

# Examining Self-Efficacy and Goal Orientation as Mediators of the Relationship between Social Presence and Career Planning of MBA Students

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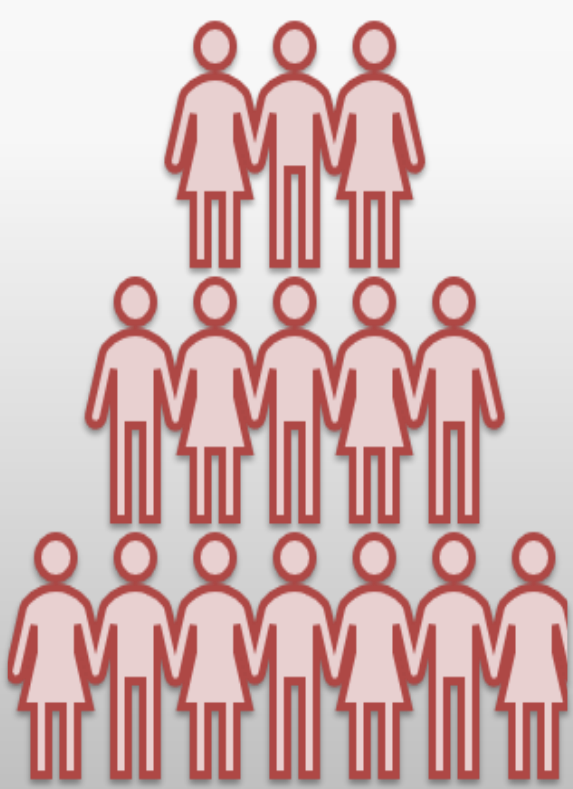
## Abstract

This study examined Internet self-efficacy, perceived self-efficacy in an MBA program, and intrinsic and extrinsic goal orientation as mediators of the relationship between social presence and career planning confidence. We found that self-efficacy and goal orientation are significant mediators of social presence and career planning confidence among MBA students. Implications of these results can guide the online course preparation in accredited MBA programs.

## Theoretical Background

Social presence theory has been employed to understand computer-mediated communication of students in virtual learning environments (Herring, 2007). **Social presence** is projecting one’s physical and emotional presence when interacting with others in digital mediums (Abdullah, 2004). As students project their social presence in virtual learning activities, students may become more self-efficacious and goal-oriented in online courses. Students with higher social presence are likely to engage in the career planning process. Thus, the purpose of this study was to examine whether self-efficacy and goal orientation mediated the relationship between social presence and career planning.

## Method



### Participants

- 292 MBA students (143 men, 145 women, 3 other)
- Average age 34.1 years ( $SD = 8.68$ )
- Enrolled in online ( $n = 227$ ) and hybrid ( $n = 15$ ) courses



### Procedure

- Completed online survey via Qualtrics
- Recruited using convenience sampling – asked instructors to invite students to participate
- Survey completion length: approx. 20-25 minutes



### Measures

- Social presence (Kim, 2011) ( $\alpha = 0.92$ )
- Internet self-efficacy (Kim & Glassman, 2013) ( $\alpha = 0.79$ )
- Perceived self-efficacy (Pintrich & Groot, 1990) ( $\alpha = 0.91$ )
- Intrinsic ( $\alpha = 0.78$ ), Extrinsic ( $\alpha = 0.52$ ) Goal Orientation (Pintrich et al., 1991)
- Career planning confidence (McAuliffe et al., 2006) ( $\alpha = 0.86$ )

## Results

Multiple mediation analyses

➤ Examining self-efficacy variables as mediators of social presence and career planning

