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Communication Apprehension, Self-Efficacy, and Their Effects on the Utilization of On-Campus Services

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Communication Apprehension, Self-Efficacy, and Their Effects on the Utilization of On-Campus Services

Ashley Mikolay

School of Communication

Honors Research Project

Submitted to

The Honors College

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Honors Project Sponsor (signed)

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Reader (signed)

__________________________ Date __________
Reader (printed)

Accepted:

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School Director (signed)

__________________________ Date __________
School Director (printed)

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Honors Faculty Advisor (signed)

__________________________ Date __________
Honors Faculty Advisor (printed)

__________________________ Date __________
Dean, Honors College

Reader (signed)

Reader (printed)
Communication Apprehension, Self-Efficacy and Their Effects on the Utilization of On-Campus Services

Introduction

While we can find evidence that being involved with on-campus services while studying at a university is beneficial, we find little evidence regarding why students do, or do not, get involved. This study seeks to fill these gaps in the literature to gain insight into what kinds of students are, or are not, participating so that university officials might be able to implement methods to get more students involved.

One communication and one personality factor were the focus of the study, self-efficacy and communication apprehension. A review of the literature regarding perceived self-efficacy and communication apprehension suggests that while there has been much research regarding communication apprehension and perceived self-efficacy separately not much research links the two together. While a review of the literature shows that one can find many studies which examine how Communication Apprehension and Self-Efficacy relate to academic success, little to no research has been conducted to explore what factors influence students’ utilization of the services provided to them on campus.

Utilization of On Campus Services and Getting Involved

One study examined the effects of involvement in clubs and organizations in respect to psychosocial development. Foubert and Urbanski (2006) found that students who were more involved showed greater psychosocial development and leadership development than those who were not involved in those activities.
Research done by Neal and Heppner (1986) found that problem-solving appraisal was related to awareness, use, and satisfaction with campus helping services. This finding suggests that effective problem solvers were more aware, used services more, and were more satisfied with those services than ineffective problem solvers. These findings provide some insight into some of the characteristics that may differentiate between students who get involved and who do not. It is clear in this study that being involved is related to retention or staying in school. From this study, a new question arises, does self-efficacy relate to problem solving appraisal? It is possible to infer that self-efficacy would be related to problem solving in that the level of a person’s perceived self-efficacy, or how capable they believe they are at completing a task, would be dependent on how capable they feel they are at solving a problem.

The previous research brings up a related question: What effects, if any, do students who differ in Self-Efficacy and Communication Apprehension have on involvement in college on – campus services. Thus, this question is the focal point of the present study.

Perceived Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is defined as “as people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives” (Bandura 1994, p. 71). Much of the literature that examines self-efficacy in a collegiate setting is related to goal-setting in relation to student motivation and academic achievement. One study found that a student’s perceived self-efficacy for academic achievement influenced the academic goals that they set, which was found to be linked to their final grades in the social studies class that they were examining (Bandura, Martinez-Pons, & Zimmerman, 1992).
Hsieh et al. (2007), define motivation as a process in which goal-directed activity is initiated and sustained and is related to (and can be inferred from) behaviors such as students’ choice of tasks, initiation, persistence, commitment, and effort investment. They examined the relationship between motivation and self-efficacy in the terms of their goals using the definition of self-efficacy, “the [students’] beliefs about their capabilities to successfully complete a task” (Hsieh, et al., 2007, p 456). Students with higher self-efficacy are found to be more willing to persist, and students with goals of mastering a task invest more in focused effort. The previous research suggests a relationship between goal setting, motivation, and self-efficacy and how it may influence a student’s likelihood to be involved on campus and in its resources.

