

## Academic Engagement and its Relationship with Academic Self-Handicapping In light of Some Variables

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### Abstract

The aim of this study was to explore the relationship between academic engagement and academic self-handicapping in light of some variables. To achieve the objectives of the study, a sample of (410) male and female students from Al-Qasemi College in Baqa Al-Gharbiya was selected using the available sampling method, and the Academic Self-Handicapping Scale and the Academic Engagement Scale were applied to them. The results showed that the level of academic engagement was middle. Furthermore, the results indicated that there were no statistically significant differences in academic engagement based on gender and specialization. The results also showed a statistically significant negative correlation between academic self-handicapping and academic engagement.

**Keywords:** : Academic self-handicapping, academic engagement, some variables

## الاندماج الأكاديمي وعلاقته بالإعاقة الذاتية الأكاديمية في ضوء بعض المتغيرات

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### المخلص

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى التعرف على العلاقة بين الاندماج الأكاديمي والإعاقة الذاتية الأكاديمية في ضوء بعض المتغيرات. ولتحقيق أهداف الدراسة تم اختيار عينة مكونة من (410) طلاب وطالبات من الكلية القاسمي في باقة الغربية باستخدام طريقة العينة المتاحة، وتم تطبيق مقياس الإعاقة الذاتية الأكاديمية ومقياس الاندماج الأكاديمي لهم. وأظهرت النتائج أن مستوى الاندماج الأكاديمي كان متوسطاً. كما أشارت النتائج إلى عدم وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية في الاندماج الأكاديمي حسب الجنس والتخصص، بينما أظهرت النتائج وجود علاقة ارتباطية سلبية ذات دلالة إحصائية بين الإعاقة الذاتية الأكاديمية والاندمج الأكاديمي.

**كلمات مفتاحية:** الإعاقة الذاتية الأكاديمية، المشاركة الأكاديمية، بعض المتغيرات.

## Introduction

It is the attitude of the student that plays the most important role in determining the outcome of any endeavor (Durak & Saritepeci, 2017). Therefore, it is essential to take into account the factors that affect students' motivation to learn. According to Zhao (2015), a number of factors—including input, presentation, resources, the classroom setting, students, and teachers—contribute to the way in which students approach learning. Further, Wilinkiewicz-Górniak (2019) states that when using VTS, English language instructors can make use of any resources that feature visuals, such as textbooks or worksheets. Images, maps, graphs, posters, cartoons, and other works of art are some examples. This can be done, for instance, with the help of a movie poster that features numerous questions and difficult tasks.

Academic engagement is described as a process of psychological, social, emotional, and academic investment process by students in the learning process. They try hard to learn what the academic institution of a school, college or university has to offer. In this process, students take pride not only in obtaining the official indicators of success that are officially listed under the so-called "grades", but in understanding, integrating, and absorbing the material, and achieving lifelong learning. Academic engagement is an important indicator of the success of teaching within the different academic stages, and a high value for the reform that takes place in the learning process (Newmann, 1992 ; Atoum & Shalaefeh, 2018).

Academic engagement can be defined as an indicator through which the extent of compatibility between the student with other students, teachers, the elements of the learning environment, the level of interest in the subject matter, relevant behaviors and attitudes, and the increase in the student's work effort inside and outside the school, including the hours spent on homework, household chores, meeting deadlines, not skipping lessons, and participating in various academic activities and tasks (Chapman, 2003). Fredricks et al., (2004) defines it as a flexible, evolving, and multidimensional structure consisting of three main dimensions: behavioral, cognitive, and emotional. It can also be defined as the process of students' meaningful and productive involvement in all dimensions of the learning environment, including students' participation in classroom management, and the school and university climate (Fletcher, 2005). Taylor and Parsons (2011) define it as the process of integrating the student into extracurricular activities and events that take place within the university or school campus, and which are believed benefits to educational benefits to the classroom activities and events, such as: students become more focus on systematic studies of the various courses, it also involves planning, management, and completion of university education.