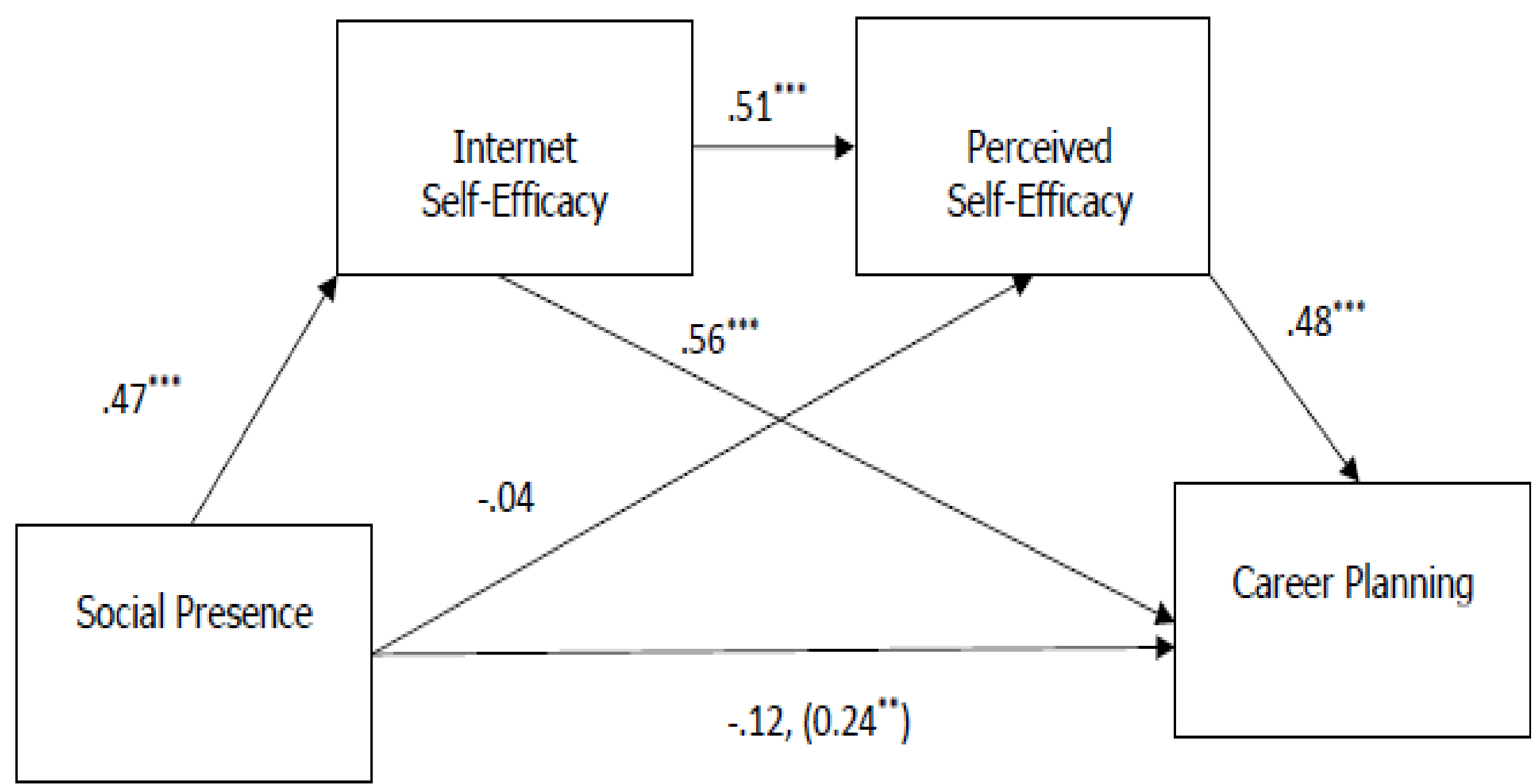


Figure 1. Multiple Mediation Analysis of Self-Efficacy

➤ Examining goal orientation variables as mediators of social presence and career planning

