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Influences Impacting Secondary Student Attendance

A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

BY THE COMMITTEE CONSISTING OF

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to reveal the relationship between student academic self-efficacy, cost and task value beliefs in education as it relates to student attendance. Previous research has linked absenteeism to educational outcomes (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012; Chang & Romero, 2008; Ready, 2010). Participants were selected using purposeful sampling from two public high schools in Oklahoma City Public Schools. The sample included 202 students, with 24 participants from U.S. Grant High School and 178 from Capitol Hill High School, both located on the south side of Oklahoma City. The schools serve predominantly Hispanic student populations with a substantial proportion of English Language Learners (approximately 50%). This study examines the relationship between self-efficacy, task value, perceived cost, and student absenteeism based on the following questions: Is absenteeism related to self-efficacy, task value, and perceived cost? To what extent do task value, self-efficacy, and perceived cost predict absenteeism? The implications of this study could be far more than solely for educational research, but also for potential policy and practice. This research could be linked to current and future research in order to design more relevant and engaging curricula tied to students' interests, goals, and cultural background—to increase self-efficacy, value, and cost. The results provide evidence that self-efficacy and several task value constructs were significant predictors of unexcused absences, whereas perceived cost variables were associated with total absenteeism. The findings indicate that students' self-beliefs, perceptions of task value, and perceived costs may contribute to shaping attendance behaviors.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Classroom observations suggest that low self-efficacy may reduce student motivation and attendance. In order to establish applicable and effective strategies school leaders can use to increase student attendance in low-SES minority populations, a study on the factors associated with absenteeism needs to be done. I propose that self-efficacy and perceived value of education are related to attendance among minority students. Rooted in prior work, absenteeism is strongly associated with educational outcomes (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012; Chang & Romero, 2008; Ready, 2010). Likewise, student self-efficacy (Alivernini & Lucidi, 2011; Santos, 2016; Van Beek, 2019) and expectancy-value (Beymer et al., 2022; Chen & Usher, 2015; Eccles et al., 1983; Eccles & Wigfield, 2024; Parr, 2015) also are associated with educational outcomes. Researchers have found that self-efficacy greatly influences motivation, specifically intrinsic motivation, and have linked motivation and self-efficacy as factors linked with attendance (Ryan & Deci, 2000a & 2000b, & Bianchi, 2022). External factors such as socioeconomic status (Alivernini & Lucidi; 2011; Pittenger, 2021; Woullard-Wilder, 2020), parental involvement (Gonzalez, 2005; Gutman et al., 2000), cultural barriers and language learning (Cerna et al., 2009; Bianchi, 2022; Santos, 2016; Shi, 2018) are associated with lower self-efficacy in the classroom.

However, there remains a gap in the research regarding the specific causes of low self-efficacy, its relationship to absenteeism, and how students' perceived value of education affects attendance. More precisely, there is limited literature on the possible link between self-efficacy, and value as it relates to absenteeism in minority student populations. Due to this gap in literature, I plan to gather evidence to determine influences that are associated with absenteeism, specifically focusing on motivation through self-efficacy and value through the

theoretical lens of expectancy-value theory—focusing on the individual's expectation for success in any given task as well as the perception of value or cost for completing the task.

Problem Statement

Student attendance has been an increasing issue among high school students, which has been especially exacerbated since the COVID-19 pandemic (Mervosh & Paris, 2024). Absenteeism is associated with several challenges, including students who miss school are less likely to read on grade-level and have post-high school education or career goals. Furthermore, it is often attributed as the leading cause of students dropping out of high school according to the U.S. Department of Education in 2015 (as cited in Robinson, 2018; Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012). This attendance issue is more prevalent in high poverty urban areas and continues to rise as students enter middle and high school, increasing the likelihood of dropout rates (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012). Absenteeism is negatively associated with school success, specifically in early grades (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012; Chang & Romero, 2008; Ready, 2010). Just as absenteeism disrupts learning, student motivation as perceived through self-efficacy and perceived value of education may be related to school absences. Researchers at this point do not know the predictive relationship between task value, cost, self-efficacy, and absenteeism. Moreover, researchers do not know the dimensions of this issue such as low self-efficacy and low value, high cost and high self-efficacy, etc. In order to create interventions for absenteeism, all stakeholders need to understand how they interact.

Rationale

Given the need to better understand these interacting factors, this study is grounded in the following rationale. Due to the influence that absenteeism has on educational outcomes, it is pertinent to determine how to decrease the rate of absenteeism. With that in mind, this study

aims to contribute to the limited body of literature on the influences of self-efficacy and value on student attendance in order to, in the future, provide educators with practical strategies to implement in their schools to support improved student attendance all the while promoting positive educational outcomes.

Research Purpose

In future research, I plan to build practical strategies school building leaders can use to increase student motivation and expectancy-value in regard to school attendance. Presently, this study examines the relationship between self-efficacy, task value, perceived cost, and student absenteeism.

Research Question(s)

Q1: To what extent do motivational beliefs predict student absenteeism?

a. To what extent does students' perceived task value predict their absenteeism?

b. To what extent does students' self-efficacy predict their absenteeism?

c. To what extent does students' perceived cost predict their absenteeism?

Research Hypotheses

This study will examine the potential relationship between self-efficacy, task values, and cost of students to investigate factors associated with student absenteeism. I hypothesize that high self-efficacy, high task value, and low cost will have a positive effect on student attendance. Research confirms differences in cost, task value, and self-efficacy between students. However, it does not explain the extent of these effects on attendance (Bandura, A., 1997; Eccles, J. S., & Wigfield, A., 1995; Manzano-Sanchez et al., 2018). When students are self-efficacious and perceptive of tasks to be of high value or the cost is worth the result, I predict that it will improve their attendance. For this reason, I predict a positive relationship between self-efficacy, task

value, and cost value on attendance (see Figure 1), which is a conceptual model illustrating the relationship between students' self-efficacy, perceived value, perceived cost, and their school attendance. The relationship is assumed, but this study focuses on the extent to which relationship exists. Furthermore, I hypothesize that there is a difference in cost and task values between students who have high absenteeism and students who do not that would display the extent to which task value, self-efficacy, and perceived cost predict absenteeism. Research confirms that students who have a high cost and task value are more likely to consider attendance pertinent, but does not explain the extent as to which there is an effect nor the difference between who have high absenteeism and students who do not (Ayro, 2012 & Cavazos et al., 2010; Manzano-Sanchez et al., 2018; Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012; Hunsu et al, 2023). Essentially, this prediction concludes that students with high absentee rates see that cost and task of attending school as not worth the result. Finally, I hypothesize that there is a difference in academic self-efficacy between those who have high absenteeism and students who do not (Alivernini & Lucidi, 2011; Zimmerman, B. J., 2000). Research confirms that motivation plays in reducing the intention to dropout rate for high school students over time and considering the impact of academic performance and socioeconomic status, but does not explain the extent as to which there is an effect nor the difference between students who have high absenteeism and students who do not.

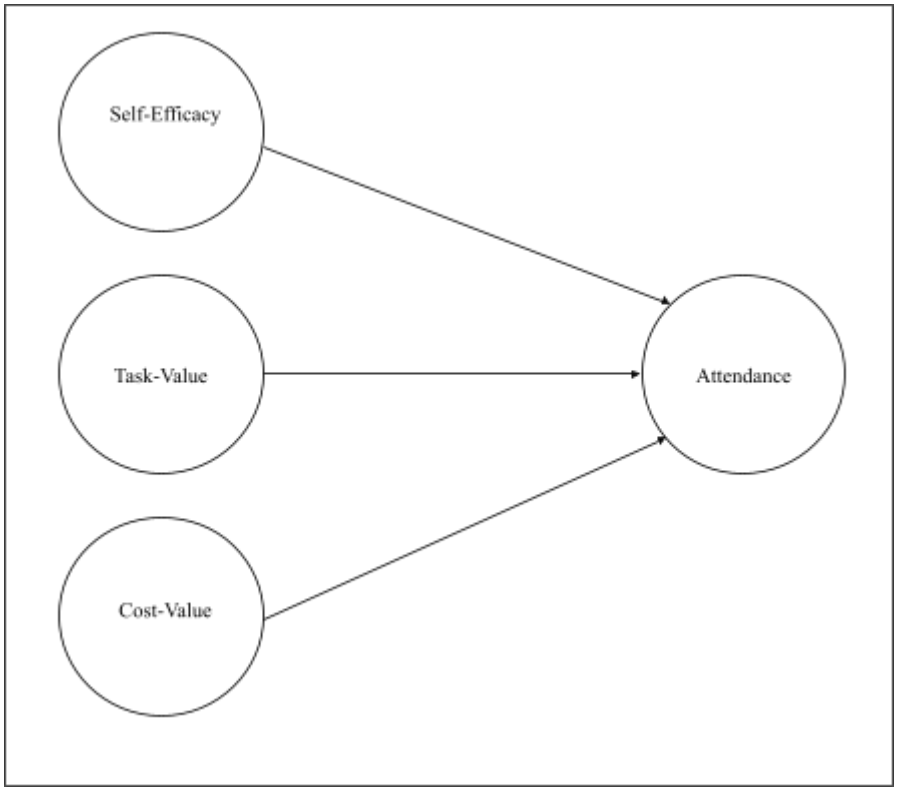


Figure 1. Displays the proposed interaction of each of the elements on attendance.

The model in Figure 1 illustrates the hypothesized relationship between the three concepts: student self-efficacy, task value, and cost value as predictors of attendance. Each construct in the model was selected based on its empirical relevance: self-efficacy is linked to student persistence and effort, which can influence attendance (Heyne et al., 1998; Ingul et al., 2019; as cited in Bianchi, 2022); task value as represented by interest and engagement may also affect attendance (Beymer et al., 2022; Eccles & Wigfield, 2024; Parr, 2015); and cost value displays the positive and or negative perceived aspects that could discourage attendance (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012). By modeling these constructs, this study aims to examine the extent to which they are individually and collectively related to attendance. As shown in the diagram, self-efficacy, task value, and cost value each have a direct path to attendance; however, it tests the extent to which each motivational construct uniquely is related to attendance rates.

Significance of the Study

This study aims to examine the potential relationship between student self-efficacy and cost and task values have on student attendance, a subject of increasing noteworthiness in education. Despite the extensive research conducted on self-efficacy and task value, significant gaps remain in understanding extent to which cost or task values and self-efficacy predict school absences. Addressing this gap is critical for improving student attendance in school and in turn the academic achievement. For example, if a student has many absences, it will likely impact their school success due to the loss of instruction, specifically in early grades, thus causing a lack of construction of knowledge for literacy and math skills (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012; Chang & Romero, 2008; Ready, 2010). Research in educational and psychological fields show that self-efficacy and cost or task values are related in that they display the relationship between self-efficacy and the tasks with which they are compared, and that seek to increase self-efficacy (Bandura, 1990a; Pajares, 1996). However, research lacks the connection as to which there is an effect nor the difference between students with high absentee rates and those who do not. If we can connect them, we can make an impact theoretically and practically.

The findings of this study will contribute to the existing body of literature on expectancy-value theory and self-efficacy by specific theoretical contribution to cost and task value, and self-efficacy as it pertains to attendance. This research will provide a deeper understanding of student cost and task value as well as self-efficacy, which has been underexplored in the context of attendance in high school students. Furthermore, the study has a practical potential to inform educators, policymakers, parents, and other stakeholders the effect of task value and self-efficacy on attendance. The findings may help in designing effective interventions leading to improved student performance.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Framework

Research on theories of motivation conclude that *self-efficacy*, which is an individual's belief that they can successfully complete the activity needed to produce the outcome, shows a relationship with motivation, specifically intrinsic motivation (Bandura, 1977, 1982, 1988, 1991a & 1991b, 1996; & 2013; Bandura & Cervone, 1983; Pajares, 1996). This construct is a component of Bandura's (1977) social-cognitive theory in which he indicates two influences of motivation: self-efficacy expectations and outcome expectations. Self-efficacy expectations are the beliefs that one can successfully complete the activity needed to produce the outcome (Bandura, 1977; Pajares, 1996), and outcome expectations are the individual's belief that a certain act will lead to a certain outcome (Bandura, 1977 & 2001). Referred to as the *Social Cognitive Theory of Self-Regulation*, this metacognitive process focuses on personal, behavioral, and situational factors within a situation; self-regulation is a process that cycles because these factors are constantly changing and need to be monitored (Schunk & Ertmer, 2000). Self-efficacy is a major component of the self-regulation process (Bandura, 1977, 1982, 1988, & 2013; Chen & Pajares, 2010). Data supports that perceived self-regulated efficacy influences both self-evaluative standards and perceived academic self-efficacy, demonstrating that an individual's self-belief irrespective of whether they can achieve the task and the standards they set for themselves influences the efficacy for the task (Zimmerman, 1989; Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994). Thus, learners are more likely to participate and engage in specific behaviors when they believe they can complete them successfully (Bandura, 1977, 1982, 1988, & 2013; Bandura & Cervone, 1983). Conversely, individuals lacking the self-belief in succeeding have low self-efficacy, and people with high self-efficacy perceive the task to be too easy and are less

likely to participate (Salomon, 1984). Expanding upon motivational research, another prominent theory is called the *Expectancy-Value Theory of Motivation*. This theory covers the idea that motivation comes from an individual's value placement on the task (Wigfield, 2009). According to this theory, expectancy refers to a student's belief in their ability to succeed on a specific task. This belief can be shaped by previous experiences of success or failure (Eccles et al., 2020). The theory also suggests that factors such as social, psychological, and cultural influences directly predict an individual's academic performance (Eccles et al., 1983; Eccles & Wigfield, 1995; Meece, Wigfield, & Eccles, 1990; Wigfield, 1994, 2009; Wigfield & Eccles, 1992, 2000, 2002).

