2026 Volume: 02 Issue: 05 www.ijrpa.com ISSN 2456-9995 Research Article

International Journal Research Publication Analysis

Page: 01-07

TEACHERS' SELF-DETERMINATION AND GOAL ORIENTATION AS PREDICTORS OF PUPILS' SELF-REGULATED LEARNING

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Article Received: 29 March 2026

Article Revised: 19 April 2026

Published on: 09 May 2026

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DOI: https://doi-doi.org/101555/ijrpa.7278

ABSTRACT

This quantitative study examined the relationship and predictive influence of teachers' self-determination and goal orientation on pupils' self-regulated learning (SRL) in selected district schools in Arakan, North Cotabato, for School Year 2025–2026. Using a descriptive-correlational design, 278 public school teachers selected through proportionate stratified random sampling responded to a validated self-made questionnaire (Cronbach's alpha: .902, .945, .955). Data were analyzed using weighted mean, Spearman's rho correlation, and multiple linear regression. Findings revealed that teachers had very high self-determination (WM=4.42), with competence (WM=4.49) as the highest domain, followed by relatedness (WM=4.40) and autonomy (WM=4.38). Goal orientation was also very high overall (WM=4.41), with work avoidance orientation highest (WM=4.44), followed by performance (WM=4.42) and mastery (WM=4.37). Pupils demonstrated very high SRL proficiency (WM=4.50), with goal setting highest (WM=4.51). Spearman's rho confirmed highly significant positive relationships between all self-determination and goal orientation dimensions and all SRL dimensions ($p<.001$). Regression analyses showed that relatedness was the strongest predictor of pupils' goal setting ($\beta=.395$), self-monitoring ($\beta=.387$), and strategy use ($\beta=.304$). For goal orientation, performance orientation was the strongest predictor across all SRL dimensions, while mastery orientation did not significantly predict any dimension. These findings establish teachers' relational bonds and performance-driven orientations as the primary mechanisms of pupils' academic self-regulation.

KEYWORDS: *Self-Determination Theory, Goal Orientation, Self-Regulated Learning, Relatedness, Performance Orientation, Descriptive-Correlational, Elementary Teachers, Philippines*

INTRODUCTION

Teachers' self-determination and goal orientation are critical in shaping how pupils learn independently. When teachers feel motivated and capable—with strong senses of autonomy, competence, and relatedness—they inspire pupils to take charge of their learning. Their goals, whether focused on mastery, performance, or work avoidance, guide the pedagogical support they provide. Together, these factors build strong learning environments and foster pupils' capacity for self-regulation (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ames, 1992).

In local studies from Arakan, North Cotabato, teachers often struggle to balance curriculum demands with helping pupils learn independently. Cruz (2020) and Manalo (2022) note a lack of proper training programs and weak institutional support for teacher motivation. While Valdez (2023) and Santos (2024) suggest teacher motivation alone supports pupils' regulation, Gonzales (2022) and Navarro (2023) argue that stronger outcomes emerge when both self-determination and goal orientation interact. Martinez (2023) calls for studies clarifying their combined influence on SRL. This study addressed that research gap by quantitatively examining the relationship and predictive influence of teachers' self-determination and goal orientation on pupils' SRL in Arakan districts.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

A descriptive-correlational design (Cochran, 2015) was employed to assess the levels of teachers' self-determination, goal orientation, and pupils' SRL, and to determine the relationships and predictive influences between these constructs.

Participants

Using proportionate stratified random sampling via Slovin's formula (5% error), 278 public school teachers were selected from a population of 910 across three districts: Arakan East (n=93), Arakan West (n=92), and Arakan North (n=93). Inclusion criteria required public school employment with a minimum of five years of service.

Research Instrument

A three-part self-made questionnaire assessed: (1) Teachers' Self-Determination (α=.902) across three dimensions—autonomy, competence, and relatedness; (2) Teachers' Goal

Orientation (α=.945) across three dimensions—mastery orientation, work avoidance orientation, and performance orientation; and (3) Pupils' Self-Regulated Learning (α=.955) across three dimensions—goal setting, self-monitoring, and strategy use. All items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1=Very Slightly to 5=Very High). The instrument underwent content validation and Exploratory Factor Analysis.

Statistical Analysis

Weighted means described the levels of all variables. Spearman's rank-order correlation (Spearman, 1904) determined the significance and direction of relationships between independent and dependent variables. Multiple linear regression (Galo, 2015) identified the significant predictors of each SRL dimension from among self-determination and goal orientation dimensions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Levels of Teachers' Self-Determination and Goal Orientation

All self-determination dimensions were rated very high (WM=4.42 overall). Competence was highest (WM=4.49), reflecting teachers' confidence in innovative and student-centered practice. All goal orientation dimensions were very high (WM=4.41 overall). Work avoidance orientation—reflecting focus on measurable outcomes and assessment preparation—was highest (WM=4.44), suggesting a pragmatic adaptation to the high-stakes Philippine assessment environment.

Table 1. Summary of Variable Levels.