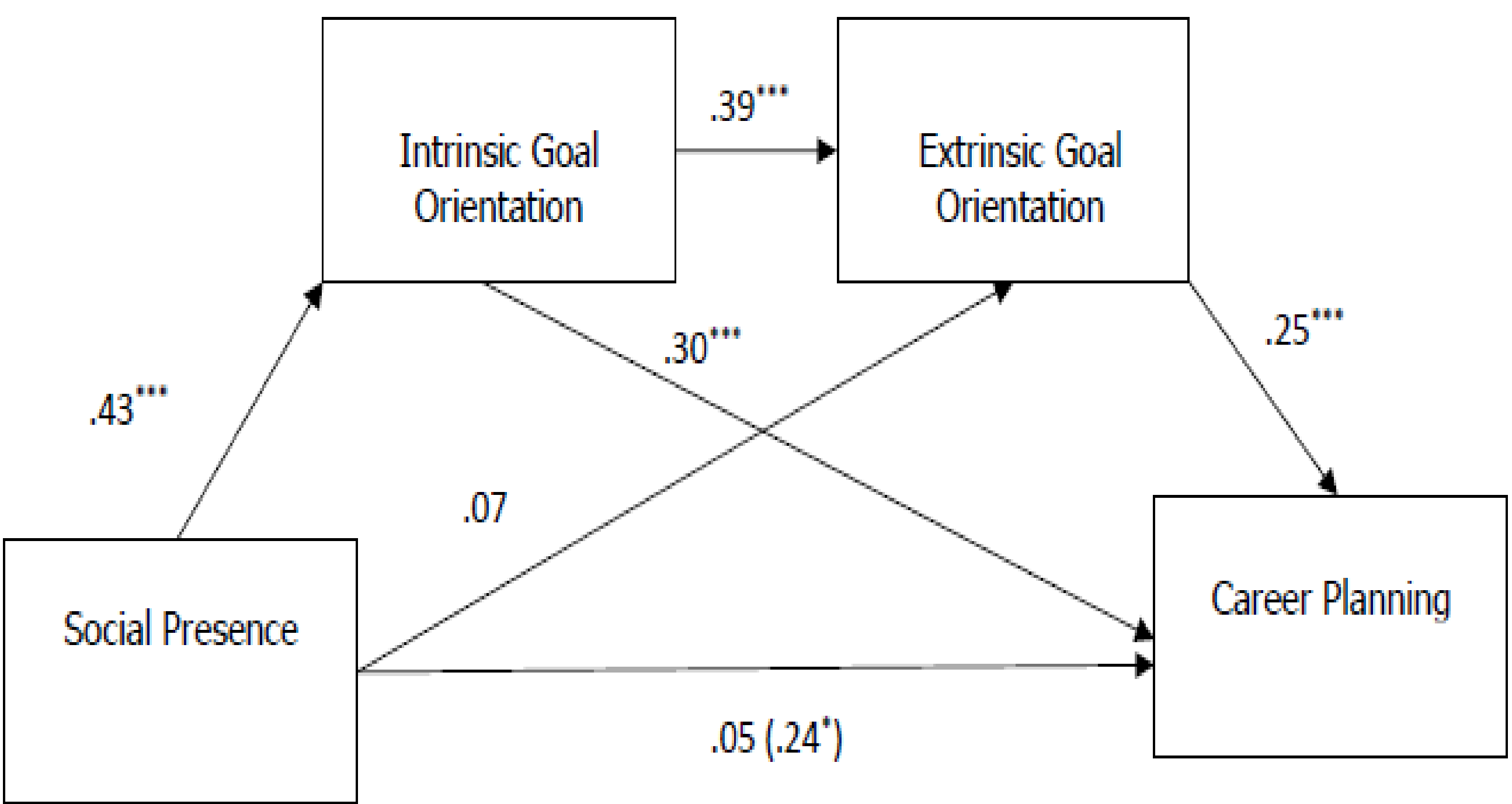


Figure 2. Multiple Mediation Analysis of Goal Orientation

## Discussion

- Internet and perceived self-efficacy mediated the relationship between social presence and career planning.
- Intrinsic and external goal orientation mediated the relationship between social presence and career planning.
- MBA students with high social presence may feel confident in using the Internet in their MBA courses in online modalities.
- MBA students with high self-efficacy may be more likely to be confident in the career planning process.
- Instructors can bolster students’ career planning confidence upon completion of online MBA courses by offering social presence opportunities in their classes such as audio and video presentations, discussion boards, group activities, etc.



## References

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