# Self-Advocacy Levels in College TRIO Participants and Their Collegiate Non-TRIO Participating Peers

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Self-advocacy is, essentially, one's ability to represent themselves or their interests. Consider self-advocacy like a circle with two prongs; those prongs would be self-determination (Ryan and Deci, 2000) and Self-Efficacy (Bandura, 1994). Self-determination is one's ability to determine and *identify* life choices and actions, while self-efficacy is the *confidence* to enact actions in one's own life. Therefore, self-determination can be represented as thought, self-efficacy as confidence, and self-advocacy as action. Self-determination and self-efficacy consequently enable self-advocacy in individuals, but current research has not explored either term in conjunction with one another as covariables dependent for self-advocacy. The literature surrounding self-advocacy is categorical with components such as motivation (Ryan and Deci, 2000; Chia Liu, W., John Wang, C.K. Hwa Kee, Y., Koh, C., Coral Lim, B.S., & Chua, L, 2013; Niemic, C. and Ryan, R., 2009; Simon, Aulls, Dedic, Hubbard, and Hall, 2015), parenting styles (Aslam and Sultan, 2014; Turner, Chandler, and Heffer, 2009), and self-efficacy (Macphee, Farro, and Canetto, 2013; Einarson and Santiago, 1996; Pittenger, Khushwant, and Heimann, 2000; DeFrietas and Bravo Jr., 2012) connecting to self-determination, but has not yet connected both self-determination *and* self-efficacy to self-advocacy.

I believe that there is sufficient cause to relate mentoring as an aspect of participating in a TRIO program and that TRIO programs assist students in satisfying the needed conditions to meet self-efficacy and self-determination in students, which then leads to improving self-advocacy levels in students. I want to explore the connection between self-advocacy levels between college students at a mid-western four-year university who participate in a TRIO program and their peers who do not participate in a TRIO program. I want to see if there is a connection between TRIO participation as well as the number of years in a TRIO program and the levels that students self-report for their self-advocacy levels. Students' perceived self-advocacy levels may impact the ability of the student to communicate their academic, personal, financial, and other needs within their college career. The results of this research would allow further research into general college student self-advocacy and the factors or support services on college campuses that encourage and promote student self-advocacy.