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## The Relative Contributions of Learning Autonomy, Time Management, and Achievement Motivation in Predicting the Level of Academic Ambition Among Qassim University Students in Light of Sustainable Development

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### Abstract

The current study aimed to identify the level of learning autonomy, time management, achievement motivation, and academic ambition among Qassim University students in light of sustainable development. It also sought to identify the relative contributions of learning autonomy, time management, and achievement motivation in predicting the level of academic ambition among Qassim University students. In light of sustainable development, a random sample was selected from the study population. The study used the correlational descriptive method, and data was collected through scales (learning autonomy, time management, achievement motivation, and academic ambition) prepared by the researchers. The study investigated autonomy, time management, and achievement motivation levels and their predictive power for academic ambition in the case of Qassim University students ( $N = 218$ ). Very high levels were found on all the variables: learning autonomy ( $M = 93.56$ ), time management ( $M = 84.20$ ), achievement motivation ( $M = 148.40$ ), and academic ambition ( $M = 89.23$ ). Time management also emerged as the most potent predictor ( $\beta = 1.053$ ) of academic ambition with 97.2% variance, followed by aspects of achievement motivation: desire for success (0.7%) and persistence (0.5%) through multiple regression analysis. While positively correlated ( $r = 0.389$ ), autonomy in learning failed to be a significant predictor of academic ambition.

**Keywords:** Sustainable Development, Learning Independence, Time Management, Achievement Motivation, Academic Ambition.

### Introduction

#### Ambition and Sustainable Development:

Sustainable development is regarded as one of humanity's foremost concerns in the twenty-first century. Its significance is evident in establishing a crucial equilibrium between the requirements of the present generation and those of future generations. This notion, originating in the late twentieth century, has become a pivotal element in governmental policies and international initiatives, embodying a prospective vision to guarantee economic and social development sustainability while safeguarding the environment and natural resources (Purvis, 2019).

Al-Hasnawi et al. (2019) pointed to the importance of sustainable development as a significant means of reducing the gap between developed and developing countries. It plays a key role in reducing economic dependency outside the state framework, protecting the natural environment, distributing production fairly, improving individual living standards, promoting social justice,

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providing capital, creating job opportunities and eliminating unemployment in developing countries, advancing the service reality of the people, reducing illiteracy rates, raising the level of education, and raising the level of national income in general.

Sustainable development provides students with objectives and the capacity to effectuate positive change, enhancing their motivation for academic achievement and societal contributions. Sustainable development and students' academic aspirations are directly correlated, each capable of enhancing the other. Suppose universities and educational institutions promote sustainable thinking and actions. In that case, they may foster a generation of graduates capable of advancing their academic and professional domains in a sustainable and advantageous manner for society. When students recognize their potential contribution to sustainable development, they may be inspired to intensify their academic and research endeavors to effectuate positive change globally (**Zwolińska et al., 2022**)

The degree of ambition is positively correlated with psychological reassurance among students. Psychological reassurance is crucial for individuals, facilitating compatibility, harmony, and integration of their personality traits in both mental and emotional dimensions. The degree of ambition significantly influences both individual lives and society, as it is a crucial determinant affecting human endeavors for the future (**Hbash, 2023**).

The ambition also contributes to the mental health of individuals and their orientation toward the future, providing them with a safe, educational environment that qualifies them for a good education in light of sustainable development. The study of Obaid & Suleiman (2016) confirmed that developing the level of ambition is positively associated with an increased level of psychological happiness, and that a high level of ambition is accompanied by improved psychological state; as ambition means pursuing goals and achieving hopes and aspirations.

Studies such as Belaishoush et al. (2018) and Mohammed (2017) indicate a negative relationship between future anxiety and the level of ambition. The absence or weakness of ambition leads to pessimism, anxiety, and fear of the future. Pessimism is also negatively associated with the level of ambition, as in the study of Mansouri et al. (2017).

By examining the variables related to the level of ambition, Bakir's study (2018) indicated that the greater the cognitive motivation in learning, the higher the level of ambition.

Learning autonomy encourages students to have confidence in themselves and their ability to achieve success, critical thinking, and increased curiosity. When students learn to develop self-learning skills and search for knowledge independently, they become more prepared for academic challenges, positively affecting their academic ambitions. Learning autonomy enables students to develop skills to find creative solutions to academic problems. This can increase the possibility of achieving outstanding academic achievements.

Effective time management enhances productivity, enables students to accomplish more academic objectives in a shorter duration, and alleviates stress and tension. University students proficient in time management are more adept at completing academic tasks, enhancing their academic ambition. Effective time management enables students to attain equilibrium among academic pursuits, personal life, and social engagements. This sustains their aspiration for intellectual achievement (**Galaviz, 2025**).

Motivation is seen as a pivotal aspect in academic desire. It enhances commitment and perseverance to study and, hence, facilitates exceptional academic accomplishments. Students

with a robust ambition and passion for success are more willing to exert effort and surmount academic obstacles, fostering a commitment to lifelong study beyond university (**Weiler & Murad, 2022**).

