

Promoting Self-Regulation During a Pandemic to Stay Academically Resilient

Cedrick B. Kazadi

Abstract

The pandemic has been tough for students because they have had to learn how to manage themselves especially in the virtual environment of learning. Virtual instruction requires serious discipline on the part of the student, whether the classes are synchronous or asynchronous in nature. That discipline is because of intentional self-regulation. Self-regulation skills include the ability to avoid distractions, manage time, seek assistance, and are associated with academic resilience. These factors are critical to learning, particularly during these virtual learning environments. This article will address the characteristics of a self-regulated student, show why planning and goal setting is critically important, and discuss what is needed to build and remain academically resilient.

The pandemic has been tough for students because we have had to learn how to self-regulate, especially in the virtual environment of learning. When the pandemic struck, students found themselves in a tight corner of having to choose between synchronous and asynchronous modalities of instruction. As a junior with a major (Informational Technology) that is really demanding, I have found myself spending close to 12 hours of my day at my desk in the corner of my room. I attend zoom sessions, spend two hours studying for every class, work on homework and labs, and worry about working remotely and part time jobs to be able to pay for my apartment and utilities. This is just my situation, but I bet some students have it worse than me. Through all of this, I must force myself out of bed every

morning because I need to graduate and accomplish all my goals. To do this, it requires self-regulation, self-motivation, and discipline. I found that asynchronous modality requires me to have self-regulation skills where I am in control of my own teaching and learning at the same time. Fortunately for me, having moved to the U.S. as an immigrant with a refugee status, I had mastered these skills before the pandemic. My journey had me develop strong resilience skills based on the challenges I had to overcome. Even though I'm resilient I've found myself struggling when it comes to the new way of learning online.

Literature Review

Self-Regulation as a Component of Academic Resilience

Self-regulation can be defined as the ability to control one's behavior, emotions, and thoughts in the pursuit of long-term goals (Zimmerman, 2002). These skills are associated with academic resilience and students with better self-regulation skills are more resilient (Nota, Soresi & Zimmerman, 2004). Self-regulation skills include the ability to avoid distractions, manage time, work towards achieving your goals, and mastering the strategies of self-evaluation, organizing, goal setting, monitoring, and seeking assistance. These factors are critical to learning, particularly within these virtual learning environments. "Students need to plan their time, monitor their progress, and reflect on the outcomes. Students must also remain motivated and engaged without any form of reinforcement. It must come from within themselves" (Delen & Liew, 2016).

Self-Care as a Component of Self-Regulation

Self-care is defined as taking care of one's own health and wellbeing (Godfrey et al., 2011). Most of the research on self-care focuses on people suffering from health problems. However, self-care is not necessarily limited to the context of health. Self-care is relevant to student population because of the myriad of things they must do and go through. As a student who is highly motivated and focused on achieving all the personal goals I set, I find myself planning my days without any breaks or times to just have some fun. With the pandemic this has been worse because I spend at least 10 hours a day at my desk trying to complete my assignments. Because we can get so caught up in trying to get our studies done, it is vital that we learn how to incorporate self-care into our lives as college students. When we talk about self-care, it is important that we include our mental and physical health. "Engaging in a self-care routine has been clinically proven to reduce or eliminate

anxiety and depression, reduce stress, improve concentration, minimize frustration and anger, increase happiness, improve energy, and more" (Glowiak, 2020). With the benefits of self-care mentioned above, a student can easily focus and enjoy their studies while balancing other aspects of their lives.

The Role of Resilience in Success

Resilience is the ability to bounce back from hardships. It is crucial that students learn this necessary skill so they can be equipped against despair and feelings of giving up. As students, the responsibility of being successful falls on us, so it is important that we are resilient to ensure our own success (Caruana, Clegg, Ploner, et al., 2011). Even though there are outside factors such as the professors, our environment, and other life responsibilities; it is important to remember that we are the ones paying for our education and we must do all we can to ensure our own success. To be successful, we need resilience and as students we can increase our resilience by viewing our failures as opportunities to learn, encouraging each other, and self-reflecting often (Liotine & Magee, 2020; Nota, Soresi & Zimmerman, 2004).

Faculty Advisor Role in Student's Self-Regulation and Success

Academic and faculty advisors play a major role in the academic paths of students. Many advisors are mainly focused on helping students schedule their classes. As a student, I believe they can contribute to the resilience and success of students by building relationships with their students to ensure trust. This trust leads to students being comfortable and honest about their academic experience. When trust is ensured, advisors can play a major role in challenging and supporting students to build resilience and pointing to appropriate resources. Advisors

can help students build self-efficacy, realistically appraise their own strengths and weaknesses, encourage help-seeking tendencies, and provide clear linkages between academic success and future economic security (Morales, 2014). Even though universities have curriculums that they have to follow, it is important that they find ways to plan and strategize to ensure that students aren't being overloaded with assignments.

Conclusion

Self-regulation is very important especially during a pandemic because this is a time where academic resilience determines your success. Many students became their own teachers and found themselves spending additional hours trying to understand the materials. It is important that advisors, professors, and university see things from a student's perspective to understand how they can better serve and prepare us for success during a pandemic.

References

- Caruana, V., Clegg, S., Ploner, J. et al. (2011). Promoting students' 'resilient thinking' in diverse higher education learning environments. Birmingham: HE Academy Subject Ce
- Delen, E., & Liew, J. (2016). The use of interactive environments to promote self-regulation in online learning: A literature review. *European Journal of Contemporary Education*, 15(1), 24–33. doi: 10.13187/ejced.2016.15.24
- Glowiak, M. (2020, April 24). Why is self-care important? Southern New Hampshire University - On Campus & Online Degrees | SNHU. <https://www.snhu.edu/about-us/newsroom/2020/04/what-is-self-care>
- Liotine, A., & Magee, M. (2020, September). Student resilience during times of crisis. *Academic Advising Today*, 43(3).
- Morales, E. E. (2014). ERIC - EJ1067580 - Learning from success: How original research on academic resilience informs what college faculty can do to increase the retention of low socioeconomic status students, *International Journal of higher education*, 2014. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1067580>
- Nota, L., Soresi, S., & Zimmerman, B. J. (2004). Self-regulation and academic achievement and resilience: A longitudinal study. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 41(3), 198-215.
- Zimmerman, B. J. (2002). Becoming a self-regulated learner: An overview. *Theory Into Practice*, 41(2), 64-70.

Recommended Citation

Kazadi, C. B. (2021). Promoting self-regulation during a pandemic to stay academically resilient. *Made in Millersville Journal*, 2021. Retrieved from <https://www.mimjournal.com/paper-44>