The values make reference to the reasons a student has for attempting the activity, which are shaped by a student's prior experiences, beliefs, and individual goals (Wigfield et al, 2000; 2009). Within EVT, there are four subjective values: *attainment*, *intrinsic* (enjoyment), *utility*, and *cost* (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020; Wigfield, 2009). Attainment value is the belief by individuals of the identity-based importance attached to the task (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). Intrinsic value is the foreseen enjoyment an individual plans to gain from completing a task (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). Utility value is described as how well a task fits into an individual's ideas and plans present or future (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). Finally, cost is described as effort cost (how much effort the task would take and is it worth it?), outside effort cost (how much time will this take away from other tasks?), and emotional cost (what are the emotions taking on this task would create: E.g. anxiety, etc?) (Eccles, 2005; Eccles & Wigfield, 2020).

Researchers in the field furthered literature by recognizing that a person's belief in their ability, value, or goal may be situationally dependent, and further, influenced by their cultural background; thus, the name of the theory was changed to "situated-expectancy value theory" (Beymer et al., 2022; Eccles & Wigfield, 2023 & 2024; Wigfield et al., 2021). SEVT looks at

how the standard of various tasks and how those standards might influence the individual's desire or motivation to participate in one task over another (Eccles, 2005; Eccles et al., 1983; Eccles, & Wigfield, 2023 & 2024; Wigfield & Eccles, 1992). Eccles and Wigfield (2023) specify that they use the term "STV" (subjective task value) over "value" to differentiate the term researchers used when discussing "value." Value of any task was subjective, unique to each individual, and dependent on several individual and task specificity that had to be considered at the time of the task as well as cultural influences in which an individual lives (Eccles & Goff, 1983; Eccles and Wigfield, 2023). Building on this understanding, educational outcomes as proposed by SEVT can be influenced by one's belief about the value of education (Beymer et al., 2022; Eccles & Wigfield, 2024). Researchers have indicated that value can be influenced by the parents' value, for example, parents with high value in education have students with good attendance, and parents who do not have students with poor attendance (Robinson et al., 2018).

While self-efficacy is not explicitly labeled as a component of Expectancy-Value Theory, it is conceptually aligned with expectancy beliefs and has been recognized as an important factor in understanding motivation and academic achievement, as reflected in integrative frameworks such as the Expectancy-Value Model (Doménech-Betoret, 2017). The findings indicated that academic self-efficacy is a precursor of the student expectancy-value beliefs in the classroom, and competence beliefs, thus, propel student expectations and task or domain value (Doménech-Betoret et al., 2017; Wan, 2021). Given the impact of self-efficacy and value on academic outcomes, it is apparent that taking an active approach in enhancing these factors is crucial for improving student success. As literature has established, creating self-belief and emphasizing the value of education can minimize issues like absenteeism and create opportunities for academic success.

Literature Review

In the following sections, I will review existing literature on the relationship between self-efficacy, value, cost, and attendance. To provide a solid understanding of each of the topics, will begin by defining each construct and providing relevant background. First, I will begin with an explanation of terms relating to student attendance. Second, I will dive into the background of self-efficacy with its origins within social cognitive theory. Finally, I will explore the concept of value specifically within the realm of expectancy-value theory.

After defining each construct, I will present each with its connection to student attendance by exploring current literature on the relationship between self-efficacy and value. This section will review prior studies that have examined the relationship with academic success, with a specific focus on senior students and consideration of cultural, socioeconomic, and contextual factors that may influence these associations.

In order to identify empirical research on my topic, I began with a broad search using the University research databases for the college of education (i.e., ERIC) on the terms ‘absenteeism,’ ‘self-efficacy,’ and ‘expectancy-value.’ To find existing literature on their relationship, I used the university libraries research database to identify peer reviewed empirical studies using keywords (‘self-efficacy AND ‘attendance,’ ‘self-efficacy’ AND ‘high school seniors,’ ‘self-efficacy’ AND ‘students’, ‘self-efficacy’ AND ‘high school seniors’ AND ‘expectancy-value,’ ‘self-efficacy’ AND ‘students’ AND ‘expectancy-value,’ ‘expectancy-value’ AND ‘attendance,’ ‘expectancy-value’ AND ‘high school seniors,’ ‘expectancy-value’ AND ‘students’). While there is existing literature on the relationship between self-efficacy and attendance, and expectancy-value and attendance; the research is limited on the extent to which all three connect as well as in my population. Therefore, I broadened the search using other

search terms to make parallels (‘engagement’ AND ‘students’, ‘engagement’ AND ‘self-efficacy,’ ‘engagement’ AND ‘high school seniors,’ ‘engagement’ AND ‘value’, ‘value’ AND ‘high school seniors,’ ‘self-efficacy’ AND ‘retention,’ ‘self-efficacy’ AND ‘drop-out’).

By examining students that used these parallel terms, I was able to identify patterns and connections relevant to my research focus. While these findings provide foundation for speculation, it is also important to consider how such relationships are apparent amongst high school seniors.

Seniors

Prior research examining the relationship between self-efficacy and attendance has not explicitly focused on high school seniors. Liu et al. (2021) investigated the predictive relationship on graduation rate and postsecondary opportunity of “noncognitive factors,” defined as both academic behaviors (e.g. attendance, tardiness, suspension) and self-reported social-emotional learning skills (SEL). However, their study was conducted with ninth-grade students rather than seniors. The findings indicated that while SEL skills contribute to cultivating positive academic behaviors, part-day absenteeism emerges as a particular salient predictor of long-term educational outcomes. The findings are especially consequential in the context of heightened absentee rates post-aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic (Dee, 2023, as cited in Liu, 2021; Mervosh & Paris, 2024). Together, the evidence suggests that academic behaviors provide more reliable indicators of educational attainment than self-reported SEL skills. Although this study was not conducted with senior students explicitly, it elicits the need for stakeholders to determine ways to engage students in their early years of high school versus in their senior year.

While researching the relationship between self-efficacy, value, cost, and attendance, I found students examining the links among self-efficacy, self-regulation, and academic

performance. Relatedly, self-regulation is connected to self-efficacy within Bandura's (1977) social cognitive theory. Khanehkeshi et al. (2013) concluded that both self-efficacy and self-regulation are significantly correlated with academic performance amongst students who exhibit school refusal behaviors as well as those that do not. School Refusal Behaviors (SRB) were identified using a Kearney, Cook and Chapman's (2007) survey, which defines SRB using factors that are not limited to the student being completely absent from school and initially attending and then leave during the day. Although Khanehkeshi et al.'s study focused on female freshman students aged 15–16, the findings suggest that similar relationships between self-efficacy and attendance may extend to senior students. Since students with higher self-efficacy are more likely to perceive themselves as capable of handling academic challenges, they may be more motivated to attend classes regularly suggesting a potential link between self-efficacy and attendance among senior students as well.

Due to the limited research discovered directly related to self-efficacy, value, cost, and attendance, I explored parallel terms and identified studies on student engagement and drop-out rates from which relevant hypotheses could be drawn. One study examined the effects of individual student and contextual factors such as classroom climate on academic engagement, finding that both achievement value and teachers' autonomy support had a positive impact on academic engagement at both the student and classroom levels. Lee et al.'s (2023) study emphasized the importance of classroom climate, noting that prior research has demonstrated its ability to enhance students' academic engagement when their psychological needs are met (Connell & Wellborn, 1991; as cited in Lee et al., 2023). Their study determined that teachers' academic pressure only had a positive impact on academic engagement at the classroom climate level. Conclusively, Lee et al. (2023) demonstrated that the variety of the study

variables—academic engagement, achievement value, teacher's autonomy support, and teacher's academic pressure— showed significantly different impacts on the student level and classroom level; thus, supporting the need to embrace a multilevel approach to increase academic engagement. In sum, Lee et al.'s (2023) study highlights the role of achievement values, teachers' autonomy support, and teachers' academic pressure in promoting academic engagement among high school seniors. Therefore, increasing students' sense of value and self-efficacy is likely to have a positive impact on specific behaviors such as class attendance. Understanding how perceptions of self-efficacy are associated with attendance can provide practical implications for school that can help improve academic outcomes.

Furthermore, Gray (2009) investigated the persistent issue in Australia of low completion rates in senior secondary schooling. Despite the government's efforts to improve participation and retention, approximately 30% of students drop out before finishing their final year. Gray's research reports on the first phase in a two-year study examining the factors influencing retention and participation among junior students (Year 11). Data was collected through student self-reports of well-being in a mixed-methods approach which included a quantitative survey and qualitative open-ended interview data using scales that measured social connectedness and academic engagement (self-efficacy) in relation to academic achievement, retention, and school culture. The findings revealed that students' sense of social connectedness, academic engagement, and achievement were interrelated with school culture identified as a key factor in influencing retention and participation. Since attendance is often the most immediate and observable indicator of student engagement, making it a valuable measure for understanding the larger patterns of achievement and student retention seems reasonable. When a student has consistent attendance, it reflects not only the student's connection to the school but also the

opportunities for academic success. By positioning attendance as an outcome of self-efficacy and a contributing factor to student achievement, this study highlights the central role of attendance in student engagement. Therefore, it is reasonable to draw a connection between student self-efficacy and attendance that will be done in my study.

Student Attendance

Research has shown that missing school affects student learning (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012; Chang & Romero, 2008; Ready, 2010). In Oklahoma, the law states that it is unlawful for a parent or guardian of a child who is over the age of five years, and under the age of eighteen years, to neglect or refuse to attend and comply with district attendance rules (*Oklahoma Statutes,* 2023). A term relating to student attendance is *truancy*, which is any absence without an excuse. Each state has varying laws on minimum and maximum ages that are subject to attendance laws, and are counted as truant if they miss one or more days of school for unexcused reasons. In most states, including Oklahoma, parents and students can be criminally charged for truancy that can lead to fines and other punishments deemed by a court (Blatt & Blatt, 2025). Varying from truancy, *chronic absenteeism* refers to when a student misses 10 percent or more of the school year for any reason—excused and unexcused absences (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012). Absenteeism is strongly associated with an increased risk of high school dropout (Robinson, 2018). According to the Oklahoma City Public School Board Policies and Regulations, excused absences include illness, medical and dental appointments, court appearances, religious holidays, and family emergencies, and require documentation beyond a limited number of parent-verified absences (OKCPS Board Policies & District Regulations, 2025). All other absences will be considered unexcused unless official written documentation is submitted (ex: doctor's note, verification of a court appearance, memorial service folder, etc.) (2025).

As previously mentioned, absenteeism is more prevalent in high poverty urban areas and continues to rise as students enter middle and high school, increasing the likelihood of dropout rates (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012). Absenteeism has a negative impact on school success since students miss instruction, specifically in early grades, thus missing the early construction of knowledge for literacy and math skills (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012; Chang & Romero, 2008; Ready, 2010). As absenteeism disrupts learning, student motivation and perceived value of education may be a contributing factor of school absences.

Self-efficacy

Miller and Dollard (1941) began the investigation of the process of social learning (Pajares, 2002). Bandura and Walters (1963) furthered the literature with the idea of observational learning and vicarious experiences (2002). In the 1970s, Bandura believed there was a piece missing, which he identified as 'self-belief' (2002). In 1986, Bandura sought to determine how a person's thoughts, beliefs, and practices were created in relation to the environment. His pursuit of these questions sparked him to develop social cognitive theory, which states that learning is a process that occurs cognitively and cannot be separated from the context in which it takes place such as within a family or school (De la Fuente & Pajares, 2002). Social cognitive theory suggests that learning occurs by observations in which an individual sets goals, chooses learning strategies that can help them achieve their goals, and then evaluates the results (Bandura 1991b; Pajares, 1996). Within social-cognitive theory, Bandura (1977) describes an integral construct that influences motivation: self-efficacy expectations. A self-efficacy expectation is the belief that one can successfully complete the activity needed to produce the outcome (Bandura, 1977; Pajares, 1996). For the learning process, self-efficacious individuals are more likely to take action on and continue activities, more likely to be cognitively engaged in

the task, and more likely to use effective strategies in a learning task. Thus, motivation is likely present and sets the stages for self-regulation; the process in which we act on our desired performance (Bandura,1977, 1982, 1988, 1991a & 1991b, 1996; & 2013; Bandura & Cervone, 1983; Zimmerman, 1989).