Learning autonomy, good time management, and achievement motivation are three interconnected factors that contribute significantly to enhancing academic ambition among university students. These factors enhance the ability to achieve academic success and excellence in the fields of study and research and enable students to achieve their personal and professional goals more effectively.

### **Research Problem**

Learning and achieving academic goals is one of the important challenges university students face. Learning autonomy, time management, and achievement motivation are important factors affecting students' ability to achieve their academic ambitions. This study will explore the relationship of these factors to the level of academic ambition among university students.

In the university environment, students may face significant challenges in achieving their academic goals, as they have to develop practical learning skills, manage their time well, and maintain their motivation to achieve academic success. Based on this context, the research problem focuses on investigating how learning autonomy, time management, and motivation affect the level of academic ambition among university students.

The proposed study focuses on this, as it addresses the relative contribution of each of / the extent to which learning autonomy, time management, and achievement motivation can predict the level of academic ambition in light of sustainable development. The researchers aim to provide scientific solutions that support sustainable development goals. Enhancing the level of ambition and studying the variables that may contribute to its occurrence provides a good education for individuals, which contributes to the progress, prosperity, and increased productivity of society.

The problem of the current study is determined by answering the following questions:

- 1- What is the level of learning autonomy among Qassim University students?
- 2- What is the level of time management among Qassim University students?
- 3- What is the level of achievement motivation among Qassim University students?
- 4- What is the level of academic ambition among Qassim University students?
- 5- What are the relative contributions of learning autonomy, time management, and achievement motivation in predicting the level of academic ambition among Qassim University students?

### **Study Objectives**

The current study aims to identify the following:

1. The level of learning autonomy, time management, achievement motivation, and academic ambition among Qassim University students
2. The relative contributions of learning autonomy, time management, and achievement motivation in predicting the level of academic ambition among Qassim University students.

## **Importance of the Study**

The current study's importance stems from the subject it addresses, which is the level of academic ambition among Qassim University students. The researchers examined three basic variables in this study: learning autonomy, time management, and achievement motivation. The importance of the study can be highlighted as follows:

### **First: Theoretical Importance:**

- Providing the Arab library with a scientific study in a specialized field of educational psychology.
- The current research results contribute to those interested in the educational process by understanding the effect of learning autonomy, time management, and achievement motivation on the level of academic ambition.
- The importance of the variables the study addresses and the nature of the expected relationship between them.
- Drawing researchers' attention to the importance of studying the variables (learning autonomy, time management, achievement motivation, and academic ambition), as the researchers could not obtain studies that combined them.

### **Second: Practical Importance**

- Revealing the relationship between learning autonomy, time management, achievement motivation, and the level of academic ambition may result in educational and counseling implications that increase the insight of educators, teachers, those responsible for the educational process, as well as psychological counselors about the factors that lead to increasing the level of academic ambition, and thus designing counseling programs to raise the level of academic ambition among university students.

The results of the current study may benefit those working in the youth sector who are building programs to develop learning autonomy, time management skills, achievement motivation, and academic ambition, address negative thoughts, and challenge the pressures they face.

## **Literature Review**

Academic ambition is one of the most effective indicators for tracking educational advancement at national levels and among students. Studies show that academic ambition represents a student's desire to achieve elevated educational and professional goals that develop through various motivational, cognitive, and behavioral elements (Amida et al., 2020). Research demonstrates that academic ambition can be predicted from learning autonomy, time management, and achievement motivation. These variables are based on the self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), which is centered around the fundamental psychological requirements for competence, relatedness, and autonomy.

The learner exhibiting learning autonomy takes ownership of their learning process by setting goals while tracking their progress and providing necessary resources independently (Soe et al., 2025). Empirical findings attest that learning environments that promote student autonomy yield higher student engagement and academic performance (Soe et al., 2025). The universal psychological need for autonomy activates intrinsic motivation and student engagement based on the Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Grolnick et al. (1997) and

Niemiec and Ryan (2009) carried out research that demonstrated that students provided with autonomy support become internally more motivated and have higher academic ambitions.

In addition, Froiland et al. (2012) and Jang et al. (2009) attest that autonomy-supportive instructional practices are associated with greater academic attainment and interest in learning different subjects. In Eastern learning cultures, including Myanmar, where autonomy was less valued in the past, the current move towards constructivist approaches has re-established autonomy as an important element for academic growth (Soe et al., 2025). Intrinsic motivation: Students will be more inclined to set and strive for difficult goals (Howard et al., 2021).

Time management involves effectively distributing study activities, prioritization, and realistic scheduling. Students who manage time more effectively have been found to have higher academic achievement and motivation (Amida et al., 2020; Britton & Tesser, 1991). Effective time management positively correlates with reduced stress and academic procrastination, thus enabling the sustenance of academic aspiration in the long run (Eilam & Aharon, 2003). Amida et al. (2020) also discovered that graduate students who were effective time managers also had greater career aspirations, linking it to continued academic aspirations.

