A CORRELATIONAL STUDY ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-EFFICACY AND ACADEMIC RESILIENCE AMONG POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

A

DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE MIER COLLEGE OF EDUCATION (AUTONOMOUS)

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

IN

PSYCHOLOGY (CLINICAL AND COUNSELLING)

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MIER COLLEGE OF EDUCATION (Autonomous)

JAMMU – 180001

2026

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all those who supported and guided me throughout the completion of this dissertation. This work would not have been possible without their encouragement and guidance. First and foremost, I am thankful to the Almighty for providing me with strength, patience and perseverance during this journey.

I am deeply indebted to my supervisor Ms. Upasana Moten, for the constant guidance, constructive suggestions and valuable insights provided throughout the study. Her encouragement and support played a significant role in the successful completion of this dissertation titled "A Correlational Study on the Relationship Between Self-Efficacy and Academic Resilience Among Postgraduate Students."

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the chairperson, Mrs. Renu Gupta, the principal, Mr. Adit Gupta and the head, school of social sciences and humanities. Dr. Monika Bajaj, Head, school of social sciences and humanities of MIER College of Education for their encouragement and support.

A special thanks to Dr. Sunil Bhat, librarian and to the library staff of MIER College of Education.

I am extremely grateful to my parents and family members for their unconditional motivation and support throughout this journey. I also wish to thank my friends, particularly Neharika and Narayani for their encouragement, understanding and continuous support during the completion of this dissertation.

Lastly, I would like to appreciate my own dedication, hard work and determination that helped me overcome every challenge and complete this dissertation successfully.

Arshia Slathia

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABBREVIATION	FULL FORM
ARS-30	Academic Resilience Scale (30 item version)
CD-RISC	Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
GSE	General Self-Efficacy Scale
JD-R	Job Demand-Resources Model
MA	Master's of Arts
MBA	Master's of Business Administration
MIER	Model Institute of Education and Research
MSc	Master of Science
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
p	Probability Value (level of Significance)
SRL	Self-Reguated Learning
MPhil	Master of Philosophy
MRes	Master of Research
N	Total Sample Size
PGR	Postgraduate Research
PGT	Postgraduate Taught
r	Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient
RSES	Research Self-Efficacy Scale
SD	Standard Deviation
SRL	Self-Regulated Learning
t	t-statistic (Student's t-test)
UK	United Kingdom
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WEMWBS	Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale

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ABSTRACT

The study titled “A Correlational study on the Relationship Between Self-efficacy and Academic Resilience Among Postgraduate Students,” explored the connection between self-efficacy and academic resilience in postgraduate students. It also evaluated the levels of self-efficacy and academic resilience, along with any gender differences in those areas. The research followed a descriptive survey design. For the sample we drew 214 postgraduate students from jammu district using random sampling. Data was collected using General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE) along with Academic Resilience Scale (ARS-30). For analysis, Mean, Standard Deviations, Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation and Independent Samples t-tests are used, results showed postgraduate students with moderately high self-efficacy (M = 30.57, SD = 4.963) And strong academic resilience (M = 112.76, SD = 17.094). The results showed a significant positive link between self-efficacy and academic resilience (r = .508, p < .01**). Students who felt more confident in their abilities generally proved more resilient in university. This means gender didn't make a difference for either measure, no significant gaps in self-efficacy (t = -0.836, p > .05**) or academic resilience (t = -0.098, p > .05**).

Keywords: Self-efficacy, academic resilience, correlation, gender difference, postgraduate students

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

A postgraduate student is an individual who has completed an undergraduate bachelor's degree and has progressed to advanced study in a specialised academic or professional field. Postgraduate education generally includes master's and doctoral programmes, as well as postgraduate diplomas and certificates that extend the knowledge and skills acquired at the undergraduate level (Altbach et al., 2009; OECD, 2019). At this stage, students are expected to engage in independent learning, critical thinking, advanced academic inquiry, and research in order to deepen disciplinary understanding and develop specialised expertise (OECD, 2021; Tight, 2020).

Postgraduate education also promotes the development of analytical ability, scholarly competence, professional skills, and problem-solving capacity required for leadership in academic and professional settings (Tight, 2020). In addition, postgraduate education serves as a bridge between formal education and professional practice by preparing graduates to contribute meaningfully to social, scientific, and economic development (Marginson, 2016).

Postgraduate education encompasses a range of qualifications including master's degrees, doctoral degrees (PhDs), professional doctorates, and postgraduate diplomas and certificates. By building on the fundamental information gained throughout undergraduate education, these programs enable students to continue their study in specific fields (Postgrad.com, 2024). In order to improve their discipline, knowledge and creativity, students are expected to engage in independent study, critical analysis, and advanced research. According to the OECD (2022), the average percentage of 25 to 34-year-olds with a postsecondary degree rose from 27% in 2000 to 48% in 2021 across OECD nations, making postsecondary education the most prevalent level of education among young adults.

Postgraduate teaching (PGT) courses and postgraduate research (PGR) courses are the two primary types of postgraduate education. The most popular type of postgraduate education is a master's degree, which can be earned through taught courses, research, or a mix of the two. While Master of Philosophy (MPhil) and Master of Research (MRes) degrees are research-focused programs, Master of Arts (MA) and Master of Science (MSc) courses are often taught programs (Hot Courses Abroad, 2019). The Master of Business Administration (MBA), which is especially well-liked in the business sector, normally requires one to two years of full-time study for coursework and research programs.

Three different global approaches to master's education are identified by the OECD (2025). The first is the integrated master's, which is typical in disciplines like engineering and the natural sciences and allows students to move smoothly from the bachelor's to the master's level without interruption. The second method, which is popular in OECD nations and is in line with the Bologna Process, entails students earning a bachelor's degree before finishing a master's degree over the course of one to two years, preparing graduates for employment in both professional practice and research. In the third strategy, which views master's degrees as lifelong learning, students pursue postgraduate education after obtaining job experience. This is frequently done through flexible formats including online or part-time programs, which are common in Executive MBA programs (OECD, 2025).

Global postgraduate education growth is a reflection of interrelated trends in higher education and employment. More than 236 million students were enrolled in higher education globally by 2020, a 63.5% increase from 2000 levels, according to a UNESCO report prepared for the 2009 World Conference on Higher Education (Altbach, Reisberg & Rumbley, 2009). According to the OECD (2022), women now make up the vast majority of young adults with bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees, making up 57% of those aged 25 to 34 compared to 43% of their male counterparts. This indicates that women's tertiary attainment has increased particularly sharply.

Scholarly interest in mental health issues among postgraduate students, especially PhD candidates, has grown. PhD students have higher rates of psychological distress, anxiety, and depression than the general population, according to several studies. About one-third of PhD students in Flanders, Belgium, were at risk of having or developing common psychiatric disorders like depression, according to a widely cited 2017 study by Levecque and colleagues published in Research Policy. Of those surveyed, 51% reported at least two symptoms of poor mental health, and 32% reported at least four symptoms (Levecque et al., 2017).

Beyond mental health, postgraduate students deal with a variety of interrelated issues. Due to the wide variations in funding options among fields, institutions, and geographical locations, financial pressure is a major obstacle. Many doctoral schools provide stipends or scholarships, but these sometimes fall short of covering living expenses, especially in pricey urban areas, forcing students to work part-time jobs or incur debt. Difficulty juggling conflicting work and family obligations was found to be the biggest predictor of having mental health issues; high job expectations and little job control were also linked to more symptoms.

With few permanent jobs and a heavy reliance on temporary contracts, the academic labor market has grown more unstable, raising concerns about career viability outside of academia. A systematic review found that the impostor phenomenon, which is defined as worrying about deceiving others about one's abilities, was positively correlated with student sadness and was positively predicted by feelings of isolation from instructors and fellow graduate students. PhD students from underrepresented groups frequently endure additional pressures from biases and low faculty representation, while international students face increased stress due to visa constraints, language obstacles, and cultural changes.

Institutions are putting in place extensive support systems as knowledge of these issues grows. By providing free in-person or virtual treatment, areas specifically for graduate students, and organized support groups, universities are integrating mental health resources into campus culture. In order to better accommodate a variety of student conditions and career goals, educational institutions are now investigating flexible pathways such as part-time study alternatives, medical leaves of absence, and alternate job preparation.

In research and innovation ecosystems, postgraduate education plays vital roles. Scientific publications, patent applications, and technical advancements are greatly influenced by doctorate students and postdoctoral researchers, who make up a sizable section of the research workforce in universities and research organizations. Climate change, public health emergencies, technology disruption, and social injustice are just a few of the complex societal issues that are often the subject of postgraduate study, producing information with immediate policy and useful implications. Additionally, postgraduate training ensures the sustained viability and renewal of scholarly communities by fostering the next generation of academic professors and research leaders.

Postgraduate education ultimately represents a critical investment in human capital, knowledge generation, and societal advancement. By cultivating advanced expertise, critical thinking, and innovative problem-solving capabilities, postgraduate programs prepare individuals to assume leadership roles across academic, professional, and civic domains. The contributions of postgraduate-educated individuals extend across scientific discovery, technological innovation, policy development, cultural production, and social transformation.

As global higher education continues to evolve in response to technological, economic, and social changes, postgraduate education remains central to developing the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for navigating an increasingly complex and interconnected world, while institutions must continue addressing the structural and support challenges that affect student wellbeing and success.

1.1.1 SELF-EFFICACY

Albert Bandura coined the term "self-efficacy" in 1977 to describe a person's confidence in their ability to plan and carry out the necessary steps to accomplish particular objectives. According to Bandura (1977), self-efficacy is a task- and situation-specific belief in one's ability to carry out actions that result in desired results rather than a universal feature. This implies that disparities in efficacy beliefs may cause two people with similar talents to perform differently. According to Bandura (1977), self-efficacy affects people's thoughts, feelings, and actions, influencing their decisions, level of effort, and emotional reactions to challenges.

Self-efficacy is formed by four main sources: mastery experiences, which are the most potent since they boost confidence; vicarious experiences, which are derived from watching capable people; verbal persuasion, such as peer or teacher encouragement; and physiological and affective states, such as how people interpret stress, worry, or exhaustion (Bandura, 1977; Maddux, 2009). Maddux (2009) went on to say that self-efficacy is a belief in one's capacity to apply these skills successfully when needed, rather than just an evaluation of skill.

Self-efficacy plays a critical role in shaping people's choices, motivation, persistence, and problem-solving behavior across various domains. For instance, Schunk (1989) found that students with higher academic self-efficacy are more likely to use effective learning strategies, persist longer on academic tasks, and achieve higher performance. Similarly, Zimmerman (1986) showed that self-efficacy strongly predicts self-regulated learning behaviors and academic persistence. High self-efficacy enhances cognitive resources, increases goal commitment, and promotes resilience during challenges.

Empirical evidence demonstrates that individuals with strong efficacy beliefs exert greater effort, recover more rapidly from setbacks, and view difficult tasks as challenges rather than threats (Bandura, 1997). A meta-analytic cross-lagged panel study by Talsma et al. (2018) confirms a reciprocal relationship: high self-efficacy improves performance, and improved performance further strengthens self-efficacy over time.

Conversely, low self-efficacy is associated with avoidance behaviors, heightened anxiety, reduced effort, and vulnerability to stress. Bandura (1997) and later Artino (2012) reported that people with weak efficacy beliefs often focus on personal deficiencies, anticipate failure, and disengage quickly when challenged. This creates a negative cycle of reduced motivation and poor performance.

Low self-efficacy can also amplify negative emotional responses, making individuals more susceptible to stress or learned helplessness. López-Garrido (2019) highlighted that self-efficacy is domain-specific, meaning individuals may feel competent in one area (e.g., problem solving) yet lack confidence in another (e.g.,

public speaking). This domain-specific nature explains why individuals often perform inconsistently across different life contexts despite having strong abilities.

Additionally, self-efficacy is crucial for emotional wellbeing, behavior modification, and health. Higher self-efficacy is associated with improved adherence to medical treatments, better management of chronic illnesses, and healthier lifestyles, according to research in health psychology (Schwarzer & Renner, 2000). High self-efficacy is associated with better disease management, less discomfort, and an enhanced quality of life in people with chronic illness, according to studies. Furthermore, self-efficacy affects clinical skill performance, learning motivation, and perseverance in challenging situations, according to Artino (2012) and other medical education experts.

Developing self-efficacy has important effects on schooling, mental health, and personal growth. According to Bandura (1997), developing strong efficacy beliefs promotes adaptive coping, tenacity, and goal-directed behavior. This assertion is supported by recent empirical research. Academic self-efficacy exhibits moderate to significant relationships with performance, mediated by elements like effort regulation and deep learning techniques, according to a systematic review by Honicke and Broadbent (2016).