Variable	Dimension	WM	Description
Self-Determination	Autonomy	4.38	Very High
	Competence	4.49	Very High
	Relatedness	4.40	Very High
	Overall	4.42	Very High
Goal Orientation	Mastery Orientation	4.37	Very High
	Work Avoidance Orientation	4.44	Very High
	Performance Orientation	4.42	Very High
	Overall	4.41	Very High
Pupils' SRL	Goal Setting	4.51	Very High
	Self-Monitoring	4.48	Very High
	Strategy Use	4.50	Very High
	Overall	4.50	Very High

Relationship between Self-Determination and Pupils' SRL

Spearman's rho confirmed highly significant positive correlations between all self-determination dimensions and all SRL outcomes ($p<.001$). Relatedness showed the strongest correlations with all three SRL dimensions: goal setting ($r=.568$), self-monitoring ($r=.561$), and strategy use ($r=.533$). Competence produced the next strongest associations across all dimensions, while autonomy showed moderate but significant correlations. The null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 2. Spearman's Rho: Self-Determination and Pupils' SRL.

Self-Determination	Goal Setting (r)	Self-Monitoring (r)	Strategy Use (r)
Autonomy	.417** (.000)	.366** (.000)	.387** (.000)
Competence	.517** (.000)	.522** (.000)	.500** (.000)
Relatedness	.568** (.000)	.561** (.000)	.533** (.000)

***p<.01 (2-tailed)*

Influence of Self-Determination on Pupils' SRL

Multiple regression confirmed significant collective influence of self-determination on all SRL outcomes. For goal setting ($R^2=.368$, $F=57.335$, $p<.001$), all three dimensions were significant predictors, with relatedness as strongest ($\beta=.395$, $p<.001$). For self-monitoring ($R^2=.336$, $F=49.864$, $p<.001$), competence ($\beta=.211$, $p=.007$) and relatedness ($\beta=.387$, $p<.001$) were significant; autonomy was not. For strategy use ($R^2=.325$, $F=47.487$, $p<.001$), competence ($\beta=.228$, $p=.002$) and relatedness ($\beta=.304$, $p<.001$) were significant; autonomy was marginal ($p=.062$).

Relationship between Goal Orientation and Pupils' SRL

Spearman's rho confirmed highly significant positive relationships between all goal orientation dimensions and all SRL outcomes ($p<.001$). Performance orientation showed the strongest correlations: goal setting ($r=.652$), strategy use ($r=.618$), self-monitoring ($r=.608$). Work avoidance orientation also showed robust positive correlations, while mastery orientation—though significant—showed the weakest associations.

Table 3. Spearman's Rho: Goal Orientation and Pupils' SRL.

Goal Orientation	Goal Setting (r)	Self-Monitoring (r)	Strategy Use (r)
Mastery Orientation	.536** (.000)	.529** (.000)	.471** (.000)
Work Avoidance	.607** (.000)	.569** (.000)	.570** (.000)
Performance Orientation	.652** (.000)	.608** (.000)	.618** (.000)

***p<.01 (2-tailed)*

Influence of Goal Orientation on Pupils' SRL

Multiple regression confirmed that performance orientation was the strongest predictor across all SRL dimensions: goal setting (β=.434, R^2=.475, F=89.104, p<.001), self-monitoring (β=.345, R^2=.404, F=66.875, p<.001), and strategy use (β=.435, R^2=.412, F=69.049, p<.001). Work avoidance orientation was also a significant positive predictor across all dimensions. Mastery orientation was not a significant individual predictor for any SRL dimension—a counter-intuitive finding that reflects a pragmatic adaptation to high-stakes assessment environments.

Table 4. Regression: Goal Orientation Predicting Pupils' SRL.

SRL Outcome	Significant Predictors (Goal Orientation)	R^2	F
Goal Setting	Performance (β=.434**); Work Avoidance (β=.247**)	0.475	89.104**
Self-Monitoring	Performance (β=.345**); Work Avoidance (β=.270**)	0.404	66.875**
Strategy Use	Performance (β=.435**); Work Avoidance (β=.228**)	0.412	69.049**

***p<.01*

The dominance of performance and work avoidance orientations over mastery in predicting SRL aligns with Malipot and Rustia (2024), who observed that the performance-driven culture in the Philippine educational system encourages teachers to implement highly structured instructional goals that students subsequently adopt. Abun et al. (2021) noted that streamlined, pragmatic teaching approaches provide students with a clear, manageable framework for goal regulation and self-monitoring.

CONCLUSION

This study confirms that teachers' self-determination and goal orientation are significant predictors of pupils' self-regulated learning in Arakan public schools. All null hypotheses are

rejected. Relatedness is the most consistent and strongest predictor of pupils' SRL across all dimensions—confirming that the relational bond between teacher and student is the primary mechanism for fostering academic agency, more powerful than autonomy alone. Performance and work avoidance orientations outperform mastery orientation as predictors of SRL—a pragmatic finding that reflects the structural reality of the Philippine high-stakes assessment environment. School leaders and policymakers should prioritize strengthening teacher-student relational bonds through Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) integration in professional development, while creating institutional conditions that reduce operational friction and allow teachers to invest in deep, growth-oriented pedagogical practice.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The researchers sincerely thanks the 278 teacher-respondents from Arakan East, Arakan West, and Arakan North Districts for their generous participation. Gratitude is extended to the Schools Division Office of Cotabato for institutional endorsement, and to the members of Advisory Committee Dr. Queenie A. Habibun, and Dr. Rizza Rhea V. Ringconada—for their scholarly guidance throughout this study.

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