Referred to as the social cognitive theory of self-regulation, this framework focuses on personal, behavioral, and situational factors; self-regulation is a process that cycles because these factors are constantly changing and need to be monitored (Schunk & Ertmer, 2000). This process is metacognitive in that it requires individuals to explore their own thought process as an evaluative procedure of the results of their actions and further to create a plan for future success (Pajares & Valiante, 2002; Usher & Pajares, 2006; Usher & Pajares, 2008). Our purpose, and cognitive motivators (i. e. goals, outcome expectations, and plans), influence our performance, which leads to our sub-processes. The sub-processes (i.e. monitoring, evaluating, and reacting) affect our performance. The sub-processes cycle back into our anticipatory cognitive motivators, which are the intentions for performing such action or behavior. After going through the sub-processes, we may change our cognitive motivators based on our performance (Bandura, 1998; Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994).

A major component of the self-regulation process and motivation is self-efficacy—the self-belief of an individual regarding completing a given task (Bandura, 1977, 1982, 1988, & 2013; Chen & Pajares, 2010). It was proposed that perceived self-regulated efficacy influences both self-evaluative standards and perceived academic self-efficacy meaning that an individual's belief that they can achieve the task and the standards they set for themselves influence the efficacy for the task (Zimmerman, 1989; Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994). Because of this, learners are more likely to participate and engage in certain behaviors when they believe they

can complete them successfully; this belief is called self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977, 1982, 1988, & 2013; Bandura & Cervone, 1983). The obvious contrast is that individuals who see themselves as not succeeding in the task have low self-efficacy; those who perceive the task to be too easy are less likely to participate (Salomon, 1984). Therefore, if self-efficacy is low, we may not regulate our behavior such as attending school.

As stated previously, researchers have linked educational outcomes within motivation frameworks like social cognitive theory (Parr, 2015; Chen & Usher, 2015; Chen et al., 2016). Within social cognitive theory, a person's motivation is determined to be influenced by outcome expectancies and reinforcement that are developed through social interactions between examples and observers (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020). Furthermore, it is believed that a person learns through observation called vicarious experiences (Schunk & Meece, 2005). The proposed connection between attendance and social cognitive theory is that an individual can learn the importance of attendance and value in school through others. As Wang (2021) discovered with their approach to social cognitive theory, since it is heavily reliant on relationships amongst people and situational and behavioral factors, students can be supported in their learning by encouraging them to interact closely with peers. Psychologists have linked three advantages to the social cognitive theory approach to self-regulated learning: recognizes the effects of self-regulated influences over behavior, connects self-regulatory processes to social learning, and distinguishes ways in which learning is achieved—perceived self-efficacy and its relation to student motivation and academic success (Zimmerman, 1989).

To measure self-efficacy, Bandura (1990a) created the Multidimensional scales of perceived academic efficacy (*MSPSE*), which suggests that an individual's belief in their abilities influences their motivation (Bandura; 1997; Chen & Pajares, 2010). This scale incorporates

different frameworks that include motivation such as academic (Pajares & Miller, 1994), social (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995), and emotional contexts (Bandura, 1990b). The *MSPSE* has been used in educational and psychological research for studies that associate self-efficacy beliefs with academic outcomes (Pajares, 1996), and that seek to increase self-efficacy (Schunk, 1991). Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995) comprised the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE). This scale was developed based on Bandura's social cognitive theory of self-efficacy, which is the theory of motivation used for this student, and provided strong content validity (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995).

As educational outcomes have been connected to self-efficacy within the lens of social cognitive theory, I plan to study the influence that self-efficacy has on student attendance with the General Self-Efficacy Scale (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995). The hypothesis is that low-efficacious individuals have a lower attendance rate than the opposing high-efficacious individuals.

Expectancy-Value Theory

The underlying question behind someone's motivation for doing something is the "why?," which could be expanded with the question of "what value does this have?" The constructs, expectancy and value, were initially defined by theorists such as Lewin and Tolman (Wigfield, 2009). Lewin established the idea of human ambitions and hypothesized that a human's level of aspiration was the individual's goal-setting standards (Reijo, 2012). He concluded that humans choose to set goals based on past experiences with the task (Reijo, 2012). Atkinson continued Lewin's research by including an individual's expectancies, needs, and values related to motivation (Reijo, 2012). Atkinson provided more components to study when trying to determine and analyze an individual's motivation toward a task such as an individual's

expectancy for success and incentive value, which helped differentiate the influence of past experiences' prediction of anticipated success to pride felt from attempting or completing the task because Atkinson argued that highly valued tasks are ones that individuals think are more difficult to complete (Reijo, 2012; Atkinson, 1957, as cited in Wigfield, 2009).

In 1983, Eccles et al. proposed the expectancy-value model of achievement performance and choice (Wigfield et al, 2000). Eccles' theory differs from Atkinson's theory in that both components, expectancy and value, are connected and proposed to contribute to a broader range of social, psychological, and cultural influences (Wigfield, 2009). Furthermore, Eccles' theory has been tested in real-world cases versus Atkinson's lab-tested theory (2009).

The Eccles Expectancy-Value Model Eccles proposes that these constructs—social, psychological, and cultural influences— are direct predictors of an individual's achievement performance (Eccles et al., 1983; Eccles & Wigfield, 1995; Meece, Wigfield, & Eccles, 1990; Wigfield, 1994, 2009; Wigfield & Eccles, 1992, 2000, 2002). Eccles and her colleagues have focused on how expectancies and values influence choice in completing a task (Wigfield, 2009).

Expectancy refers to the student's expectation for success on a given task. Past success or failure can impact a student's perception of the likelihood of success. The model of the theory is shown in Figure 2 (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). As displayed, Eccles' theory attributes social, psychological, and cultural components as influencers of an individual's achievement performance (Eccles et al., 1983; Eccles & Wigfield, 1995).

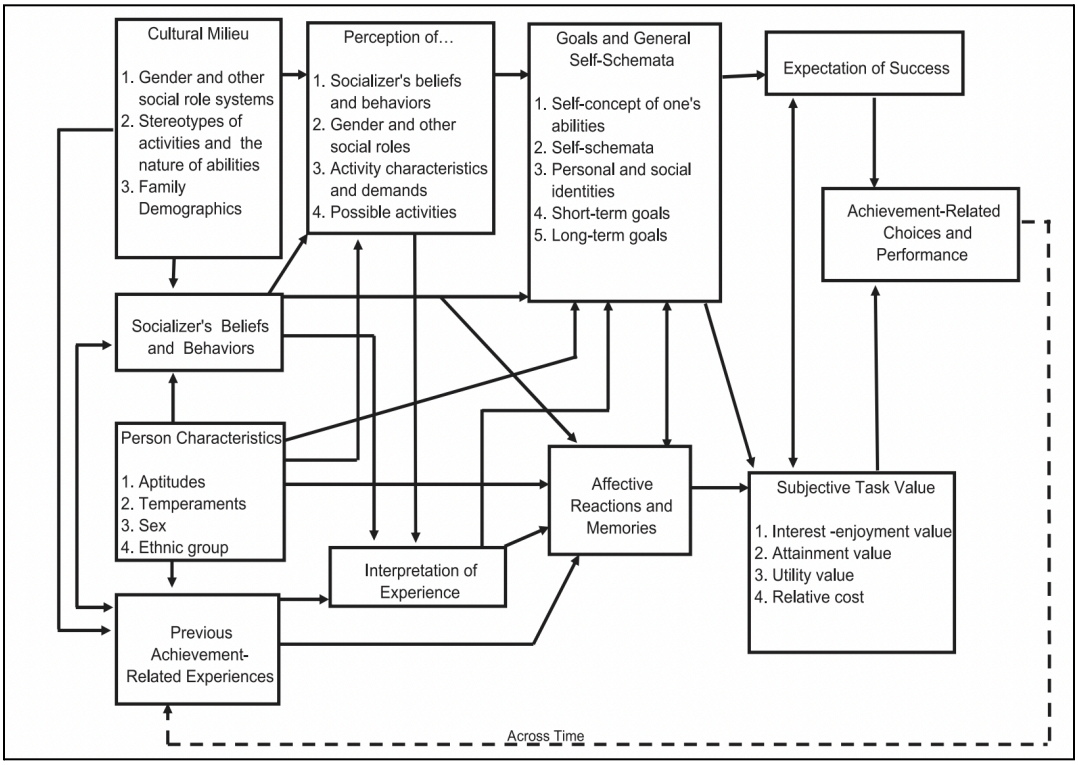


Figure 2. Displays Eccles Expectancy-value model.

Values refer to reasons for doing the activity. These values are shaped by a student's prior experiences, beliefs, and individual goals (Wigfield et al, 2000). Within the expectancy-value theory, there are four subjective values: attainment, intrinsic (enjoyment), utility, and cost (Wigfield, 2009). Attainment value is the belief by individuals of the identity-based importance attached to the task (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). Intrinsic value is the foreseen enjoyment an individual plans to gain from completing a task (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). Utility value is described as how well a task fits into an individual's ideas and plans present or future (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). Finally, cost is described as the cost of engaging in an activity and includes sub factors such as: effort cost (how much effort the task would take and is it worth it?), outside effort cost (how much time will this take away from other tasks?), and emotional cost (what are

the emotions taking on this task would create: anxiety, etc?) (Eccles, 2005; Eccles & Wigfield, 2020).

Situated Expectancy-Value Theory. In 2020, Eccles and Wigfield changed the name of expectancy-value theory to "situated-expectancy value theory;" the purpose of this was to recognize that a person's belief in their ability, value, or goal may be situationally dependent, and further, influenced by their cultural (Eccles & Wigfield, 2023 & 2024; Wigfield et al., 2021). SEVT looks at how the standard of various tasks and how those standards might influence the individual's desire or motivation to participate in one task over another (Eccles, 2005; Eccles et al., 1983; Eccles, & Wigfield, 2023 & 2024; Wigfield & Eccles, 1992). Eccles and Wigfield (2023) specify that they use the term "STV" (subjective task value) over "value" to differentiate what researchers used when discussing "value." Eccles and Wigfield (2023) proposed that the larger cultural influences in which an individual lives such as physical context and belief systems influence the "subjective task value," as modeled after Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecological model of human development.

In relation to education, according to expectancy-value theory, an individual's academic achievement and choices are compelled by their expectancies and task values. According to this theory, expectancy refers to how well an individual believes they will do on said task and subjective task value refers to how much the individual wants to complete the task (Beymer, 2022; Eccles et al., 1983). SEVT takes this theory further into proposing that subjective task value is multifaceted composed of multiple reasons for an individual to engage in a specific task (Beymer, 2022; Eccles et al., 1983). That being said, educational outcomes as proposed by SEVT can be influenced by one's belief about the value of education (Beymer et al., 2022; Eccles & Wigfield, 2024); therefore, it is proposed that it can impact school attendance. How confident a

person is in their ability to succeed in a task: can I do well in school? Or, how important, useful, or enjoyable a person perceives the task, can determine the value of it: attending school. For this reason, researchers have linked educational outcomes to motivation with theories such as expectancy-value theory, and social cognitive theory (Parr, 2015).

Expectancy-Value Theory, Self-Efficacy, and Attendance

Within the research of motivation, multiple theories conclude that *self-efficacy* is associated with motivation (specifically intrinsic motivation) and is one's belief that they can successfully complete the activity needed to produce the outcome (Bandura, 1977, 1982, 1988, 1991a & 1991b, 1996; & 2013; Bandura & Cervone, 1983; Pajares, 1996). Research suggests that perceived self-regulated efficacy impacts both self-evaluative standards and perceived academic self-efficacy, meaning that an individual's belief in whether or not they can achieve the task and the standards they set for themselves influences the efficacy for the task (Zimmerman, 1989; Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994). For this reason, learners are more likely to participate and engage in a task when they believe they can complete them successfully like attending school (Bandura, 1977, 1982, 1988, & 2013; Bandura & Cervone, 1983). On the contrary, individuals who see themselves as not succeeding in the task have low self-efficacy; those who perceive the task to be too easy are less likely to participate (Salomon, 1984). Accordingly, if students have low self-efficacy for school, they will be more likely to not attend.

Within the context of student school attendance, the questions of motivation for expectancy-value theory are: does the student see themselves succeeding in school? Have they had success previously? What cost would attending school have on the student? What value would the student receive in attending school? Would attending school help them achieve their future goal?

Prior research has indicated the following results: intrinsic motivation in students is directly related to the intention to drop out of school (Alivernini & Lucidi, 2011; Bianchi, 2022), and parental support is related to future career outcome expectations (Gutman et al., 2000; Miller, 2006). Additionally, prior research reveals that parental belief in the value of attendance influences their student's attendance; but, early invention is linked to improved attendance (Ehrlich et al., 2014; Robinson et al., 2018).