Meng et al. (2023) showed that academic engagement and performance are highly predicted by university students' academic self-efficacy. These results highlight the flexibility and strength of self-efficacy, which makes it a crucial target for interventions meant to enhance motivation, resilience, and long-term success. Increasing self-efficacy can help people overcome obstacles, persevere, see setbacks as teaching moments, and eventually accomplish their academic, professional, and personal objectives.

Studies demonstrate that targeted curricular experiences that build domain-specific confidence (for example, scholarly-concentration programs or research training) produce measurable increases in students’ research self-efficacy and are associated with greater satisfaction and future research intentions among medical students (DiBiase et al., 2020). Adolescent samples indicate that self-efficacy mediates the relationship between positive dispositions (optimism) and academic

achievement, suggesting self-efficacy is the psychological mechanism through which hopeful outlooks translate into performance gains (Usán, Salavera, & Quílez-Robres, 2022). These findings reinforce that self-efficacy is not merely correlational with achievement but functions as a practical lever that educational programs can target to improve outcomes.

Context and instructional design shape self-efficacy substantially, especially in technology-mediated learning. Research on online learning has shown that online learning self-efficacy mediates the relationship between interaction and engagement: students who feel confident in their ability to learn online experience more positive academic emotions and greater engagement, which predict better learning outcomes (Wang et al., 2022). Broader literature reviews confirm that academic self-efficacy positively impacts online and blended learning outcomes, although its effect can be moderated by factors such as course design, students' digital skills, and interaction quality (Yokoyama, 2024). This implies that instructional practices are not just individual traits; it shapes efficacy beliefs and thereby academic success in remote or blended settings.

Intervention and meta-analytic evidence points to practical pathways for strengthening self-efficacy. Integrative reviews of higher-education interventions find that structured programs (8–12 weeks) combining psycho education, mastery tasks, reflective homework, and positive-mental-health strategies can increase general self-efficacy in college students (Gueroni et al., 2023). Related meta-analytic work on self-regulated-learning interventions and instructional supports shows moderate-to-large effects on self-regulated learning and upstream benefits for self-efficacy and achievement, indicating that teaching practices which scaffold mastery and reflection reliably raise students' confidence and performance (Xu, 2023). Taken together, these data show self-efficacy is both a measurable predictor and a practical target for educational design, across face-to-face, blended, and fully online environments.

1.1.2 ACADEMIC RESILIENCE

Academic resilience is a student's ability to "bounce back" and succeed in school despite facing tough times, like family problems, stress, or learning challenges, by staying motivated, managing emotions, and using support to overcome obstacles

instead of giving up. The ability of students to sustain or regain positive academic performance, motivation, engagement, and psychological well-being in the face of significant adversity, such as financial hardship, academic failure, stress, disappointment, or external life challenges is referred to as academic resilience. Academic resilience is described as a multifaceted, process-based construct Cassidy (2016). Rather than merely assessing a student's success or failure, the focus is on how a student adjusts cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally when faced with academic challenges.

It is becoming more widely acknowledged that academic resilience is a dynamic, behavioral, and motivational process that allows students to maintain engagement, performance, and well-being in the face of personal or academic challenges. Resilience is a process that improves self-regulation, motivation, and consistent academic behavior over time rather than only acting as a buffer against stress.

To operationalize this idea, Cassidy (2016) created the Academic Resilience Scale (ARS-30), a 30-item test. Instead than focusing only on academic results, the ARS-30 assesses students' adaptive reactions to academic adversity, such as tenacity, help-seeking, emotional management, and introspection. The ARS-30 showed strong concept validity and internal reliability in the first validation research, demonstrating that academic resilience may be accurately assessed across behavioral and cognitive-affective dimensions.

Additionally, K. Radhamani & D. Kalaivani (2021) compiled data from multiple empirical studies conducted worldwide in their thorough literature review, highlighting the fact that academic resilience helps students manage academic pressure, anxiety, setbacks, and stress and thereby lowering the likelihood of subpar performance or dropout. Their analysis emphasizes that academic resilience is a capacity that can be fostered, developed, and supported by institutional, social, and environmental factors rather than just an inherent attribute.

Following Cassidy's original research, empirical investigations have examined the relationship between academic resilience and other psychological constructs and environmental supports, producing findings in line with the theoretical model, a 2024

study that was published in the Journal of Happiness Studies employed a weekly diary design to show that students' self-regulation practices, which in turn predicted their weekly academic achievement, were positively correlated with their weekly resilience.

Crucially, this indirect benefit was more pronounced among students who scored highly on both grit and perceived social support. This highlights how the protective effect of resilience is amplified by the combination of internal characteristics like persistence and "grit" and external or contextual resources like social support.

In a similar vein, a 2024 Journal of Professional Nursing research that looked at pre-licensure nursing students discovered that academic self-efficacy was positively correlated with improved academic and clinical performance, and resilience significantly predicted academic self-efficacy. This implies that resilience promotes self-belief in academic/clinical competence as well as coping with adversity, which may mediate health-related educational results. Furthermore, social support, self-concept, and resilience all work together to protect adolescents from school maladjustment. This suggests that academic resilience supports emotional well-being, school adjustment, and a lower risk of academic distress in stressful situations.

A systematic review on "Measurement and Increase of Academic Resilience" emphasizes that academic resilience is both malleable and measurable (using the ARS-30 and related instruments); that is, interventions like social-emotional learning, mentoring, guided counseling, and supportive academic environments can improve resilience.

In a four-week diary study, Li, Wang, Siu, and Yu (2024) showed that weekly increases in academic resilience were followed by quantifiable improvements in self-regulation behaviors, such as goal monitoring, effort regulation, and planning, which subsequently predicted weekly academic performance. Their results demonstrate that resilience affects academic performance through self-regulatory behaviors that children engage in when faced with hardship rather than directly. This study also showed that the positive effect of resilience was significantly stronger among students

with high grit and strong perceived social support, indicating that resilience operates synergistically with personal perseverance and social relationships.

Additionally, there is growing evidence that academic resilience is associated with emotional functioning and burnout prevention. Agyapong et al. (2025) discovered that resilience acted as a mediating element in the indirect relationship between positive psychological traits including adaptability, optimism, and emotional stability and reduced levels of academic burnout in a study of undergraduate students. During demanding academic times, students with greater resilience reported less signs of fatigue and emotional dysregulation. This shows that resilience helps students stay mentally stable in high-pressure situations by protecting their emotions in addition to improving grades.

Research in multicultural contexts has also added depth to resilience theory. In a Ghanaian student sample, Quarshie and Essuman (2025) found that academic resilience strongly predicted academic well-being, but this relationship was mediated by grit and intrinsic motivation. Students who were resilient also tended to maintain stronger internal motivation and long-term effort, which improved their overall academic satisfaction and emotional well-being. This suggests that resilience fosters internal motivational states that support both academic success and psychological flourishing.

Resilience theory has also been enhanced by research conducted in multicultural settings. Quarshie and Essuman (2025) discovered that academic resilience significantly predicted academic well-being in a sample of Ghanaian students; however, grit and intrinsic motivation acted as a mediating factor in this connection. Additionally, resilient students tended to sustain higher levels of internal motivation and sustained effort, which enhanced their general academic satisfaction and emotional health. This implies that resilience creates internal motivating states that promote psychological well-being and academic achievement.

According to González-Pérez, Fidalgo, and García-Moreira (2022), self-efficacy and grit are particularly consistent interests that predict academic success throughout the semester among online university students. These findings reinforce that personal agency, perseverance, and sustained motivation remain critical even in

flexible or remote learning environments, where students must manage learning more independently.

Academic accomplishment is positively correlated with resilience-related protective variables, such as coping skills, optimism, teacher support, and mastery motivation, according to a review by Özdemir and Kavak (2023). It offers compelling empirical evidence that resilience accurately forecasts academic performance in a variety of demographics, educational levels, and cultural contexts. stress that academic resilience is a multifaceted concept that continuously improves student success and includes individual characteristics, environmental resources, and adaptive mechanisms.

1.1.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

- Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory

A fundamental explanation of the function of self-efficacy in human motivation, behavior, and adaptation found in Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory. Bandura (1986, 1997) defined self-efficacy as people's confidence in their ability to plan and carry out the actions necessary to handle future circumstances. These beliefs have an impact on people's decisions, efforts, perseverance in the face of adversity, and emotional responses to pressures. Self-efficacy impacts whether obstacles are viewed as dangers or manageable tasks in postgraduate study, where students face challenging research work, high academic demands, and extended periods of uncertainty. Strong self-efficacy increases a student's ability to persevere, control their emotions, and bounce back from failures, all of which contribute to greater academic resilience. Thus, Social Cognitive Theory directly supports the present correlational study by explaining how self-efficacy functions as a core psychological mechanism underlying resilient academic behavior.

- Richardson’s Resilience Framework

According to Richardson's Metatheory of Resilience, resilience is a dynamic process that involves growth, reintegration, and disruption after adversity. Richardson (2002) asserts that people use protective factors, both internal (like self-efficacy) and external (like social support) to positively adjust to stressors.

Academic setbacks like research failure, supervision difficulties, or performance pressure upset students' equilibrium in postgraduate settings. Effective reintegration and adaptive functioning are made possible by self-efficacy, an essential internal protective force. Resilient reactions to academic hardship are facilitated by students who have higher levels of self-efficacy because they are more confident in their ability to cope. By presenting self-efficacy as a resilience-promoting tool that improves postgraduate students' ability to bounce back and persevere academically, this framework complements the current study.

- Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) Model

The cyclical relationship between motivating ideas, cognitive techniques, and behavioral regulation is highlighted by Zimmerman's Self-Regulated Learning model. One key motivational factor that affects goal-setting, self-monitoring, perseverance, and introspection is self-efficacy (Zimmerman, 2000). Students in postgraduate education are required to control their learning processes, handle independent research, and maintain motivation over long stretches of time. Students with high self-efficacy are more likely to use adaptive learning techniques and persevere in the face of challenges, which directly supports academic resilience. Therefore, by elucidating how self-efficacy promotes resilient academic behaviors through effective self-regulation, the SRL model supports the current correlational investigation.

- Cassidy’s Academic Resilience Model

Students' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral reactions to academic adversity are the main emphasis of Cassidy's Academic Resilience Model, which views resilience as a multifaceted and process-oriented construct. According to Cassidy (2016), academic resilience is a dynamic process that involves persistence, introspective help-seeking, and emotional control rather than just an outcome. One important antecedent that affects how students perceive and react to academic difficulties is self-efficacy. Higher self-efficacy among postgraduate students increases their likelihood of using adaptive coping mechanisms, maintaining motivation, and sustaining effort, all of which are indicators of greater academic resilience. The current study, which looks at the connection between postgraduate

students' academic resilience and self-efficacy, has direct theoretical support from this paradigm.

- Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) Model

The Job Demands–Resources model describes how, in the absence of adequate resources, excessive demands result in strain. The approach, which was first created in professional settings, has been extensively used in academic settings. Personal resources like self-efficacy boost motivation, lower stress levels, and encourage favorable results, according to Xanthopoulou et al. (2007). Academic challenges in postgraduate education include high workloads, deadlines, research constraints, and job insecurity. Students can effectively manage these pressures and sustain resilience by using self-efficacy as a personal resource. One beneficial adaptive byproduct of making efficient use of one's own resources is academic resilience. Therefore, by elucidating how self-efficacy reduces academic stress and promotes resilience among postgraduate students, the JD–R model supports the current study.

1.2 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

SELF-EFFICACY: Self-efficacy in the current study is the students' general confidence in their capacity to effectively manage academic assignments, overcome obstacles, and handle stressful situations associated with postgraduate education.

ACADEMIC RESILIENCE: The ability of the students to effectively adapt, persist, and maintain motivation, emotional regulation, and constructive academic behaviors when faced with academic challenges, stress, or setbacks.

1.3 NEED FOR THE STUDY

High academic standards, substantial research duties, competitive pressure, and a variety of psychosocial stressors that test students' perseverance and wellbeing are characteristics of postgraduate education. Postgraduate students are held to higher standards for independent research, more accountability for academic results, and more autonomy than undergraduate students. In addition to strong psychological

resources, such as academic resilience and self-efficacy, these demands call for advanced cognitive ability.

Despite the importance of these psychological concepts, little empirical research has looked at how they interact to affect students' motivation, coping skills, performance, and general academic adjustment, particularly in the Indian and South Asian postgraduate environment. This disparity highlights the necessity for methodical studies that investigate how these two constructs relate to postgraduate students.

