

The Predictive Role of Guilt and Shame Proneness on Academic Self-Handicapping

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ABSTRACT

The present study aims to investigate the predictive role of Guilt and Shame Proneness on Academic Self-Handicapping, by examining the subscales of these constructs. In accordance with this, a correlational research design was employed using the Guilt and Shame Proneness Scale (GASPS by Cohen, et al, 2011) and the Academic Self- Handicapping Scale (ASH) on a sample of 102 participants from Bengaluru, India. Data analysis was done through Descriptive Statistics, Correlational study and Multiple Regression. The calculated results are indicative of a weak correlation that exists between certain subscales of Guilt and Shame Proneness and Academic Self-Handicapping. These findings are expected to provide insight as well as deeper understanding of the contributing factors towards Academic Self-Handicapping and to highlight the importance of understanding the predictive role of guilt and shame proneness in this behavior. Another expected contribution of this study is towards the growing literature on emotions arising out of self-evaluation, their proneness, and the maladaptive coping strategies that might emerge in response to them. Ethical guidelines laid down by APA were followed as ethical consideration, confidentiality and data security was maintained during data handling. The study states its limitations, delimitations and future directions as well.

Keywords: *Guilt Proneness, Shame Proneness, Academic Self-Handicapping*

Self-Conscious emotion

What makes Human beings unique is their ability to experience complex emotions, especially those that are self-directed after a brief moment of self-evaluation (Tangley J.P 2002, Wolf et al 2009) These self-directed emotions have drawn in the interest of researchers for centuries, as they are intricately intertwined with one's perception of themselves, subsequent behavior and also social relationships. Shame and Guilt are two such self-conscious or Self-directed emotions that have been a topic of interest in psychology for several decades. While often used interchangeably, they have quite some differences that help us further understand how they're experienced and the consequences that follow. Behavioral consequences like withdrawal or repair that follow Shame and Guilt respectively are of interest too. (Ilona E. et al. 2010)

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Received: May 14, 2023; Revision Received: May 24, 2023; Accepted: May 28, 2023

Guilt Proneness

Guilt is an emotional state one experiences after a perceived violation has taken place of either their morals, principles or values. This emotional state is characterized by distress about harming others or being irresponsible in fulfilling their duties to others (Keltner, D. and Buswell, B.N., 1997), negative evaluation of self-due to the failure to act or dissatisfaction of action, an urge to redo or undo their precipitating actions, a sense of tension, remorse and regret. (Tangney J.P, 2002; Frijda, Kuipers, & ter Schure, 1989). Guilt proneness can be described as the “a predisposition to experience negative feelings about personal wrongdoing, even when the wrongdoing is private” (Cohen et al., 2012, p. 2) Thus we can assume that certain individuals are more likely to feel guilty regardless of whether their transgression is a private or public one. Guilt proneness often leads to the individual wanting to ask for forgiveness from those they have violated and have a strong belief that they should be punished for their actions. (Tracy and Robins, 2006) Since guilt is controllable and malleable, that is when one experiences guilt, two behavioral consequences are said to follow: Guilt Negative Behavior (henceforth addressed as GNB), which entails the feeling of guilt accompanied by feeling bad or disappointed about one’s actions. Guilt Repair (henceforth addressed as GR) is another behavioral consequence that is more action centered and focuses on rectifying or compensating after the transgression has taken place. (Tracy and Robins, 2006; Cohen, T.R. et al, 2011) Thus, their desire to somehow repair or amend the situation leads to self-inflicting punishment. (Roseman, West, & Swartz, 1994).

Shame Proneness

Alternatively, shame is an emotion said to arise when one’s transgression, failure or mistakes are exposed to public (Gehm and Scherer, 1988) It is characterized by certain physical, observable aspects like blushing, redness of face, ears and neck or higher distress levels, and certain psychological aspects like feeling self-conscious and small. (Scott. W et al, 2010) Shame Proneness is the tendency of an individual to feel ashamed when they believe they have not met a standard or expectation (Hewitt and Flett, 1991). Since, shame is considered maladaptive as one goes through a “painful negative scrutiny” of their self, attributing the cause of their transgression to their own worthlessness, unworthiness, incompetency and powerlessness, Shame proneness leads to the individual wanting to change their global self. (Tangney & Dearing, 2002; Niedenthal, Tangney, & Gavanski, 1994; Niedenthal, Tangney, & Gavanski, 1994) Shame proneness also leads to the individual wanting to ‘escape or hide’ as they believe that their flawed self has been exposed to others, regardless of the fact that these transgressions occur in public or in private. Therefore, shame has two behavioral consequences: Shame Negative Behavior (henceforth addressed as SNB) where one feels bad about their entire self and Shame Withdraw (henceforth addressed as SW) which is more avoidance centered and focused on hiding, escaping, withdrawing or isolating oneself after a public transgression has occurred. (Cohen, T. R., et al, 2011)

