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THE ROLE OF ACADEMIC SELF-CONCEPT IN LANGUAGE LEARNING: EVIDENCE FROM HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS[1]

Manolya SAĞLAM* **Türkay BULUT****

*Dr. Öğretim Üyesi, Biruni Üniversitesi, Eğitim Fakültesi, İngilizce Öğretmenliği Ana Bilim Dalı, manolyas@biruni.edu.tr, ORCID: 0009 0004 3610 0668

**Prof. Dr., İstanbul Aydın Üniversitesi, Eğitim Fakültesi, İngilizce Öğretmenliği Ana Bilim Dalı, turkaybulut@aydin.edu.tr, Orcid: 0000-0003-0711-6869

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ABSTRACT

Academic self-concept is an important concept in education that affects students' approach to learning, motivation, and success. It is also pivotal in foreign language learning, as it fosters effective learning and the use of language. The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between academic self-concept (ASC) and academic success of high school students, taking into account the gender factor. The research was conducted via a descriptive quantitative research design. The participants consisted of 100 12th-grade students, 50 females and 50 males, from six different schools in Ordu province of Türkiye. The data were collected using the Myself-As-A-Learner Scale (MALS) and the latest English exam scores obtained from ÖSYM. The students' MALS scores and YKS success test scores were analyzed using SPSS version 25. In addition, MANOVA analysis was performed to determine the students' success levels, taking into account the gender variable. Finally, the results of the study were integrated and analyzed, and a comprehensive interpretation was presented. This study is expected to contribute to the literature by examining the concept of academic self-concept through the lens of academic achievement and gender differences among high school students.

Keywords: Self-concept, Academic-self-concept, Academic achievement, Motivation, Self-efficacy

1. INTRODUCTION

In the field of language learning, self-concept has been considered as a significant issue integrating the concepts of achievement, abilities, beliefs, and self-assessments of learners. Considerable research has been conducted to explore the definition and the scope of self-concept. Some noteworthy definitions include the relevant term's focus on different dimensions such as academic, social, emotional, and physical (Shavelson, 1976). It is also referred as the self-perception gained through an insight into individual's own experiences and interactions with the environment (Marsh & Shavelson, 1985). Considering the diverse aspects of the concept, it is crucial to take into account the relationship between the relevant concept and motivation. Being an important element of the self-concept, believing in oneself may be influential in increasing and changing the motivation of individuals (Dörnyei, 2000). As a manifestation of this, it can be stated that one of the important components of positive motivation is regarded as self-belief (Edgar et al.,2019)

Regarding its sub-dimensions, self-concept can be investigated specifically in the context of academic self-concept (ASC). ASC encompasses what students believe, think, and perceive about their abilities and achievement. Moreover, learning backgrounds together with

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beliefs and insight derived from them significantly shape ASC. In line with this argument, Ferla et al. (2009) underscores the importance of past experiences, by further stating that it can foster academic performances, self-efficacy, competence, and confidence in learners.

As aforementioned points indicate, self-concept, within its integrity, offers an important underlying principle to have an understanding of oneself which helps learners progress further (Chen et al., 2025). There are many studies conducted to investigate and measure its effectiveness on the behaviors and beliefs of learners (Marsh and Yeung, 1997; Arnold, 2007; Liu, 2008). Extensive research exists on the important aspects of self-concept at the international level. Yet, there is limited national research conducted with high school students to investigate the ASC and its relation to academic achievement and L2 learning motivation. To fill this gap, the study aims at investigating the impact of ASC in relation with academic achievement and motivation on high school students by incorporating gender differences into the analysis. Although the setting and the participants of the study are limited, the results and the findings are expected to help educators and policy makers design their plans and curricula by taking into consideration student's ASC and academic achievements. Moreover, various training programs developed with the attention to students' performances, perceptions, feelings and beliefs are likely to enhance outcomes for both teachers and students.

In line with these objectives, this study aimed to provide answers to the following questions:

What is the relationship between the students' academic self-concept and academic achievement?

What are the differences between the female and male students' academic self-concept?