Students' engagement, perseverance, and academic success are significantly influenced by self-efficacy, which is described as people's confidence in their capacity to do tasks successfully. Highly difficult responsibilities like preparing a thesis, making methodological decisions, communicating academically, and dealing with publication-related demands are common for postgraduate students. Increased anxiety, decreased effort, avoidance behaviors, and a higher chance of academic burnout or dropout are all possible outcomes of low self-efficacy. Higher self-efficacy individuals, on the other hand, are more likely to persevere, successfully manage their learning, bounce back fast from setbacks, and retain confidence amid challenging academic times. Therefore, initiatives to improve motivation, academic confidence, and performance can be informed by an understanding of postgraduate students' levels of self-efficacy.

In a similar vein, academic resilience, the ability to adjust, bounce back, or flourish in the face of academic hardship is a crucial psychological tool for overcoming postgraduate obstacles. Postgraduate students are more likely to experience psychological distress due to financial strain, research failures, institutional demands, publication rejections, and uncertain career prospects. Students that possess academic resilience are better able to handle academic losses, keep up their work over protracted times of academic uncertainty, and retain emotional stability. Resilience may serve as a buffer against stress, burnout, and demotivation, according to research showing resilient postgraduate students exhibit higher levels of adaptation, perseverance, and academic well-being.

Despite the fact that both dimensions have an independent impact on academic success, little is known about how they work together, particularly in postgraduate populations. According to theoretical and empirical data, self-efficacy may boost resilience by boosting confidence in the face of difficulties, while resilience may support self-efficacy by facilitating effective coping mechanisms. Therefore, studying the relationship between academic resilience and self-efficacy is essential to comprehending the psychological processes that influence postgraduate students' capacity to control stress, sustain academic momentum, and accomplish long-term objectives.

Additionally, postgraduate students worldwide are experiencing an increase in mental health issues; recent studies have shown high levels of stress, anxiety, sadness, and imposter syndrome. Supervisory relationships, academic competition, financial insecurity, and career ambiguity frequently exacerbate these problems. Increasing resilience and self-efficacy may be economical psychological buffers that promote wellbeing and academic performance. However, institutions are unable to create focused interventions to improve these constructs in the absence of empirical data.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the research project summarizes what is to be achieved by the study. In view of the available literature and importance of the topic. The following objectives were set:-

1. To examine the relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience among postgraduate students.

2. To assess the gender difference in academic resilience among postgraduate students.

3. To compare self-efficacy between male and female postgraduate students.

1.5 HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There is a significant and positive relationship between self efficacy and academic resilience among postgraduate students.

2. There is no significant difference in the academic resilience between males and females.

3. There is no significant difference in the self-efficacy between males and females.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

A literature review is a thorough summary of earlier studies on a subject. The literature review examines scholarly books, journals, and other sources that are pertinent to a particular field of study. This prior research should be listed, described, summed up, impartially evaluated, and clarified in the review.

2.2 STUDIES RELATED TO SELF-EFFICACY AND ACADEMIC RESILIENCE

In a cross-sectional study involving 446 nurse academics, Özdemir and Kaplan (2025) discovered a favorable correlation between psychological resilience and job satisfaction and overall self-efficacy. According to their findings, resilience was strongly predicted by higher levels of self-efficacy, indicating that self-efficacy serves as a crucial psychological resource in demanding academic settings. Additionally, demographic and professional criteria like age, years of academic service, relationships with peers and family, and academic rank had an impact on resilience and self-efficacy. This study demonstrates the relevance of self-efficacy in maintaining emotional stability and job satisfaction, highlighting it as a critical protective element that improves resilience and well-being in academic workers. The results also highlight how institutional support systems, like professional development opportunities, career trajectories, and mentoring, can boost resilience and self-efficacy, which in turn improves academic well-being and job satisfaction.

Liu et al. (2024) examined 609 postgraduate students in China and found that the supervisor–postgraduate relationship negatively predicted perceived stress, with self-efficacy acting as a significant mediator. This finding indicates that supervisory support enhances students' self-efficacy, which in turn reduces their academic stress. This study highlights self-efficacy as a psychological buffer against postgraduate stress, demonstrating its central role in maintaining emotional stability and academic performance. The finding emphasizes that strong supervisory support enhances self-

efficacy, which subsequently reduces stress and promotes well-being among postgraduates.

Zhang et al. (2024) surveyed 558 master's students in China during the COVID-19 period using the Academic Resilience Scale and the Factors Influencing Academic Resilience Scale. They found that academic resilience was moderately high among the participants. Significant predictors of resilience included research self-efficacy, involvement in research, academic guidance from supervisors, university support, and family support. The study also reported that students who communicated more frequently with supervisors or who actively led or participated in their supervisor's research demonstrated significantly higher resilience than peers who did not. This research highlights the importance of active engagement in research activities and supportive supervisory relationships in building resilience among postgraduate students.

Casey et al. (2024) conducted a mixed-methods study examining the mental health, well-being, and resilience of postgraduate researchers (PGRs) at a UK institution. Using validated scales including the WEMWBS (Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale) and Connor–Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), the study revealed that PGRs had significantly lower levels of well-being and resilience in comparison to general population norms. Qualitative interview data highlighted control, balance, and coping strategies (such as managing workload, boundary setting, and seeking support) as critical themes influencing resilience. The authors argue for institutional interventions tailored to improve these dimensions among PGRs to reduce psychological distress and improve persistence.

Mezhel Muzuva (2024) explored international postgraduate students (Masters and PhD) at a University of Technology in Durban using semi-structured interviews with 10 students. This qualitative work revealed that these students employ multiple resilience strategies, including self-regulation, seeking peer and supervisor support, and adaptive time management, to overcome academic challenges such as language barriers, cultural adjustment, and differences in academic expectations. This research adds rich insights into the active and diverse coping mechanisms that international postgraduate students utilize to maintain resilience in unfamiliar academic environments.

Gooding et al. (2023) conducted a longitudinal study following postgraduate research (PGR) students over six months in the UK to understand how resilience interacts with academic pressures. They found that well-being significantly deteriorated across this period, although anxiety and depression remained relatively stable. Importantly, students' perceptions of academic challenges at baseline significantly predicted increases in anxiety six months later. However, those with higher social support resilience at baseline showed a buffering effect: the negative impact of academic challenges on anxiety was weaker for students with stronger social support resilience. Social support resilience measured at baseline moderated the impact of perceived academic challenges on anxiety over the six-month period; students with higher resilience experienced less increase in anxiety despite similar levels of academic pressure. This finding suggests that resilience, particularly the social support dimension, acts as a protective factor for postgraduate research student mental health under pressure.

Abdolrezapour et al. (2023) studied 120 Iranian university students in online learning environments and reported that both self-efficacy and resilience were significant predictors of academic motivation. Their regression analysis indicated that self-efficacy accounted for a substantial proportion of variance in motivation, demonstrating its importance even in virtual postgraduate contexts. These findings align with earlier work by Salanova et al. (2010), confirming the cross-cultural relevance of self-efficacy in academic settings.

Gong et al. (2022) conducted research among nursing postgraduates and revealed that mastery experiences, research training, and supervisor feedback were the most influential sources of research self-efficacy. They identified mastery experiences, supervisory feedback, and structured research training as the three most influential sources, consistent with Bandura's (1997) four identified origins of self-efficacy: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological states.

Komsu (2021) investigated 300 postgraduate students across various academic disciplines in Turkey and reported high levels of research self-efficacy, which varied by discipline, gender, and stage of study. Male students demonstrated slightly higher confidence in technical research tasks, whereas female students showed stronger

persistence and organization in data management and thesis writing. These findings highlight the multidimensional nature of self-efficacy in postgraduate contexts.

Olodude and Omolola (2020) conducted research with 581 postgraduate students at Obafemi Awolowo University, finding that general self-efficacy (GSE) significantly predicted scores on the Academic Resilience Scale (ARS). Their results suggest that students' beliefs in their own capabilities serve as a meaningful determinant of resilience within postgraduate educational contexts, where students frequently encounter academic difficulties and psychological distress.

Schunk and DiBenedetto (2020) reinforced earlier findings that students with high self-efficacy establish more challenging goals, demonstrate greater persistence when encountering setbacks, and employ more sophisticated coping strategies. Their research emphasized how this self-confidence enables students to manage stress effectively, sustain motivation over extended periods, and develop adaptive learning behaviors that promote long-term academic success.

Schunk and DiBenedetto (2020) emphasized that a strong sense of self-efficacy enables postgraduate students to set challenging research goals, remain motivated during prolonged academic projects, and effectively manage setbacks. Their work reinforced the importance of developing self-efficacy through targeted interventions, including mentoring, performance feedback, skill workshops, and mastery-based learning, which have been shown to improve academic outcomes and reduce attrition rates.

Cassidy (2016) subsequently demonstrated that targeted interventions, including guided practice, performance feedback, and positive reinforcement, can effectively enhance both self-efficacy and academic resilience. She emphasized that the strong interconnection between these two constructs suggests that interventions designed to improve self-efficacy can simultaneously strengthen students' academic resilience.

Cassidy (2015) further substantiated the strong, positive relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience among students across various educational levels. Her work confirmed that students with higher self-efficacy beliefs are better

equipped to recover from adversity and achieve academic success, even when confronted with significant challenges.

Salanova et al. (2010) demonstrated that self-efficacy and resilience function as significant predictors of academic motivation, particularly in demanding educational contexts. Their research indicated that when students perceive themselves as capable, they exhibit higher levels of engagement and sustained drive. They argued that given the rigorous demands of postgraduate education—including substantial workloads, research pressures, and complex supervisory relationships—developing self-efficacy is essential for fostering resilience and maintaining psychological well-being.

Salami (2010) found that stronger self-efficacy beliefs are associated with greater academic persistence and more resilient approaches to difficult learning situations. His research revealed that successful academic experiences, motivated by self-belief, can reinforce students' confidence and further develop their resilience. Additionally, Salami identified gender-based variations in self-efficacy, with female students demonstrating higher general self-efficacy levels than their male counterparts.

Salanova et al. (2010) demonstrated that self-efficacy enhances engagement and reduces burnout among university students, suggesting its broad applicability in academic performance and mental health. Their findings indicated that students with higher self-efficacy demonstrate greater psychological resilience in demanding academic environments.

Usher and Pajares (2008) demonstrated that positive beliefs about one's academic capabilities foster an optimistic mindset toward learning and problem-solving, thereby enhancing both performance and perseverance in demanding academic environments. They emphasized that high self-efficacy cultivates a constructive attitude toward learning, which proves crucial for navigating the challenges of higher education, particularly in postgraduate contexts that emphasize autonomous learning and critical thinking.

Usher and Pajares (2008) found that low self-efficacy has been associated with procrastination, anxiety, and attrition in graduate programs. These psychological

mechanisms are crucial, as postgraduate studies often involve unstructured timelines, supervisor conflicts, and high expectations for independent work—all of which require confidence in one's abilities. Conversely, high self-efficacy students are more likely to perceive challenges as manageable and to attribute failures to controllable factors, leading to adaptive coping and long-term success.

Martin and Marsh (2006) established a strong, positive relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience defined as the capacity to adapt, persist, and recover from academic adversity. Their work demonstrated that self-efficacy directly influences academic resilience, with this relationship proving both complex and significant in determining a student's ability to recover from academic challenges.

Chemers et al. (2001) found that students with elevated self-efficacy levels demonstrate greater persistence when facing setbacks and employ more effective coping strategies. Their research revealed that this confidence enables students to manage stress more effectively, maintain motivation during challenging periods, and develop adaptive learning behaviors all of which contribute significantly to academic resilience. A robust belief in one's academic abilities empowers students to feel less overwhelmed by academic demands and to employ strategic approaches to overcome difficulties.

Zimmerman (2000) established that students with high self-efficacy are more likely to set ambitious academic goals and demonstrate greater commitment to achieving them. His research also indicated variations in self-efficacy across demographic factors, revealing that older students tend to demonstrate higher academic self-efficacy compared to their younger counterparts.

Zimmerman (2000) and Pajares (2002) established that in postgraduate education, which often involves high levels of autonomy, complex research tasks, and frequent academic stressors, self-efficacy becomes particularly critical. A strong sense of self-efficacy allows postgraduate students to set challenging research goals, remain motivated during prolonged academic projects, and effectively manage setbacks associated with thesis writing, supervision, and publication demands.

Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995) developed the Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE), which remains the most widely used instrument for assessing overall

belief in one's ability to handle difficult tasks. This scale provides a reliable measure of academic confidence across diverse contexts. Subsequently, Bieschke et al. (1996) developed the Research Self-Efficacy Scale (RSES) to specifically measure graduate students' confidence in performing research-related tasks, recognizing the unique demands of postgraduate research work.