According to Makiah and Nusron (2025), management skills demonstrate a positive correlation with the goal clarity and persistence levels of university students. Students who manage their time efficiently successfully complete their work and maintain their motivation and drive. Academic burnout destroys ambition and performance at large, but time management skills act as a protective measure (Macan et al., 1990).

Student achievement motivation expresses itself through extreme desires to improve their academic performance and stands as one of the most dependable indicators of student ambition (Elliot & McGregor, 2001). Al-Saud and Al-Mutairi (2020) found achievement motivation, when used in combination with student-centered techniques, to be a driving factor in sustainable educational development. Academic success operates as both the motivation force and the result of either achievement, which sustains ambition while ambition fuels academic achievement.

Academic aspiration shows results as an intermediate connection between time management and autonomy when studied as separate units. For instance, Soe et al. According to (Soe et al. Soe et al. (2025) found that students with stronger achievement motivation demonstrate greater science and mathematics engagement regardless of the influence on national goals. Developing interventions to reach a consensus would benefit from knowing what type of achievement motivation (intrinsic or extrinsic) Ryan and Deci (2020) found most prevalent among individuals.

According to Soe et al., SDG 4 is a foundational pillar of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals by advocating for inclusive and equitable quality education. Education systems that unite autonomy with motivation and efficient learning approaches in their practices will establish long-term student learning results, as stated by Soe et al. (2025). Students who learn self-regulatory skills like time management and develop intrinsic motivation become active developers of the future.

Sustainability benefits from motivational constructs of autonomy and achievement because these factors enable self-led education and extended educational plans for adapting to future market changes (Vansteenkiste et al., 2005).

## **Study Methodology and Procedures**

Study Methodology: The current study followed the descriptive correlational approach for its suitability to the study objectives.

## **Study Limitations**

- Subject limitation: The current study addressed the following three variables (learning autonomy, time management, achievement motivation, and academic ambition)
- Spatial limitation: The study was limited to Qassim University.
- Human limitation: Qassim University students.
- Time limitation: The study tools were applied in the academic year 1445 AH.

## **Study Population**

The study population consists of Qassim University students for the year 1445 AH.

## **Study Sample**

Main Sample: It consisted of (218) male students from Qassim University in the colleges of Medicine - Pharmacy - Computer - Economics and Administration - Science - Applied Medical Sciences - Engineering - Sharia and Islamic Studies - Arabic Language and Social Studies. The sample included students from the first level to the seventh level and was distributed according to college, academic specialization, and level. The three scales were applied to them, and they were selected randomly.

## **Study Procedures**

### **Research Tools**

In the current research, the following tools were used:

- 1- Learning Autonomy Scale prepared by the researchers.

The current scale was prepared after reviewing previous research and studies that were available for review and the tools that were used in them, especially studies by (Biggs, J., Kember, D., & Leung, D. Y. 2001), (Paris, S. G., & Paris, A. H. 2001), (Zimmerman, B. J. 2008), (Cleary, T. J., & K), (Zimmerman, B. J. 2004), (Bei.et al.2020), (Higgs., 1988), (Nardo, 2017).

In light of this, (19) statements were identified and formulated. The scale statements are answered through a five-point response gradient starting with "does not apply to me at all" and ending with "applies to me completely" to correspond to the scores (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) respectively. All statements are positively oriented, so the high score indicates a high level of learning autonomy.

### **Psychometric Efficiency of the Scale**

#### **A) Scale Validity:**

The validity of the scale was verified through the validity of the arbitrators, as it was presented to (10) specialists, who were asked to express their opinions about it. The arbitrators provided valuable observations that benefited the research, enriched the scale, and helped produce it well. All statements received all arbitrators' agreement with some wording modifications.

**Psychometric Characteristics of the Learning Autonomy Scale****Internal Consistency:**

The internal consistency of the scale statements was verified by calculating correlation coefficients between each statement's scores and the scale's total score after removing the statement score. The correlation coefficients are shown in the following table:

Statement	Correlation	Statement	Correlation
1	0.822**	6	0.852**
2	0.509**	7	0.819**
3	0.596**	8	0.489**
4	0.554**	9	0.802**
5	0.562**	10	0.489**
11	0.656**	16	0.710**
12	0.511**	17	0.568**
13	0.326**	18	0.767**
14	0.426**	19	0.379**
15	0.326**	—	—

Table 1. Correlation Coefficients Between Scale Statement Scores and the Total Scale Score

*Significant at the 0.01 level*

The previous table shows that the correlation coefficients between the scores of scale statements and the total scale score are all positive correlation coefficients and statistically significant at the level of 0.01, which confirms the consistency and homogeneity of the scale statements among themselves and their coherence with each other.

**Reliability**

The reliability of the scale scores was verified using Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient. The reliability coefficient value was 0.873, which confirms that the scale scores have high and statistically acceptable reliability coefficients. From the above, it is clear that the scale has good statistical indicators (validity, reliability), which confirms its suitability for use in the current research.

***Second Scale:*** Achievement Motivation Scale Prepared by the Researchers

The current scale was prepared after reviewing previous research, available studies, and the tools used in them.