Another study examined self-efficacy in relation to the Theory of Planned Behavior and in particular the factor of perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 2002). The Theory of Planned Behavior states that while a person may intend to perform a behavior, that intention to perform does not always lead to the completion of that behavior (as the Theory of Reasoned Action suggests), due to the concept of perceived behavioral control and perceived self-efficacy. In other words, although a person may intend to do something, if they perceive a lack of external or internal control (self-efficacy) they may not succeed in performing that behavior. Again, this is a theory relevant to this current study because the difference between two people who may intend to utilize, for example, the recreation center on campus and who actually use the recreation center may be dependent on such factors as self-efficacy and perceived behavioral control.
Communication Apprehension

Communication apprehension is defined as the stress or anxiety that arises from communication situations. The PRCA-24, a scale produced by James C. McCroskey (1986) measures four different contexts in which a person can be communicatively apprehensive: group discussions, interpersonal situations, meetings, and public speaking. The present study focused only on CA in the contexts of interpersonal communication and meetings. As with self-efficacy research, most of the findings regarding communication apprehension in college are in the realm of academic success. However, because we know that CA can manifest itself in meetings and interpersonal situations, we may infer that the effects of CA for college students reach beyond their success academically and may simultaneously affect their ability to become involved on campus and remain in school. McCroskey, Booth-Butterfield, and Payne (1989) provide us with evidence of this. In their research they looked at the impact of CA on student retention and success stating that students high in CA were more likely to drop out than those with low CA. They found a difference of 7.1% in dropout rates between the two groups. As stated earlier regarding involvement and utilization of campus services, retention rates are related to levels of social involvement in a university, therefore demonstrating a potential connection between high CA and utilization of on campus services.

After reviewing the literature and finding that communication apprehension and self-efficacy have proven effects on some aspects of student success in college two research questions will be tested to see if there is any evidence that these two factors play a role in another aspect of student success in college.
Research Questions

Thus, the following research questions and hypotheses were examined in this study:

RQ1: Is there a relationship between communication apprehension and utilization of and participation in on-campus services?

RQ2: Is there a relationship between self-efficacy and utilization of and participation in on-campus services?

Method

Participants

This study involved 141 undergraduate students from the University of Akron. All participants were 18 years or older and voluntarily participated in the study by completing the questionnaire with no harm or penalty for not participating. The participants included students in several undergraduate classes at the University and were selected on the basis of a convenience sample (i.e., these professors allowed the primary investigator into their classrooms to distribute the surveys).

There was a relatively even split regarding the gender of the sample with 48.2% identifying as male and 51.82% identifying as female. The majority of the sample (72.3%) was Caucasian, 13.5% were African American, 6.4% were Asian and the remaining 7.8% identified as “other” regarding ethnicity. The final demographic variable examined was “year in school.” It was found that 9.9% of the participants were freshmen, 19.9% were sophomores, 37.6% were juniors and 32.6% were seniors. None of the participants indicated that they were graduate students or post-secondary students.
Procedures

After receiving IRB approval (see Appendix A), the primary investigator visited several classes at the University of Akron to distribute the surveys to undergraduate students. Administration of the surveys occurred during a one week period. The investigator distributed the surveys at the beginning of class after being introduced by each professor. Before the students began the survey the investigator read through the informed consent page with the class in order to ensure that they were aware of what was being studied, that their participation was fully voluntary and that no identifying information would be included with their data. After reading through the consent page, the participants were asked to sign the bottom in order to provide their formal consent. The consent page was not linked to any participant data.

Measures

The questionnaire (see Appendix B) was composed of questions regarding the student’s knowledge of and participation in on campus services, activities and organizations at the University of Akron along with basic demographic information. Two other primary components of the questionnaire were the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension Scale (PRCA McCroskey, 1986) and the General Self-Efficacy scale (Schwarzer & Jerusalem 1995).