High self-efficacy empowers postgraduate students to persist through setbacks, maintain well-being, and complete their programs successfully. Interventions that strengthen self-efficacy such as mentoring, performance feedback, skill workshops, and mastery-based learning have been shown to improve academic outcomes and reduce attrition rates. Given the demanding nature of postgraduate education, cultivating self-efficacy is not only essential for academic success but also for sustaining psychological resilience and lifelong professional competence. Collectively, these studies establish self-efficacy as a critical psychological construct that underpins postgraduate students' motivation, coping, and resilience in managing the demanding nature of advanced academic work.

Resilience is multidimensional, involving cognitive, emotional, and behavioural components, including reframing challenges, controlling emotional responses, and applying active coping strategies. Social and familial support systems emerge consistently as strong contributors to resilience. Higher resilience is associated with lower anxiety, better well-being, and improved academic persistence in the face of pressure.

2.3 RESEARCH GAP

A review of the available literature revealed that considerable research has been conducted on self-efficacy and academic resilience separately in different educational settings. Previous studies have examined the role of self-efficacy in academic performance, motivation, engagement, stress management, and psychological well-being, while other studies have investigated academic resilience in relation to coping strategies, social support, academic adjustment, and educational outcomes.

However, only a limited number of studies have specifically explored the relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience among postgraduate students.

Furthermore, much of the existing research has been conducted among undergraduate students, nursing students, medical students, international students, and students from foreign educational contexts such as China, the United Kingdom, Turkey, Iran, and other countries. Very few studies have focused on postgraduate students in the Indian higher education context, particularly in Jammu district.

Postgraduate students face unique academic challenges including research work, dissertation completion, academic pressure, independent learning, and career uncertainty, which may influence both self-efficacy and academic resilience differently from other student populations.

In addition, previous findings regarding gender differences in self-efficacy and academic resilience have been inconsistent. While some studies reported significant gender differences, others found no significant differences. This inconsistency highlights the need for further investigation among postgraduate students.

Therefore, there existed a need to examine the relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience and to investigate gender differences in these variables among postgraduate students of Jammu district. The present study was undertaken to address this gap and contribute empirical evidence to the existing body of psychological and educational research.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The methodical framework that directs the entire process of conducting research, from data collection to analysis and interpretation, is known as research methodology. It is the "how" of a study, outlining the particular methods, approaches, and processes employed to provide a valid and reliable response to a research question or test a hypothesis. It helps to find out more information about study in a detailed and careful manner. According to Kothari (2004) Research methodology refers to the systematic way of solving a research problem. It involves the procedures, techniques, and tools used by the researcher to conduct the study and includes the logic behind the methods adopted. Methodology helps to contribute towards the success or failure of any research work. After selecting the problem, the researcher has to decide suitable procedures and techniques to be investigated according to the nature of the research problem.

3.2 METHOD

There are several methods of collecting data but the selection of methods of research is determined by the nature of the problem. The descriptive survey method is used in the study after considering the nature, need and purpose of present research. A descriptive study method observes and describes characteristics of a population or phenomenon without manipulating variables, aiming to identify patterns and trends, often as a first step before deeper causal research. Descriptive survey studies are conducted to describe the current status of a population or phenomenon, to collect the data of existing phenomena with the view to employ data to justify current conditions. Description of the tools and the sample is given under.

3.3 POPULATION

The population for the present study consists of all post graduate students studying in the Jammu district.

3.4 SAMPLE

Sample is the soul of scientific study. A good sample minimises the error of estimations is less time consuming, and economical in terms of time and money. The size of the sample varies from study to study, methods and nature of the population. A sample is a smaller, manageable group of individuals or items selected from a larger population to study and draw conclusions about the entire group. In the present study, keeping in view the limitation of time the researcher has to be content within the limited samples. For this study data will be collected from 150 postgraduate students of Jammu district.

3.5 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The sampling technique used for the present study is random sampling. In this method, every student in the population had an equal and independent chance of being selected.

3.6 RESEARCH TOOLS USED AND ITS DESCRIPTION

The selection of suitable tools is of vital importance for successful research. Different tools are suitable for collecting different kinds of information for various purposes. Selection of tools for data collection depends upon the nature of the problem undertaken. For the present investigation the investigator has used the following tools of research:-

General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE, Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995)

It is a widely used 10-item self-report psychometric tool designed to assess an individual's general belief in their ability to cope with daily challenges and adapt to various stressful life events. The General Self-Efficacy Scale consists of 10 items, each designed to assess an individual’s perceived competence in handling stressful or demanding situations. The items reflect confidence in problem-solving, persistence, and goal achievement. Each item is rated on a 4-point Likert scale, ranging from: Not at all true, Hardly true, Moderately true, Exactly true. Higher scores indicate a higher level of perceived self-efficacy. The General Self-Efficacy Scale is easy to score. A score between 1 and 4 is given to each item based on the participant's chosen

response. The sum of the scores for each of the ten items yields the overall self-efficacy score, minimum score: 10, maximum score: 40. A higher total score reflects greater self-efficacy, indicating stronger beliefs in one's ability to manage academic demands and challenges effectively. Across a wide range of demographics and cultural situations, the General Self-Efficacy Scale has shown excellent validity and reliability. This scale is a self-report measure of self-efficacy.

Academic Resilience Scale (ARS-30, Cassidy, 2016)

It is a 30-item questionnaire measuring students' adaptive responses (cognitive, affective, behavioral) to academic challenges, focusing on the *process* of resilience rather than just outcomes, using a 5-point Likert scale. Respondents rate each item on a 5-point scale, typically ranging from 1 (likely) to 5 (unlikely), Minimum Score: 30, Maximum Score: 150. Developed by Simon Cassidy, it identifies key factors like perseverance, reflective help-seeking, and negative emotional response to adversity, providing a valuable tool for researchers and educators to understand how students bounce back from setbacks, with higher scores indicating greater resilience. It assesses how students cope with difficulties. It assesses students' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses to academic adversity. It has good internal reliability and construct validity. Key dimensions reflected in ARS-30 questions are perseverance (14 items) Questions focus on: Viewing hardship as a chance for growth, Striving to overcome difficulties and stay goal-focused. Reflecting and Adaptive Help-Seeking (9 items) questions assess: Evaluating strengths and weaknesses, Adjusting study methods and Negative Affect and Emotional Response (7 items) questions explore: Managing anxiety, worry, and emotional vulnerability, Overthinking and suppressing emotions.

3.7 STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES EMPLOYED

In order to analyse the data, the researcher used the following statistical technique:

1. Mean
2. Standard Deviation
3. t-test
4. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter includes the aims and objectives of the present study, the characteristics of the sample, the tools used for the study and the procedure employed along with the precautions taken while selecting the participants for the sample and the statistical procedures employed to analyse the data.

4.2 RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The statistical analysis, interpretation, and presentation of data collected from postgraduate students to look into the relationship between academic resilience and general self-efficacy are the main topics of this chapter. The distribution of scores on the main study variables and the demographic characteristics of the individuals were analysed using descriptive statistics. To determine the nature and direction of the association between academic resilience and general self-efficacy, we employed Pearson's correlation analysis. The occurrence of substantial gender differences in academic resilience and self-efficacy between male and female postgraduate students was examined using an independent sample t-test. The detailed results are presented in the following tables and figures.

Table 4.1

Showing frequency distribution of female and male

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Female	112	52.3
Male	102	47.7
Total	214	100.0

The table provides a breakdown of gender distribution, detailing the number and percentage of males and females within a total sample of 214 individuals. It shows that among the samples, there were 112 females, constituting (52.3%) of the total and 102 males, accounting for (47.7%) which is shown in the figure below.

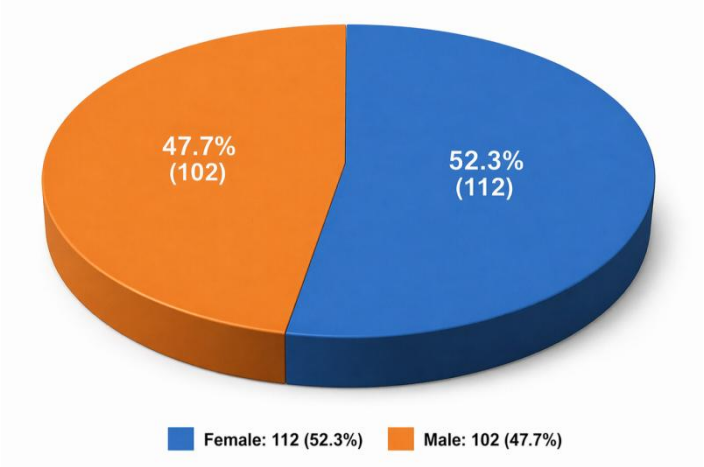


Figure 4.1: Gender Distribution of Participants

Table 4.2

Showing frequency distribution of age

Age	Frequency	Percent
20-25	170	79.4
25-30	44	20.6
Total	214	100.0

The table provides a breakdown of age. It shows that among the frequency distribution, 170 respondents (79.4%) of age 20-25 years and 44 respondents (20.6%) of age 25-30 years, indicating that the sample is dominated by the younger age group which is shown in the figure below.

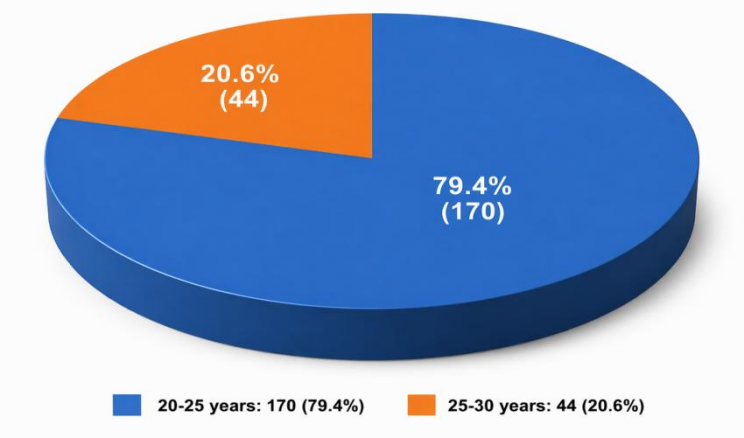


Figure 4.2: Age Distribution of Participants

Table 4.3

Showing frequency distribution of employment status

Employment Status	Frequency	Percent
Not employed	195	91.1
Part time	14	6.5
Full time	5	2.3
Total	214	100.0

The majority of participants (91.1%) were not employed followed by 6.5% were part time employed and 2.3% were full time employed. This indicates that most respondents were not engaged in employment which is shown in the figure below.

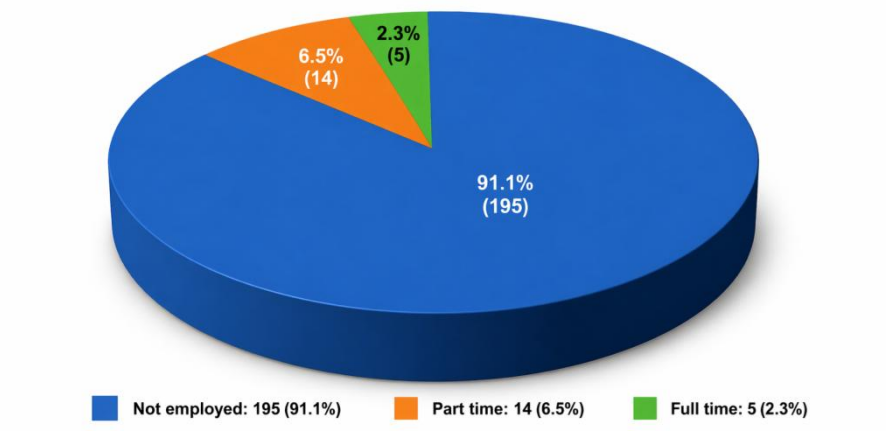


Figure 4.3: Employment Status of Participants

Table 4.4

Showing frequency distribution of current academic performance

Current Academic Performance	Frequency	Percent
Below 60%	7	3.3
60% - 70%	48	22.4
70% - 80%	89	41.6
Above 80%	70	32.7
Total	214	100.0

Most participants scored in the 70% - 80% range (41.6), followed by above 80% (32.7), 60% - 70% (22.4) and below 60% (3.3). This suggests that the majority of respondents fall within the average to above average academic performance range which is shown in the figure below.