Building on these findings, one can speculate that a student who recognizes the attainment value of school—believing it is more important to their identity or success—is more likely to attend than one who does not. Likewise, students who genuinely enjoy school, whether due to interest in the subject or social connections, are more inclined to be present. Those who see the utility value of education and understand how it can support their future goals are also less likely to miss school. Finally, students who believe the benefits of education outweigh the time, effort, or stress involved are more likely to maintain consistent attendance. These conclusions stem from the understanding that educational outcomes are linked to education outcomes as a result of an individual's beliefs about the value of education, which is shaped by an individual's confidence in their ability to succeed along with how important, useful, or enjoyable they perceive the task to be, shapes the value they assign to it, including the value of attending school (Beymer et al., 2022; Eccles & Wigfield, 2024; Parr, 2015).

Expounding on this concept, it is necessary to research how external factors shape these components. Knowing that prior research indicates that absenteeism is related to task value, perceived cost, and self-efficacy. The focus of this study is to answer the following question: To what extent do task value, self-efficacy, and perceived cost predict absenteeism?

Self-Efficacy and SEVT Related Factors that Influence Attendance

Prior research indicates that parental involvement—such as assisting with or checking in on homework—has been shown to increase student self-efficacy and positively influence academic achievement, particularly when parents are engaged at school (Henderson & Berla, 1994, Gonzalez, 2005; Greenwood & Hickman, 1991; Gutman et al., 2000). This connection is especially important when considering student attendance, as low self-efficacy can discourage students from attending school. Students are more likely to engage or participate—or attend—when they believe they are capable (Pajares, 1996). This finding is an especially significant connection since absenteeism has been linked to negative impact on school success since students miss instruction (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012; Chang & Romero, 2008; Ready, 2010). Together, these findings suggest that both self-efficacy in learning and consistent attendance are pertinent for academic success.

Researchers have linked motivation and self-efficacy as key factors influencing school attendance (Heyne et al., 1998; Ingul et al., 2019; as cited in Bianchi, 2022). Low self-efficacy, often linked to language barriers, impacts academic performance and future career outcomes (Bianchi, 2022; Cavicchiolo et al., 2020; Shi, 2018; Miller, 2006, as cited in Santos, 2016; Van Beek, 2019). Self-efficacy has been associated with overcoming social and economic challenges to succeed academically (Ayro, 2012; Cavazos et al., 2010; Cerna et al., 2009; Ceja, 2004; Manzano-Sanchez et al., 2018).

Another factor that has been shown to influence attendance is decreased self-efficacy resulting from socioeconomic barriers such as lack of transportation, illness, unsafe environments, and limited parental guidance at home (Pittenger, 2021; Woullard-Wilder, 2020). Low socioeconomic status is particularly linked to lower self-efficacy, which in turn contributes to reduced student attendance. However, self-efficacy can be improved through strong, positive

relationships among parents, students, and teachers—relationships that are essential to increasing motivation and reducing dropout rates (Alivernini & Lucidi, 2011; Sarkissian, 2021).

Building on these findings, this study aims to investigate how self-efficacy, task value, and perceived cost function as key predictors of student absenteeism. Specifically, the research aims to answer the following question: To what extent do task value, self-efficacy, and perceived cost predict absenteeism? First, it is hypothesized that high self-efficacy, task value, and cost will have a positive effect on student attendance (Bandura, A., 1997; Eccles, J. S., & Wigfield, A., 1995; Manzano-Sanchez et al., 2018). Second, it is expected that there is a difference in cost and task values between students who have high absenteeism and students who do not (Ayro, 2012 & Cavazos et al., 2010; as cited in Manzano-Sanchez et al., 2018; Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012; Hunsu et al, 2023). Finally, the third hypothesis posits that there is a difference in academic self-efficacy between those who have high absenteeism and students who do not (Alivernini & Lucidi, 2011; Zimmerman, B. J., 2000).

Chapter 3

Methodology

Research Design

To explore variables related to self-efficacy and attendance, this study used a quantitative approach with Poisson regression analysis, guided by recommendations for a sample size of 100–200 participants to ensure stable and reliable estimates (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Correlation quantitative research determines relationships between variables not causation, which can be a positive or negative correlation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The Poisson regression model test was chosen because attendance is a 'count variable,' determined by the amount of times the event occurs, in this case the number of times a student was absent (Elhai, 2008). This approach is more appropriate than linear regression for count data because it assumes a non-negative, discrete distribution rather than a normally distributed outcome. Thus, predictive relationships with a dependent variable (e.g., student absences) can be evaluated much like a linear regression, without the issues caused by having non-normal distributions and heteroscedasticity (Elhai, 2008). The survey was administered at the beginning of the school year, and the results correlated with attendance data from the previous school year. This timing was chosen due to the logistical constraints and availability of the student participants.

Participants and Context

Existing literature has linked socioeconomic status (Alivernini & Lucidi, 2011; Pittenger, 2021; Woullard-Wilder, 2020), cultural barriers and language learning (Cerna at al., 2009; Bianchi, 2022; Santos, 2016; Shi, 2018) to self-efficacy, which are characteristics of this population. Furthermore, decreased self-efficacy linked to socioeconomic barriers—such as lack of transportation, illness, unsafe environments, and limited parental guidance—has been

associated with lower attendance rates (Pittenger, 2021; Woullard-Wilder, 2020). This is not to suggest that parents or guardians are to blame for students' low self-efficacy or limited value placed on school attendance. Rather, these challenges may arise from broader responsibilities, such as the need to work multiple jobs to support the family. As stated previously, prior research has already made a connection between self-efficacy, value, and attendance; the present study seeks to examine the extent to which these motivational factors influence attendance in this specific context.

Demographic data were not collected from participants at U.S. Grant High School due to a survey administration error. In contrast, participants at Capitol Hill High School completed the demographic items. Therefore, a general description of the school population was used to represent the demographics of U.S. Grant High School.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Students at U.S. Grant High School

Demographic Group	U.S. Grant High School (%)
Hispanic	77.8
Black	10.0
White	4.9
Multiracial	4.3
American Indian	2.3
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.4
Asian	0.3
Economically Disadvantaged	98.0

English Language Learners (ELL)	49.1

Note. Values represent percentages of the student population at U.S. Grant High School

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics of Students at U.S. Grant High School

Demographic Group	Capitol Hill High Schooll (%)
Hispanic	63.7
Black	10.6
White	7.3
American Indian	6.1
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.6
Asian	0.6
Prefer to Self-Describe	1.7
Prefer Not to Answer	10.1

Note. Values represent percentages of the participants at Capitol Hill High School

The school sites of study population are predominately Hispanic, suggesting that the findings may offer valuable insights into the Hispanic student population that may offer implications for schools serving similar demographics. This study focuses specifically on senior students. While prior research has identified several factors related to self-efficacy that are relevant to secondary students broadly, few studies isolate seniors as a distinct subset (Alivernini

& Lucidi, 2011; Bianchi, 2022; Pajares, 1996; Sarkissian, 2021). Research that found differences in cost and task value between students with high and low absenteeism rates focused on students in higher education (Manzano-Sanchez et al., 2018), similar studies with high school juniors has shown that students' perceptions of a task's importance and cost influence their engagement and performance (Wigfield, 1994). Examining this population may address a gap in the literature.

The sample was drawn using purposeful sampling to select students from a population of senior students within participating high schools within Oklahoma City Public Schools (Creswell, 2014; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). To strengthen the reliability of the study, a second site with similar demographic characteristics was selected. Approximately 24 students from U.S. Grant High School and 178 students from Capitol Hill High School elected to participate in the survey and their data was used for analysis. Both schools are located on the south side of Oklahoma City and serve approximately 1600 students at peak enrollment. According to the most recent statistical profile from OKCPS, the student population at U.S. Grant High School is composed of Hispanic (77.8%), American Indian (2.3%), Asian (0.3%), Black (10.0%), Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (0.4%), White (4.9%), and multiracial (4.3%) (Oklahoma City Public Schools, 2023). At Capitol Hill High School, the demographics are similarly composed of Hispanic (75.1%), American Indian (3.5%), Asian (0.5%), Black (9.7%), Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (0.3%), White (7.3%), and multiracial (3.6%) students (Oklahoma City Public Schools, 2023). According to district reports, 98% of the student population at U.S. Grant High School are classified as economically disadvantaged and 98.1% at Capitol Hill (Oklahoma City Public Schools, 2023). Additionally, approximately half of the students at each school are identified as English Language Learners (49.1% at U.S. Grant and 51% at Capitol Hill), indicating that a language other than English is spoken in the home (Oklahoma City Public Schools, 2023).

Participants were recruited through the researcher's existing professional networks within the district. Participation was voluntary for both teachers administering the survey and students completing it. Although the research sites included a vulnerable population and one site was the researcher's place of employment, the researcher was not a member of nor actively involved in any student associations related to participant recruitment. Students completed a brief demographic questionnaire included as part of the survey (see Appendix A). The sampling pool focused on seniors who were 18 years of age or older so that participants could provide consent independently without requiring parental permission, thereby improving the feasibility of data collection; however, permission forms were distributed to students under 18, meaning the sample was not exclusively limited to 18-year-olds, though reliance on returned forms may have reduced participation and affected representativeness.

While prior research is lacking that shows specific characteristics of seniors, parallel research indicates a connection between student self-efficacy and academic engagement or behaviors such as attendance (Khanehkeshi et al., 2013; Liu et al., 2021). Prior studies emphasize the needs to engage students earlier in their secondary education to increase engagement (Gray, 2009; Lee et al., 2023); therefore, a study focusing on senior students' self-efficacy, value, and attendance would reveal implications for stakeholders to improve student engagement in the future. The intended population for this study was all high school students; however, due to limitations in participant recruitment, the actual population was limited to senior students. Senior students represent a unique population, as they are at the culmination of their secondary education, making attendance behaviors particularly consequential

Measures

General Self-Efficacy Scale (*GSE*). Self-efficacy was measured using the GSE scale (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995). This scale consists of 10 4-point Likert-type scale items relating to perceived self-efficacy (1 not true at all to 4 exactly true). For example, a sample question is "I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough" (for full scale see Appendix A). The total score is calculated by finding the sum of all items. For the GSE, the total score ranges between 10 and 40, with a higher score indicating more self-efficacy. The GSE demonstrated a high internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient ranging from 0.76 to 0.90 (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995). This scale was developed based on Bandura's social cognitive theory of self-efficacy, which is the theory of motivation used for this student, and provided strong content validity (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995).

Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ). Task value was measured using Pintrich's MSLQ survey (1993). The survey is broken into three sections that focus on intrinsic value, utility value, and attainment value (for full scale see Appendix A). An example of an intrinsic value item is "School is exciting to me." Furthermore, an example of a utility value question is "School will be useful to me later in life." Finally, an attainment value item is "Being someone who is good at school is important to me." Respondents answer 15 questions on a 7-point Likert scale (1 not at all true of me to 7 very true of me). The results of the survey are dependent on the scale: the higher the score on the intrinsic value section means the student studies because they enjoy learning or find it interesting; the higher the score on the utility value scale the more the student perceives the task or course as highly relevant to their personal, academic, or career goals; similarly, the higher the score on the attainment value scale means the student sees success or mastery in this area matters for their goals.

The MSLQ demonstrated internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the motivation subscales ranging from $\alpha = 0.74$ to $\alpha = 0.93$ indicating strong internal consistency (Pintrich et al., 1991, 1993), and has been linked to predict various academic outcomes such as GPA, performance, self-regulated learning (Lynch et al., 2013; Credé & Phillips, 2011). For this reason, it will be used to measure task value in relation to school attendance.

Cost Scale. Finally, student cost in education was measured with Beymer's (2022) shortened cost scale, which is a shortened version of Flake et al.'s (2015) cost scale. The survey is separated into four sections that answer questions about task effort cost, outside effort cost, loss of valued alternatives, and emotional cost. A task effort cost question is "school demands too much of my time." An outside effort cost question is "I have so many other commitments that I can't put forth the effort needed for school." A loss of valued alternatives is "I have to sacrifice too much to be in school." Finally, an emotional cost question is "I worry too much about school" (for full scale see Appendix A). This tool is a 7-point Likert scale (1 strongly disagree to 7 strongly agree). Results of the scale indicate as follows: the higher the score on task effort means the student perceives the task as very effortful/demanding, the higher the score on outside effort means the student believes the task takes too much outside effort, the higher the score on loss of valued alternatives means the student believes that school keeps them from other valued activities, and finally, a higher score for emotional cost means the student believes the task is stressful. The goal of the shortened scale was to provide researchers with a quicker way to assess students' perceptions of cost. Because of the design of the shortened scale—one item per construct— a cronbach's alpha test to measure internal reliability was not applicable; therefore, the authors used other methods such as testing how items functioned consistently across different

contexts (Beymer, 2021). Beymer et al. (2022) conducted three studies in order to assess the validity (structural, convergent, and predictive and otherwise) of the shortened scale.