Academic engagement is affected positively or negatively by many psychological, cognitive, and emotional factors, like academic self-handicapping. When academic self-handicapping occurs, the student deliberately sets himself an obstacle that prevents the achievement of his academic goals and undermines his goals and value system, which reflects negatively on his university performance and the extent to which he achieves the learning outcomes (Atoum and Abo Hilal, 2017). For example, conscious academic self-handicapping occurs when a student makes a decision to help his parents with housework so that he does not study for an exam, while unconscious academic self-handicapping occurs when a student uses several strategies that undermine an important goal for him, such as graduating from university, or A personal value, such as self-respect, that he did not realize from the start (Wignall, 2020).

Brooks et al., (2013) confirmed that academic engagement goes beyond surface learning, such as: memorizing the content, and fulfilling the requirements to achieve a degree of success

in the training course or academic task. Rather, the matter goes beyond that to attracting students to deep thinking activities, such as: analyzing and understanding concepts, and eliciting meaning. Academic engagement also includes social interaction with peers and the teacher, like sharing experiences, knowledge, opinions, and support.

One of the requirements for academic engagement is emphasized by Fletcher (2005), such as That teachers and faculty members strive to create conditions that enhance academic engagement, introducing students to the nature of academic engagement, and its fields, and how to achieve it and increase its levels, defining clear formulation of learning standards with feedback, acknowledging the voice of students, and increasing equality between different generations by maintaining partnerships between youth and adults throughout the learning environment.

One of the models that talked about academic engagement is the Finn model, where Finn (1989) identified two basic components of academic engagement, the behavioral engagement that is reflected in the classroom and the various school activities. Such as: doing homework and answering teachers' questions, Emotional engagement, which means a sense of belonging to the school, and appreciating the results related to the learning process.

While Schaufeli et al., (2002) showed three dimensions of academic engagement: Vigor: which indicates perseverance, flexibility, and effort in the face of difficulties. Absorption: which makes the learner engaged in learning tasks and activities. Dedication: which provides inspiration, pride, and enthusiasm in academic learning.

The model of Jimerson et al. (2003) confirmed the existence of three components of academic engagement: Affective engagement: which relates to feelings about educational institutions, teachers, and peers, for example, a positive sense of peers. Behavioral engagement: This includes students' observed performance and various factions within the academic setting, for example, task completion, grade point average, and extracurricular activities, such as sports. Cognitive engagement: It includes students' beliefs and perceptions of self, academic institutions, teachers, and peers.

Academic self- handicapping is a cognitive strategy through which individuals avoid effort within a particular academic task, in the hope of preventing potential failure and trying not to harm oneself. The concept was first coined by Edward Jones and Steven Berglas who saw academic self-handicapping to maintain self-esteem, but it can also be used for self-enhancement and managing the impressions of others. This preservation or increase in self-esteem is due to changes in the causal traits, or the traits of success and failure provided by the academic self- handicapping (Kolditz & Arkin, 1982 ; Atoum, et al. 2019).

Situational strategies for academic self- handicapping occur in situations in which certain factors or characteristics are present, such as probability of failing, or the difficulty of a task, and it occurs in situations in which the outcome is uncertain, and it used to reduce uncertainty regarding one's abilities (Snyder & Smith, 1982).

In the academic field, academic self- handicapping allows students to express their failures, but with a degree of internalization of inner success. An example of this is that a student who spends the night before an important exam at parties instead of studying, maybe he will fail the exam and appear helpless, then he offers plausible explanations, such as saying that he was tired and had headaches. But if he succeeds in the task, this achievement reinforces the fact that he succeeded despite the actual presence of disability (Feick & Rhodewalt, 1997).

It can be said that all definitions of academic self-handicapping agreed on a unifying element, which is that it involves creating barriers to successful performance in tasks that the individual considers important (Covington, 1992; Rhodewalt, 1994; Tice, 1991). One of these definitions by Jones and Berglas (1978) is that academic self-handicapping is the obstacles created or claimed by the student in anticipation of the failure of the performance associated with an academic task. It is also defined as the actions that an individual takes that allow him to avoid effort or responsibility for potential failures that might harm his self-esteem (Schwinger et al., 2014). It can also be defined as a frequently used strategy to regulate self-esteem elicited by the fear of failure in an academic task (Torok et al., 2018).

Academic self-handicapping is associated with a set of variables specific to the student's academic environment. It is probabilistically negatively associated with academic achievement, academic engagement, and self-esteem, and probabilistically positively with non-adaptive academic perfectionism, academic pessimism, academic boredom, and low self-esteem (Urduan & Midgley, 2001).