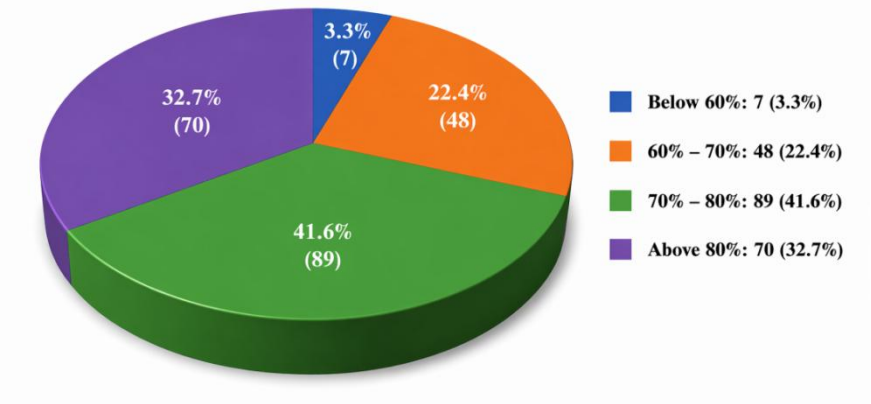


Figure 4.4: Current Academic Performance of Participants

Table 4.5

Showing frequency distribution of medium of instruction

Medium of Instruction	Frequency	Percent
English Language	202	94.4
Regional Language	12	5.6
Total	214	100.0

The majority of participants (94.4%) studied in the English medium and 5.6% belonged to the regional language medium. This indicates that most respondents share a common medium of instruction which is shown in the figure below.

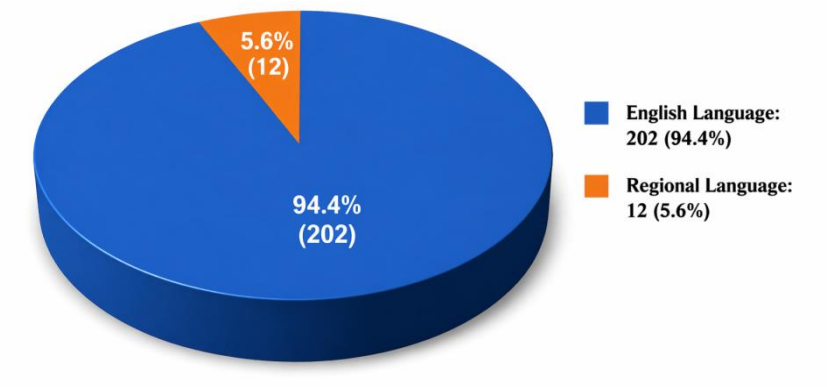


Figure 4.5: Medium of Instruction of Participants

Table 4.6

Showing frequency distribution of Academic Discipline

Academic Discipline	Frequency	Percent
Arts/Humanities	144	67.3
Science	32	15.0
Commerce	12	5.6
Management	14	6.5
Professional	12	5.6
Total	214	100.0

Most participants (67.3%) belonged to the arts/humanities category, followed by science (15%), commerce (5.6%), management (6.5%) and professional courses (5.6%). This shows that the sample is heavily concentrated in arts/humanities which is shown in the figure below.

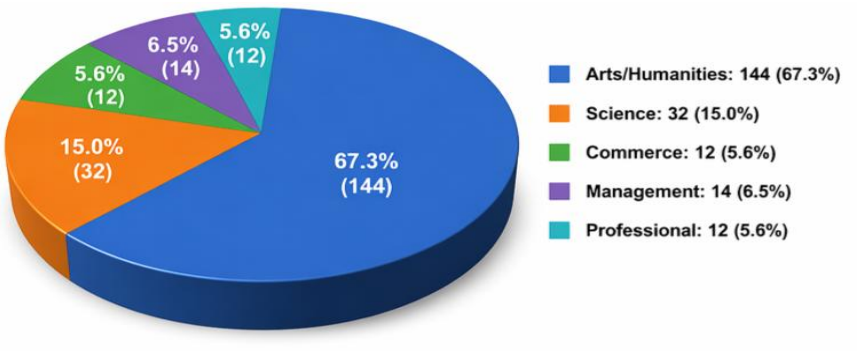


Figure 4.6: Academic Discipline of Participants

Table 4.7

Showing frequency distribution of Year of Study

Year of Study	Frequency	Percent
1st Year	67	31.3
2nd Year	147	68.7
Total	214	100.0

The majority of participants were in their second year (68.7%), while 31.3% were in their first year. This indicates that most respondents were in the later stage of their academic program which is shown in the figure below.

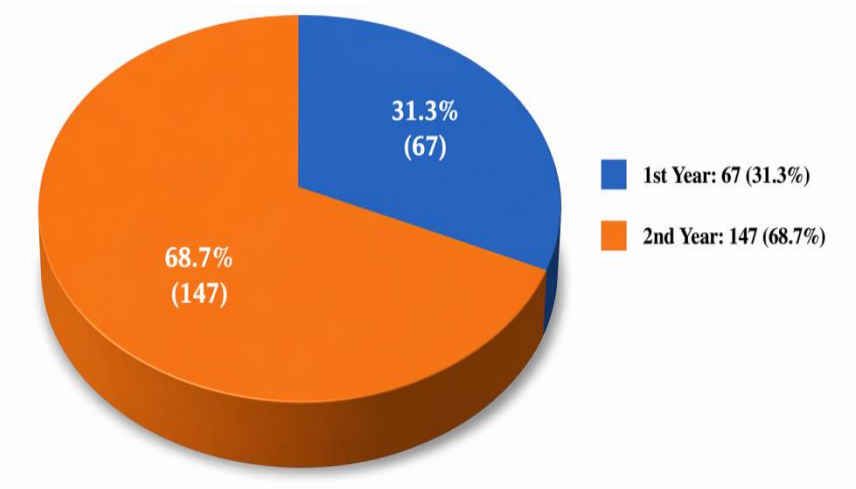


Figure 4.7: Year of Study of Participants

Table 4.8

Showing descriptive data of the study

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Total (N)
Self-Efficacy	30.57	4.963	214
Academic Resilience	112.76	17.094	214

The table presents the descriptive statistics of the study variables among 214 postgraduate students. The mean scores of self-efficacy was 30.57 with a standard deviation of 4.963, indicating a moderately high level of self-efficacy among the participants with relatively low variability in scores. The mean score of academic resilience was 112.76 with a standard deviation of 17.094, suggesting a good level of academic resilience among the students, with moderate variation in responses. The findings indicate that the participants generally reported positive levels of both self-efficacy and academic resilience.

Table 4.9

Showing relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience among postgraduate students

Variables	Mean	SD	N	1	2
self-efficacy	30.57	4.963	214	1	.508**
Academic Resilience	112.76	17.094	214	.508**	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The table shows a significant positive relationship between Self-Efficacy and Academic Resilience among postgraduate students. This indicates that students with higher self-efficacy tend to have higher academic resilience. Therefore, as self-belief increases, the ability to cope with academic challenges also increases which is shown in the figure below.

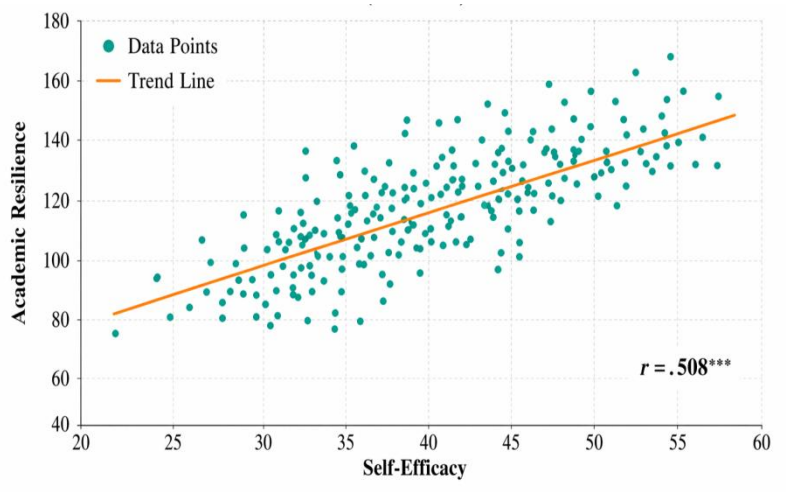


Figure 4.8: Scattered plot representation of relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience among postgraduate students

Table 4.10

Showing differences in self-efficacy and Academic Resilience among postgraduate students

Variables	Females		Males		t	p
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Self-Efficacy	30.86	4.93	30.29	5.01	0.836	.404
Academic Resilience	112.87	16.95	112.64	17.28	0.098	.922

The t-test table shows no significant gender difference in Self-Efficacy and Academic Resilience among postgraduate students (p > .05**). For self-efficacy, female students obtained a mean score of 30.86 (SD = 4.93), while male students obtained a mean score of 30.29 (SD = 5.01). The obtained t-value was 0.836 with a p-value of 0.404, which is greater than the level of significance (0.05). This indicates that there is no statistically significant difference in self-efficacy between male and female postgraduate students. The null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in self-efficacy between males and females is accepted. For academic resilience, female students obtained a mean score of 112.87 (SD = 16.95), whereas male obtained a mean score of 112.64 (SD = 17.28). The obtained t-value was 0.098 with a p-value of 0.922, which is greater than the level of significance (0.05). This

indicates that there is no statistically significant difference in academic resilience between male and female postgraduate students. Hence the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference in academic resilience between males and females is accepted. The comparison is shown in the figure below.

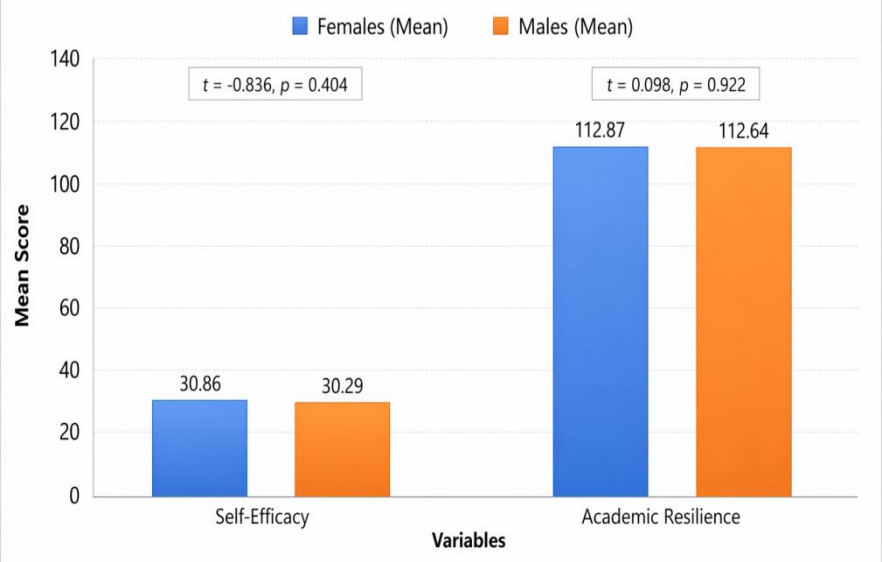


Figure 4.9: Graphical representation of independent sample t-test of self-efficacy and academic resilience among postgraduate students

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, FUTURE IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the study by presenting a summary of its key components, along with the major findings, discussions, conclusions, limitations and implications derived from the analysis. The primary objective of the research was to investigate the relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience among post graduate students using a quantitative correlational research design. In addition, the study aimed to understand the levels of self-efficacy and academic resilience among postgraduate students.

High academic demands, research pressure, performance expectations, uncertainty about job options, and the requirement for independent learning are all common features of postgraduate education. Psychological traits like academic resilience and self-efficacy become crucial in these situations. Academic resilience is the capacity to adjust constructively, persevere and bounce back from academic setbacks, whereas self-efficacy is a person's confidence in their capacity to complete tasks and overcome obstacles.

The results are interpreted in this chapter in light of the study's goals and current psychological knowledge. It also emphasises how useful the results are for educators, institutions, counsellors, and students. The chapter concludes with limitations and recommendations for future studies.

5.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective of the research investigation encapsulates what is to be achieved by the study in this view of the available literature and importance of the topic, the following objectives were:-

1. To examine the relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience among postgraduate students.

2. To assess the gender difference in academic resilience among postgraduate students.

3. To compare self-efficacy between male and female postgraduate students.

5.3 HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There is a significant and positive relationship between self efficacy and academic resilience among postgraduate students.

