self-efficacy scores and a final program course grade for first-generation graduate professional college students (FGS) and non-first-generation graduate professional college students (NFGS) in a physician assistant program. In addition, the researcher sought to explore the perceptions of first-generation graduate professional program students regarding experiences, contributors, and successful strategies relative to self-efficacy as related to completion of their degree program. Method: This mixed method study examined the experiences of 59 physician assistant students from Georgia Health Sciences University (formerly known as the Medical College of Georgia) by using the Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE), originally developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem in 1981, and a demographic questionnaire which was designed by the researcher. Results from the two instruments were evaluated using bivariate correlations and descriptive statistics. The researcher also utilized chi-square and t-test for quantitative analyses. Second, the researcher developed a list of interview questions which expanded upon the study’s research questions in order to explore the perceptions of first-generation graduate professional students regarding experiences, contributors, and successful strategies relative to self-efficacy as related to completing their degree program. Major Findings: Based on the quantitative findings of this study, it was not determined if self-efficacy has a significant influence on a final Anatomy course grade based on generation status. In addition, the researcher concluded that the group comparison between FGS and NFGS did not show a significant difference when comparing group Anatomy scores or self-efficacy scores. The qualitative phase revealed three common themes regarding self-efficacy in a physician assistant program: (a) mastery experiences, (b) family support, and (c) self-confidence.

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Physician assistants work under the supervision of physicians, providing support to healthcare teams. They need an advanced education and extensive training in a medical setting. Coursework and clinical hours prepare physician assistant students to provide support during surgical procedures, develop treatment plans, and work in a fast-paced healthcare setting.

This comprehensive guide serves as a resource for individuals interested in pursuing a physician assistant career. What Does a Physician Assistant Do? Physician assistants (PA) provide frontline medical care under the supervision of physicians. Self-efficacious students also recover quickly from setbacks, and ultimately are likely to achieve their personal goals. Students with low self-efficacy, on the other hand, believe they cannot be successful and thus are less likely to make a concerted, extended effort and may consider challenging tasks as threats that are to be avoided. Thus, students with poor self-efficacy have low aspirations which may result in disappointing academic performances becoming part of a self-fulfilling feedback cycle. (Bandura (more info) ) [Margolis and McCabe, 2006]. How can students gain self-efficacy? Physician assistant student handbook. Class of 2022. CONTACT INFO: physician.assistant@wichita.edu. (316) 978-3011. Last Revised 06/2020. Notice of Nondiscrimination WSU does not discriminate in its programs and activities based on race, religion, color, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, marital status, political affiliation, status as a veteran, genetic information, or disability. The Director. of the WSU Office of Equal Employment. A physician-collaborative role affords PAs a large amount of responsibility and autonomy without usurping the ultimate authority of physicians. Thus, the legal basis for PA practice is built upon physician collaboration, a relatively unique arrangement among health care providers. Our physician assistant masters degree program is one of the best post bacc programs for PAs, building a strong foundation in sciences and offering hands-on clinical experiences. A virtual cadaver is helping Physician Assistant students deepen their understanding of anatomy and clinical medicine. The ability to undo mistakes, which can't be done on a real cadaver, allows the PA students to explore without fear. Three Degree Options for M.S. in Physician Assistant: Master of Science – for those already holding a bachelor degree. Articulated Bachelor of Arts/Master of Science or Bachelor of Science/Master of Science – a 3+3 program offered in affiliation with 10 college partners.