



Template for Article Summary, Analysis, and Annotation

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1. **Full citation** McConnell, A., Martin, J., & Hennessey, M. (2015). Indicators of Postsecondary Employment and Education for Youth With Disabilities in Relation to GPA and General Education. *Remedial and Special Education*, 327-336.
Doi:10.1177/0741932515583497
2. **Abstract** This study examined the relations among research-identified non-academic indicators of post school education and employment measured by the Transition Assessment and Goal Generator (TAGG), student grade point average (GPA), and percentage of time students with disabilities received instruction in the general education classroom. Participants included 1,219 individuals from 49 school districts, across nine states. Analysis of Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients indicated weak to no relations among variables with the exception of persistence and core GPA. Neither student GPA nor time in the general education setting accounted for meaningful variance in TAGG scores, suggesting the TAGG measures behaviors different from GPA and educational placement. Only scores provided by educators yielded a moderate correlation between core GPA and the construct of persistence. Implications for practice and future research needed are discussed.
3. **Summary**
 - a. **Purpose of study** the article examines the relationships between non-academic behaviors that research identified that associates post-school education and employment measured by the TAGG and percentage of time secondary students with disabilities receive instruction in general education, GPA of secondary students with disabilities, and each TAGG construct and percentage of time spent in general education and student GPA.
 - i. Research questions:
 1. Is there a relationship between general education and GPA and non-academic behaviors that indicate students' post-school employment and education?
 2. Do students who have high GPA's and receive more instruction in the general education setting possess more of the skills measured by the TAGG than those with lower GPA's and who receive less instruction in the general education setting?
 3. Does GPA alone represent one's readiness for postsecondary education and employment?
 - b. **Framework**





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This paper examines how participation in general education and GPA relate to non-academic behaviors associated with student post-school employment and education and whether other skills are needed through research.

c. **Population and sample**

- i. The sample included 1,219 individuals from 49 school districts across 9 states, which were studied over two academic years.
 1. The individuals included 650 students with disabilities, 497 family members, and 72 high school special educators.
 2. Students had to be high school students with IEPs and a mild to moderate disability identified by the educator
 3. Educators had to be a special education teacher or secondary transition coordinator that completed transition plans for students 14-21
 4. Family members included parents, stepparents, grandparents, or other legal guardians.

d. **Overview of methods**

- i. Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was secured before recruitment began. All participants consented to the study.
- ii. G*Power 3.1 power analysis test for correlational analysis indicated at least 138 TAGG assessments from educators, family members, and students, and student transcripts were needed to achieve a moderate correlation of 0.3
- iii. Non-academic behaviors associated with post-school employment and education for students with disabilities were identified and arranged into constructs by McConnell et al (2013) These constructs were used to create the initial version of the TAGG, which included 75 items across 10 constructs presented in three versions: Professional, Family and Student. Then they applied factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis techniques across two independent samples completed a year apart to TAGG data collected from all the participants. Based on the results the TAGG was a 34-item assessment arranged into eight constructs for the Professional and Family versions: (a) Strengths and limitations, (b) disability awareness, (c) persistence, (d) interacting with others, (e) goal setting and attainment, (f) employment, (g) student involvement in the IEP, and (h) support community, and the Student version has 34 parallel items across seven constructs due to strengths and limitations and support community constructs collapsing into one construct.

e. **Variables** (or broad topics/sources of variance for qualitative studies)





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- i. Independent variables: percentage of time in general education setting and student GPA.
 1. Percentage of time in general education setting determined from student demographic information completed by the students' participating educators.
 2. Student GPA was determined from high school transcripts.
 - ii. Depended variables: TAGG total score, TAGG construct scores for professional, family, and student versions
- f. **Findings/Results**
- i. The students in the sample received about 69% of instruction in the general education setting.
 - ii. The relationship between overall TAGG scores from educator, family, and student versions and percentage of time in general education yielded a significant positive correlation too low to be meaningful.
 - iii. Only the relation between percentage of time in general education and the construct interacting with others yielded significant correlations for the educator version.
 - iv. No statistical significance between GPA and TAGG scores, or construct results and GPA.
 - v. Results of the study indicate non-academic behaviors associated with employment and further education measured by the TAGG are different than behaviors associated with the percentage of time receive instruction in the general education classroom or GPA.
 - vi. Overall TAGG scores provided weak significant positive correlations and very low variance in relation to percentage of time in general education classrooms.
 - vii. Student GPA and overall family TAGG scores did yield a weak, significant negative correlation, but did not provide a meaningful coefficient of determination.
- g. **Implications**
- i. There should be less focus on academics to prepare students for post-high school education and employment.
 - ii. The percentage of time in classroom and GPA didn't improve the TAGG score, which measures the skills needed for post-high school endeavors.
 - iii. A strict focus on teaching academic on teaching academics alone without teaching and providing students the opportunity to practice and generalize non-academic skills may result in students with disabilities not successfully transitioning in to postsecondary education and employment.





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4. Critiques & Limitations (In your own words, that make sense when skimmed)

a. Conceptual

b. Data

- i. More replications will help streamline the data and make it more applicable to other studies.

(In the research, each teacher completed a TAGG on nine different students. It seems like that the number of educator participants in this research is lower than students and family members.)

c. Analysis

- i. TAGG constructs only focuses on 8 aspects needed for post-high school opportunities however other factors are important for success beyond high school.

d. Interpretation

- i. Some of the data was difficult to interpret based on numbers.
- ii. Future research needs to replicate the results of this study across additional groups of secondary special educators.

e. Application

- i. Since there weren't any real positive findings as a result of this research I don't see how there could be any application of this study.
(The results of this study suggest the need to teach students with disabilities the non-academic skills associated with post-school employment and further education the TAGG measures.)

5. Follow-Up

f. Little Questions N/A

g. Big Questions

- i. Why are schools placing a greater emphasis on spending time in the classroom and testing rather than social preparation for students with disabilities?

h. Next Steps

- i. There needs to be a follow up study of high school students who completed the TAGG to determine the relation between TAGG scores and post high-school student employment and education outcomes.

i. Other Resources

6. Utility: This article is useful but only to a minimal extent. Since the article focuses on disabilities in general rather than autism specifically. Also there were very weak significant positive correlations to be meaningful with the students' percentage of time in general education.