2. There is no significant difference in the academic resilience between males and females.

3. There is no significant difference in the self-efficacy between males and females.

5.4 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The present study entitled a correlational study on the relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience among postgraduate students was conducted to examine the association between self-efficacy and academic resilience among postgraduate students. A descriptive survey method was used for data collection. The sample consisted of 214 postgraduate students selected through random sampling. The participants represented different demographic categories such as gender, age group, academic discipline, year of study, employment status, medium of instruction, and academic performance providing a broader representation of postgraduate students. The tools used in the study were:-

General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE) by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995), it is a 10 item psychometric instrument designed to assess an individual's optimistic self-belief in their ability to cope with a wide range of demands in life. It is a 4-point likert scale typically: 1 = Not at all true, 2 = Hardly true, 3 = Moderately true, 4 = Exactly true. Response to all 10 items are summed to produce a final composite score ranging from 10 to 40.

Academic Resilience Scale (ARS-30) by Cassidy (2016), it is a 30 item self-report questionnaire to measure how university students manage academic adversity,

challenges and setbacks. 30 items rated on a 5-point likert scale typically: 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neutral, 4 = disagree, 5 = strongly disagree. Total score range from 30 to 150.

The collected data were analysed using appropriate statistical techniques including Mean, Standard Deviation, Pearson's Product Moment Correlation, and t-test. Mean and standard deviation were used to understand the general level and variability of the variables, correlation was used to determine the relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience, and t-test was used to examine gender differences in these variables. The descriptive findings of the study revealed that the mean score of Self-efficacy was 30.57 with a standard deviation of 4.963, indicating a moderately high level of self-efficacy among postgraduate students. The mean score of academic resilience was 112.76 with a standard deviation of 17.094, indicating a good level of academic resilience among the participants. The major objective of the study was to examine the relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience. Pearson's product moment correlation analysis revealed a significant positive correlation between self-efficacy and academic resilience ($r = .508$). This finding indicates a moderate positive relationship between the two variables, it means that students who reported stronger belief in their own capabilities also tended to report higher levels of academic resilience. Such students are more likely to remain motivated during academic stress, persist in difficult tasks, recover from failures, and adapt positively to challenges. To test the first hypothesis, Pearson's Product Moment Correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience among postgraduate students. The analysis revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience ($r = .508$, $p < .01$**). This indicates that postgraduate students with higher self-efficacy tended to report higher academic resilience. Therefore, the first hypothesis, which states that there is a significant and positive relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience among postgraduate students, is accepted.

To test the second hypothesis, an independent sample t-test was conducted to examine gender differences in academic resilience. The findings revealed no significant difference in academic resilience between female and male postgraduate students. Female students obtained a mean score of 112.87 (SD = 16.95), while male

students obtained a mean score of 112.64 (SD = 17.28). The obtained t-value was 0.098 with a p-value of .922, which is greater than the level of significance (0.05). Therefore, the second hypothesis, which stated that there is no significant difference in academic resilience between males and females, is accepted.

To test the third hypothesis, an independent sample t-test was conducted to examine gender differences in self-efficacy. The findings revealed no significant difference in self-efficacy between female and male postgraduate students. Female students obtained a mean score of 30.86 (SD = 4.93), while male students obtained a mean score of 30.29 (SD = 5.01). The obtained t-value was 0.836 with a p-value of .404, which is greater than the level of significance (0.05). Therefore, the third hypothesis, which stated that there is no significant difference in self-efficacy between males and females, is accepted.

5.5 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings support Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, which emphasizes the role of efficacy beliefs in behaviour, motivation, and adaptation. Students with stronger self-efficacy beliefs appear more resilient in academic context. The results also strengthen resilience frameworks suggesting that internal strengths such as confidence and persistence help students adapt positively during stress. The findings of the present study have important implications for students, teachers, counselors, and educational institutions. Students should work on developing confidence, problem-solving ability, and positive thinking, as these may strengthen resilience during academic stress. Teachers can promote students' self-efficacy by providing encouragement, constructive feedback, mentoring and opportunities for mastery experiences. Counselling interventions may focus on confidence-building, stress management, emotional regulation, and resilience training and institutions like universities may organise workshops on mental well-being, coping skills, motivations, and academic adjustments for postgraduate students. The findings suggest that educational policymakers should incorporate psychological skill development into higher education systems. Academic success should not be measured only through examinations and grades, but also through students' ability to adapt, persist, and maintain well-being. Programs on life skills, emotional intelligence, confidence-building, coping strategies, and resilience training can be integrated into postgraduate

curricula. This would help produce not only academically competent graduates but also psychologically strong and adaptable professionals.

The study also encourages future researchers to further examine factors that enhance self-efficacy and resilience, such as family support, motivation, personality, academic environment, mentoring quality, and stress management skills. The central implication of the study is clear: when postgraduate students believe in their capabilities, they become more resilient in facing academic challenges. Therefore, self-efficacy should be viewed as a key psychological strength that educational institutions must actively nurture. Strengthening self-efficacy and resilience can improve academic performance, emotional well-being, persistence, and long-term professional success among postgraduate students.

5.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Although the present study makes a meaningful contribution to understanding the relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience among postgraduate students, certain limitations should be acknowledged while interpreting the findings. These limitations may guide future research in conducting more comprehensive investigation. Recognizing these limitations is important because it helps maintain objectivity and provides direction for future research. Despite its usefulness, the study had certain limitations which are, The sample was limited to postgraduate students of jammu district only. The findings are based on a specific regional and educational context. Students from other districts, states, or countries may differ in academic environment, cultural background, access to resources, stressors, and support systems. As a result, the findings cannot be generalized confidently to all postgraduate students. A wider geographical sample would provide more representative and universal conclusions. The data are collected using standardized questionnaires (GSE and ARS-30), which rely on participant's honesty, self-awareness, and willingness to respond accurately, possibly leading to response bias. The correlational design does not establish cause-and-effect relationship. This means the study cannot prove whether: Higher self-efficacy causes greater resilience, or Greater resilience increases self-efficacy, or Both are influenced by some third factor such as family support, personality, motivation, or mental health. Therefore, conclusions about causation should not be drawn from the present findings. Other variables such as stress,

personality, motivation, family support, and socioeconomic status were not studied. The findings may not be generalized to all student populations.

5.7 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Similar studies may be conducted on larger and more diverse samples. Comparative studies may be done across undergraduate and postgraduate students. Future research may include variables such as stress, anxiety, motivation, burnout and academic achievement. Experimental studies may be designed to improve self-efficacy and academic resilience through interventions. Longitudinal studies may be conducted to understand casual relationships over time. Intervention based studies may be designed to improve self-efficacy and resilience among students.

5.8 CONCLUSION

The present research investigated the relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience among postgraduate students. The correlational analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience ($r = .508$), indicating that students who possess stronger confidence in their abilities are more likely to cope effectively with academic stress and challenges. The t-test findings showed that there was no significant difference in academic resilience between male and female postgraduate students, and there was also no significant difference in self-efficacy between male and female postgraduate students. This suggests that both male and female students experience comparable levels of confidence in their abilities and capacity to bounce back from academic difficulties. Based on the findings of the present study it has been clearly concluded that self-efficacy and academic resilience are closely connected psychological strengths among postgraduate students and gender does not significantly influence self-efficacy or academic resilience among postgraduate students. In conclusion, self-efficacy and academic resilience are crucial resources for postgraduate success. Strengthening these qualities can help students not only perform better academically but also maintain persistence and long-term professional growth.

SUMMARY

TOPIC: A CORRELATIONAL STUDY ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-EFFICACY AND ACADEMIC RESILIENCE AMONG POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

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INTRODUCTION

A postgraduate student is an individual who has completed an undergraduate bachelor's degree and has progressed to advanced study in a specialised academic or professional field. Postgraduate education generally includes master's and doctoral programmes, as well as postgraduate diplomas and certificates that extend the knowledge and skills acquired at the undergraduate level (Altbach et al., 2009; OECD, 2019). At this stage, students are expected to engage in independent learning, critical thinking, advanced academic inquiry, and research in order to deepen disciplinary understanding and develop specialised expertise (OECD, 2021; Tight, 2020).

Postgraduate education also promotes the development of analytical ability, scholarly competence, professional skills, and problem-solving capacity required for leadership in academic and professional settings (Tight, 2020). In addition, postgraduate education serves as a bridge between formal education and professional practice by preparing graduates to contribute meaningfully to social, scientific, and economic development (Marginson, 2016).

Postgraduate education encompasses a range of qualifications including master's degrees, doctoral degrees (PhDs), professional doctorates, and postgraduate diplomas and certificates. By building on the fundamental information gained

throughout undergraduate education, these programs enable students to continue their study in specific fields (Postgrad.com, 2024). In order to improve their discipline, knowledge and creativity, students are expected to engage in independent study, critical analysis, and advanced research. According to the OECD (2022), the average percentage of 25 to 34-year-olds with a postsecondary degree rose from 27% in 2000 to 48% in 2021 across OECD nations, making postsecondary education the most prevalent level of education among young adults.

Postgraduate teaching (PGT) courses and postgraduate research (PGR) courses are the two primary types of postgraduate education. The most popular type of postgraduate education is a master's degree, which can be earned through taught courses, research, or a mix of the two. While Master of Philosophy (MPhil) and Master of Research (MRes) degrees are research-focused programs, Master of Arts (MA) and Master of Science (MSc) courses are often taught programs (Hot Courses Abroad, 2019). The Master of Business Administration (MBA), which is especially well-liked in the business sector, normally requires one to two years of full-time study for coursework and research programs.

Three different global approaches to master's education are identified by the OECD (2025). The first is the integrated master's, which is typical in disciplines like engineering and the natural sciences and allows students to move smoothly from the bachelor's to the master's level without interruption. The second method, which is popular in OECD nations and is in line with the Bologna Process, entails students earning a bachelor's degree before finishing a master's degree over the course of one to two years, preparing graduates for employment in both professional practice and research. In the third strategy, which views master's degrees as lifelong learning, students pursue postgraduate education after obtaining job experience. This is frequently done through flexible formats including online or part-time programs, which are common in Executive MBA programs (OECD, 2025).

Global postgraduate education growth is a reflection of interrelated trends in higher education and employment. More than 236 million students were enrolled in higher education globally by 2020, a 63.5% increase from 2000 levels, according to a UNESCO report prepared for the 2009 World Conference on Higher Education (Altbach, Reisberg & Rumbley, 2009). According to the OECD (2022), women now

make up the vast majority of young adults with bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees, making up 57% of those aged 25 to 34 compared to 43% of their male counterparts. This indicates that women's tertiary attainment has increased particularly sharply.

Scholarly interest in mental health issues among postgraduate students, especially PhD candidates, has grown. PhD students have higher rates of psychological distress, anxiety, and depression than the general population, according to several studies. About one-third of PhD students in Flanders, Belgium, were at risk of having or developing common psychiatric disorders like depression, according to a widely cited 2017 study by Levecque and colleagues published in Research Policy. Of those surveyed, 51% reported at least two symptoms of poor mental health, and 32% reported at least four symptoms (Levecque et al., 2017).

Beyond mental health, postgraduate students deal with a variety of interrelated issues. Due to the wide variations in funding options among fields, institutions, and geographical locations, financial pressure is a major obstacle. Many doctoral schools provide stipends or scholarships, but these sometimes fall short of covering living expenses, especially in pricey urban areas, forcing students to work part-time jobs or incur debt. Difficulty juggling conflicting work and family obligations was found to be the biggest predictor of having mental health issues; high job expectations and little job control were also linked to more symptoms.

With few permanent jobs and a heavy reliance on temporary contracts, the academic labor market has grown more unstable, raising concerns about career viability outside of academia. A systematic review found that the impostor phenomenon, which is defined as worrying about deceiving others about one's abilities, was positively correlated with student sadness and was positively predicted by feelings of isolation from instructors and fellow graduate students. PhD students from underrepresented groups frequently endure additional pressures from biases and low faculty representation, while international students face increased stress due to visa constraints, language obstacles, and cultural changes.

Institutions are putting in place extensive support systems as knowledge of these issues grows. By providing free in-person or virtual treatment, areas specifically

for graduate students, and organized support groups, universities are integrating mental health resources into campus culture. In order to better accommodate a variety of student conditions and career goals, educational institutions are now investigating flexible pathways such as part-time study alternatives, medical leaves of absence, and alternate job preparation.

In research and innovation ecosystems, postgraduate education plays vital roles. Scientific publications, patent applications, and technical advancements are greatly influenced by doctorate students and postdoctoral researchers, who make up a sizable section of the research workforce in universities and research organizations. Climate change, public health emergencies, technology disruption, and social injustice are just a few of the complex societal issues that are often the subject of postgraduate study, producing information with immediate policy and useful implications. Additionally, postgraduate training ensures the sustained viability and renewal of scholarly communities by fostering the next generation of academic professors and research leaders.