Academic Self-Handicapping (ASH)

One particular area of research that has received significant attention is nature and consequences of self-handicapping behaviors. Self-handicapping is a behavior in which obstacles or excuses to avoid failure or negative evaluation are created intentionally. This behavior can take many forms, including procrastination, drug or alcohol use, and self-criticism. Research has shown that self-handicapping leads to negative outcomes, such as a decrease in feeling competent, low mood, increased substance use, reduced academic and athletic performance, and decreased intrinsic motivation. (Zuckerman M., Tsai F-F., 2005)

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Students often face many obstacles in the journey of accomplishing their academic goals. These obstacles might be stress, financial difficulties, inability to concentrate on the mass amount of work assigned, etc. However recently, another interesting phenomenon which impacts one's academic goals has been noticed, known as Academic Self-Handicapping. This term refers to "the tendency to engage in behaviors that threaten one's academic success or to create impediments to one's success when none exist" (Rhodewalt et al., 1991, p. 71). Thus procrastination, not paying attention in class, not taking notes or gathering study material, avoiding taking up challenging assignments that would lead to academic growth, are some of the behaviors that students might present. When doing this, the causal factor for the failure to achieve the goal is not attributed to their abilities but rather to the circumstantial factors. So, while their self-esteem is protected, it leads to constant failure to meet expected goals and further only adds damage to their self-esteem when they experience negative feelings like guilt and shame. (Weiner, B, 2000) Thus a vicious cycle of negative self-directed emotions (guilt, shame, embarrassment) and a negative maladaptive behavior (Academic self-handicapping) is created. (Zuckerman et al. 1998)

Relationship between Guilt and Shame proneness and Academic Self-Handicapping

Previous researches show a link between Shame Proneness, withdrawal behavior and motivational inhibition. Thus, insinuating that experience of shame related affects lead to individuals having an avoidance-behavior to their tasks. Guilt proneness was linked to behaviors that moved towards recompensation and achievement motivation (Hoffman, M.L 1982; Wicker et al.1983). These findings can indicate that where Shame leads to withdrawing effort, Guilt leads promoting effort towards the accomplishment of goal. (Weiner, B, 2000)

Another research discussed that shame is a negative emotion that individuals may experience in response to failure, as shame is often closely associated to fear of failing and self-handicapping. (Bartels, J.M., Herman, W.E., 2011) Similarly, self-handicapping may be related to shame, as individuals self-handicap might be doing it to protect their self-esteem and avoid feelings of shame or inadequacy that may arise from failure.

Additionally, there has been work with Self-Handicapping as a mediating variable along with shame and guilt proneness. (Fasihaniard, S., et al, 2020) Discussing the nature of Self-Handicapping, the research suggested that Self-Handicapping occurs when people are focused on the possibility of failure rather than their ability to achieve. The study concluded that Shame and Guilt play as emotional predictors of educational adaptation. Guilt predicts Academic Adjustment, where External Self-Handicapping is a direct, positive influencing factor. Shame negatively predicts Internal Self-Handicapping. Failure leads to a negative self-evaluation of self and compensatory reaction. In order to compensate for the negative self-evaluation, they use dysfunctional cognitive and emotional strategies; in which Self-Handicapping is included. As these strategies are inconsistent and maladaptive, they only double down in guilt and shame.

Other researches suggest that Shame and Guilt Proneness both directly influence Self-Handicapping; Shame Proneness positively influences it while Guilt negatively influences it. These findings can be interpreted as Feelings of Shame lead to increased Self-Handicapping while Feelings of Guilt lead to decreased Self-Handicapping. (Hofseth, E. Toering, T. & Jordet, G., 2015)

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Furthermore, one research study claimed that Shame only occurs when a person attributes their failure to a personal trait that they cannot change. (Sheikh et. al., 2009) When people fear that a future failure would bring them shame, they Self-Handicap. Thus eventually, when failure occurs, it is externalized. Thus, an attempt to avoid feeling ashamed is done to protect their self-esteem.