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Self-concept, mentioned as individuals' understandings of themselves such as their thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and attitudes, is defined as the source of individuals' experiences from their own perspective, regarding their relationships with the environment, and their perceptions shaped by people around them (Shavelson et al, 1976). Self-concept is a comprehensive structure with academic, social, emotional, and physical dimensions (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003). Regardless of the academic field, self-concept is regarded as pivotal in the domain of education (Burden, 2012) Self-concept, which is an important factor for students to recognize their affective and cognitive states, plays an important role in foreign language learning as well (Horwitz, 2012). Furthermore, the relevant concept is broadly and strongly linked to the concepts of self-efficacy, L2 self-esteem, L2 linguistic self-confidence, and motivation

Examining its broad scope and holistic nature, Shavelson refers to two sub-dimensions of the relevant concept: ASC and non-ASC self-concept. ASC, which refers to the academic dimension of self-concept, is based on an affective and cognitive evaluation of oneself through comparison with others. (Byrne & Shavelson, 1986; Cokley, 2000; Ireson et al.,2009; Lent et.al., 1997; Trautwein et al., 2006). Additionally, an individual's family structure, educational level, social activities, and communication behaviors also significantly impact their ASC (DeDonno & Fagan, 2013). ASC is one of the goals to be achieved in the field of education. Moreover, it encompasses important educational objectives such as greater success, effective participation, self-motivation, coping with test anxiety, and effective learning. (Skinner et al, 2006). Therefore, it can be argued that ASC and academic achievement are closely related (Marsh & Craven, 2006; Marsh & Martin, 2011).

Various definitions have been proposed regarding what academic achievement is. Some focus on measurable numerical data, such as the grades students receive (Harackiewicz et al., 2002; Howcroft, 1991). It has also been mentioned as a goal to be achieved or an indicator of students' progress in the process (Baadjies, 2004). Additionally, achievement is defined as a

factor that reveals students' adaptation to academic life (Coetzee, 2011). In today's educational institutions, students' academic performance is seen as a significant indicator of academic success, as it increases their chances of a quality life and employment after school (Areepattamannil & Freeman, 2008). Academic achievement is often perceived as a mental process. Yet, as Piaget argues, all behaviors include affective and mental components (Reed et al., 2013). Therefore, an explanation encompassing a broad spectrum is appropriate for explaining the relevant concept. To be more precise, many factors can influence students' academic success, including motivation, teachers, family circumstances, environmental conditions, students' learning history, past academic performance, study skills, and intention to succeed. To date, numerous studies have been conducted on cognitive factors affecting students' academic success, but affective factors have been overlooked (Sikhwari, 2014). For this reason, it is suggested that students' emotions, attitudes, beliefs, and motivations should be examined during the learning process (Combs, 1982; Dambudzo, 2009).

Regarding the affective factors, it is important to take into consideration the concepts of self-efficacy and motivation. Self-efficacy is the individual's confidence in his or her capacity to direct, design, and implement future events and situations (Bandura, 1982, 1986). The ability to accurately acknowledge one's own talents and abilities has a positive impact on effective action and is a critical need for individuals. There are various factors that feed self-efficacy in individuals such as family relationships, interactions with peers, and sharing common areas of interest with peers (Bandura & Walters, 1959). Developing self-efficacy encourages a solution-focused approach and increases mental competencies and areas of interest in academic subjects (Bandura & Schunk, 1981; Schunk, 1984; Relich et al., 1986). Teachers who create positive learning environments, are competent, and have confidence in their capabilities can encourage students and enhance their advancement (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Gibson & Dembo, 1984).

Academic motivation is a key factor influencing students' academic achievement and attitudes toward language learning. It refers to the internal energy that initiates, directs, and sustains learners' engagement in academic tasks, shaping their goals, beliefs, and persistence (Ryan et al., 2009). Motivation is affected not only by individual characteristics but also by contextual factors such as teachers, classroom climate, and instructional methods (Williams & Williams, 2011). In foreign language learning, motivation is particularly vital, as sustained effort and positive attitudes are essential for success. Within self-determination theory, academic motivation is classified as intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, and amotivation (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Research indicates that academic motivation is closely related to academic self-concept (ASC) (Işıksal, 2019; Radi, 2013; Berg & Coetzee, 2014). Highly motivated students tend to show greater interest in learning, higher achievement, and lower dropout rates, whereas amotivation is associated with disengagement and poor academic performance (Berg & Coetzee, 2014).