Postgraduate education ultimately represents a critical investment in human capital, knowledge generation, and societal advancement. By cultivating advanced expertise, critical thinking, and innovative problem-solving capabilities, postgraduate programs prepare individuals to assume leadership roles across academic, professional, and civic domains. The contributions of postgraduate-educated individuals extend across scientific discovery, technological innovation, policy development, cultural production, and social transformation.

As global higher education continues to evolve in response to technological, economic, and social changes, postgraduate education remains central to developing the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for navigating an increasingly complex and interconnected world, while institutions must continue addressing the structural and support challenges that affect student wellbeing and success.

SELF-EFFICACY

Albert Bandura coined the term "self-efficacy" in 1977 to describe a person's confidence in their ability to plan and carry out the necessary steps to accomplish particular objectives. According to Bandura (1977), self-efficacy is a task- and

situation-specific belief in one's ability to carry out actions that result in desired results rather than a universal feature. This implies that disparities in efficacy beliefs may cause two people with similar talents to perform differently. According to Bandura (1977), self-efficacy affects people's thoughts, feelings, and actions, influencing their decisions, level of effort, and emotional reactions to challenges.

Self-efficacy is formed by four main sources: mastery experiences, which are the most potent since they boost confidence; vicarious experiences, which are derived from watching capable people; verbal persuasion, such as peer or teacher encouragement; and physiological and affective states, such as how people interpret stress, worry, or exhaustion (Bandura, 1977; Maddux, 2009). Maddux (2009) went on to say that self-efficacy is a belief in one's capacity to apply these skills successfully when needed, rather than just an evaluation of skill.

Self-efficacy plays a critical role in shaping people’s choices, motivation, persistence, and problem-solving behavior across various domains. For instance, Schunk (1989) found that students with higher academic self-efficacy are more likely to use effective learning strategies, persist longer on academic tasks, and achieve higher performance. Similarly, Zimmerman (1986) showed that self-efficacy strongly predicts self-regulated learning behaviors and academic persistence. High self-efficacy enhances cognitive resources, increases goal commitment, and promotes resilience during challenges.

Empirical evidence demonstrates that individuals with strong efficacy beliefs exert greater effort, recover more rapidly from setbacks, and view difficult tasks as challenges rather than threats (Bandura, 1997). A meta-analytic cross-lagged panel study by Talsma et al. (2018) confirms a reciprocal relationship: high self-efficacy improves performance, and improved performance further strengthens self-efficacy over time.

Conversely, low self-efficacy is associated with avoidance behaviors, heightened anxiety, reduced effort, and vulnerability to stress. Bandura (1997) and later Artino (2012) reported that people with weak efficacy beliefs often focus on personal deficiencies, anticipate failure, and disengage quickly when challenged. This creates a negative cycle of reduced motivation and poor performance.

Low self-efficacy can also amplify negative emotional responses, making individuals more susceptible to stress or learned helplessness. López-Garrido (2019) highlighted that self-efficacy is domain-specific, meaning individuals may feel competent in one area (e.g., problem solving) yet lack confidence in another (e.g., public speaking). This domain-specific nature explains why individuals often perform inconsistently across different life contexts despite having strong abilities.

Additionally, self-efficacy is crucial for emotional wellbeing, behavior modification, and health. Higher self-efficacy is associated with improved adherence to medical treatments, better management of chronic illnesses, and healthier lifestyles, according to research in health psychology (Schwarzer & Renner, 2000). High self-efficacy is associated with better disease management, less discomfort, and an enhanced quality of life in people with chronic illness, according to studies. Furthermore, self-efficacy affects clinical skill performance, learning motivation, and perseverance in challenging situations, according to Artino (2012) and other medical education experts.

Developing self-efficacy has important effects on schooling, mental health, and personal growth. According to Bandura (1997), developing strong efficacy beliefs promotes adaptive coping, tenacity, and goal-directed behavior. This assertion is supported by recent empirical research. Academic self-efficacy exhibits moderate to significant relationships with performance, mediated by elements like effort regulation and deep learning techniques, according to a systematic review by Honicke and Broadbent (2016).

Meng et al. (2023) showed that academic engagement and performance are highly predicted by university students' academic self-efficacy. These results highlight the flexibility and strength of self-efficacy, which makes it a crucial target for interventions meant to enhance motivation, resilience, and long-term success. Increasing self-efficacy can help people overcome obstacles, persevere, see setbacks as teaching moments, and eventually accomplish their academic, professional, and personal objectives.

Studies demonstrate that targeted curricular experiences that build domain-specific confidence (for example, scholarly-concentration programs or research

training) produce measurable increases in students' research self-efficacy and are associated with greater satisfaction and future research intentions among medical students (DiBiase et al., 2020). Adolescent samples indicate that self-efficacy mediates the relationship between positive dispositions (optimism) and academic achievement, suggesting self-efficacy is the psychological mechanism through which hopeful outlooks translate into performance gains (Usán, Salavera, & Quílez-Robres, 2022). These findings reinforce that self-efficacy is not merely correlational with achievement but functions as a practical lever that educational programs can target to improve outcomes.

Context and instructional design shape self-efficacy substantially, especially in technology-mediated learning. Research on online learning has shown that online learning self-efficacy mediates the relationship between interaction and engagement: students who feel confident in their ability to learn online experience more positive academic emotions and greater engagement, which predict better learning outcomes (Wang et al., 2022). Broader literature reviews confirm that academic self-efficacy positively impacts online and blended learning outcomes, although its effect can be moderated by factors such as course design, students' digital skills, and interaction quality (Yokoyama, 2024). This implies that instructional practices are not just individual traits; it shapes efficacy beliefs and thereby academic success in remote or blended settings.

Intervention and meta-analytic evidence points to practical pathways for strengthening self-efficacy. Integrative reviews of higher-education interventions find that structured programs (8–12 weeks) combining psychoeducation, mastery tasks, reflective homework, and positive-mental-health strategies can increase general self-efficacy in college students (Gueroni et al., 2023). Related meta-analytic work on self-regulated-learning interventions and instructional supports shows moderate-to-large effects on self-regulated learning and upstream benefits for self-efficacy and achievement, indicating that teaching practices which scaffold mastery and reflection reliably raise students' confidence and performance (Xu, 2023). Taken together, these data show self-efficacy is both a measurable predictor and a practical target for educational design, across face-to-face, blended, and fully online environments.

ACADEMIC RESILIENCE

Academic resilience is a student's ability to "bounce back" and succeed in school despite facing tough times, like family problems, stress, or learning challenges, by staying motivated, managing emotions, and using support to overcome obstacles instead of giving up. The ability of students to sustain or regain positive academic performance, motivation, engagement, and psychological well-being in the face of significant adversity, such as financial hardship, academic failure, stress, disappointment, or external life challenges is referred to as academic resilience. Academic resilience is described as a multifaceted, process-based construct Cassidy (2016). Rather than merely assessing a student's success or failure, the focus is on how a student adjusts cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally when faced with academic challenges.

It is becoming more widely acknowledged that academic resilience is a dynamic, behavioral, and motivational process that allows students to maintain engagement, performance, and well-being in the face of personal or academic challenges. Resilience is a process that improves self-regulation, motivation, and consistent academic behavior over time rather than only acting as a buffer against stress.

To operationalize this idea, Cassidy (2016) created the Academic Resilience Scale (ARS-30), a 30-item test. Instead than focusing only on academic results, the ARS-30 assesses students' adaptive reactions to academic adversity, such as tenacity, help-seeking, emotional management, and introspection. The ARS-30 showed strong concept validity and internal reliability in the first validation research, demonstrating that academic resilience may be accurately assessed across behavioral and cognitive-affective dimensions.

Additionally, K. Radhamani & D. Kalaivani (2021) compiled data from multiple empirical studies conducted worldwide in their thorough literature review, highlighting the fact that academic resilience helps students manage academic pressure, anxiety, setbacks, and stress and thereby lowering the likelihood of subpar performance or dropout. Their analysis emphasizes that academic resilience is a

capacity that can be fostered, developed, and supported by institutional, social, and environmental factors rather than just an inherent attribute.

Following Cassidy's original research, empirical investigations have examined the relationship between academic resilience and other psychological constructs and environmental supports, producing findings in line with the theoretical model, a 2024 study that was published in the Journal of Happiness Studies employed a weekly diary design to show that students' self-regulation practices, which in turn predicted their weekly academic achievement, were positively correlated with their weekly resilience.

Crucially, this indirect benefit was more pronounced among students who scored highly on both grit and perceived social support. This highlights how the protective effect of resilience is amplified by the combination of internal characteristics like persistence and "grit" and external or contextual resources like social support.

In a similar vein, a 2024 Journal of Professional Nursing research that looked at pre-licensure nursing students discovered that academic self-efficacy was positively correlated with improved academic and clinical performance, and resilience significantly predicted academic self-efficacy. This implies that resilience promotes self-belief in academic/clinical competence as well as coping with adversity, which may mediate health-related educational results. Furthermore, social support, self-concept, and resilience all work together to protect adolescents from school maladjustment. This suggests that academic resilience supports emotional well-being, school adjustment, and a lower risk of academic distress in stressful situations.

A systematic review on "Measurement and Increase of Academic Resilience" emphasizes that academic resilience is both malleable and measurable (using the ARS-30 and related instruments); that is, interventions like social-emotional learning, mentoring, guided counseling, and supportive academic environments can improve resilience.

In a four-week diary study, Li, Wang, Siu, and Yu (2024) showed that weekly increases in academic resilience were followed by quantifiable improvements in self-regulation behaviors, such as goal monitoring, effort regulation, and planning, which

subsequently predicted weekly academic performance. Their results demonstrate that resilience affects academic performance through self-regulatory behaviors that children engage in when faced with hardship rather than directly. This study also showed that the positive effect of resilience was significantly stronger among students with high grit and strong perceived social support, indicating that resilience operates synergistically with personal perseverance and social relationships.

Additionally, there is growing evidence that academic resilience is associated with emotional functioning and burnout prevention. Agyapong et al. (2025) discovered that resilience acted as a mediating element in the indirect relationship between positive psychological traits including adaptability, optimism, and emotional stability and reduced levels of academic burnout in a study of undergraduate students. During demanding academic times, students with greater resilience reported less signs of fatigue and emotional dysregulation. This shows that resilience helps students stay mentally stable in high-pressure situations by protecting their emotions in addition to improving grades.

Research in multicultural contexts has also added depth to resilience theory. In a Ghanaian student sample, Quarshie and Essuman (2025) found that academic resilience strongly predicted academic well-being, but this relationship was mediated by grit and intrinsic motivation. Students who were resilient also tended to maintain stronger internal motivation and long-term effort, which improved their overall academic satisfaction and emotional well-being. This suggests that resilience fosters internal motivational states that support both academic success and psychological flourishing.

Resilience theory has also been enhanced by research conducted in multicultural settings. Quarshie and Essuman (2025) discovered that academic resilience significantly predicted academic well-being in a sample of Ghanaian students; however, grit and intrinsic motivation acted as a mediating factor in this connection. Additionally, resilient students tended to sustain higher levels of internal motivation and sustained effort, which enhanced their general academic satisfaction and emotional health. This implies that resilience creates internal motivating states that promote psychological well-being and academic achievement.

According to González-Pérez, Fidalgo, and García-Moreira (2022), self-efficacy and grit are particularly consistent interests that predict academic success throughout the semester among online university students. These findings reinforce that personal agency, perseverance, and sustained motivation remain critical even in flexible or remote learning environments, where students must manage learning more independently.

Academic accomplishment is positively correlated with resilience-related protective variables, such as coping skills, optimism, teacher support, and mastery motivation, according to a review by Özdemir and Kavak (2023). It offers compelling empirical evidence that resilience accurately forecasts academic performance in a variety of demographics, educational levels, and cultural contexts. stress that academic resilience is a multifaceted concept that continuously improves student success and includes individual characteristics, environmental resources, and adaptive mechanisms.

The present study entitled "A Correlational Study on the Relationship Between Self-Efficacy and Academic Resilience Among Postgraduate Students" was conducted to examine the relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience among postgraduate students and to investigate gender differences in these variables. The study was based on the assumption that students who possess greater confidence in their abilities are more likely to cope effectively with academic challenges and setbacks.

A descriptive survey method was adopted for the study. The sample consisted of 214 postgraduate students from Jammu district selected through random sampling. Data were collected using the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE) developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995) and the Academic Resilience Scale (ARS-30) developed by Cassidy (2016). The collected data were analysed using Mean, Standard Deviation, Pearson's Product Moment Correlation, and Independent Samples t-test. The descriptive analysis revealed that postgraduate students reported a moderately high level of self-efficacy with a mean score of 30.57 and a standard deviation of 4.963.