Attendance. Using the school district's information system (Infinite Campus), I collected the number of absences each student who fills out the survey had from the previous school year with the help of the district's Planning, Research & Evaluation department. Any number of days absent—excused or unexcused—was considered due to the impact it has proven to have on academic success (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012). Attendance was categorized into excused absences, unexcused absences, and total absences. Excused absences were defined as absences approved by the school for valid reasons such as illness, family obligations, or school-sponsored activities, whereas unexcused absences were defined as absences without formal approval or documentation (OKCPS Board Policies & District Regulations, 2025). Total absences represented the sum of both excused and unexcused absences.

Procedures

The survey was administered to senior students, with those aged 18 able to provide consent independently and those under 18 participating with parental permission. Although the sample was intended to primarily include students aged 18 or older to streamline data collection, permission forms were also distributed to younger students, resulting in a sample not limited to 18-year-olds; reliance on returned forms may have reduced participation and affected representativeness. Working with the site principal, the survey was scheduled during a time that will have the least disruption on their school day. The survey took at most 30 minutes to complete; however, ensuring each student had a device to complete the survey may take an entire class period depending on their school schedule. In an ideal situation, the survey would be distributed on one day in senior classes such as Government or English courses. The reason for

this is that all students have an English or Government course, so this would ensure more students are given the opportunity to participate; the course was dependent upon the school site administrator and what worked best for their teachers. The survey was given through Qualtrics with the consent form provided on the survey.

Due to the limited senior population at U.S. Grant High School and the inability of other school sites to fully participate, additional approval was obtained from the Oklahoma City Public Schools Institutional Review Board (IRB) to allow the study to be conducted at the researcher's own school site. To prevent potential bias and protect sensitive information, the researcher was not involved in the data collection process. Instead, a collaborating researcher administered the survey and handled all initial data collection procedures.

To gather attendance data, student IDs were matched from the surveys to their attendance data on the school's student information system, Infinite Campus. This information was gathered by working with the district Planning, Research & Evaluation department. The reports were sent from the district level to me, so I could then match the attendance with the student ID. Once the data was matched, all identifying information was wiped from the data to ensure protection of the participants. Students' total absences from the previous academic year were correlated with their survey responses, as a full year of attendance data was available, whereas the survey was administered during a single quarter of the current school year, allowing for a more comprehensive measure of attendance to be used in the analysis.

Data Analyses

Preliminary Analyses

Before performing my primary analysis, preliminary analyses were done to ensure the data was ready for assessments. As the data were reviewed, some items were found to be missing from the scales. If a single item was missing from a scale, it was replaced with the average of the other items in that scale. If an entire subscale, (e.g. all Task Effort Cost items) was missing, the missing values were left blank. Missing data were addressed using mean substitution, in which missing values were replaced with the mean score of the observed responses for that variable (Field, 2018; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). In mean substitution, missing values for a variable are replaced with that variable's mean, allowing researchers to retain incomplete cases under the assumption that the mean reasonably estimates a typical observation in a normally distributed dataset with random missingness (Malhotra, 1987). Since Poisson regression does not assume normal outcomes, skewness/kurtosis diagnostics are not relevant for model assumption checking. Thus, normality and outliers were assessed looking at the goodness-of-fit (GOF), which includes the Pearson R assessment to determine the reliability of instruments (Feng, 2020). Poisson regression test (Elhai, 2008) was conducted between all instruments including self-efficacy (Schwarzer and Jerusalem, 1995), value (Beymer, 2022), and cost (Pintrich, 1993). These preliminary steps are essential to confirm the validity of the data and support accurate interpretation of the results.

Primary Analyses

Using data results from the surveys for self-efficacy, value, cost, and student attendance, I examined the relationships among these variables using regression analysis. This regression type allowed me to model the predictive relationships, determining the extent to which self-efficacy, value, and cost can predict student attendance while controlling for other variables.

Attendance was measured against attendance for unexcused absences, excused absences, and total absences. This leads to a central research question along with its hypotheses:

Q1: Is absenteeism related to self-efficacy, task value, and perceived cost?

H1a: Self-efficacy will be a significant negative predictor of the number of days missed during the school year.

H2a: Task value will be a significant negative correlate of number of days missed during the school year.

H3a: Perceived cost will be a significant positive correlate of the number of days missed during the school year.

The first hypothesis was that self-efficacy will be a significant negative predictor of the number of days missed during the school year. Higher levels of self-efficacy are expected to be associated with fewer days missed during the school year, reflecting a significant negative predictive relationship. In previous research, self-efficacy has been shown to greatly influence motivation, particularly intrinsic motivation, and both motivation and self-efficacy have been linked to student attendance behaviors (Ryan & Deci, 2000a, 2000b; Bianchi, 2022). Thus, it is expected that there will be a significant relationship between self-efficacy and student attendance.

The second hypothesis was that task value will be a significant negative correlate of number of days missed during the school year indicating that students who place higher value on academic tasks are expected to exhibit lower levels of absenteeism. Previous research has linked value to whether an individual chooses to engage in and complete a task (Reijo, 2012; Atkinson, 1957, as cited in Wigfield, 2009). Thus, it is expected that there will be a significant relationship between task value and student attendance.

The final hypothesis was that cost will be a significant positive correlate of the number of days missed during the school year suggesting that students who perceive greater costs associated with school participation are expected to exhibit higher levels of absenteeism. The current body of research indicates that perceived cost has been associated with the negative aspects of engaging in a task, such as the effort required, emotional strain, or the loss of alternative opportunities (Eccles, 2005; Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). Thus, it is expected that there will be a significant relationship between perceived cost and student attendance.

In this study the dependent variable (DV) is the number of days missed during the school year—unexcused, excused, and total absences. Because attendance is count data, Poisson regression analysis was used to examine the relationship between days missed and the independent variables (IV): self-efficacy; intrinsic, utility value, and attainment value; and task effort cost, outside effort cost, loss of valued alternatives, and emotional cost.

Chapter 4

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were calculated for all variables in this study, including self-efficacy, value, cost, and student absences. As shown in Table 3, participants reported moderate levels of overall self-efficacy (M = 3.05, SD = 0.43), suggesting that students generally perceived themselves as capable of handling challenges, though their confidence may vary across situations. The General Self-Efficacy Scale is scored by summing responses across 10 items (range = 10–40), with higher scores indicating greater perceived self-efficacy (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995; Albert Bandura, 1997; Testable, 2026). Among the value variables, utility value had the highest mean (*M*=5.40, *SD*=1.16), followed by intrinsic value (*M*=4.23, *SD*=1.40) and attainment value (*M*=4.12, *SD*=1.08), suggesting that while students recognized the usefulness of academic tasks, their interest and perceived importance were only moderate, indicating a level of engagement that may support participation but not necessarily sustained or high-intensity motivation. Similar moderate levels of motivation have been reported in prior research using the same scale (Stoffa et al., 2011; Credé & Phillips, 2011).

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables

Variable	M	SD	Median
Overall Self-Efficacy	3.05	0.43	3.00
Overall Intrinsic Value	4.23	1.40	4.40
Overall Utility Value	5.40	1.26	5.67

Overall Attainment Value	4.12	1.08	4.14
Overall Task Effort Cost	4.09	1.13	4.00
Overall Outside Effort Cost	3.60	1.20	3.75
Overall Loss of Valued Alternative Cost	3.50	1.30	3.75
Overall Emotional Cost	4.50	1.35	4.33
2024–2025 Unexcused Absences	13.98	12.28	10.00
2024–2025 Excused Absences	3.93	4.71	2.50
2024–2025 Total Absences	17.91	13.51	14.00

Note. M = mean; SD = standard deviation.

The perceived cost variables also had moderate means. These levels suggest that students experience noticeable but manageable demands, which may still compete with motivation and influence engagement or persistence. Recent research further indicates that assessing student motivation, including perceived costs, can provide insight into how students experience academic demands and respond to course expectations (Ferland et al., 2024). Emotional cost had the highest mean (M=4.50, SD=1.35), followed by task effort cost (M=4.09, SD=1.13), outside effort cost (M=3.60, SD=1.20), and loss of valued alternative cost (M=3.50, SD=1.30). These results suggest that students experienced varying levels of effort-related and emotional demands associated with academic tasks.

According to the attendance data from the 2024-2025 school year, students averaged 13.98 unexcused absences (SD=12.28) and 3.93 excused absences (SD=4.71), equally an average of 17.91 total absences (SD=13.51). Median values for absences variables were lower than the corresponding means, suggesting a positively skewed distribution in which a smaller number of students reported a higher absences count skewing the data.

Because the outcome variables in this study consisted of count data for the numbers of absences, a Poisson regression model was used (Laerd Statistics, n.d.). This type of model is appropriate when the dependent variable represents non-negative integer counts, such as attendance and absences data, and is to the right of the median (e.g. positively skewed). The examination of the descriptive statistics indicated that the absence variables had means greater than zero and large standard deviations, proposing variability across students. Furthermore, the results indicated a positive skew suggesting that the means were higher than the median values, where a smaller number of students accounted for a higher amount of absences. Since traditional linear models assume normal distribution, it was not appropriate for this data set. Thus, the Poisson regression model was appropriately selected for examining the relationship between self-efficacy, value, perceived cost, and student absences.

To better understand the relationships among the variables before conducting the Poisson regression analysis, bivariate correlations were examined (see table 4).

Table 4

Correlations Among Study Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Overall SE	—										
2. Overall IV	.21[b]	—									
3. Overall UV	.25[b]	.49[b]	—								
4. Overall AV	.31[b]	.66[b]	.68[b]	—							
5. Overall TE	−.16[a]	−.26[b]	−.19[b]	−.18[a]	—						
6. Overall OE	−.11	−.07	−.10	−.04	.13	—					
7. Overall IL	−.06	−.11	−.08	−.05	.17[a]	.61[b]	—				
8. Overall EM	−.07	−.23[b]	.01	−.06	.27[b]	.41[b]	.44[b]	—			
9. Unexcused Absences	−.14	−.07	−.01	−.06	.10	.10	.10	.19[b]	—		
10. Excused Absences	−.10	−.08	−.03	−.06	.03	.13	.11	.15[a]	.08	—	
11. Total Absences	−.15[a]	−.09	−.01	−.06	.10	.13	.13	.22[b]	.94[b]	.42[b]	—

Note. N = 198–202. SE = self-efficacy; IV = intrinsic value; UV = utility value; AV = attainment value; TE = task effort cost; OE = outside effort cost; IL = loss of valued alternatives; EM = emotional cost. $p < .05$[a], $p < .01$[b] (2-tailed).

These results suggest that self-efficacy was positively associated with task value variables and negatively associated with cost. Cost variables were positively related with emotional cost demonstrating a positive association with absenteeism. Overall, associations between motivational constructs and attendance indicate that absenteeism may be associated with factors beyond students' motivation alone.

Findings

To determine if the model accurately fits the data set more than the null, an omnibus test was conducted, which includes a Chi-squared test. This is essentially the comparison of a model with all the predictors versus a model that has no predictors. From this analysis we get the p-value to determine if the model is statistically significant indicating a high probability that a real effect exists between the variables.

Unexcused Absences

In the case of unexcused absences to each survey model, the omnibus test resulted in a likelihood ratio chi-square test; this demonstrates a strong relationship in this model where all predictors are included. The likelihood ratio chi-square tests was used to assess whether the model with predictors fits the data significantly better than a null model without predictors. In this analysis the likelihood ratio χ^2 was significant ($\chi^2 = 64.016$, $df = 8$, $p < .001$), indicating that the included predictors meaningfully contribute to the explaining variation in the outcome variable. This demonstrates that the model is useful for predicting the outcome. Table 5 displays the parameter estimates for each variable in the model.

Table 5

Poisson Regression Parameter Estimates Predicting Unexcused Absences

Predictor	B	SE	Wald χ^2	p	Exp(B)	95% CI for Exp(B) [Lower, Upper]
(Intercept)	2.20	0.28	63.16	< .001	9.06	[5.26, 15.60]
Self-Efficacy	-0.18	0.07	6.45	.011	0.84	[0.73, 0.96]
Intrinsic Value	0.07	0.03	6.80	.009	1.07	[1.02, 1.13]
Utility Value	0.11	0.03	11.08	< .001	1.12	[1.05, 1.19]
Attainment Value	-0.15	0.05	10.42	.001	0.86	[0.79, 0.94]
Task Effort	0.02	0.03	0.31	.576	1.02	[0.96, 1.07]
Outside Effort Cost	0.12	0.03	16.92	< .001	1.13	[1.06, 1.19]
Loss of Valued Alternatives	-0.00	0.03	0.00	.981	1.00	[0.94, 1.06]
Emotional Cost	0.03	0.03	1.33	.250	1.03	[0.98, 1.08]

Note. B = unstandardized regression coefficient; SE = standard error; Exp(B) = incidence rate ratio (IRR). Significant predictors indicate changes in the expected rate of absences associated with a one-unit increase in the predictor.