Personal Report of Communication Apprehension

The PRCA-24 is a 24 item scale created by James C McCroskey (1986) and measures an individual’s level of apprehension in different realms of oral communication including meetings, interpersonal communication, group discussions and public speaking through 24 self-report questions. A 1-5 response format is employed, with “1” meaning strongly agree and “5” being strongly disagree. Although there are 24 items on this scale, for the purposes of this study only
the 11 items pertaining to meetings and interpersonal communication were tested (see Appendix B). To get a total PRCA score on this scale, you add up all of the scores to get an overall score of communication apprehension with the lower the score signifying a lower communication apprehension. Although we did not use the entire scale, we added the scores for the interpersonal communication and meetings dimensions to compute an overall communication apprehension score (PRCA Total). Cronbach’s Coefficient Alpha of .921 was found for the combined 11 items used from this scale. As such, this measure was deemed reliable.

General Self-Efficacy Scale

Perceived Self Efficacy is “people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives” (Bandura 1994, p. 71). The General Self-Efficacy scale is a 10 item scale which measures an individual’s level of perceived self-efficacy. The items on the scale ask participants to provide a score regarding their beliefs about their ability to accomplish their goals (see, Appendix B). In order to calculate a total Self-Efficacy score for this scale you find the sum of all of the questions answered with The response format for this scale ranges from 1 “not at all true” to 4 “exactly true.” The scores range from 10-40 and the higher the score the higher the self-efficacy. All 10 items were included in the survey and therefore no special scoring instructions were necessary. Cronbach’s coefficient alpha of .842 was observed for this scale for this study, indicating a high reliability of the instrument.

Results

Research Question 1 asked: Is there a relationship between communication apprehension and utilization or and participation in on-campus services?
In order to address RQ1, a cross tabulation table was computed. Three groups were created based on their scores on the PRCA by combining scores on both the dimensions of apprehension in meetings and apprehension in interpersonal communication. PRCA scores one standard deviation above the mean were considered high in CA. Scores one standard deviation below the mean were considered low in CA. Similarly, participants who scored in between were deemed moderate in CA.

Participation in on-campus services was conceptualized via two items: Utilization of On-Campus Services, and Involvement in On-Campus Organizations and Clubs.

A cross tabulation with \( \chi^2 \) was first computed for the variable of Utilization ("Within the last year, have you utilized any services at the Student Wellness and Recreation Center?") by level of PRCA. As can be seen in Table 1, there were no significant differences between the three groups in their utilization of services at the wellness and recreation center (\( \chi^2 = 0.28, df = 2, p = .87 \)). Thus, no relationship was observed regarding differences in communication apprehension and utilization of on-campus services.
**Table 1:** Utilization of On-Campus Services by Level of Communication Apprehension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group PRCA</th>
<th>Utilization of On-Campus Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (Low CA)</td>
<td>1 (Yes) 15 2 (No) 4 Total 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Moderate CA)</td>
<td>1 (Yes) 80 2 (No) 16 Total 96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (High CA)</td>
<td>1 (Yes) 22 2 (No) 4 Total 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1 (Yes) 117 2 (No) 24 Total 141</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A second cross tabulation with χ² was computed for the variable of Involvement (“Are you involved in any on-campus organizations or clubs?”) by level of PRCA. As can be seen in Table 2, there were no significant differences between the three groups in their involvement in on-campus organizations or clubs (χ² = 0.61, df = 2, p = .74). Thus, no relationship was observed regarding differences in communication apprehension and involvement in on-campus organizations or clubs.

**Table 2:** Involvement in On-Campus Organizations or Clubs by Level of Communication Apprehension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group PRCA</th>
<th>Involvement in On-Campus Organizations or Clubs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (Low CA)</td>
<td>1 (Yes) 11 2 (No) 8 Total 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Moderate CA)</td>
<td>1 (Yes) 47 2 (No) 49 Total 96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (High CA)</td>
<td>1 (Yes) 14 2 (No) 12 Total 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1 (Yes) 72 2 (No) 69 Total 141</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Question 2 asked: Is there a relationship between self-efficacy and utilization of and participation in on-campus services?