The mean score of academic resilience was 112.76 with a standard deviation of 17.094, indicating a good level of resilience among the participants. To examine the relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience, Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was applied. The analysis revealed a significant positive correlation ($r = .508$, $p < .01$) between self-efficacy and academic resilience. This finding indicates that students who possess higher confidence in their abilities tend to demonstrate greater resilience in dealing with academic challenges. Therefore, as self-efficacy increases, academic resilience also tends to increase. The Independent Samples t-test was used to compare male and female postgraduate students on self-efficacy and academic resilience.

For self-efficacy, female students obtained a mean score of 30.86 (SD = 4.93), whereas male students obtained a mean score of 30.29 (SD = 5.01). The obtained t-value was 0.836 with a p-value of .404, which was greater than .05. Therefore, there was no significant difference in self-efficacy between male and female postgraduate students. For academic resilience, female students obtained a mean score of 112.87 (SD = 16.95), whereas male students obtained a mean score of 112.64 (SD = 17.28). The obtained t-value was 0.098 with a p-value of .922, which was greater than .05. Therefore, there was no significant difference in academic resilience between male and female postgraduate students. The study concluded that postgraduate students generally possess positive levels of both self-efficacy and academic resilience.

A significant positive relationship exists between these two variables, suggesting that students who believe in their capabilities are more likely to cope effectively with academic difficulties and remain resilient. Furthermore, the findings revealed that male and female postgraduate students do not differ significantly in either self-efficacy or academic resilience. Thus, self-efficacy may be considered an important psychological factor contributing to academic resilience among postgraduate students.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE

High academic standards, substantial research duties, competitive pressure, and a variety of psychosocial stressors that test students' perseverance and wellbeing are characteristics of postgraduate education. Postgraduate students are held to higher

standards for independent research, more accountability for academic results, and more autonomy than undergraduate students. In addition to strong psychological resources, such as academic resilience and self-efficacy, these demands call for advanced cognitive ability.

Despite the importance of these psychological concepts, little empirical research has looked at how they interact to affect students' motivation, coping skills, performance, and general academic adjustment, particularly in the Indian and South Asian postgraduate environment. This disparity highlights the necessity for methodical studies that investigate how these two constructs relate to postgraduate students.

Students' engagement, perseverance, and academic success are significantly influenced by self-efficacy, which is described as people's confidence in their capacity to do tasks successfully. Highly difficult responsibilities like preparing a thesis, making methodological decisions, communicating academically, and dealing with publication-related demands are common for postgraduate students. Increased anxiety, decreased effort, avoidance behaviors, and a higher chance of academic burnout or dropout are all possible outcomes of low self-efficacy. Higher self-efficacy individuals, on the other hand, are more likely to persevere, successfully manage their learning, bounce back fast from setbacks, and retain confidence amid challenging academic times. Therefore, initiatives to improve motivation, academic confidence, and performance can be informed by an understanding of postgraduate students' levels of self-efficacy.

In a similar vein, academic resilience, the ability to adjust, bounce back, or flourish in the face of academic hardship is a crucial psychological tool for overcoming postgraduate obstacles. Postgraduate students are more likely to experience psychological distress due to financial strain, research failures, institutional demands, publication rejections, and uncertain career prospects. Students that possess academic resilience are better able to handle academic losses, keep up their work over protracted times of academic uncertainty, and retain emotional stability. Resilience may serve as a buffer against stress, burnout, and demotivation, according to research showing resilient postgraduate students exhibit higher levels of adaptation, perseverance, and academic well-being.

Despite the fact that both dimensions have an independent impact on academic success, little is known about how they work together, particularly in postgraduate populations. According to theoretical and empirical data, self-efficacy may boost resilience by boosting confidence in the face of difficulties, while resilience may support self-efficacy by facilitating effective coping mechanisms. Therefore, studying the relationship between academic resilience and self-efficacy is essential to comprehending the psychological processes that influence postgraduate students' capacity to control stress, sustain academic momentum, and accomplish long-term objectives.

Additionally, postgraduate students worldwide are experiencing an increase in mental health issues; recent studies have shown high levels of stress, anxiety, sadness, and imposter syndrome. Supervisory relationships, academic competition, financial insecurity, and career ambiguity frequently exacerbate these problems. Increasing resilience and self-efficacy may be economical psychological buffers that promote wellbeing and academic performance. However, institutions are unable to create focused interventions to improve these constructs in the absence of empirical data.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The present study is entitled as A Correlation Study on the Relationship Between Self-Efficacy and Academic Resilience Among Postgraduate Students.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION

SELF-EFFICACY: Self-efficacy in the current study is the students' general confidence in their capacity to effectively manage academic assignments, overcome obstacles, and handle stressful situations associated with postgraduate education.

ACADEMIC RESILIENCE: The ability of the students to effectively adapt, persist, and maintain motivation, emotional regulation, and constructive academic behaviors when faced with academic challenges, stress, or setbacks.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the research project summarizes what is to be achieved by the study. In view of the available literature and importance of the topic. The following objectives were set:-

1. To examine the relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience among postgraduate students.

2. To assess the gender difference in academic resilience among postgraduate students.

3. To compare self-efficacy between male and female postgraduate students.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There is a significant and positive relationship between self efficacy and academic resilience among postgraduate students.

2. There is no significant difference in the academic resilience between males and females.

3. There is no significant difference in the self-efficacy between males and females.

POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The population for the present study consists of all post graduate students studying in the jammu district.

SAMPLE FOR THE STUDY

Sample is the soul of scientific study. A good sample minimises the error of estimations is less time consuming, and economical in terms of time and money. The size of the sample varies from study to study, methods and nature of the population. A sample is a smaller, manageable group of individuals or items selected from a larger population to study and draw conclusions about the entire group In the present study,

keeping in view the limitation of time the researcher has to be content within the limited samples. For this study data will be collected from 150 postgraduate students.

TOOLS USED

General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE) by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995), it is a 10 item psychometric instrument designed to assess an individual's optimistic self-belief in their ability to cope with a wide range of demands in life. It is a 4-point likert scale typically: 1 = Not at all true, 2 = Hardly true, 3 = Moderately true, 4 = Exactly true. Response to all 10 items are summed to produce a final composite score ranging from 10 to 40.

Academic Resilience Scale (ARS-30) by Cassidy (2016), it is a 30 item self-report questionnaire to measure how university students manage academic adversity, challenges and setbacks. 30 items rated on a 5-point likert scale typically: 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neutral, 4 = disagree, 5 = strongly disagree. Total score range from 30 to 150.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The first objective of the study was to examine the relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience among postgraduate students. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience ($r = 0.508$, $p < 0.01$). This indicates that postgraduate students with higher levels of self-efficacy tend to possess higher academic resilience. The obtained correlation value shows a moderate positive relationship between the two variables. Therefore, the first hypothesis stating that there is a significant positive relationship between self-efficacy and academic resilience among postgraduate students was accepted.

The second objective of the study was to assess the gender difference in academic resilience among postgraduate students. An independent sample t-test was used for comparison. Female students obtained a mean score of 112.87, while male students obtained a mean score of 112.64. The obtained t-value was 0.098 with a p-value of 0.922, which was greater than the level of significance (0.05). This indicates that there was no statistically significant difference in academic resilience between

male and female postgraduate students. Hence, the second hypothesis stating that there is no significant gender difference in academic resilience was accepted.

The third objective of the study was to compare self-efficacy between male and female postgraduate students. The independent sample t-test results showed that female students obtained a mean score of 30.86, whereas male students obtained a mean score of 30.29. The obtained t-value was 0.836 with a p-value of 0.404, which was greater than 0.05. Therefore, no statistically significant gender difference was found in self-efficacy among postgraduate students. Thus, the third hypothesis stating that there is no significant gender difference in self-efficacy was accepted.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future studies may include a larger sample size to improve the generalizability of the findings.

- Similar studies can be conducted in different districts, states, and educational settings for broader comparison.
- Future researchers may include undergraduate students, doctoral scholars, and students from professional courses for comparative analysis.
- Additional psychological variables such as stress, anxiety, motivation, self-esteem, coping strategies, and social support can be studied along with self-efficacy and academic resilience.
- Longitudinal studies may be conducted to examine changes in self-efficacy and academic resilience over time.
- Qualitative or mixed-method research designs can be used to gain deeper understanding of students' experiences and coping mechanisms.
- Future research may examine the impact of interventions, counselling programs, and mentorship on improving self-efficacy and academic resilience among students.
- Studies can also explore the role of family environment, supervisor support, and academic performance in influencing self-efficacy and academic resilience.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX-A

General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE)

About: This scale is a self-report measure of self-efficacy.

Items: 10

Reliability: Internal reliability for GSE = Cronbach's alphas between .76 and .90

Validity: The General Self-Efficacy Scale is correlated to emotion, optimism, work satisfaction. Negative coefficients were found for depression, stress, health complaints, burnout, and anxiety.

Scoring:

	Not at all true	Hardly true	Moderately true	Exactly true
All Questions	1	2	3	4

The total score is calculated by finding the sum of all items. For the GSE, the total score ranges between 10 and 40, with a higher score indicating more self-efficacy.

References: Schwarzer, R., & Jerusalem, M. (1995). Generalized Self-Efficacy scale. In J. Weinman, S. Wright, & M. Johnston, Measures in health psychology: A user's portfolio. Causal and control beliefs (pp. 35-37). Windsor, UK: NFER-NELSON.

GENERAL SELF-EFFICACY SCALE (GSE)

Items	Not at all true	Hardly true	Moderately true	Exactly true
1. I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough				
2. If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want.				
3. It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.				
4. I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events.				
5. Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations.				
6. I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort.				
7. I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities.				

8. When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.				
9. If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution				
10. I can usually handle whatever comes my way.				

APPENDIX-B

Academic Resilience Scale (ARS-30)

Please read the paragraph in the box below and do your best to imagine that you are in the situation being described:

Instruction: You have received your mark for a recent assignment and it is a 'fail'. The marks for two other recent assignments were also poorer than you would want as you are aiming to get as good a degree as you can because you have clear career goals in mind and don't want to disappoint your family. The feedback from the tutor for the assignment is quite critical, including reference to 'lack of understanding' and 'poor writing and expression', but it also includes ways that the work could be improved. Similar comments were made by the tutors who marked your other two assignments.

If you were in the situation described above how do you think you would react?

Read each of the statements below and tick (✓) the box between 1 (strongly agree) and 5 (strongly disagree) that best reflects how much you think each statement describes how you personally would react.

Please make sure that you give a response to ALL the statements and try to be as sincere and precise as possible in your answers.

ACADEMIC RESILIENCE SCALE (ARS-30)

Items	Strongly Agree (1)	Agree (2)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
1. I would not accept the tutors' feedback					

2. I would use the feedback to improve my work					
3. I would just give up					
4. I would use the situation to motivate myself					
5. I would change my career plans					
6. I would probably get annoyed					
7. I would begin to think my chances of success at university were poor					
8. I would see the situation as a challenge					
9. I would do my best to stop thinking negative thoughts					
10. I would see the situation as temporary					
11. I would work harder					
12. I would probably get depressed					
13. I would try to think of new solutions					

14. I would be very disappointed					
15. I would blame the tutor					
16. I would keep trying					
17. I would not change my long-term goals and ambitions					
18. I would use my past successes to help motivate myself					
19. I would begin to think my chances of getting the job I want were poor					
20. I would start to monitor and evaluate my achievements and effort					
21. I would seek help from my tutors					
22. I would give myself encouragement					
23. I would stop myself from panicking					
24. I would try different ways to study					
25. I would set my own goals for achievement					

26. I would seek encouragement from my family and friends					
27. I would try to think more about my strengths and weaknesses to help me work better					
28. I would feel like everything was ruined and was going wrong					
29. I would start to self-impose rewards and punishments depending on my performance					
30. I would look forward to showing that I can improve my grades					

Scoring Key

Step One. The following items are reverse-scored, so a score of 5 becomes 1, 2 becomes 4, and so on: 2, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30.

Step Two. A total score is achieved by summing scores for all 30 items (this must be carried out after completing reverse-scoring described in step one).

Step Three. Factor (dimension/subscale) scores are achieved by summing item scores as follows (this must be carried out after reverse-scoring described in step one has been completed):

Factor 1 (Perseverance): 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16, 17, 30.

Factor 2 (Reflecting and adaptive help-seeking): 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29.

Factor 3 (Negative affect and emotional response): 6, 7, 12, 14, 19, 23, 28.

CHAPTER-I

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