Academic self-handicapping is a proactive strategy used by the student to maintain his self-esteem, the appreciation of others for him, and the fear of failure. Therefore, considered his academic engagement rate is low, so he does not submit to any academic engagement whose results are unsatisfactory. On the other hand, this self-strategy increases the student's absent on classroom, feeling uncomfortable, anxious, upset, academic boredom, and low student achievement and learning outcomes (Schwinger et al., 2022).

Covington (1992) points out some characteristics of individuals with high academic self-handicapping. They constantly form negative beliefs about themselves, even if they succeed in manipulating other people's perceptions, these beliefs cause students to have low self-esteem, become lazy, insincere, Also, individuals who use self-handicapping strategies are affected by their motivation and levels of achievement. Academic self-handicapping results in decreased interest in achievement, increased negative emotions, failure, decreased expectations for future success, and decreased achievement.

Smith et al., (1983) confirmed that there are many forms of academic self-handicapping, including procrastination, not making enough effort to perform the academic task, increased levels of anxiety from exams, exaggerating claims of illness or physical fatigue, excessive drinking of alcohol, and drugs. The main reason behind hindering the academic self-handicapping is self-protection, maintaining high self-efficacy.

The Jones and Berglas model are one of the models that dealt with academic self-handicapping (Jones & Berglas, 1978). They emphasized the existence of two methods that people use academic self-handicapping: behavioral academic self-handicaps and claimed academic self-handicaps.

behavioral academic self-handicaps refer to the method students use to hold themselves back by making a task more difficult than it is, for fear of not completing the task successfully, so that if in fact they fail, they can simply blame the obstacles rather than themselves. Examples include alcohol consumption, choosing unattainable goals, and refusing to practice a specific task or technique, especially in sports and fine arts disciplines, or those that require behavioral and motor skills (Schwinger et al., 2022).

As for the claimed academic self-handicaps, it involves students making justifications for their potential failures, so that if they fail in the task, they provide personal excuses to justify their failure. Where the students only declare that there is an obstacle to the performance.

Examples of this type, claiming illness, death of a relative, helping others (Coudevylle et al., 2011).

Some studies have dealt with the level of academic engagement, as well as its relationship to academic self-handicapping. Cocorada (2011) conducted a study aimed at determining the relationship between academic self-handicapping and some variables related to the academic field, such as: motivation, academic outcome, self-esteem, and cognitive engagement. To achieve the objectives of the study, a sample of (232) male and female students was selected from several secondary schools in the Romanian province of Brasov, and the academic self-handicapping scale, the cognitive engagement scale, in addition to the rest of the other variables measures were applied to them. The results showed that there is a statistically significant negative relationship between academic self-handicapping and cognitive engagement, reaching (-0.53). The results also showed that adolescent males have a higher academic self-handicapping than females.

While Mwita (2014) conducted a study aimed at determining the relationship between academic self-handicapping and academic engagement. To achieve the objectives of the study, a sample of (790) male and female students was selected from the International Islamic University in Malaysia, academic self-handicapping scale and the academic engagement scale were applied to them. The results showed that there is a negative relationship between academic engagement and academic self-handicapping.

Casuso-Holgado et al., (2013) conducted a study aimed at revealing the relationship between academic engagement and academic achievement. To achieve the objectives of the study, a sample of (304) male and female students was selected at the University of Malaga, and the academic engagement scale was applied to them, while achievement was measured by means of the cumulative average (GPA). The results showed that the level of academic engagement was middle among students.

Al-Janadi and Ta'alb (2016) conducted a study aimed at revealing the perspective of the future time in the light of the academic engagement and academic achievement of a sample of female university students. Academic engagement scale was applied to them. The results showed that there were statistically significant differences in the study sample's responses on the academic engagement scale of the largest mean, which was for the humanity specialization.

Hasanvandi et al., 2017 conducted a study aimed at building a causal model for the relationship between academic self-handicap and a set of other variables, including academic engagement. To achieve the objectives of the study, a sample of (305) male and female students was selected in Iran, and the academic self-handicapping scale, the fear of negative evaluation scale, the acquired goal orientation scale, the avoidance goals scale, the attitudes scale, the feelings of academic achievement scale, and the engagement scale were applied to them. The results showed that there is a statistically significant negative relationship between academic self-handicap and academic engagement, reaching (-0.12).