In order to address RQ2, a cross tabulation table was computed. Three groups were created based on their scores on the General Self-Efficacy scale. Self-Efficacy scores one standard deviation above the mean were considered to be high in self-efficacy. Scores one standard deviation below the mean were considered to be low in self-efficacy. Similarly, participants who scored in between were deemed to be moderate in self-efficacy.

Participation in on-campus services was conceptualized via two items: Utilization of On-Campus Services, and Involvement in On-Campus Organizations and Clubs.

A cross tabulation with $\chi^2$ was first computed for the variable of Utilization ("Within the last year, have you utilized any services at the Student Wellness and Recreation Center?") by level of self-efficacy. As can be seen in Table 3, there were no significant differences between the three groups in their utilization of services at the wellness and recreation center ($\chi^2 = 0.37, df = 2, p = .83$). Thus, no relationship was observed regarding differences in perceived Self-Efficacy and utilization of on-campus services.

**Table 3:** Utilization of On-Campus Services by Level of Perceived Self-Efficacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GroupSE</th>
<th>Utilization of On-Campus Services</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (Low SE)</td>
<td>1 (Yes) 13</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 (No) 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Moderate SE)</td>
<td>1 (Yes) 89</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 (No) 18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (High SE)</td>
<td>1 (Yes) 15</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 (No) 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1 (Yes) 117</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 (No) 24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A second cross tabulation with $\chi^2$ was computed for the variable of Involvement (“Are you involved in any on-campus organizations or clubs?”) by level of self-efficacy. As can be seen in Table 4, there were no significant differences between the three groups in their involvement in on-campus organizations or clubs ($\chi^2 = 3.00$, $df = 2$, $p = .22$). Thus, no relationship was observed regarding differences in perceived self-efficacy and involvement in on-campus organizations or clubs.

**Table 4: Involvement in On-Campus Organizations or Clubs by Level of Perceived Self-Efficacy**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group SE</th>
<th>Involvement in On-Campus Organizations or Clubs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (Low SE)</td>
<td>1 (Yes) 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 (No) 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Moderate SE)</td>
<td>1 (Yes) 55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 (No) 52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total 107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (High SE)</td>
<td>1 (Yes) 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 (No) 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1 (Yes) 72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 (No) 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total 141</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Post-Hoc Analyses**

After conducting the appropriate analyses to test the two research questions, other tests were performed in order to reveal any if there were any additional relationships between perceived self-efficacy, communication apprehension and utilization of and participation in on-campus services.

One aspect of utilization of on-campus services was conceptualized by how often students utilized their professors office hours (e.g., “In the last year how often have you utilized your professor’s office hours?”).
A cross tabulation with $\chi^2$ was computed for this variable by level of CA. As can be seen in Table 5, there were no significant differences between the three groups on CA and the frequency with which they visited their professor’s office hours. ($\chi^2 = 10.21, df = 6, p = .12$). Thus, no relationship was observed regarding differences in communication apprehension the frequency in which students visited their professor’s office hours.

**Table 5: Utilization of Professor’s Office Hours by Level of CA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>PRCA</th>
<th>Utilization of Professor’s Office Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (Low CA)</td>
<td>1 (Never) 7</td>
<td>2 (1-3 times) 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Moderate CA)</td>
<td>1 (Never) 31</td>
<td>2 (1-3 times) 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (High CA)</td>
<td>1 (Never) 14</td>
<td>2 (1-3 times) 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1 (Never) 52</td>
<td>2 (1-3 times) 67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A second cross tabulation with $\chi^2$ was computed for this variable by level of perceived self-efficacy. As can be seen in Table 6, there were no significant differences between the three groups on Self-Efficacy and the frequency in which they visited their professor’s office hours. ($\chi^2 = 2.85, df = 6, p = .83$). Thus, no relationship was observed regarding differences in perceived self-efficacy and the frequency in which students visited their professor’s office hours.
Table 6: Utilization of Professor’s Office Hours by Level of Perceived Self-Efficacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GroupSE</th>
<th>Utilization of Professor’s Office Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 (Never) 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (Low SE)</td>
<td>1 (Never)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Moderate SE)</td>
<td>1 (Never) 38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (High SE)</td>
<td>1 (Never) 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1 (Never) 52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another aspect of utilization of on-campus services was conceptualized by how often students felt that they could use the help of a professor (e.g., “How often in the last year have you felt that you could use the help of a professor?”). This variable was measured by employing the following response format: “Never; Rarely; Often; Sometimes; Very Frequently.” As such, this variable was treated as an interval-level measurement.

A one-way ANOVA was computed for this variable by level of CA. As can be seen in Table 7, there were no significant differences between the three groups and the frequency in which they felt that they could use the help of a professor. ($F = .31, df = 2, 138, p = .74$). Thus, no relationship was observed regarding differences in CA and the frequency in which they felt that they could use the help of a professor.
Table 7: Frequency of the Need of Help from a Professor by Level of CA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>PRCA</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (Low CA)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Moderate CA)</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (High CA)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A second one-way ANOVA was computed for this variable by level of perceived self-efficacy. As can be seen in Table 8, there were no significant differences between the three groups and the frequency in which they felt that they could use the help of a professor ($F = 1.914, df = 2, 138, p = .151$). Thus, no relationship was observed regarding differences in perceived self-efficacy and the frequency in which they felt that they could use the help of a professor.

Table 8: Frequency of the Need of Help from a Professor by Level of Perceived Self-Efficacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (Low SE)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Moderate SE)</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (High SE)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Another aspect of utilization of on-campus services was conceptualized by how often students felt that they could use the help of a tutor (e.g., “How often in the last year have you felt that you could use the help of a tutor in your classes?”).

A one-way ANOVA was computed for this variable by level of CA. As can be seen in Table 9, there were no significant differences between the three groups and the frequency in which they felt that they could use the help of a professor \( (F = .2.09, df = 2, 138, p = .13) \). Thus, no relationship was observed regarding differences in CA and the frequency in which they felt that they could use the help of a tutor.

**Table 9: Frequency of the Need of Help from a Tutor by Level of CA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (Low CA)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Moderate CA)</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (High CA)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>1.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A second one-way ANOVA was computed for this variable by level of perceived self-efficacy. As can be seen in Table 10, there were no significant differences between the three groups on self-efficacy and the frequency in which they felt that they could use the help of a tutor \( (F = 1.13, df = 2, 138, p = .33) \). Thus, no relationship was observed regarding differences in perceived self-efficacy and the frequency in which they felt that they could use the help of a tutor.
Table 10: Frequency of the Need of Help from a tutor by Level of Perceived Self-Efficacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GroupSE</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (Low SE)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Moderate SE)</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (High SE)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>0.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>1.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Pearson Correlation was computed in order to explore the relationship between communication apprehension and self-efficacy. A significant, negative correlation was observed between the subjects’ total PRCA scores and their total self-efficacy scores ($r = -0.28, p = .01$). Thus, the higher the perceived self-efficacy, the lower the communication apprehension in meetings and interpersonal communication.

Finally, potential gender differences were examined for both communication apprehension and self-efficacy. A t-test was conducted for total PRCA score and gender. As seen in Table 11, a significant difference was observed between total PRCA score for males and females ($t= -3.23, df= 139, p= .001$) with males scoring significantly in lower communication apprehension in meetings and interpersonal communication than females.
Table 11: Total PRCA Score and Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (Male)</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>21.056</td>
<td>7.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Female)</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>25.29</td>
<td>7.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another t-test was conducted for total Self-Efficacy score and gender. As seen in Table 12, it was found that there was a significant difference between total Self-Efficacy score for males and females ($t = 2.35$, $df = 139$, $p = .02$) with males showing higher perceived self-efficacy than females.

Table 12: Total Self-Efficacy Score and Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (Male)</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>33.07</td>
<td>4.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Female)</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>31.63</td>
<td>3.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion

This study was conducted with the idea that there may be differences between students who are involved on campus and students who are not. There are many possible reasons for why some students choose to participate in on-campus activities or be involved and why some students do not while in college. The literature that exists in regards to perceived self-efficacy
and communication apprehension and college students suggests that these factors do in fact have an impact on the academic success of these students. The literature on self-efficacy and communication apprehension was limited to students’ academic success. However, exploring the relationship between involvement on campus and academic success, Webber, Bauer Krylow and Zhang (2013) found that students who reported more frequent engagement in academic and social activities earned higher grades and reported higher levels of satisfaction with their college experience. With a relationship identified between academic success and these two factors, and a relationship between academic success and involvement on campus, it was inferred that the linking variable might be one or both of these factors. For example, if a student is high in communication apprehension, perhaps they would have some anxiety about going to a tutor, visiting a professor during office hours, or joining an organization on campus. Similarly, students with high self-efficacy would believe more in themselves to figure things out without the help of a tutor or a professor, and may feel more confident in finding the right avenues to join a club or organization that interested them. The results of these speculations, however, were not supported in this study.

Although non-significant, results did show that there were slight differences in the way that students with different levels of communication apprehension and self-efficacy responded to the items on the questionnaire. For example, although no significant differences were observed, students with high self-efficacy were less likely to feel like they could use the help of a professor or a tutor than students with low or moderate self-efficacy. This finding could be explained by suggesting that students who perceive that they are capable of solving problems on their own are less likely to feel like they need outside help.
Although the data suggests that differences in Communication Apprehension and Self-Efficacy did not differentiate these groups in the utilization and involvement in on-campus activities, one post-hoc analysis was found to show a significant difference. That is a significant difference between the genders was observed for both Communication Apprehension and Self-Efficacy. Females, compared to the males were significantly higher on communication apprehension and significantly lower on self-efficacy. Studies conducted at other universities have observed the same results. One study found that females had significantly higher communication apprehension than males (Frantz, Marlow, & Wathen, 2005). Frantz, et al. suggest that this finding may be due to the pressure than women feel to achieve a certain persona leads to self-consciousness which could explain their communication apprehension.

Another factor that could influence this finding is more historical. It may be argued that men have historically had an advantage in many facets of society, while women have only been provided the same opportunities as men within the last few decades. Frantz, Marlow and Wathen (2005) further suggest that feelings of apprehension and insecurity might be the result of women comparing themselves to other women. The subject of gender differences is extremely complex and should be explored more extensively in future research.

Why students do, or do not, participate in organizations or utilize on-campus services may go well beyond their perceived self-efficacy and level of communication apprehension. One of the probable major factors is that some students have more time, while other students have busier schedules which limit the amount of time that they can dedicate to outside activities. Some students live on campus, while others commute upwards of thirty minutes to get to class every day, again limiting the amount of time that they can spend on campus.
Another potential influence is the amount of interest that a student has in using the ping pong tables at the recreation center or joining a club. Unfortunately, none of these variables were accounted for in this study.

Limitations of the Study

Despite our best efforts, limitations to this study did emerge. One limitation is that this study has limited external validity because of the sample size and that the data was collected in only one university. Another limitation is that there was room for extraneous variables to have influenced the outcomes. The fact that this was a convenience sample is another limitation. The sample consisted of mostly students in communication classes and because of this, their possible prior knowledge of the scales, and the fact that they chose a major that is arguably dependent on not being apprehensive communicators could have had an impact on the results.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore whether a relationship exists between students’ perceived self-efficacy and communication apprehension, and utilization of on campus services and involvement in organizations and clubs. Although the results did not observe any significant differences in these factors, some interesting data was observed that could have a heuristic value. Future research on differences between the genders in communication apprehension or self-efficacy regarding utilization and involvement in on-campus activities would be worthwhile given that both have an impact on academic success in college.