In light of this, (34) statements were identified and formulated. The scale statements are answered through a five-point response gradient starting with "does not apply to me at all" and ending with "applies to me completely" to correspond to the scores (1, 2, 3, 4, 5), respectively. All statements are positively oriented so that the high score indicates high achievement motivation.

**Psychometric Characteristics of the Achievement Motivation Scale:****Internal Consistency**

The internal consistency of the scale statements was verified by calculating correlation

coefficients between the scores of each statement and the total score of the dimension to which the statement belongs after removing the statement score from the dimension score. The correlation coefficients are shown in the following table:

Desire to Achieve Success and Excellence		Self-Reliance and Independence		Self-Confidence		Perseverance		Academic Ambition	
Statement	Corr.	Statement	Corr.	Statement	Corr.	Statement	Corr.	Statement	Corr.
1	0.784**	8	0.646**	1	0.196	1	0.467**	1	0.818**
2	0.616**	9	0.571**	2	0.555**	2	0.667**	2	0.737**
3	0.422**	10	0.492**	3	0.603**	3	0.466**	3	0.528**
4	0.139	11	0.724**	4	0.907**			4	0.737**
5	0.525**	12	0.795**	5	0.708**	4	0.687**	5	0.818**
6	0.103			6	0.691**			6	0.415**
7	0.795**	13	0.370**	7	0.800**	5	0.669**	7	0.706**
				8	0.791**				

Table 2.

Correlation coefficients between scale statement scores and the total score of the dimension to which the statement belongs

*Significant at the 0.01 level*

It is clear from the previous table that the correlation coefficients between the scale statement scores and the total score of the dimension to which the statement belongs after removing the statement score from the dimension are all positive and statistically significant at the level of 0.01, which confirms the consistency and homogeneity of the statements of each dimension among themselves and their coherence with each other, except for statements 4, 6 in the first dimension, and statement 1 in the second dimension. Therefore, these were removed from the final version used in the current research.

The consistency and homogeneity of the scale dimensions with each other were also verified by calculating the correlation coefficients between the score of each dimension of the scale and the total score of the scale after removing the dimension score, as shown in Table (3):

<b>Desire to Achieve Success and Excellence</b>	<b>Self-Reliance and Independence</b>	<b>Self-Confidence</b>	<b>Perseverance</b>
0.956**	0.946**	0.828**	0.941**

Table 3.

Correlation coefficients between scale dimension scores and the total scale score

*Significant at the 0.01 level*

It is clear from the previous table that the correlation coefficients between scale dimension scores and the total scale score after removing the dimension score are all positive correlation coefficients and statistically significant at the level of 0.01, which confirms the consistency and homogeneity of the scale dimensions among themselves and their coherence with each other.

### **Reliability**

The reliability of the scale scores was verified using Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient. The reliability coefficients of the scale scores and their sub-dimensions are shown in Table (4):

<b>Desire to Achieve Success and Excellence</b>	<b>Self-Reliance and Independence</b>	<b>Self-Confidence</b>	<b>Perseverance</b>	<b>The Scale as a Whole</b>
0.805	0.810	0.739	0.770	0.932

Table 4. Reliability Coefficients of the Scale Scores and Their Sub-Dimensions

The table clearly shows that the reliability coefficients of the scale scores and its sub-dimensions are high and statistically acceptable. The above demonstrates that the scale has good statistical indicators (validity, reliability), which confirms its suitability for use in the current research.

### **Third Measure: Time Management Scale Prepared by the Researchers**

The current scale was prepared after reviewing previous research and studies that were available for review and the tools used in them, especially studies such as (Laurie-ann Michelle Hellsten, 1999), (Karl G. Nelson 2003), (Roland John Rios, B.S., M.A. 2002), (Inchul Soh, 2003), (Krista P. Smith Terry 2002).

In light of this, (18) statements were identified and formulated. The scale statements are answered through a five-point response gradient starting with "does not apply to me at all" and ending with "applies to me completely" to correspond to the scores (1, 2, 3, 4, 5), respectively. All statements are positively oriented, so the high score indicates a high level of time management.

### **Psychometric Characteristics of the Time Management Scale:**

Internal Consistency:

The internal consistency of the scale statements was verified by calculating correlation coefficients between each statement's scores and the scale's total score after removing the statement score. The correlation coefficients are shown in the following table:

Statement	Correlation	Statement	Correlation	Statement	Correlation	Statement	Correlation
1	0.311**	6	0.422**	11	0.604**	16	0.311**
2	0.422**	7	0.094	12	0.721**	17	0.352**
3	0.701**	8	0.458**	13	0.428**	18	0.701**
4	0.422**	9	0.094	14	0.422**	19	0.422**
5	0.555**	10	0.721**	15	0.721**		

Table 5.

### Correlation Coefficients Between Scale Statement Scores and the Total Scale Score

*Significant at the 0.01 level*

It is clear from the previous table that the correlation coefficients between the scale statement scores and the total scale score are all positive correlation coefficients and statistically significant at the level of 0.01, which confirms the consistency and homogeneity of the scale statements among themselves and their coherence with each other, except for statements 7 and 9. Therefore, they were removed from the final version used in the current research.