Mahmoud (2017) conducted a study aimed at identifying the academic self-concept and the level of academic ambition and their relationship to academic engagement among a sample of university students. To achieve the objectives of the study, a sample of (150) male and female students was selected from Qassim University, and the academic ambition scale, the academic engagement scale, and the academic self-concept scale were applied to them. The results showed that there were no statistically significant differences in the study sample's responses on the academic engagement scale due to gender.



Momeni and Radmehr (2018) also conducted a study aimed at revealing the predictive ability of academic self-handicap and self-efficacy with academic engagement. To achieve the objectives of the study, a sample of (369) male and female students in medical specializations was selected at the Iranian University of Kermanshah, and the academic engagement scale, the self-efficacy scale, and the academic self-handicap scale were applied to them. The results showed that there is a statistically significant negative relationship between academic engagement and academic self-handicap. The results also showed that the academic self-handicapping variable explained 12% of the variance in academic engagement.

Delghandi et al., 2019 carried out a study aimed at revealing the predictive ability of academic behavior for academic self-disengagement by academic engagement. To achieve the objectives of the study, a sample of (350) male and female students was selected from several secondary schools in the Iranian region of Ray, and the academic self-handicapping scale and the academic engagement scale were applied to them. The results showed that (16%) of the explained variance in academic self-disengagement was explained by academic engagement.

Xuji et al. (2020) conducted a study that aimed to construct a causal model of the relationship between academic self-handicap and academic engagement, through the mediating effect of academic advancement and parental support. To achieve the objectives of the study, a sample of (498) male and female students was chosen from several secondary schools in Tianjin Province, China, and the academic self-handicap scale, the academic engagement scale, the academic advancement scale, and the parental support scale were applied to them. The results showed that academic self-handicapping is a negative predictor of academic engagement.

While Aylan and Al-Radam (2021) conducted a study aimed at building a measure of academic engagement and determining its level in the light of some variables, and to achieve the objectives of the study, a sample of (250) male and female students was selected at the Libyan University of Waist, and the academic engagement scale was applied to them. The results showed that the level of academic engagement was high among the students.

Abbas (2021) conducted a study aimed at identifying academic engagement among university students in the light of some variables. To achieve the objectives of the study, a sample of (376) male and female students in Iraq was selected, and the academic engagement scale was applied to them. The results showed that the level of academic engagement was high. The results also showed that there were no statistically significant differences in the responses of the study sample on the scale of academic engagement due to the variables of gender and specialization.

While Sorour and El-Obeid (2021) conducted a study aimed at revealing the relationship between academic ambition and university engagement in the light of some variables. To achieve the objectives of the study, a sample of (140) male and female students was selected from the Faculty of Education at the Egyptian University of Kafr El-Sheikh, and the scale of university engagement and the scale of academic ambition were applied to them. The results showed that there were no statistically significant differences in university engagement due to the gender variable.

Núñez et al., 2021 conducted a study that aimed to construct a causal model of the relationship between parental support, academic engagement, and academic self-handicap. To achieve the objectives of the study, a sample of (643) male and female students in the seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth grades were selected in several schools in Spain, and the parental support scale, the behavioral academic engagement scale, and the academic self-handicap scale were

applied to them. The results showed that the lower parents' perceptions of support when performing behavioral engagement by students such as homework, the more students used academic self-handicapping strategies, and thus the lower their levels of academic behavioral engagement.

Saati Masomi et al., 2021 conducted a study aimed at building a causal model for the relationship between academic engagement based on self-regulation, academic emotions and academic self-handicap as a mediating variable and determining the effectiveness of the model on academic burnout. To achieve the objectives of the study, a sample of (384) female high school students in the Iranian city of Hamedan Al-Laei was selected, and the academic engagement scale, the self-regulation scale, the academic emotions scale, the academic self-handicap scale, and the academic burnout scale were applied to them. The results showed that there is a direct, negative relationship between academic self-handicap, academic engagement, and academic emotions.

### **Study problem and questions**

The problem of the study emerged from the results of some previous studies (Núñez et al., 2021; Saati Masomi et al., 2021; Cocorada, 2011), where these results showed that academic engagement was affected by the psychological, cognitive, and emotional aspects of the student (Sulea et al., 2015). Therefore, the researchers noted that the indicators of academic engagement among students are uneven and are affected by the levels of self-promotion and preserving their image opposite others.

