



# Academic Achievement: A Study of the Predictors of Success in Higher Education

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**RQ 1:** Is there a relationship between students' hours of employment per week and academic achievement?

**RQ 2:** Is there a relationship between need for affinity and college students' level of involvement and academic achievement throughout their college career?

**RQ 3:** Is there a relationship between the number of organizations a student is involved with and academic achievement?

## Introduction

This research examined predictors of academic achievement among college seniors. Specifically, academic achievement was studied in relation to employment, organizational involvement, out of class communication with faculty, need for affinity, and gender. Although researchers generally argue that associations exist between academic achievement in college and a number of demographics and behavioral variables, results have been sometimes conflicting and inconclusive.

## Objective

This study examined academic achievement and its potential correlations with employment, organizational involvement, out-of-class communication with faculty, need for affinity, and gender.

## Method

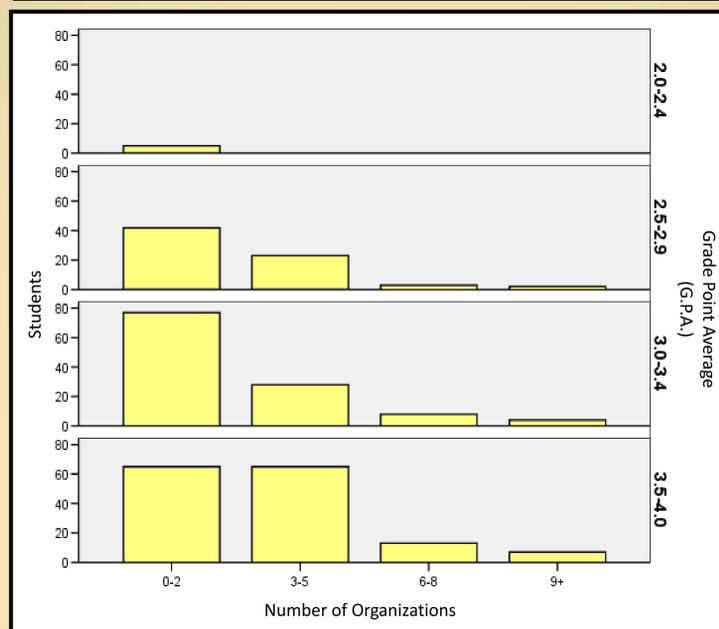
- Three hundred forty three male (32.1%) and female (67.9%) college seniors were recruited through email. Seventy-five participants were discarded due to incomplete questionnaires.

- WebSurvey, an online questionnaire tool provided by the university, was used for data collection.

- Knapp's Out-of-Class Communication Scale and Bell's Affinity-Seeking Instrument were used to assess students' communication tendencies. Demographics, employment, organizational involvement, and academic achievement were also examined.

- Data was collected from April 8, 2008 through April 11, 2008.

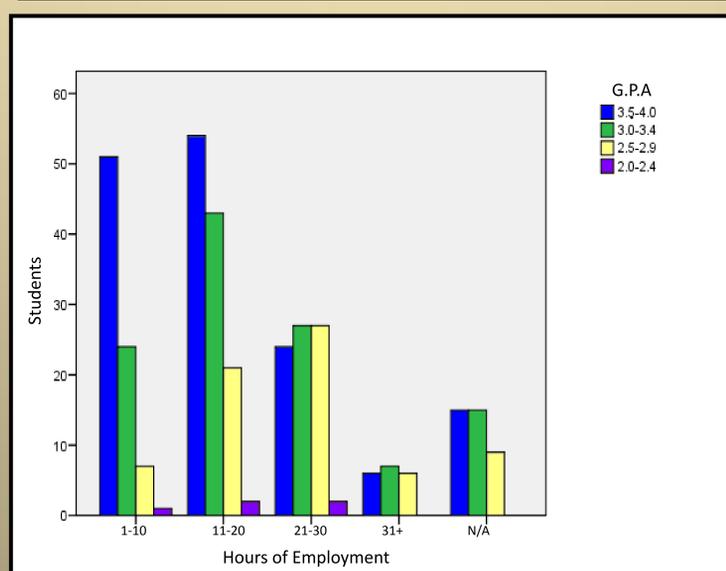
Number of Organizations vs. Grade Point Average



## Sample Questions

- Out-of-Class Communication Scale:
  - I often talk to my instructors during their office hours.
  - When I see my instructor in public, I avoid talking to him/her.
- Affinity-Seeking Instrument:
  - I am good at getting others to want to hang around with me.
  - I have trouble building rapport with others.

Hours of Employment vs. Grade Point Average



## Results

The Pearson correlation shows a negative correlation between students' hours of employment per week and academic achievement,  $r = -.18$ ,  $p \leq .01$ .

The Pearson correlation shows a positive correlation between the number of organizations the student is involved with and need for affinity,  $r = .17$ ,  $p \leq .01$ .

The Pearson correlation shows a positive correlation between the number of organizations the student is involved with and academic achievement,  $r = .16$ ,  $p \leq .01$ .

## Discussion

The results indicate significant correlations for the aforementioned research questions. In examining RQ 1, the results show as the number of hours of employment per week increases, the students' academic achievement decreases. Academic achievement was measured in terms of grade point average.

Through investigating RQ 2, results indicate that as the level of organizational involvement increases, the students' need for affinity increases.

In examining RQ 3, the results show as the number of organizations the students are involved with increases, the students' academic achievement also increases.