Results indicated that several predictors were significantly associated with the outcome. OverallSE (self-efficacy) was a significant negative predictor (B = −0.176, χ^2 = 6.447, p = .011), indicating that students with higher levels of self-efficacy experienced fewer unexcused absences. Similarly, OverallAV (attainment value) was a significant negative predictor (B = −0.147, χ^2 = 10.420, p = .001, meaning that students who place greater importance on doing well (attainment value) tend to have fewer unexcused absences.

OverallIV(intrinsic value) was a significant positive predictor (B = 0.070, χ^2 = 6.798, p = .009), indicating that as intrinsic value increased the number of unexcused absences increased.

This result suggests that students who reported higher levels of intrinsic value toward school tasks also tended to have a greater number of unexcused absences. Similarly, OverallUV (utility value) was positively associated with the outcome ($B = 0.111$, $\chi^2 = 11.076$, $p < .001$). This finding indicates that students who perceived school tasks as more useful or beneficial were associated with higher levels of unexcused absences. Additionally, OverallOE (outside effort cost) significantly predicted the outcome ($B = 0.117$, $\chi^2 = 16.919$, $p < .001$). This result suggests that students who perceived greater effort or demands outside of school were more likely to have higher numbers of unexcused absences.

In contrast, OverallTE (task value) ($p = .576$), OverallIL (Loss of Valued Alternative Cost) ($p = .981$), and OverallIEM (emotional cost) ($p = .250$) were not statistically significant predictors of the outcome. These findings suggest that several of the examined variables significantly influence the expected count of the outcome, while others do not demonstrate a meaningful association.

Excused Absences

To determine the relationship for excused absences to each survey model, the omnibus test resulted in a likelihood ratio chi-square test which illustrated a strong relationship in this model where all predictors are included. The likelihood ratio chi-square test indicated that the model with predictors fit the data significantly better than the null model, $\chi^2(8) = 15.83$, $p = .045$.

Table 6

Poisson Regression Parameter Estimates Predicting Excused Absences

Predictor	B	SE	Wald χ^2	p	Exp(B)	95% CI for Exp(B) [Lower, Upper]
Intercept	2.07	0.50	17.11	< .001	7.92	[2.97, 21.09]
Self-Efficacy	-0.17	0.13	1.79	.181	0.85	[0.66, 1.08]
Intrinsic Value	-0.02	0.05	0.22	.636	0.98	[0.89, 1.08]
Utility Value	-0.10	0.05	3.54	.060	0.91	[0.82, 1.00]
Attainment Value	0.02	0.07	0.08	.782	1.02	[0.89, 1.17]
Task Effort	0.00	0.05	0.00	.964	1.00	[0.91, 1.10]
Outside Effort Cost	-0.02	0.05	0.16	.686	0.98	[0.88, 1.09]
Loss of Valued Alternatives	0.08	0.05	2.65	.104	1.09	[0.98, 1.20]
Emotional Cost	-0.03	0.04	0.60	.440	0.97	[0.89, 1.05]

Note. B = unstandardized regression coefficient; SE = standard error; Exp(B) = incidence rate ratio (IRR). Wald χ^2 tests whether each predictor significantly contributes to the model.

The results display that none of the predictors were statistically significant. Self-efficacy (B = −0.168, χ^2 = 1.788, p = .181), intrinsic value (B = −0.023, χ^2 = 0.224, p = .636), utility value (B = −0.098, χ^2 = 3.538, p = .060), attainment value (B = 0.019, χ^2 = 0.077, p = .782), task effort (B = 0.002, χ^2 = 0.002, p = .964), outside effort cost (B = −0.022, χ^2 = 0.164, p = .686), loss of valued alternative cost (B = 0.083, χ^2 = 2.647, p = .104), and emotional cost (B = −0.034, χ^2 = 0.597, p = .440) were not statistically significant predictors of the outcome, as all p-values were

greater than 0.05. Therefore, the results suggest that none of the variables surveyed predict excused absences.

Total Absences

To assess the relationship between total absences and the survey variables, an omnibus likelihood ratio chi-square test was performed. Results indicated that the model including all predictors significantly improved the fit compared to the null model. The likelihood ratio chi-square test indicated that the model with predictors fit the data significantly better than the null model, $\chi^2(8) = 50.489$, $p = .001$.

Table 7

Poisson Regression Parameter Estimates Predicting Total Absences

Predictor	B	SE	Wald χ^2	p	Exp(B)	95% CI for Exp(B) [Lower, Upper]
Intercept	2.67	0.24	123.78	< .001	14.46	[9.03, 23.15]
Self-Efficacy	-0.15	0.06	5.95	.015	0.86	[0.77, 0.97]
Intrinsic Value	0.02	0.02	0.56	.455	1.02	[0.97, 1.06]
Utility Value	0.02	0.03	0.69	.407	1.02	[0.97, 1.08]
Attainment Value	-0.04	0.04	1.05	.306	0.96	[0.90, 1.04]
Task Effort	0.07	0.02	9.62	.002	1.07	[1.03, 1.12]
Outside Effort	0.04	0.02	3.21	.073	1.04	[1.00, 1.09]
Loss of Valued Alternatives	-0.04	0.02	2.55	.110	0.96	[0.92, 1.01]
Emotional Cost	0.07	0.02	12.72	< .001	1.08	[1.03, 1.12]

Note. B = unstandardized regression coefficient; SE = standard error; Exp(B) = incidence rate ratio (IRR). Wald χ^2 tests the significance of individual predictors.

The results exhibit several predictors were significantly associated with total absences. Self-efficacy was a significant negative predictor ($B = -0.147$, $\chi^2 = 5.952$, $p = .015$), suggesting that higher levels of self-efficacy were associated with fewer total absences. Task effort cost was a significant positive predictor ($B = 0.071$, $\chi^2 = 9.619$, $p = .002$), exhibiting that increases in task effort were associated with higher total absences. Additionally, emotional cost was a significant positive predictor of total absences ($B = 0.074$, $\chi^2 = 12.724$, $p < .001$). Intrinsic value ($p = .455$), utility value ($p = .407$), attainment value ($p = .306$), outside effort ($p = .073$), and loss of valued alternative cost ($p = .110$) were not statistically significant predictors.

The findings were not surprising for self-efficacy and task effort, as both have been commonly associated with student engagement and school attendance in prior research (Bandura, A., 1997; Eccles, J. S., & Wigfield, A., 1995; Manzano-Sanchez et al., 2018). Higher self-efficacy was related to fewer absences, suggesting that students who feel more confident in their ability to succeed are more likely to attend school consistently. Likewise, the relationship between task effort and absences aligns with the idea that students who report exerting effort may also experience increased academic demands or pressures (Wigfield, 1994). An interesting finding, however, was that emotional cost was not a significant predictor of unexcused absences but was significant when examining total absences. This may suggest that emotional cost is more strongly related to overall absenteeism rather than specifically unexcused absences.

Chapter 5

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to explore factors that are associated to student absenteeism including self-efficacy and value beliefs. The analysis revealed that self-efficacy and multiple task value components significantly predicted unexcused absences, while perceived cost variables were associated with total absenteeism. These outcomes suggest that senior students' perceptions of their academic capabilities, the value they place on school-related tasks, and the perceived costs of participation may influence patterns of attendance. Prior research has demonstrated that absenteeism is influenced not only by internal motivational factors but also by external factors such as socioeconomic status, parental involvement, and cultural and linguistic barriers, all of which shape students' academic self-efficacy and engagement (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012; Gutman et al., 2000; Cerna et al., 2009). Building on this understanding, the present study examines how motivational factors relate to student attendance outcomes.

Self-efficacy and Attendance

The results indicated that self-efficacy was a significant predictor of unexcused absences. Specifically, higher levels of self-efficacy were associated with fewer unexcused absences, suggesting that students who feel more confident in their ability to succeed academically are more likely to attend school consistently. This result supports the potential role that senior students' beliefs in their academic capabilities may play in influencing attendance behaviors. As stated above, none of the predictors such as self-efficacy were statistically significant for excused absences, suggesting that no individual variable significantly predicted attendance. However, self-efficacy was found to be a significant predictor of the total amount of absences, suggesting that higher levels of self-efficacy were associated with fewer total absences.

As hypothesized, these findings support the study's claim that self-efficacy would serve as a significant predictor of senior student attendance. Prior research indicates that learners are more likely to participate and engage in a task when they believe they can complete them successfully like attending school (Bandura, 1977, 1982, 1988, & 2013; Bandura & Cervone, 1983; Zimmerman, 1989; Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994). Conversely, individuals who see themselves as not succeeding in the task have low self-efficacy; those who perceive the task to be too easy are less likely to participate (Salomon, 1984). Students are more likely to engage or participate—or attend—when they believe they are capable (Pajares, 1996). This finding is an especially significant connection since absenteeism has been linked to negative impact on school success since students miss instruction (Balfanz & Byrnes, 2012; Chang & Romero, 2008; Ready, 2010). Prior research examining the relationship between self-efficacy and attendance has not explicitly focused on high school seniors; however, Liu et al concluded that noncognitive factors, including academic behaviors and social-emotional learning (SEL) skills, are predictive of outcomes such as graduation and postsecondary opportunities, though their study focused on earlier high school populations (2021). Building on this work, the present study extends the literature by examining self-efficacy as a specific noncognitive factor in relation to attendance among senior students, highlighting its continued importance at the culmination of secondary education. Within this study, which focused on senior students, the results indicated that self-efficacy was a significant predictor of unexcused absences and total absences, suggesting that senior students who feel more confident in their academic abilities are less likely to have unexcused absences. Importantly, much of the prior research does not reflect the demographic composition of the present study, which consists of predominantly Hispanic students, many of whom are English Language Learners and economically disadvantaged. These contextual

differences are important, as prior research suggests that these populations may experience unique structural and cultural barriers that influence both self-efficacy and attendance. Thus, the present study not only supports existing literature linking self-efficacy to academic engagement and attendance, but also extends it by demonstrating that these relationships persist among senior students and within a high-poverty, linguistically diverse population.

Task Value and Attendance

Attainment Value

Attainment value was a significant negative predictor of attendance, meaning that senior students who place greater importance on school tend to have fewer unexcused absences. The negative direction displayed in the B value indicates an inverse relationship meaning that as attainment value increases, unexcused absences decrease. The results reveal that senior students' perceptions of attainment value in their academic work play an important role in predicting unexcused absences. In the case of excused absences, attainment value was not a statistically significant predictor of the outcome. Finally, attainment value was not found to be a statistically significant predictor of total absences. This indicates that senior students who see success in academics as important do not necessarily have fewer total absences than those who place less importance on academic achievement according to this model.

Attainment value is the belief by individuals of the identity-based importance attached to the task (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). Educational outcomes as proposed by the theory can be influenced by one's belief about the value of education (Beymer et al., 2022; Eccles & Wigfield, 2024). Prior research has highlighted the role of achievement values, teachers' autonomy support, and teachers' academic pressure in promoting academic engagement among high school seniors (Lee et al, 2023; Reijo, 2012; Atkinson, 1957, as cited in Wigfield, 2009). The results of

the study suggest that senior students' perceptions of attainment value, such as believing that academic success is important to their identity or future success, may play an important role in shaping their engagement with school, including attendance behaviors.

While attainment value was found to be a significant negative predictor of unexcused absences but not of excused absences or total amount of absences, the results still support the claim that perceived importance of academic success may influence attendance behaviors (Beymer et al., 2022; Eccles & Wigfield, 2024). Although the specific circumstances surrounding each student's absence were not examined in this study, one possible explanation for this finding is that unexcused absences may be more closely associated with students' motivational beliefs and perceptions about school. On the other hand, excused absences are often related to circumstances outside of students' control, such as illness, family responsibilities, or school-approved activities. Additionally, some students may experience home or family circumstances that make it more difficult to have absences formally excused, such as limited parental availability, transportation challenges, or other hardships (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991; Gutman et al., 2000). As a result, unexcused absences may not always reflect senior students' motivation or engagement alone, and these contextual factors warrant further exploration in future research. Consistent with prior literature, students who view academic achievement as an important aspect of their identity may be more motivated to attend school regularly and avoid unexcused absences (Eccles & Wigfield, 2024; Parr, 2015). Because existing research does not specifically focus on seniors, related topics such as student engagement and dropout rates were examined to inform relevant hypotheses, this work demonstrates that variables including academic engagement, achievement value, teacher autonomy support, and teacher academic pressure have differing impacts at the student and classroom levels (Lee et al.,

2023). Prior research suggests that increasing students' sense of value and self-efficacy may be associated with improved attendance behaviors; thus, this study contributes to the literature by focusing specifically on high school seniors and directly examining how these motivational factors are associated with attendance, extending prior research and offering practical implications for improving student outcomes. Conversely, excused absences and overall absences may be influenced by external factors that are less directly related to students' motivational beliefs. These results display the importance of teachers' role in shaping achievement values and promoting academic engagement among high school seniors that may decrease student absences (Lee et al., 2023; Reijo, 2012; Atkinson, 1957, as cited in Wigfield, 2009).