It can also be said that many university students suffer from low levels of academic engagement, especially in the post-COVID-19 period. Also, some students resort to creating fake excuses to justify their failure or lack of success in certain tasks, which relatively reduces the chances of academic engagement. This study came to determine the level of academic engagement and its relationship to academic self-handicap in the light of the variables of gender and specialization, by answering the following questions:

1. **What is the level of academic engagement of students?**
2. **Does the level of academic engagement of students differ according to gender and specialization?**
3. **What is the relationship between academic engagement and academic self-handicapping?**

## **Method**

### **Study population**

The study population consisted of all the students of Al-Qasimi Academic College in the Baqa al-Gharbia region, whose number is (826) male and female students among the undergraduate students, according to the statistics of the administrative office of the Department of Practical Education in the college, as they are divided into humanities, academic and scientific. The number of male students reached (60) students, and the number of female students (766) students, for the first semester of the academic year (2021-2022).

### **Participants**

The sample study consisted of (410) male and female students from Al Qasimi College among the undergraduate students. For the academic year (2021/2022) in the second semester, they were chosen in the available way, from among the students registered in the second semester of the academic year (2021/2022).

## Measures

### Academic self-handicapping scale

The academic self-handicap scale of Gupta and Geetika (2020) was used. The scale consists of (32) items, divided into two dimensions: The behavioral academic self-handicaps, (17) items, and claimed academic self-handicaps (15) items.

### Validity

**Face validity:** the scale was presented to a group of reviewers consisting of (22), in specializations (educational psychology, measurement and evaluation, Arabic, and English) from several Arab universities. Where they were asked to express their opinions about the scale in terms of linguistic formulation and its clarity, and the belonging of each item to the dimension in which it was included, and any amendments they deem appropriate. It has been relied upon unanimously (18) arbitrators or more, (80%). The reviewers' remarks indicated the following:

Deletion of items with numbers (12, 21, 26, 28) because they are of inappropriate content with the formulation of the scale. Or that its idea is repetitive, incomprehensible to the respondent, or contradictory to its text.

Modifying the linguistic wording of some other paragraphs. The scale became consisting (28) items.

**Construct Validity:** Construct validity was used on a pilot study sample consisting of (62) male and female students from Al Qasimi Academic College in the Western Baqa region, and from outside the target study sample. The results showed that the value of the correlation coefficient of the items: (6, 8, 10, 16, 22, 24) was of an unacceptable and non-statistically significant degree, and it was deleted, while the rest of the items, their correlation coefficients ranged between (.21-72), It had acceptable and statistically significant scores, Considering what was indicated by (Odeh, 2000) that the correlation coefficients of the items should not be less than the criterion (20). Therefore, items (6, 8, 10, 16, 22, 24) were deleted, and the number of items of the scale became (22).

**Reliability:** The indicators of the reliability of the scale also showed that the values of Cronbach's alpha stability coefficients for the domains of the academic self-handicap scale ranged between (.75-87), and the value of the test re-test coefficients for the domains of the scale ranged between (.86-93), and the value of the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the total scale was (.88), and test re-test (.92), where all these values are suitable, and make the tool applicable to the original sample.

### Academic engagement scale

The Hassanein and Abdel Wahed scale (2020) was used for academic engagement, it consisted of (14) items distributed over three dimensions: absorption (5) items, dedication (4) items, and vitality (5) items.

### Validity

**Face validity:** The scale was presented to a group of reviewers consisting of (22), It has been relied upon unanimously (18) arbitrators or more (80%). Where only the linguistic wording has been modified for a few the scale items, to give a clearer meaning. Thus, the scale is composed of (14) items.

**Construct Validity:** The Pearson Correlation coefficient was used to extract the values of the correlation coefficients of the items with the field to which they belong and on the overall scale. Whereas the value of the item's correlation coefficient ranged between (.43-89), and it had acceptable degrees and was statistically significant.



**Reliability:** The values of Cronbach's reliability coefficients alpha for the domains of the academic engagement scale ranged between (.78-89), and the value of the test re-test reliability coefficients for the domains of the scale ranged between (.90-96), and the value of Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the total scale was (.88) and test re-test (.96), where all these values are suitable, and make the tool applicable to the main sample.

## Results and Discussion

### What is the level of academic engagement among Al Qasimi Academic College students in Baqa Al-Gharbia?

To answer the question, the means, standard deviations, and percentages of the academic engagement were calculated. Table (1)

**Table 1**

*Means and standard deviations for academic participation and its fields*

Rank	No. domain	domain	mean	standard deviation	level
1	3	vitality	4.13	0.686	high
2	2	dedication	3.6	1.083	middle
3	1	absorption	2.95	1.014	middle
		<b>academic engagement</b>	3.55	0.757	middle

Table (1) shows that the mean of academic engagement was (3.55), with a middle level. As for the means of the study sample's responses to the domains of the academic engagement scale, it ranged between (4.13-2.95), and the domain vitality came ranked first, with a mean (4.13) and a high level, while the field of " absorption " came in the last place, with a mean of (2.95) and a medium level.

This result can be attributed to the fact that the motivation levels of the students are between medium or low levels. Students may become less interested in the university and its requirements with the passage of time. They may also become skeptical about the feasibility of their studies. However, they may sometimes engage in academic tasks for several reasons, including not losing expulsion from the university, University fees are not doubled, not seen socially as academic failures.

### Are there statistically significant differences at the level of significance ( $\alpha = .05$ ) between the averages of academic engagement among students of Al-Qasimi Academic College in Baqa al-Gharbia due to the two variables: gender, specialization?

The means and standard deviations were calculated for the study sample's responses to the scale of academic engagement among the students of Al-Qasimi Academic College in the Western Baqa region, due to the two variables: gender, specialization, and table (2) shows that.

**Table 2**  
*means and standard deviations of the study sample's responses to the academic engagement scale according to the gender and specialization.*

Variable	level	number	mean	academic engagement standard deviation
Gender	male	37	3.37	0.781
	female	373	3.57	0.754
Specialization	scientific	196	3.53	0.732
	Humanitarian	214	3.58	0.781

It is clear from Table (2) that there are apparent differences between the means on academic engagement in the light of their distribution according to the variables of the study. To reveal the significance of the differences between the means of the academic engagement scale, a two-way analysis anova (2-way ANOVA) was conducted. Before conducting it, its assumptions related to violating the homogeneity of variance were verified through the (Levene) test, where the value of (F) calculated for the (Levene) test was (1.489) at two degrees of freedom (3 for the numerator, and 406 for the denominator) with statistical significance (.217); Which indicates that there is no violation of variance homogeneity and thus this condition is fulfilled. Table (3) shows the result of 2-way ANOVA.

**Table 3**  
*2-way ANOVA of academic engagement among the study sample according to the gender and specialization*

	sum of squares	df	mean squares	F	Sig.
Gender	1.298	1	1.298	2.267	0.133
specialization	0.137	1	0.137	0.239	0.625
Errors	233.117	407	0.573		
Total	5415.388	410			

It is noted from Table (3) that there are no statistically significant differences at the significance level ( $\alpha = .05$ ) between the means of the academic engagement due to the gender and specialization.

Then, means and standard deviations were calculated for the study sample's responses to the domain of the academic engagement due to the gender, specialization. Table (4)

**Table 4**  
*means and standard deviations of the domains of the academic engagement according to the gender and specialization*

Variable	level	No	statistic	absorption	dedication	vitality
Gender	male	37	M	2.69	3.27	4.13
			SD	1.135	1.178	0.679
	female	373	M	2.97	3.63	4.13
			SD	1	1.069	0.687
Specialization	scientific	196	M	2.88	3.65	4.08
			SD	0.992	1.031	0.733
	Scientific	214	M	3.01	3.55	4.17
			SD	1.034	1.128	0.638

**M: mean, SD: standard deviation**

Table (4) shows that there are differences between the mean of the study sample on the academic engagement according to the variables of the study. To reveal the significance of the differences between the means of the domains of the academic engagement scale 2-MANOVA without Interaction used.