Discovering why some students utilize facilities, services and activities offered by their universities is important knowledge not only for these schools, but potentially for their students as well. Some students may not utilize these services purely out of disinterest, but it is fair to
assume that some students fail to fully utilize these services due to other factors. If universities can discover why, it will bring them a step closer to finding ways to encourage every interested student to participate and get involved.
References


Appendix B

Questionnaire

Gender
○ Male
○ Female
○ Other Identification

Ethnicity
○ African American
○ Caucasian
○ Asian
○ Other

Year in School
○ Freshman
○ Sophomore
○ Junior
○ Senior
○ Post-Secondary Student
○ Graduate Student

Utilization of On Campus Services
1. Within the last year have you utilized any services at the Student Wellness and Recreation Center?
   ○ Yes
   ○ No

2. If yes, please indicate which services
   ○ Exercise area
   ○ Ping pong tables
   ○ Pool
   ○ Wellness center
   ○ Health advising
   ○ Game Courts
3. How familiar are you with the services provided by the Career Services located in the Union?
   - Not at all familiar
   - Somewhat familiar
   - Very familiar

4. Are you involved in any on campus organizations or clubs?
   - Yes
   - No

If yes, which campus organizations or clubs are you currently or have been a member of? Please list them below:

5. How often in the last year have you felt that you could use the help of a professor (i.e., Help with course content? Help with exam anxiety? Help by the professor providing a letter of recommendation?) in your classes?
   - Never
   - Rarely
   - Often
   - Sometimes
   - Very frequently

6. In the last year how often have you utilized your professor’s office hours?
   - Never
   - 1-3 times
   - 4-6 times
   - More than 6 times
7. How familiar are you with the tutoring services provided by the library?
   - Not at all familiar
   - Somewhat familiar
   - Very familiar

8. How often in the last year have you felt that you could use the help of a tutor in your classes?
   - Never
   - Rarely
   - Often
   - Sometimes
   - Very frequently

9. In the last year how often have you utilized the tutoring services offered on campus?
   - Never
   - 1-3 times
   - 4-6 times
   - More than 6 times

For the following questions, please indicate in the space provided the degree to which each statement applies to you by marking (1) Strongly Agree, (2) Agree, (3) Undecided, (4) Disagree (5) Strongly Disagree with each statement.

____ 1. Generally, I am nervous when I have to participate in a meeting
____ 2. Usually I am calm and relaxed while participating in meetings
____ 3. Usually I am very calm and relaxed when I am called upon to express an opinion at a meeting
____ 4. I am afraid to express myself at meetings
____ 5. Communicating at meetings usually makes me uncomfortable
____ 6. I am very relaxed when answering questions at a meeting
____ 7. While participating in a conversation with a new acquaintance, I feel very nervous
____ 8. I have no fear of speaking up in conversations
____ 9. Ordinarily I am very tense and nervous in conversations
____ 10. Ordinarily I am very calm and relaxed in conversations
11. While conversing with a new acquaintance, I feel very relaxed.

For the following items, please respond to the statement by indicating how true each statement is for YOU.

1. I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough
   - Not true at all
   - Hardly true
   - Moderately true
   - Exactly true

2. If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want
   - Not true at all
   - Hardly true
   - Moderately true
   - Exactly true

3. It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.
   - Not true at all
   - Hardly true
   - Moderately true
   - Exactly true

4. I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events
   - Not true at all
   - Hardly true
   - Moderately true
   - Exactly true

5. Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations
   - Not true at all
   - Hardly true
   - Moderately true
   - Exactly true
6. I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort
   - Not true at all
   - Hardly true
   - Moderately true
   - Exactly true

7. I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities
   - Not true at all
   - Hardly true
   - Moderately true
   - Exactly true

8. When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions
   - Not true at all
   - Hardly true
   - Moderately true
   - Exactly true

9. If I think I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution
   - Not true at all
   - Hardly true
   - Moderately true
   - Exactly true

10. I can usually handle whatever comes my way
    - Not true at all
    - Hardly true
    - Moderately true
    - Exactly true