Utility Value

Unlike attainment value, utility value was a significant positive predictor of unexcused absences, suggesting that when senior students perceive their coursework as useful or relevant to their future goals, they are more likely to miss school without an excuse. Although utility value is generally expected to promote greater academic engagement, the results reveal that motivational beliefs alone may not fully explain attendance behavior, as structural or contextual factors may also play an important role in students' decisions to attend school. Conversely, utility value was not statistically significant a predictor of excused absences. Finally, utility value was not found to be a statistically significant predictor of total absences. According to this model, senior students who see school as more useful for their future did not significantly differ in total absences compared to students who see less usefulness.

The finding that utility value was a significant positive predictor of unexcused absences contradicts much of the existing literature and the expectations of expectancy–value theory.

Within expectancy-value theory, utility value refers to the extent to which a task aligns with an individual's current or future goals and plans (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). Prior research suggests that students who recognize the utility value of education and understand how it supports their future goals may therefore be less likely to miss school (Beymer et al., 2022; Eccles & Wigfield, 2024). Therefore, it would have been expected that students who perceive greater utility value in school work would attend school more consistently rather than accumulate higher levels of unexcused absences. As stated previously, existing research does not specifically focus on seniors; however, findings from related constructs such as student engagement and dropout suggest that increasing students' sense of value and self-efficacy may be associated with improved attendance, highlighting this study's contribution by addressing a gap in the literature through its focus on senior students and direct examination of attendance behaviors (Lee et al., 2023).

These results suggest that there may be some external factors influencing these decisions. Perhaps, the senior students do see great utility value in their school work, but responsibilities, family obligations, or scheduling conflicts may influence attendance decisions. These findings may reflect factors that uniquely influence students in their final year of high school. While prior studies have linked socioeconomic status (Alivernini & Lucidi, 2011; Pittenger, 2021; Woullard-Wilder, 2020), cultural barriers and language learning (Cerna at al., 2009; Bianchi, 2022; Santos, 2016; Shi, 2018) to low self-efficacy, future research may benefit from examining how these factors also influence students' perceptions of value toward their academic tasks.

Intrinsic Value

Intrinsic value was also a significant predictor of unexcused absences, indicating that students who find schoolwork interesting or enjoyable tend to have more unexcused absences.

Within expectancy-value theory, intrinsic value represents the anticipated enjoyment derived from completing a task (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020), supporting the notion that senior students' beliefs about the value of education can influence educational outcomes (Beymer et al., 2022; Eccles & Wigfield, 2024). Therefore, the finding that intrinsic value was a significant positive predictor of unexcused absences contradicts much of the existing literature and the expectations of expectancy–value theory. It would have been expected that students who perceive greater value in school work would attend school more consistently rather than accumulate higher levels of unexcused absences indicating some possible limitations of this study.

For excused absences, intrinsic value was not found to be statistically a significant predictor of the excused absences or total absences. According to this model, senior students who have more enjoyment in school do not have a significant difference in absences than those who do not.

Interestingly, for total absences, intrinsic value, utility value, attainment value did not indicate statistical significance, indicating that none of the predictors demonstrated a statistically significant independent relationship with the total amount of absences. This means that they may have had a larger effect on unexcused absences but not on the total amount of absences.

As stated above, the research emphasizes the role of achievement values, teachers' autonomy support, and teachers' academic pressure in promoting academic engagement among high school seniors (Lee et al, 2023; Reijo, 2012; Atkinson, 1957, Wigfield, 2009). The findings of the survey support prior research indicating that intrinsic value was a significant predictor of unexcused absences, despite not being a statistically significant predictor of excused absences or total absences. Contrary to expectations, higher levels of intrinsic value were associated with greater numbers of unexcused absences, suggesting that students' enjoyment or interest in

schoolwork alone may not fully explain patterns of absenteeism. These findings contribute to the existing literature by demonstrating that, among senior students, intrinsic value may not function as a protective factor against absenteeism as previously expected, suggesting that motivational beliefs alone may be insufficient to explain attendance behaviors at the culmination of secondary education.

Cost and Attendance

Task Effort Cost

Task effort was not found to be a significant predictor of unexcused absences, indicating that the amount of effort senior students perceive a task requires may not meaningfully influence whether they attend school consistently. However, task effort was not found to be a statistically significant predictor in relation to excused absences. For the total amount of absences, Task effort cost was a significant positive predictor, exhibiting that increases in perceived task effort were associated with higher total absences.

The results of the study display that task effort was not a significant predictor of unexcused absences or excused absences, suggesting that the amount of effort senior students perceive a task requires may not meaningfully influence whether they attend school consistently. However, task effort cost was a significant positive predictor of total absences, indicating that higher perceived effort was associated with greater overall absenteeism parallel to prior research. These results do not contradict prior research suggesting the correlation between task effort cost and absenteeism, but rather display that task effort cost does not explicitly correlate to excused or unexcused absences individually (Beymer et al., 2022; Eccles & Wigfield, 2020, 2024). Lee et al. (2023) highlight that achievement values, teachers' autonomy support, and academic pressure promote academic engagement among high school seniors, suggesting that strengthening

students' sense of value and self-efficacy may influence attendance behaviors. These findings contribute to the existing literature by demonstrating that, among senior students, task effort cost may be associated with overall absenteeism but not with specific types of absences, suggesting that the influence of perceived effort is more complex than previously understood.

Outside Effort Cost

For unexcused absences, outside effort cost was a significant predictor of the outcome, indicating that higher perceptions of outside effort demands were associated with increased absenteeism. None of the predictors like outside effort effort were found to be a statistically significant predictor in relation to excused absences, indicating that no individual predictor was significantly associated with attendance. Additionally, outside effort was not statistically significant predictors of total absences. This means that senior students who reported more outside effort do not necessarily have more absences than students who do not.

Building on prior research regarding the perceived negative aspects of engaging in a task, outside effort cost was a significant predictor of unexcused absences, indicating that higher perceptions of outside effort demands were associated with increased absenteeism (Eccles, 2005; Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). For excused absences and total absences, outside effort cost was not a statistically significant predictor, suggesting that senior students who reported greater outside effort demands did not necessarily have higher overall absence rates. This difference in the results of types of absences is pertinent because it suggests that outside effort demands are associated with students' attendance behaviors for absences that are potentially out of their control in such as external demands such as family responsibilities which aligns with prior research highlighting the influence of parents and family contexts on students' perceptions of value (Robinson et al., 2018). These findings extend prior research by suggesting that, among

senior students, outside effort cost is associated with particular types of absences rather than overall absenteeism, reflecting the influence of external demands on attendance behavior.

Loss of Valued Alternatives

The results of the study indicated that loss of valued alternatives cost was not a statistically significant predictor for unexcused absences, excused, or total absences indicating that none of the variables independently predicted attendance. These findings suggest senior students who feel that they are missing out on other valued alternative activities do not have more or less absences than those who do not.

Opportunity cost or loss of valued alternatives reflects the belief that attending school requires sacrificing time that could be spent on other activities, expressed in thoughts like "I have to sacrifice too much to be in school" (Eccles, 2005; Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). These findings extend prior research by demonstrating that, for senior students, loss of valued alternatives does not meaningfully relate to attendance, revealing differences among various elements of cost.

Emotional Cost

Emotional cost was not a statistically significant predictor of unexcused absences. However, emotional cost was a significant positive predictor of total absences. These results suggest that senior students who perceive schoolwork as highly demanding or emotionally stressful tend to have higher overall absenteeism.

Emotional cost refers to the negative emotions associated with engaging in a task, such as anxiety, stress, or frustration (Eccles, 2005; Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). Although prior research has not explicitly examined emotional cost, the stress associated with academic tasks may be related to low self-efficacy mentioned in earlier studies. The research suggests that perceived self efficacy influences individuals' beliefs about their ability to complete a task, along with the

standards they set for themselves, shape their confidence in successfully performing that task (Zimmerman, 1989; Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994). As a result, emotional stress related to academic tasks may contribute to lower perceived capability, which could influence senior students' motivation and engagement in school activities. These findings contribute to the existing literature by indicating that, among senior students, emotional cost is related to overall absenteeism but not to specific categories of absences.

Unexpected Findings

Several findings in the present study may be considered unexpected or atheoretical, particularly in relation to the direction and consistency of effects observed across models. Notably, OverallIV (intrinsic value) emerged as a statistically significant positive predictor of unexcused absences, indicating that higher levels of intrinsic value were associated with an increase in unexcused absences. Similarly, OverallUV (utility value) was positively associated with unexcused absences, suggesting that students who perceived school tasks as more useful or beneficial tended to report higher levels of unexcused absences. These findings are counterintuitive given theoretical expectations from expectancy-value theory (Eccles et al., 1983; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). An additional unexpected finding was that emotional cost was not a significant predictor of unexcused absences, yet it was significant when predicting total absences. These patterns may reflect underlying statistical phenomena, such as suppression effects, which is when the inclusion of related predictors alters the observed direction and magnitude of associations within the multivariate models (Conger, 1974; MacKinnon et al., 2000). For this reason, I checked for multicollinaerity and no strong evidence of multicollinearity impacting the results. However, evidence of suppression effects may account for some of the counterintuitive findings.

Theoretical Implications

There are several theoretical implications as a result of this study. I will discuss the following three: 1) relating to indications that different components of expectancy-value theory and cost may influence different types of absenteeism and 2) the mixed findings of utility value and intrinsic value predicting unexcused absences but not total absences. The findings of this study both support and extend prior research on expectancy-value theory and self-efficacy. Consistent with existing literature, motivational constructs such as self-efficacy and task value have been linked to academic engagement and behavioral outcomes, including attendance (Bandura, 1997; Eccles & Wigfield, 2020, 2024). Much of the prior research has focused on younger students or general populations rather than high school seniors, and often does not account for demographic contexts such as high-poverty, predominantly Hispanic, or English Language Learner populations (Liu et al., 2021; Cerna et al., 2009; Bianchi, 2022; Woullard-Wilder, 2020). This distinction is important, as it suggests that motivational processes may operate differently across developmental stages and contextual environments.

To begin, the results of this study have important theoretical implications related to facilitating an increase in self-efficacy and value in academics in order to increase student attendance. The results indicate that different components of expectancy-value theory may influence different types of absenteeism. Specifically, attainment value and intrinsic value were significant negative predictors of unexcused absences, while utility value was a significant positive predictor. Because unexcused absences may result from both student-controlled decisions and environmental factors outside of students' control, motivational beliefs related to the importance, enjoyment, and usefulness of school may influence whether students choose to attend. In contrast, excused absences are often externally related and without student choice.

Even though students may see the utility value in school, there may be external factors influencing the decision not to attend. This finding that utility value predicts unexcused absences but not total absences, suggests that these motivational beliefs alone may not fully explain attendance patterns.

For total absences, intrinsic value, utility value, attainment value did not indicate statistical significance, demonstrating that none of the predictors displayed a statistically significant independent relationship with the total amount of absences. This means that they may have had a larger effect on unexcused absences but not on the total amount of absences. According to Expectancy-Value theory, these constructs—social, psychological, and cultural influences— are direct predictors of an individual's achievement performance (Eccles et al., 1983; Eccles & Wigfield, 1995; Meece, Wigfield, & Eccles, 1990; Wigfield, 1994, 2009; Wigfield & Eccles, 1992, 2000, 2002). Eccles and her colleagues have focused on how expectancies, values, and their influence on choice in completing a task (Wigfield, 2009). The results of the present study align with this framework, suggesting that students' perceptions of value may influence attendance decisions, although social, psychological, and cultural influences may still affect attendance even when students recognize the value of education.

The results of this study have important theoretical implications related to understanding how perceived costs may influence student attendance. The findings indicate that different components of cost within expectancy-value theory may influence different types of absenteeism. According to the Eccles Expectancy-Value Model, perceived cost reflects the negative aspects associated with engaging in a task, including the effort required, the potential loss of alternative activities, and the emotional strain that may accompany task completion (Eccles, 2005; Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). The findings in this study reveal that task effort cost

was not a significant predictor of unexcused or excused absences, but was a significant positive predictor of total absences. Outside effort cost was a significant predictor of unexcused absences, but not excused absences or total absences. Finally, emotional cost was not a significant predictor of unexcused or excused absences, but it was of total amount of absences. Prior research suggests that perceived self-regulated efficacy is associated with individuals' beliefs about their ability to complete a task, along with the standards they set for themselves, shape their confidence in successfully performing that task (Zimmerman, 1989; Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994). Outside effort cost seems to affect absences that are unexcused, while task effort and emotional cost reveal a broader explanation for total amount of absences. These findings suggest that different types of perceived cost influence different attendance behaviors.