Before conducting it, its assumptions related to the absence of multicollinearity were verified by calculating the correlation coefficients for the domains of the academic engagement followed by the Bartlett test for sphericity, as the correlation coefficients did not exceed (.71), and it is considered acceptable if it did not exceed ( $r = .85$ ) according to Tabachnick & Fidel (2012). The approximate value of chi square for Bartlett's sphericity test was ( $\chi^2 = 369.634$ ) and a statistical significance ( $P < .000$ ), which indicates that this condition is fulfilled. Homogeneity of covariance was verified through Box's test M test), with a value of (36.814), and a statistical significance ( $P = .010$ ), which is considered appropriate when it is greater than ( $P > .001$ ) according to Debbie & Hahs-Vaughn, (2016), which confirms the realization of this assumption, and the table (5) Shows the results of multivariate analysis:

**Table 5**  
***multivariate on academic engagement scale domains according to the variables of gender and specialization***

	domains	sum of squares	df	mean squares	F	Sig.
gender Hotelling's Trace (1.790b= (F P=1.48	absorption	2.345	1	2.345	2.288	0.131
	dedication	4.839	1	4.839	4.156	.042*
	vitality	0.01	1	0.01	0.022	0.883
specialization Hotelling's Trace (3.882= (F P=.009	absorption	1.171	1	1.171	1.143	0.286
	dedication	1.516	1	1.516	1.302	0.255
	vitality	0.88	1	0.88	1.871	0.172
Errors	absorption	416.983	407	1.025		
	dedication	473.855	407	1.164		
	vitality	191.337	407	0.47		
Total	absorption	3980.08	410			
	Dedication	5782.5	410			
	Vitality	7184.72	410			

Table (5) shows the following:

- There are no statistically significant differences, at the level of significance ( $\alpha = .05$ ), between the averages of the fields of academic engagement, except for the field of dedication among students of Al-Qasimi Academic College in Baqa Al-Gharbia region, due to the gender variable, as the differences came in the field of dedication in favor of females.
- There are no statistically significant differences, at the level of significance ( $\alpha = .05$ ), between the averages of the fields of academic engagement among the students of Al-Qasimi Academic College in Baqa Al-Gharbia region, due to the variable of specialization.

This result on the dedication domain is attributed to the fact that females are more interested in studying than males. Their level of motivation is relatively higher than that male, as indicated by Singh et al. (2002). They also make a great effort when facing challenges and problems, and are deeply involved in work, tasks, and academic activities, which allows them

to experience enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, challenge, and a sense of importance, and this leads to them increasing levels of dedication. As for the absence of differences in the dimensions of absorption and vitality, this result can be attributed to the fact that both male and female face difficulties and obstacles that make them exhausted, tired, and their energy depleted. This is natural because a person has limited physical and cognitive capabilities, and if they are depleted, he cannot perform any activity or work.

As for specialization, it can be said that all university students, regardless of their academic majors, are required to achieve academic engagement, and to engage in various tasks and activities. Also, all majors contain tasks, activities, and learning experiences that require individuals within the academic institution to implement and integrate into it. For example, majoring in languages requires the student to engage in listening and speaking skills, go to language laboratories, and interact with the tasks posed by the faculty member. The same applies to the statistics student, who must enroll in computer laboratories to learn statistical packages for different statistical software such as (SPSS, SAT, AMOS, TAT) and others.

### **What is the relationship between academic engagement and academic self-handicapping?"**

To answer the question, Pearson's correlation coefficient was calculated between academic engagement and academic self-handicapping, as the value of the coefficient was (-0.648\*), which is a strong negative value with statistical significance at the significance level (\* $p < .05$ ).

This result can be attributed to the fact that academic self-handicapping affects the completion of homework, engagement in classes, and engagement in the learning process, which affects academic performance and academic achievement. Students with high levels of academic self-handicapping are likely to lack perseverance in learning and to produce a series of behaviors that cause them to avoid academic engagement (Wei & Xiting, 2004). academic self-handicapping negatively predicts student learning inputs, including academic engagement (Xuji et al., 2020).

### **Recommendations**

- Increasing levels of academic engagement by increasing students' involvement in academic activities and tasks, increasing their levels of dedication and interest, making them active and energetic by developing their ability to solve problems they face, and increasing their positive expectations towards the educational process.
- Reducing the effects of self-handicapping on academic engagement by encouraging students to complete academic assignments, homework assignments, increase their academic investment, and improve participation in the learning process and classrooms.

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