ASC and achievement are closely linked to each other regarding individuals' overall performance but these relationships are often shaped by gender. It is thought that male and female students differ in terms of their academic skills and qualifications, and these differences cause various behavioral patterns (Bieg et al., 2015). For example, males exhibit higher ASC in the fields of math and science, while females are reported to have more increased self-concept in language and verbal skills (Skaalvik, & Skaalvik, 2004). Additionally, some studies have shown that while females may be ahead of males in getting strong academic results, their academic self-concept may decrease swiftly in the long- run in comparison with males due to various factors (Herrera & Mohamed, 2020). Regarding ASC, it is important that there is a strong relationship when considering achievement and motivation for both genders, and it is worth studying in what way and in what context the issue is related to the relevant fields (Wang

et al., 2025). For this reason, gender role has been included as an important variable in this study.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

The current study adopted a descriptive quantitative research design, as its primary aim was to depict existing patterns and relationships among naturally occurring variables without any experimental manipulation. Quantitative research is a systematic research approach that aims to test hypotheses based on numerical data, measure relationships between variables, and interpret the results in a generalizable way. (Lim, 2024). Within this framework, a descriptive quantitative research design aims to reveal the existing characteristics of the phenomenon or situation under investigation as they are, using numerical data and to depict the attitudes, behaviors, or demographic characteristics of a specific population through statistical generalizations (Creswell & Creswell, 2023)

3.2. Participants

The population of the study consisted of 12th-grade EFL learners enrolled in high schools in the Ordu district of Türkiye. The research was carried out in 13 high schools that constituted the accessible population. Due to the limited number of students attending foreign language preparatory classes in these schools, all available students in this subgroup were included in the study. Accordingly, the sampling procedure is best described as convenience sampling within the accessible population rather than strict random sampling. The final sample comprised 100 students, equally distributed by gender (50 females and 50 males), whose ages ranged from 17 to 18. This number represents the total population of students preparing for the university entrance exam available in the participating schools during the data collection period. Below is the frequency distribution of the participants according to the schools in which they were enrolled.

Table 1. Frequency Distribution of the Students by School

The schools	Number	%
Atatürk Anatolian High School	15	15,00
Başöğretmen Anatolian High School	2	2,00
Bulancak Lokman Hekim Health Vocational High School	1	1,00
Cumhuriyet Anatolian High School	6	6,00
Fatih Anatolian High School	10	10,00
Ordu High School	2	2,00
Ordu Bilim Temel High School	38	38,00
Ordu Doğa College	1	1,00
Perşembe Zehra Şelale Anatolian High School	3	3,00
Piraziz Anatolian High School	2	2,00
Turnasuyu Girl Anatolian High School	16	16,00
Ulubey Anatolian High School	3	3,00
Zuver Kaya Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School	1	1,00
Total	100	100,00

3.3. Instruments

Data were collected using Myself-As-A-Learner Scale by Burden (Burden, 2012) and its Turkish version by Erten (Erten, 2015). Moreover, Latest English Test Scores of Higher Education Institutions Exam from ÖSYM (Öğrenci Seçme ve Yerleştirme Merkezi/Student

Selection and Placement Center) were included in the process to have a better insight into the student's academic achievement. MALS, a one-dimensional Likert-type scale, consisted of 20 questions asking students to describe themselves by responding to statements such as "I like using my brain" and "Learning is easy." The original instrument was found to have high internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = 0.84) and test-retest reliability (r = 0.96) (Burden, 1998, 2012). Furthermore, the Turkish version of the instrument was also found to have high internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = 0.83) and high split-half correlation (r = 0.666) (Erten & Burden, 2014). MALS was adapted into Turkish. Its validity and reliability were tested by Demirdiş (2010), and the Cronbach's alpha of this scale was reported as 0.87. Regarding the latest English scores from ÖSYM, it can be stated that YKS (Yüksek Öğretim Kurumları Sınavı/Higher Education Institutions Exam) is a standardized multiple-choice exam with high reliability and validity, covering the topics of the Ministry of National Education (MEB) 2017-2018 Academic Year curriculum. Within the scope of this study, after the data was collected, this data collection tool was employed to compare the relationships between YKS scores and ASC scores.

3.4. Procedure

The study was conducted during the second semester of the 2017-2018 academic year. Following the permissions obtained from the Provincial Directorate of National Education, the schools included in the study were visited and the scale, MALS, was administered as a pre-test. To answer any potential questions from the students, the researcher personally participated in the application during class hours, together with the teachers of the relevant classes. Then, the students' YKS scores were collected. All the results obtained from the measurement tool and the exam scores were brought together for the purpose of examining, evaluating, and revealing their relationships with each other.

3.5. Data Analysis

In order to answer the first and the second research questions, the results obtained from MALS were analyzed. Regarding the third research question, the students' YKS scores were incorporated into the data analysis process. The statistical procedures were conducted by SPSS software version 25. After calculating descriptive statistics showing the characteristics of the participants, Pearson correlation coefficients and partial correlations were used to examine the relationship between gender differences, and ASC and YKS achievement test scores. Additionally, the Chi-square statistic was used to investigate students' achievement levels based on test results. Then, the students with high and low ASC scores were classified according to gender differences. Finally, the results were interpreted in relation to the research questions.

4. RESULTS

This section presents the results of the quantitative data later to be analyzed descriptively

4.1. Frequency Analysis of Participants' Responses to Questions

Table 2. The frequency distribution of the responses of the participants to the propositions in "Myself as a Learner Scale"

Propositions (Items)	f	Definitely not true of me	Tends not to be true of me	Unsure	Tends to be true of me	Definitely true of me	No answer	Total
I am good at doing tests.	n	1	24	28	34	13	-	100
	%	1,00	24,00	28,00	34,00	13,00	-	100,00
I like having problems to solve.	n	3	17	8	52	20	-	100
	%	3,00	17,00	8,00	52,00	20,00	-	100,00
	n	6	16	18	38	20	-	100

When I am given a new work to do I usually feel confident I can do it.	%	6,00	16,00	18,00	38,00	20,00	-	100,00
I think carefully about what I have got to do.	n	3	19	8	29	41	-	100
	%	3,00	19,00	8,00	29,00	41,00	-	100,00
I am good at discussing things.	n	13	16	15	37	19	-	100
	%	13,00	16,00	5,00	37,00	19,00	-	100,00
I need lots of help with my work. *	n	9	21	25	32	13	-	100
	%	9,00	21,00	25,00	32,00	13,00	-	100,00
I like having difficult work to do.	n	21	19	24	29	6	1	100
	%	21,00	19,00	24,00	29,00	6,00	1,00	100,00
I get anxious when I have to do new work. *	n	10	22	28	25	15	-	100
	%	10,00	22,00	28,00	25,00	15,00	-	100,00
Problem solving is fun.	n	7	27	16	33	16	1	100
	%	7,00	27,00	16,00	33,00	16,00	1,00	100,00
When stuck with my work I can usually work out what to do next.	n	7	26	19	31	17	-	100
	%	7,00	26,00	19,00	31,00	17,00	-	100,00
Learning is easy.	n	11	26	19	32	11	1	100
	%	11,00	26,00	19,00	32,00	11,00	1,00	100,00
I am not very good at solving problems. *	n	4	21	36	22	17	-	100
	%	4,00	21,00	36,00	22,00	17,00	-	100,00
I know the meaning of lots of words.	n	4	23	23	37	13	-	100
	%	4,00	23,00	23,00	37,00	13,00	-	100,00
Thinking carefully about work helps you to do better.	n	5	23	5	40	27	-	100
	%	5,00	23,00	5,00	40,00	27,00	-	100,00
I know how to solve the problems that I meet.	n	6	27	14	40	13	-	100
	%	6,00	27,00	14,00	40,00	13,00	-	100,00
I find a lot of school work difficult. *	n	2	28	29	32	9	-	100
	%	2,00	28,00	29,00	32,00	9,00	-	100,00
I am clever.	n	9	16	15	36	24	-	100
	%	9,00	16,00	15,00	36,00	24,00	-	100,00
I know how to be a good learner.	n	9	21	10	32	28	-	100
	%	9,00	21,00	10,00	32,00	28,00	-	100,00
I like using my brain.	n	1	21	4	39	33	2	100
	%	1,00	21,00	4,00	39,00	33,00	2,00	100,00
Learning is difficult. *	n	19	15	26	22	18	-	100
	%	19,00	15,00	26,00	22,00	18,00	-	100,00

Prior to examining the results of the scale, it is important to emphasize the correlation between the scale's results and the YKS scores, as the relevant answers will be interpreted taking into account the participants' university entrance exam results. The correlation coefficient between the MALS Scale used in this study and the participants' YKS scores were calculated as 0.833 for females, 0.874 for males, and 0.870 for all students. The obtained correlation coefficients are statistically high and significant ($p < 0.001$).

As seen in the results, 13 out of 100 students stated that it is absolutely true that they perform well on tests. Comparing these students' answers with their YKS scores clearly

indicates that their success is similarly high. As seen from the students' answers, most students believe that they enjoy problem-solving and are good at discussing topics. This is related to their willingness to deal with problems and succeed, and their preference for sharing information by communicating with each other.