Practical Implications

Beyond theoretical and conceptual impact, the findings of the current study have several specific and actionable implications for improving student attendance and motivation, particularly through strengthening self-efficacy, increasing perceived value, and reducing perceived academic cost. Practical implications include potential influences on practices by stakeholders such as school leaders, principals, teachers, parents, and students.

To begin, the findings have implications for classroom instruction such as teacher support for self-efficacy. Teachers can implement targeted instructional strategies to build student self-efficacy, which has been consistently linked to improved academic outcomes and motivation (Parr, 2015; Chen & Usher, 2015; Chen et al., 2016). This theory suggests that motivation is influenced by outcome expectations, reinforcement, and social interactions, with individuals learning behaviors through observation and vicarious experiences (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020; Schunk & Meece, 2005). Teachers should facilitate peer support and collaborative learning

environments in order to increase students' confidence in their academic abilities, which can positively influence motivation and engagement (Wang, 2021; Zimmerman, 1989). This practice is in alignment with Bandura's social cognitive theory in which our goals, outcome expectations, and plans influence our performance (Bandura, 1998; Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994). In addition to peer support, teachers can strengthen students' self-efficacy by providing mastery-oriented feedback, setting learning goals, and celebrating progress (Bandura 1991b; Chen & Usher, 2015; Pajares, 1996 Parr, 2015). This practice can incorporate weekly goal-setting routines, where students set short-term, achievable academic goals and reflect on their progress, reinforcing mastery experiences that are central to self-efficacy development. Teachers might also use scaffolded assignments with gradual release of responsibility, ensuring that students experience early success before progressing to more complex tasks, which can increase both competence and persistence. These practices may contribute to improved motivation and engagement, which could also support consistent school attendance (Bandura, 1998; Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994).

Furthermore, teachers and school leaders can take concrete steps to enhance students' perceptions of task value while reducing perceived academic cost, both of which are central to expectancy-value theory (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). Within this framework, teachers play an important role in shaping students' perceptions of cost by influencing how demanding or stressful academic tasks are perceived to be. Teachers can provide students with scaffolded learning experiences that lead to successful outcomes which could influence their confidence in their academic abilities (Wigfield et al, 2000; 2009). Teachers can increase task value by explicitly connecting lesson content to students' real-world interests, career goals, or everyday applications and offering choice assignments, such as incorporating project-based learning tied to community issues or student-selected topics (Wigfield et al., 2009). To reduce perceived cost,

teachers can break larger assignments into clearly defined, manageable steps with interim deadlines, which can lower feelings of overwhelm and stress (Wigfield et al., 2000). Schools might also implement structured academic support systems, such as built-in intervention periods, tutoring sessions, or check-in/check-out systems, to help students manage workload demands more effectively. By providing clear guidance, offering appropriate academic support, and creating structured learning environments, teachers can help reduce students' perceptions of effort and stress associated with schoolwork.

Since prior research has highlighted the role of families in shaping students' perceptions of value (Robinson et al., 2018) as well as their self-efficacy beliefs (Alivernini & Lucidi, 2011; Sarkissian, 2021), parents and families may also play an important role in supporting students' perceptions of value and self-efficacy. Schools can support families by providing clear communication about academic expectations and progress, as well as offering family workshops or resources on how to support learning at home. Parents can reinforce motivation and support attendance by discussing the relevance of education to future goals, encouraging persistence, and helping students develop consistent routines and expectations around completing schoolwork and participating in school regularly. Encouraging positive attitudes toward education, reinforcing the importance of school attendance, and supporting students in managing academic responsibilities may help strengthen students' motivation to attend school consistently.

Together, these stakeholder-specific strategies provide actionable steps to put the study's findings into practice, with the potential to improve both student motivation and attendance through coordinated efforts across classrooms, schools, and families.

Limitations and Future Directions

While the findings contribute to the understanding of motivational influences of attendance, several limitations should be acknowledged. One limitation includes the generalizability of the sample. The sample was drawn from two high schools within one school district, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other schools, districts, or geographic regions. This study is that attendance categories were defined according to district-specific criteria for excused and unexcused absences. Because these definitions may vary across school districts, the findings are most applicable to contexts with similar classification systems and may not fully generalize to districts with differing attendance policies. Student populations in other contexts may experience different motivational factors related to attendance.

A limitation of this study is that participant-level demographic data were not collected from students at U.S. Grant High School due to a survey administration error. As a result, school-level demographic data were used to describe this population. However, these data may not accurately represent the characteristics of the study participants, limiting the ability to examine demographic differences and interpret findings for this subgroup. Similarly, the focus on senior students represents a subgroup limitation, as the findings may not be generalizable to students in other grade levels.

Additionally, the use of self-reported measures may introduce response bias, as participants may provide socially desirable responses or may not accurately recall their experiences (DeVellis, 2003; van de Mortel, 2008). The survey was completely voluntary; however, by administering the survey in a classroom setting by teachers may have introduced additional limitations. Students may have felt pressured to participate or may have altered their

responses due to perceived expectations from teachers or peers, potentially affecting the honesty and accuracy of their responses (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Ting, 2013; van de Mortel, 2008).

Another limitation was that student attendance may be influenced by external factors such as family responsibilities, transportation challenges, health concerns, or school climate, which were not examined in the present study. Additionally, this study did not account for the role of families in shaping students' perceptions of task value (Robinson et al., 2018) and self-efficacy beliefs (Alivernini & Lucidi, 2011; Sarkissian, 2021), despite prior research suggesting that parents and families play an important role in supporting and reinforcing these motivational beliefs.

Additionally, the unexpected positive relationships between intrinsic value and utility value with unexcused absences could be considered a limitation for this study as it contradicts prior research and hypothesis; thus, suggesting that further research is needed to better understand these findings. One possible limitation of this study is how attendance outcomes are measured, as distinguishing between excused and unexcused absences may provide more meaningful insight into student behavior. Excused absences count towards the students absentee rate, but are typically out of the control of the student. Because excused absences may reflect more acceptable or unavoidable circumstances, future research should continue to examine these categories separately rather than relying solely on total absences, which may obscure important differences in the factors influencing student attendance. Thus, these findings suggest the need for future research on this topic.

Future research could employ longitudinal or experimental designs to examine how changes in self-efficacy and value influence attendance over time. Additionally, future research should explore contextual factors such as school climate, student-teacher relationship, and

socioeconomic variables that potentially could interact with self-efficacy and value to build on current research on the topic (Sarkissian, 2021; Woullard-Wilder, 2020). Furthermore, future research should use a mixed methods approach versus the quantitative measure used in this study. Future studies could examine additional variables that may influence absenteeism, such as school belonging, teacher support, mental health, or family engagement, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of attendance behavior, especially since emotional cost was a major predictor. These future studies would build on existing literature on parental involvement that is connected to academic achievement, wellbeing, attendance, student attitude, homework readiness and grades (Gonzalez, 2005; Greenwood & Hickman, 1991).

The results of this study have important implications for stakeholders such as educators, school leaders, and policymakers. Efforts to improve student attendance should extend beyond punitive measures and rather prioritize interventions that enhance student self-efficacy and perceived value, but also include cost. Instructional practices that provide mastery experiences, constructive feedback, and opportunities for student autonomy may strengthen self-efficacy (Parr, 2015; Chen & Usher, 2015; Chen et al., 2016). Similarly, providing relevant applications to student interests may increase perceived value and cost value (Beymer, 2022; Eccles, 2005; Eccles & Wigfield, 2020). By addressing motivational factors underlying attendance, schools may bridge the attendance gap.

Conclusion

The goal of this study was to reveal the relationship between student academic self-efficacy, cost and task value beliefs in education as it relates to student attendance. Based on the results, self-efficacy emerged as a significant negative predictor of absenteeism, indicating that students who have greater confidence in their academic abilities tend to have fewer

absences. Additionally, certain dimensions of perceived cost, particularly task effort and emotional cost, were positively associated with total absences, suggesting that students who view school as overly demanding or emotionally stressful are more likely to miss school. While components of task value, including intrinsic and utility value, were associated with reduced unexcused absences, not all value-related variables were significant predictors across all attendance outcomes. Overall, these findings suggest that students' beliefs about their academic abilities, the value of school tasks, and the perceived costs of participation all play a role in shaping attendance behaviors.

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Appendix A

General Self-Efficacy Scale				
1. I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.	Not at all true	Hardly true	Moderately true	Exactly true
2. When I feel challenged, I can find the means and ways to get what I want.	Not at all true	Hardly true	Moderately true	Exactly true
3. It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.	Not at all true	Hardly true	Moderately true	Exactly true
4. I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events.	Not at all true	Hardly true	Moderately true	Exactly true
5. Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations.	Not at all true	Hardly true	Moderately true	Exactly true
6. I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort.	Not at all true	Hardly true	Moderately true	Exactly true
7. I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities.	Not at all true	Hardly true	Moderately true	Exactly true
8. When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.	Not at all true	Hardly true	Moderately true	Exactly true
9. If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution.	Not at all true	Hardly true	Moderately true	Exactly true
10. I can usually handle whatever comes my way.	Not at all true	Hardly true	Moderately true	Exactly true

Expectancy-Value								
Intrinsic Value								
I like school.		Not at all true of me	Mostly not true of me	Somewhat not true of me	Neither true or not true of me	Some what true of me	Mostly true of me	Very true of me
School is exciting to me		Not at all true of me	Mostly not true of me	Somewhat not true of me	Neither true or not true of me	Some what true of me	Mostly true of me	Very true of me
I am fascinated by school		Not at all true of me	Mostly not true of me	Somewhat not true of me	Neither true or	Some what	Mostly true of me	Very true of me

					not true of me	true of me		
I enjoy doing school		Not at all true of me	Mostly not true of me	Somewhat not true of me	Neither true or not true of me	Some what true of me	Mostly true of me	Very true of me
I enjoy subjects in school		Not at all true of me	Mostly not true of me	Somewhat not true of me	Neither true or not true of me	Some what true of me	Mostly true of me	Very true of me
Utility Value								
School will be useful for me later in life.		Not at all true of me	Mostly not true of me	Somewhat not true of me	Neither true or not true of me	Some what true of me	Mostly true of me	Very true of me
School concepts are valuable because they will help me in the future.		Not at all true of me	Mostly not true of me	Somewhat not true of me	Neither true or not true of me	Some what true of me	Mostly true of me	Very true of me
Being good at in school will be important when I get a job or go to college.		Not at all true of me	Mostly not true of me	Somewhat not true of me	Neither true or not true of me	Some what true of me	Mostly true of me	Very true of me
Attainment Value								
Being someone who is good at school is important to me.		Not at all true of me	Mostly not true of me	Somewhat not true of me	Neither true or not true of me	Some what true of me	Mostly true of me	Very true of me
I feel that, to me, being good at solving problems in school is very important.		Not at all true of me	Mostly not true of me	Somewhat not true of me	Neither true or not true of me	Some what true of me	Mostly true of me	Very true of me
Being good at school is an important part of who I am.		Not at all true of me	Mostly not true of me	Somewhat not true of me	Neither true or not true of me	Some what true of me	Mostly true of me	Very true of me

It is important for me to be someone who is good at solving problems in school work.		Not at all true of me	Mostly not true of me	Somewhat not true of me	Neither true or not true of me	Some what true of me	Mostly true of me	Very true of me
It is important for me to be someone who is good at solving problems in school work.		Not at all true of me	Mostly not true of me	Somewhat not true of me	Neither true or not true of me	Some what true of me	Mostly true of me	Very true of me
It is important to me to be a person who reasons with school work.		Not at all true of me	Mostly not true of me	Somewhat not true of me	Neither true or not true of me	Some what true of me	Mostly true of me	Very true of me
Thinking about school is an important part of who I am.		Not at all true of me	Mostly not true of me	Somewhat not true of me	Neither true or not true of me	Some what true of me	Mostly true of me	Very true of me

Cost								
Task Effort Cost								
TE1 School demands too much of my time.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Some what Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
TE2 I have to put too much energy into school.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Some what Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
TE3 School takes up too much time.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Some what Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
TE4 School is too much work.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Some what Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
TE5 School requires too much effort.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Some what Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Outside Effort Cost								
OE1 I have so many other commitments that I can't put forth the effort needed for school.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Some what Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
OE2 Because of all of the other demands on my time, I don't have enough time for this school.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Some what Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
OE3 I have so many other responsibilities that I am unable to put in the effort that is necessary for school.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Some what Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
OE4 Because of other things that I do, I don't have time to put into school.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Some what Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Loss of valued alternatives								
L1 I have to sacrifice too much to be in school.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Some what Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
L2 School requires me to give up too many other activities I value.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Some what Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
L3 Taking classes causes me to miss out on too many other things I care about.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Some what Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
L4 | can't spend as much time doing the other things that I would like		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Some what Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

because I am taking classes.								
Emotional Cost								
EM1 I worry too much about school.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Some what Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
EM2 School is too exhausting.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Some what Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
EM3 School is emotionally draining.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Some what Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
EM4 School is too frustrating.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Some what Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
EM5 School is too stressful.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Some what Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
EM6 School makes me feel too anxious.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Some what Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree