Confidence is the strength of one's belief, trust or expectation, related to task accomplishment

Sander & Sanders, 2003

Academic Behavioural Confidence

- is confidence in ability to engage in behaviour that might be required during a student's academic career

Sander & Sanders, 2006

ABC Scale - assesses students' confidence in their ability to plan and conduct behaviours relevant to academic success

Academic Behavioural Confidence and the ABC Scale

- Stankov et al (2014) concluded, perhaps unsurprisingly, that when taking the four principal stakeholders in education into account - that is, students, teachers, schools (in the broadest sense) and parents - the strongest predictors of academic achievement reside within the functioning of the learners. Of particular significance appear to be measure of three constructs of self-belief: self-concept, self-efficacy and anxiety and how these impact in specific domains, for example in English, Science or Mathematics. However a fourth self-belief, that of confidence, appeared to be the strongest predictor of all.

- Sander & Sanders (2003) underpinned their studies about the impact of confidence on academic achievement on the key theories promulgated earlier by Bandura and others and initially sought to explain the extent to which differences in students' *expectations* of higher education were attributable to differing levels of confidence.

- Acknowledging much of the earlier work relating the effects of self-efficacy on academic performance, their initial research aimed to explore differences

in *confidence* between two quite different student groups, arguing that this distinct sub-construct of academic self-efficacy - which they termed **academic confidence** - is particularly pertinent in higher education settings where student autonomy and independence are key factors that students need to draw on to meet the challenges of the self-managed learning environment that is university.

- Fundamental to their studies was a working definition of academic confidence as:
  - '*a mediating variable that acts between the individual's inherent abilities, their learning styles and the opportunities afforded by the academic environment of university*' (ibid, p4).

- Sander & Sanders argued that as part of the parent concept of self-efficacy, academic confidence would stem from the same, four sources as originally proposed by Bandura: mastery experience, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and physiological states.

- The two student groups in this earlier research were a group of medical students at a traditional university and a group of psychology students at a new university and the researchers' interest was spawned by striking differences in reasons given by students for being reluctant participants in role-play exercises and student presentations that formed part of their respective teaching courses. The medical students were worried that these were ineffective teaching methods whereas the psychology students were concerned about their competence to participate in them.

- Their earlier, Academic Confidence Scale, as used in the original research, was later renamed as the Academic *Behavioural* Confidence Scale because it was considered to be focused on confidence in actions and plans that were specific to academic study (Sander & Sanders, 2007).

- The Scale comprises 24 Likert scale self-report items each preceded by the stem statement: '*How confident are you that you will be able to...*'. Later factor analysis of data collected in the earlier and subsequent studies identified four distinct factors: Grades, Studying, Verbalizing, Attendance, after dropping 7 of the original items on the earlier scale.

- Of particular significance to my research is the negative correlation between ABC and dyslexia reported both from Sanders' et al own collaborative research (Sanders, Sander & Mercer, 2009) and also from studies by Barrett (2005) and Asquith (2008).