It is clear that students offer different perspectives when evaluating their own learning processes. Therefore, the answers given regarding their homework and completing assigned tasks vary. When the responses of the students with high scores were examined, it was found that they needed less help in the homework process, in parallel with their success. Conversely, the students with low scores needed more help and had relatively low motivation regarding their ability to succeed. The same parallelism can be seen when examining the responses to the statement, "I carefully consider what I need to do." It is clear that the students who believe this is true for them have high YKS scores. Those who state otherwise have lower scores and are weak in planning their studies.

There are varying answers regarding whether one enjoys challenging tasks. It's clear that the students who excel in their studies are more satisfied with engaging in challenging tasks, while lower-scoring students tend to avoid them. Similarly, it is observed that high-achieving students do not feel anxious when faced with a new task, while low-achieving students tend to feel anxious in the face of novelty.

The study shows that most students find problem-solving enjoyable and know what to do when they get stuck on a solution. Similarly, most students stated that learning was an easy process for them. However, 26 out of 100 students stated that this was not true for them. When the YKS scores of these students are examined, it is seen that their success is low, which indicates that they experience difficulties in their learning process. When considering the responses to the statement on the scale covering students' vocabulary knowledge, it is seen that 37 out of 100 students stated that they definitely know the meaning of many words. It is clear that these students are relatively more successful in the university entrance exam. Their success is directly related to their vocabulary knowledge, whether it is high or low. Similarly, it is evident that the students who know how to solve the problems they encounter have significantly higher university entrance exam scores compared to those who do not know how to solve them. However, there is a consensus among many students that careful thinking leads to positive outcomes.

The students have varying responses regarding the difficulty of their school assignments. It's clear that the students who find the assignments difficult dislike their teachers' teaching style and view them as an obligation rather than an enjoyable pastime.

The responses to the section where the students evaluated how intelligent they were showed that more than half of the students considered themselves intelligent. Very few students responded that this statement was not true for them, indicating that they had low self-esteem and self-efficacy. Similarly, regarding self-awareness, it is observed that most students state that they know they are good students.

In general, most students stated that they enjoy using their brains. This situation is also an expression of the students' openness to thinking and achieving success. When considering student responses regarding the difficulty of learning, it is observed that the answers are very diverse. This is because the situation varies depending on the students' emotional state, academic self-confidence, learning styles, the schools they attend, and the specific environment and the variables within those schools.

4.2. Responses of the Participants to the “Myself as a Learner Scale” by Gender

The data analysis showed that the chi-square test reveals that the participants' responses to some of the statements differed according to gender ($p < 0.001$).

Table 3. Summary of Chi-Square Analysis for Gender Differences regarding the Items

Item No	Statement	p-value
1	I am good at doing tests	0.000*** (LR χ^2=20.274), CC=0.390
2	I like having problems to solve	0.848^{NS} (LR χ^2=1.377)
3	When I am given a new work to do I usually feel confident I can do it	0.001** (LR χ^2=18.910), CC=0.376
4	I think carefully about what I have got to do	0.000*** (LR χ^2=22.232), CC=0.389
5	I am good at discussing things.	0.029* (χ^2=10.825), CC=0.313
6	I need lots of help with my work. *	0.020* (LR χ^2=11.656), CC=0.318
7	I like having difficult work to do	0.353^{NS} (LR χ^2=4.417)
8	I get anxious when I have to do new work	0.517^{NS} (χ^2=3.248)
9	Problem solving is fun	0.160^{NS} (LR χ^2=6.575)
10	When stuck with my work I can usually work out what to do next	0.670^{NS} (LR χ^2=2.358)
11	Learning is easy	0.120^{NS} (χ^2=7.317)
12	I am not very good at solving problems	0.049* (LR χ^2=9.552), CC=0.286
13	I know the meaning of lots of words	0.399^{NS} (LR χ^2=4.048)
14	Thinking carefully about work helps you to do better	0.000*** (LR χ^2=22.706), CC=0.407
15	I know how to solve the problems that I meet	0.013* (LR χ^2=12.743), CC=0.330
16	I find a lot of school work difficult	0.032* (LR χ^2=10.532), CC=0.295
17	I am clever	0.027* (LR χ^2=11.003), CC=0.310
18	I know how to be a good learner	0.056^{NS} (LR χ^2=9.196)
19	I like using my brain	0.093^{NS} (LR χ^2=7.975)
20	Learning is difficult	0.535^{NS} (χ^2=3.140)

**Reverse items*

An examination of the numerical values in the table reveals that females are more confident than males in their ability to perform well on tests, indicating greater self-belief. Similarly, it is clear that females are more self-assured and more careful in their approach to tasks when faced with a new job compared to males. Again, statistical data shows that females are better at discussing issues and finding solutions to the problems they encounter. They also believe in the fact that thinking thoroughly on an issue enhances their work. However, when it comes to the need for assistance with their work, females are more demanding than males. In other words, males are less likely to require outside help. Similarly, females find the workload of homework at school to be heavier than that of males. Females find the workload of homework at school to be heavier than that of males. Finally, another item that showed a significant difference was about females' believing in the fact that they are intelligent.