### Reliability

The reliability of the scale scores was verified using Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient. The reliability coefficient value was 0.834, which confirms that the scale scores have high-reliability coefficients and are statistically acceptable. From the above, it is evident that the scale has good statistical indicators (validity, reliability), which confirms its suitability for use in the current research.

### Fourth scale: Academic Ambition Scale Prepared by the Researchers

The current scale was prepared after reviewing previous research, available studies, and the tools used in them. In light of this, (20) statements were identified and formulated. The scale statements are answered through a five-point response gradient starting with "does not apply to me at all" and ending with "applies to me completely" to correspond to the scores (1, 2, 3, 4, 5), respectively. All statements are positively oriented, so the high score indicates high academic ambition.

### Psychometric Characteristics of the Academic Ambition Scale:

#### Internal Consistency:

The internal consistency of the scale statements was verified by calculating correlation coefficients between each statement's scores and the scale's total score after removing the statement score. The correlation coefficients are shown in the following table:

Statement	Correlation	Statement	Correlation	Statement	Correlation	Statement	Correlation
1	0.495**	6	0.495**	11	0.094	16	0.445**
2	0.709**	7	0.547**	12	0.709**	17	0.709**
3	0.307**	8	0.422**	13	0.594**	18	0.307**
4	0.495**	9	0.116	14	0.766**	19	0.495**
5	0.642**	10	0.436**	15	0.364**	20	0.495**

Table 6.

Correlation coefficients between scale statement scores and the total scale score

*Significant at the 0.01 level*

It is clear from the previous table that the correlation coefficients between the scale statement scores and the total scale score are all positive correlation coefficients and statistically significant at the level of 0.01, which confirms the consistency and homogeneity of the scale statements among themselves and their coherence with each other, except for statements 9 and 11. Therefore, they were removed from the final version used in the current research.

### **Reliability**

The reliability of the scale scores was verified using Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient. The reliability coefficient value was 0.848, which confirms that the scale scores have high-reliability coefficients and are statistically acceptable. From the above, it is evident that the scale has good statistical indicators (validity, reliability), which confirms its suitability for use in the current research.

### **Statistical Methods Used**

To verify the psychometric conditions of the questionnaire used in the current research, the following were used:

- 1- Alpha-Cronbach reliability coefficient to ensure reliability.
- 2- Pearson Correlation coefficient to ensure internal homogeneity.

To answer the research questions, the following statistical methods were used:

- One Sample T-Test to answer the first, second, third, and fourth questions.
- Pearson Correlation coefficient to answer the fifth question.
- Multiple Regression Analysis using the Stepwise method to answer the sixth question.

### **Findings**

#### **Results related to the first four questions:**

1. What is the level of learning autonomy among Qassim University students?
2. -What is the level of time management among Qassim University students?
3. What is the level of motivation for achievement among Qassim University students?
4. What is the level of academic ambition among Qassim University students?

A t-test was used to compare the average responses of the research sample individuals on each scale with a hypothetical average. The hypothetical average was equal to  $(3 \times \text{number of statements})$ . Based on that, the results were as shown in table (7):

Variable	Number of Statements	Hypothetical Mean	Actual Mean	Standard Deviation	T-value	Degree of Achievement
<b>Learning Autonomy</b>	19	57	93.558	4.626	73.283**	Very High
<b>Time Management</b>	17	51	84.198	1.890	162.887*	Very High
<b>Academic Ambition</b>	18	54	89.233	1.926	169.632*	Very High
<b>Achievement Motivation</b>						
• Desire to Achieve Success and Excellence	11	33	54.384	1.481	133.934*	Very High
• Self-Reliance and Independence	7	21	34.570	1.153	109.103*	Very High
• Self-Confidence	5	15	24.791	0.596	152.242*	Very High
• Perseverance	7	21	34.651	0.991	127.701*	Very High
<b>Total Achievement Motivation Score</b>	30	90	148.395	3.933	137.704*	Very High

Table 7.

Significance of differences between actual and hypothetical means for the variables of learning autonomy, time management, achievement motivation, and academic ambition level

(degree of freedom = 85)\*\*

It is clear from the previous table (7) that:

There are statistically significant differences at a confidence level of 0.01 between the hypothetical and actual means of the research sample individuals' responses in all variables under study, and the differences favor the actual mean. This confirms that the levels of learning autonomy, time management, achievement motivation, and academic ambition are very high among the research sample individuals.

Regarding the high level of academic ambition in the study sample, this result agrees with what was indicated by the results of Salam, H. & Ibrahim (2017) and Al-Kaabi (2021) studies, which indicated a high level of academic ambition among university students. Perhaps what explains this is that the high level of academic ambition reflects the students' willingness to take responsibility and aspire to excellence, which contributes to raising the quality of the university's educational outputs and enhances its reputation among local and international universities, as well as the efficiency of academic and psychological counseling programs in supporting students to achieve a positive balance between their ambitions and abilities. Additionally, a supportive university environment in terms of academic programs, facilities, and technology contributes to raising the level of ambition among students (Alkire, 2019). In addition, the academic ambition of Saudi students is influenced by labor market expectations and Vision 2030, where ambition reflects students' desire for excellence and contribution to achieving national development. We should not forget family support and its central role in shaping students' academic ambition, where family appreciation for their academic achievements is considered a strong motivator (Al-Jahni, 2020)

The researchers attribute the result of the high level of academic ambition to the availability of an educational environment that encourages and motivates students to strive towards achieving goals, creativity, and excellence, and the presence of a competitive environment that motivates students to exert more effort and work to achieve academic successes. Additionally, there is a high level of awareness among students about the importance of success in the academic field, including educational achievement, to achieve their future professional and social goals

Furthermore, continuous family support and encouragement and enhancing self-confidence in their children generate in them the desire to plan and the ability to set goals and strive towards achieving them. Since the family plays a prominent role in raising the level of ambition of their children, this pushes them towards more success and provides all possibilities. Additionally, students' desire to obtain suitable and prestigious job opportunities increases their academic ambition.

Dairo et al. (2023) pointed out that students' strong motivations and desire to achieve goals, good time management, and setting priorities positively contribute to facing pressures and challenges. Students who have a strong motivation or urgent need to achieve goals can overcome the difficulties and obstacles they face. The results of the current study agree with the findings of previous studies in terms of the availability of a high level of learning autonomy.

This may be due to the university's provision of services and programs for self-learning, blended learning, and e-learning, which allow students to learn at a pace that suits them; this is consistent with what Deci & Ryan (1985) indicated, where learning environment that focuses on academic freedom and self-responsibility enhances student autonomy, as autonomy arises from students' sense of competence and ability to make their educational decisions; this is supported by the design of educational programs at Qassim University that allow flexibility in choosing specializations and educational paths. The results of the current study also agree in terms of the availability of a high level of time management with the findings of previous studies.

The researcher explains the high achievement motivation among the study sample to the effect of using technology in education, which helps improve time management skills among students (Claessens, Van Eerde, Rutte, & Roe, 2007). Academic pressures may also play a role in this in terms of the nature of university curricula and the multiplicity of academic duties that motivate students to develop effective strategies for time management (Macan, 1994).

Britton and Tesser (1991) emphasize that the presence of flexible educational systems and guidance programs that support self-regulation skills enhances students' ability to balance studies and daily life, which contributes to developing time management skills among students.

**Result related to the Fifth Question:** Is there a statistically significant correlation between each (learning autonomy, time management, and achievement motivation) and academic ambition among Qassim University students?" To answer this question, the Pearson correlation coefficient was used to verify the significance of relationships between academic ambition and variables (learning autonomy, time management, and achievement motivation). The results were as shown in the following:

Significance Level	Academic Ambition (Correlation Coefficient)	Variable
0.01	0.389	Learning Autonomy
0.01	0.986	Time Management
0.01	0.892	Desire to Achieve Success and Excellence
0.01	0.787	Self-Reliance and Independence (Achievement Motivation)
0.01	0.616	Self-Confidence
0.01	0.930	Perseverance
0.01	0.895	Total Achievement Motivation Score

Table 8. Significance Of Relationships Between (Learning Autonomy, Time Management, Achievement Motivation) And Academic Ambition Level

Table (8) clearly shows statistically significant positive relationships between academic ambition and learning autonomy, time management, and achievement motivation. The strongest of these relationships was with the time management variable, and the weakest was with learning autonomy.

The results of the current study indicate a significant positive correlation between academic ambition and time management. Academic ambition is a key motivator that drives students to achieve their educational and professional goals. At the same time, time management is a vital skill that helps them efficiently organize their academic and personal activities. Students who have good time management skills tend to achieve higher levels of academic ambition, which positively reflects on their academic performance and educational achievement

Time management is also considered an essential skill that helps students prioritize academic tasks and plan to achieve goals. Academic ambition generates strong motivation for students to use time effectively to achieve academic goals such as academic excellence. In addition to what Dairo et al. (2023) indicated, students' strong motivations and desire to achieve goals, good time management, and setting priorities positively contribute to facing pressures and challenges. Students with a strong motivation or urgent need to achieve goals can stand against their difficulties and obstacles. The results of the current study also revealed a positive correlation between academic ambition and achievement motivation among the study sample.

Students with high academic ambition show higher levels of achievement motivation, as ambition drives them to work hard and diligently and use effective strategies to achieve their academic goals (Elliot & Dweck, 2005). Ambition also forms a main incentive that enhances

achievement motivation, thereby contributing to building a clear vision for the academic future and increasing the effort to reach these goals (Pintrich, 2003).

Academic ambition reflects the extent of an individual's desire to achieve high-level educational or professional goals. At the same time, achievement motivation expresses the internal forces that drive the individual to work hard to achieve success or excellence in their field.

The results of the current study also revealed a positive correlation between academic ambition and learning autonomy. Students with high academic ambition tend to adopt independent learning strategies as they seek to develop their skills and knowledge in ways that go beyond basic academic requirements. They are more prepared to set ambitious academic goals and work towards achieving them, given their ability to effectively organize their time and use educational resources.

Therefore, students who enjoy a high learning autonomy often have higher academic ambitions because they can determine their academic goals and work to achieve them effectively. Learning autonomy encourages students to trust themselves and their ability to achieve success, critical thinking, and increase curiosity. When students learn how to develop self-learning skills and search for knowledge independently, they become more prepared for academic challenges, which positively affects their academic ambition and enables them to develop skills to search for creative solutions to academic problems. This can increase the possibility of achieving outstanding academic achievements.

**Results related to the Sixth Question:** The sixth question of the current research states: "What are the relative contributions of learning autonomy, time management, and achievement motivation in predicting the level of academic ambition among Qassim University students?" To answer this question, multiple regression analysis was used with the stepwise method to predict academic ambition as a dependent variable through learning autonomy, time management, and achievement motivation as independent variables. The F-ratio value for the regression variance analysis reached 1652.871, which is a statistically significant value at a significance level of 0.01 and degrees of freedom (3, 82), confirming the substantiality of the independent variables in predicting the level of academic ambition among Qassim University students. The results of the regression analysis were as shown in table (9):

Predictors	B	Beta	Standard Error	t-value	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Change in R <sup>2</sup>
<b>Regression Constant</b>	4.309	—	1.324	3.255**	0.992	0.984	0.972
<b>Time Management</b>	1.073 <sup>1</sup>	1.053**	0.051	20.869**	—	—	—
<b>Achievement Motivation:</b> Desire to Achieve Success and Excellence	0.316 <sup>2</sup>	0.243	0.052	6.107**	—	—	0.007
<b>Achievement Motivation:</b> Perseverance	0.340 <sup>3</sup>	0.175	0.068	4.974**	—	—	0.005

Table 9.

Predicting the level of academic ambition through learning autonomy, time management, and achievement motivation among Qassim University students

It is clear from the results of table (9) that the significant variables in predicting the level of academic ambition among Qassim University students are, in order, time management, followed by the desire to achieve success and excellence, and perseverance as dimensions of achievement motivation. The value of the multiple correlation coefficient  $R$  reached 0.992, which is a statistically significant value at a significance level of 0.01, while the value of the squared multiple correlation coefficient reached 0.984, which confirms the very high contributions of time management and achievement motivation in predicting the level of academic ambition, where 98.4% of the variance in the level of ambition can be predicted through the significant independent variables in prediction. The prediction equation can be formulated as follows:

$$\text{Academic ambition} = 4.309 + 1.073 \times \text{Time management} + 0.316 \times \text{Desire to achieve excellence and success} + 0.340 \times \text{Perseverance}$$

It is noted from the previous results that the highest contribution to prediction was for the time management variable, which contributes to explaining about 97.2% of the total variance in the level of ambition. In comparison, the desire to achieve success and excellence explains about 0.7% of this variance, and perseverance explains about 0.5%. Despite the weak contributions of the desire to achieve excellence and success and the contributions of perseverance compared to time management, they were substantial and statistically significant at a significance level of 0.01. It is also noted from the previous results that no significant contributions of learning autonomy appeared in predicting the level of academic ambition.

The dominance of time management in explaining a large amount of variance compared to the desire to achieve excellence, success, and perseverance may be because time management is considered the final product of motivational variables. An increase in the level of achievement motivation is followed by an increase in the individual's skills in time management, which is the same reason that can explain the non-appearance of significant contributions of learning autonomy in predicting the level of ambition, as the variable of time management is one of the most important indicators of learning autonomy. Despite the logic of the previous explanations from the researcher's point of view and the existence of some results of previous studies that confirm them, these explanations are research gaps that need more research efforts to explore more deeply.

The table in the image shows correlation values between variables and academic ambition, with significance levels of 0.01 for all relationships. Time management has the highest correlation (0.986), followed by perseverance (0.930), desire to achieve success and excellence (0.892), total score (0.895), self-reliance and independence (0.787), self-confidence (0.616), and learning autonomy (0.389).

## Discussion of the Results

Qassim University students' empirical evidence revealed strong correlations between time management, learning autonomy, academic ambition, and achievement motivation. The study's findings are consistent with the literature but introduce new data that corroborates Saudi Arabia's sustainable development model in higher education. Students recorded very high levels on all the variables measured as articulated through learning autonomy ( $M = 93.56$ ), time management ( $M = 84.20$ ), achievement motivation ( $M = 148.40$ ), and academic ambition ( $M = 89.23$ ). The study's findings reveal that internal academic motivators greatly shape the sense of direction

among university students toward the future and ambition levels.

Time management is found to be the main driver of academic aspirations, as suggested by the findings of the research. The regression analysis results showed that time management explained 97.2% of the variation in academic aspirations ( $\beta = 1.053$ ), supporting previous empirical research. A study conducted by Makiah and Nusron (2025) demonstrated that improving time management skills significantly enhances the clarity of college students' goals and persistence, indicating that time management is a valuable strategy and an academic motivational psychological tool. Further, Amida et al. (2020) established a significant relationship between career commitment and the implementation of time management because effective management of time results in increased commitment toward future careers. A study by Britton and Tesser (1991), in conjunction with Macan et al. (1990), showed that effective time management leads to better academic functioning while decreasing procrastination and stress, influencing academic motivation and aspiration. The robust predictive power of time management demonstrated in this study brings regional validity to findings recognized across the globe.

The study finds evidence to support Galaviz (2025) and Claessens et al. (2007), who demonstrated how time management protects against academic burnout. Time management is a fundamental necessity at Qassim University because students need to maintain academic success while following Saudi Vision 2030 development goals through their scholarly ambitions.

The function of achievement motivation—specifically the subdimensions defined by the "desire to achieve success and excellence" and "perseverance"—were found to be statistically significant predictors, though at a much lower strength compared to time management, adding 0.7% and 0.5% to the explained variance, respectively. The findings are aligned with motivational theories, such as McClelland's (1961) achievement theory and Deci and Ryan's (2000) self-determination theory, which posit intrinsic motivation and persistence as inherent factors for success. These findings are consistent with Elliot and McGregor (2001) and Weiler and Murad (2022), who explained achievement motivation as the driving force underlying the development of academic goals and the exertion of sustained effort. Notably, Pintrich (2003) noted that students with a strong achievement motivation are more likely to employ self-regulated learning strategies—a phenomenon reflected in the current study, where high-achieving students had better time management and goal-directed behavior.

Learning autonomy demonstrated a positive relationship with academic ambition ( $r = 0.389$ ) yet failed to reach significance as a predictive factor in the analysis. The research findings differ from those of Soe et al. (2025) and Vansteenkiste et al. (2005), who demonstrated that autonomy-supportive environments promote academic motivation and ambition robustly. This investigation offers a possible explanation for these results. Time management demonstrates operational aspects of learning autonomy and achievement motivation. The students who demonstrate autonomous learning tendencies choose structured time usage, which explains why learning autonomy becomes less influential after including time management in the model. The model supports Macan's (1994) theory about motivational systems by showing that proximal factors such as time management operate as intermediate variables that reduce the direct effect of global dispositions like autonomy.

The positive relationships between academic aspiration and the three predictors observed in this study agree with cultural research done in the Arab and Gulf regions. Al-Kaabi (2021) discovered that UAE university students' ambition strongly correlates with intrinsic motivation and external motivating factors, including family commitment and national development

narratives. According to Al-Jahni's (2020) research in Saudi Arabia, family support strongly affects student academic aspirations, thus matching the current study's findings on aspiration levels. The combination of internal psychological characteristics together with communal support leads students to demonstrate elevated academic aspirations. Education reforms under Vision 2030 have motivated students to succeed while dedicating their achievements to benefit society.

The research also confirms the hypothesis of Obaid and Suleiman (2016) that a higher degree of ambition positively affects psychological well-being and academic engagement. The very high mean scores on all the variables indicate an academic setting at Qassim University that concentrates not only on academic success but also on a vision-oriented, student-centered approach. This is also supported by Alkire (2019), who stated that institutional infrastructure, counseling services, and flexible academic planning significantly contribute to students' future planning and aspirations.

In terms of methodological correspondence, the employment of standardized instruments and conservative statistical tests (e.g., multiple regression and Pearson correlations) enhances the validity and comparability of the research with international research. Specifically, the Biggs et al. (2001) and Zimmerman (2008) scales employed are commensurate with measures employed in studies in Western and Asian contexts, thereby confirming the cross-cultural suitability of these psychological measures in a Saudi educational setting.

The research makes sustainable development its contextual framework, which stands apart from typical ambition studies. According to Zwolińska et al. (2022) and Purvis et al. (2019), the sustainable development goals (SDG 4 particularly) require education systems to deliver inclusive and equitable learning that supports continuous education throughout life. Student academic aspiration levels in this research study demonstrated greater depth because students recognize educational goals as essential societal objectives, which boosts their intrinsic motivation. The findings confirm Vansteenkiste et al. (2004) theory about societal-focused intrinsic goals leading to stable aspiration and motivational patterns.

However, the study also leaves opportunities for future investigation. The failure of learning autonomy to predict is worthy of closer investigation. Future studies could be assisted by examining mediating variables such as learning self-efficacy, affect control, or competence in online environments—variables that would condition the extent to which autonomy will manifest itself in concrete ambition. Also, since the present study sampled only male students from Qassim University, a similar study with a more gender-diverse or balanced sample from several Saudi Arabian universities would be useful in ascertaining whether the observed findings hold true on a more general level.

In brief, the present research has a useful contribution to both theoretical and applied domains in educational psychology. It underscores the inherent importance of time management in promoting academic aspirations, legitimates the facilitatory but comparatively subaltern roles of achievement motivation and learning autonomy, and places these interactions within the broader context of sustainable higher education development. The findings confirm the theoretical presuppositions of self-determination theory and achievement motivation and yield significant practical ramifications for academic advisors, policy-makers, and course designers interested in improving student performance and engagement in university settings.

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