

Associations between High School Students' Social-Emotional Competencies and Their High School and College Academic and Behavioral Outcomes in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

This study examined the associations between high school students' self-reported social-emotional competencies and students' high school and college academic and behavioral outcomes in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). In May 2019 grade 11 and 12 students in public high schools in the CNMI responded to survey questions related to their self-management, growth mindset, self-efficacy, sense of belonging, and social awareness using a 5-point scale; higher scores reflected greater social-emotional competencies. The study used two analytic samples. The first sample included 439 students who were in grade 11 or 12 at a public high school during the 2018/19 academic year. The second sample included 82 students from the first sample who graduated high school in spring 2019 and enrolled at Northern Marianas College during the fall 2019 semester.

Key findings

- **High school students with higher growth mindset or self-efficacy scores had higher high school grade point averages.** On growth mindset, students with an average score of 5 had an 87.8 average grade point average, while students with an average score of 1 had an 81.4 average grade point average. On self-efficacy, students with an average score of 5 had a 93.0 average grade point average, while students with an average score of 1 had a 77.9 average grade point average.
- **High school students with higher social awareness scores had lower average high school grade point averages.** Students with an average score of 5 on social awareness had an 83.2 average high school grade point average, while students with a score of 1 had a 92.1 average grade point average.
- **High school students with higher growth mindset or self-efficacy scores had higher grade 10 ACT Aspire math and reading scale scores.** Students with an average score of 1 on growth mindset had an average grade 10 ACT Aspire math scale score of 416.7 and an average grade 10 ACT Aspire reading scale score of 414.9. Students with an average score of 5 on growth mindset had an average grade 10 ACT Aspire math scale score of 421.4 and an average grade 10 ACT Aspire reading scale score of 420.9. Students with an average score of 1 on self-efficacy had an average grade 10 ACT Aspire math scale score of 415.2 and an average grade 10 ACT Aspire reading scale score of 415.3. Students with an average score of 5 on self-efficacy had an average grade 10 ACT Aspire math scale score of 424.3 and an average grade 10 ACT Aspire reading scale score of 422.5.
- **Among high school students who went on to Northern Marianas College, those with higher growth mindset scores had higher first semester college grade point averages.** Students with a score of 5 on growth mindset had an average first semester college grade point average of 3.2, while students with a score of 1 had an average first semester college grade point average of 1.8.

This is the first study to examine the role of social-emotional competencies in promoting better academic and behavioral outcomes among students in the CNMI. Education leaders in the CNMI could use the findings to inform practices intended to promote students' social-emotional competencies.