No significant differences were found in the responses of females and males regarding problem-solving, enjoying challenging tasks, feeling nervous when faced with a new task, enjoying problem-solving, finding alternative solutions when stuck, thinking that learning is easy, having a large vocabulary, knowing how to learn well, using one's brain, and perceiving learning as difficult.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to develop insights into how foreign language preparatory class students in 13 schools in Ordu district perceive themselves as students. The study, conducted descriptively using quantitative data, examined the relationship between the students' academic self-concept and academic achievement.

Based on the data collected from the MALS scale, a relationship was observed between the YKS scores of the participants and the scale items related to their success. The students who were aware of their responsibilities, enjoyed discussion, had rich lexicon, knew how to deal with problems and stated they didn't need help with their assignments had correspondingly higher YKS scores. It was observed that the students with low academic performance were reluctant to force themselves to study. Similarly, Considering the YKS scores of the students who stated that learning was not easy, it is clear that their scores were lower than those who found learning easy. This is an important data explaining the positive correlation between the two data collection tools.

Responses to some statements varied depending on the specific characteristics of the participants. For example, some participants found the learning processes challenging, related to their learning style, academic self-concept, self-efficacy, and self-confidence. In general, the participants were found to be open to innovation because they stated that they enjoyed using their brains. This was an indication of how much importance they placed on creativity and critical thinking. Furthermore, some participants stated that they did not agree with the idea of being intelligent or that they did not know how to be a good student. This can be attributed to their ability to examine themselves with self-awareness and focus on their own strengths and weaknesses. Because a significant number of the students believe that they can understand the next step when they are unable to progress in a problem-solving process. This indicates that the students have developed in terms of self-efficacy and self-awareness.

The study revealed a strong correlation between ASC and YKS scores. ASC was measured by applying MALS. The students with high YKS scores tend to have high MALS scale scores, while the students with low YKS scores have correspondingly low scale scores. There are studies in the literature that show similar results with this study. In their study, Martin and Martin (2011) concluded that ASC and success mutually influence and reinforce each other. Herrera et al., (2020) worked with primary school students to conclude that ASC of the students can be highly predictive of their academic achievements. Similarly, as an example of national studies, Bıyıklı (2023) conducted a study with 552 high school students to reveal that ASC and academic ability positively influence English language academic success. Başokçu and Doğan (2005) revealed at the end of their research that ASC can provide important data regarding students' academic performance.

Gender was also an important variable in this particular study. When scale items were examined based on gender, significant differences were found in the responses of female and male participants regarding some areas. For example, the female participants had confidence in their ability to do a job. Similarly, they stated that they could think thoroughly when engaged in a task and were successful in developing solutions to problems. Females also reported being more skilled at debating and good at problem-solving. In addition, the number of females who considered themselves intelligent was significantly higher than that of males. However, females were more open to help while dealing with their work. No significant differences were found in the answers of females and males in other respects such as having difficulty while working, enjoying problem solving, getting nervous on encountering new responsibilities, and evaluating learning as easy. There are various studies in the literature investigating the relationship between ASC and academic achievement, considering the gender variable. Fryer (2015) conducted research with university students to investigate the issues of self-concept, interest

and achievement. He revealed that males are less likely to be goal-oriented and that they have lower self-concept. De Fraine et al., (2007) conducted longitudinal research with high school students. They revealed a positive relationship between students' academic self-concept and their achievement. Yet, it was concluded that this relationship did not show a significant difference based on gender.

6. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study was conducted using a quantitative design. Different research designs can be used to collect in-depth data. For example, longitudinal case studies coulde be quite suitable for obtaining deep insights. The number of participants in this study is insufficient for generalization. Conducting the research with larger groups could provide richer data. The study was conducted in Ordu, Türkiye. A study including students from different provinces would offer a much more diverse perspective and is therefore recommended. Furthermore, studies could be applied not only to high school students but also to all K12 level students and university students using different designs. Furthermore, the same study could be conducted for teaching staff and curriculum designers, thus serving as a means of understanding their perspectives.

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