

# Life Goals, Self-Determination and Perception of Ability in Romanian Undergraduate Students: Profile and Academic Performance

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## Abstract

Motivation, future aspirations and self-determination can regulate academic achievement in undergraduate students. In our explorational research we analyze the profile of 95 Romanian undergraduate students, enrolled at 4 different universities from Cluj-Napoca, in order to highlight the most important patterns, by applying Aspirations Index (AI), Self Determination Scale (SDS) and Ability Uncertainty Scale (AUS). We have also analyzed the academic performance curve considering the high school GPA average, the Baccalaureate score and different performance indicators from college (weighted GPA, credit points, number of failed exams, scholarship eligibility). Our results suggested that there is a systematic performance presentation in case of successful undergraduates, which pinpoints the relevance of continuity and formerly proved academic skills in the academic carrier. Ability uncertainty and motivational patterns also contoured some interesting variable associations in the context of academic achievement. Considering the motivational profile analysis, interestingly intrinsic life goals attainment and self-determinative behavior defined through freedom of choice and self-awareness, accompanied performance in a linear positive relationship only to a certain level. Top performer, scholarship eligible undergraduates' performance seems to associate with intrinsic aspirations inversely, although they longed for fame, they did not show much self-awareness. From our findings differentiated patterns emerged in the profile of Romanian undergraduate students, including possible risk factors. Thus, they open up the path for further investigations in the field of psychological interventions for undergraduates who face academic challenge.

## Keywords

undergraduate student, motivational profile, ability uncertainty, self-determination, life goals, academic achievement, performance indicators, prediction