Similar results were reflected in other studies that showed Shame Proneness had a positive relationship with Self-Handicapping in students. (Cowman, S., & Ferrari, J. R., 2002)

The likelihood to feeling guilty or ashamed is linked to procrastination, as negative emotions can cause individuals to engage in behaviors that hinder their success. Students who have the tendency to feel ashamed are more likely to prioritize avoiding failure over taking steps to increase their overall chances of success. (Gutierrez, D et al., 2020) This was the assumption taken up by Gutierrez and his colleagues in their study. However, the results indicated that neither Guilt Proneness nor Shame Proneness were statistically significant predictors of observer and self-reported procrastination. As procrastination is one of the commonly seen Self-Handicapping behavior, we can infer that the findings of this study strongly indicate that Guilt and Shame might not be the only factors predicting Self-Handicapping Behavior.

Deriving the Relationship between Guilt and Shame proneness and Academic Self-Handicapping with context to existing theories:

A theory proposed by Leary M.R. et al. in 1995, titled as Self-Presentational Theory of Social Anxiety, talks about how individual is motivated to present a desired self to others that is different from their real self so that the desired impression they make brings them some sort of benefit in terms of being treated better or avoid certain criticism from others. However, they experience social anxiety while doing this as they are doubtful of how successful they would be in this task. Similar pattern is observed in Self-Handicapping where the driving force is the possibility of failure that leads individuals to create obstacles and hindrances in the path towards goal accomplishment. It is presented to others and to themselves that it was because of the obstacles that the goal wasn't achieved, rather than their abilities. Thus, their self-esteem is protected. However, like the theory states, this causes social anxiety. (Curtis, R.C. 2013) Existing literature supports that proneness to shame might be significantly linked to disorders of social anxiety where guilt proneness is found to be non-significant (Fergus T.A. 2010) Connecting this to our present study, Shame proneness could be influencing social anxiety which is experienced during Self-Handicapping. Academic Self-Handicapping is yet to be studied in this context, however the present study aims to bridge this gap in by giving a direction towards the emotional factors that cause Academic Self-Handicapping.

According to Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger, L. 1957) individuals experience discomfort, uneasiness and tension mentally when their thoughts, beliefs and behavior are not in congruence or are inconsistent with each other. These unpleasant experiences lead them to behave in a way that would bring some consistency within their thoughts, beliefs and behavior. Similarly, while self-handicapping, an individual believes that they should succeed in a particular task (Internal belief), but they are not working actively to produce it (Behavior) ; it could lead them to feel guilty and shameful about it. If their internal belief is confirmed, it will impact their self-image. However, if they create an obstacle and eventually fail to succeed in said task occurs, they can blame the obstacle for it. This way their internal belief is maintained that they would have succeeded if not for the obstacle. Their self-esteem

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is also protected. Thus, by attributing their failure to external factors, individuals self-handicap. This pattern of behavior is similar for Cognitive Dissonance and Self-Handicapping in the context that guilt and shame is experienced during the process.

Connecting the predictive role of Proneness to Guilt and Shame on Academic Self-Handicapping with the above-mentioned theories gives the present study a theoretical framework. We can also contextualize the study's findings to a broader literature by exploring the underlying mechanism that explains the relationship between the abovementioned variables. This deeper understanding also creates opportunity for future experimental designs to study the relationship too, in various contexts.

Need and Significance

This study seeks to examine the predictive role of guilt and shame proneness in academic self-handicapping, as self-directed emotions are found to play a role in self-esteem and self-evaluation. Despite the present understanding of the factors that could be contributing to academic self-handicapping, we face a shortcoming in research directed towards examining the predictive role of guilt and shame proneness in the manifestation of this behavior. Therefore, this study's primary objective is to address this research gap by investigating the relationship between abovementioned variables, with the goal of identifying factors that could be playing an underlying role in maladaptive coping strategies to shield the self-esteem from any perceived danger.

Academic Self-Handicapping (ASH) is said to be a hindrance and have long term effects on Academic Achievement (AA) (Schwinger, M et al., 2014) Thus while looking to enhance AA, it is important to give attention towards preventing ASH and this cannot be done without understanding the underlying causes of it. The implications of this study can be taken to understand ASH better and how emotional proneness can influence behavior. Also, taking into consideration that India is a country where people give a lot of emphasis and importance to AA, it is important to study the predictive factors that might be influencing ASH, an obstacle to AA.

METHODOLOGY

Aim:

To study the predictive role Guilt and Shame Proneness on Academic Self Handicapping

Objective:

- To study if Guilt and Shame proneness has relationship with Academic Self Handicapping.
- To study the relationship between the components/ subscales of Guilt and Shame Proneness and Academic Self Handicapping.
- To study the impact of components/ subscales of Academic Self Handicapping on Guilt and Shame Proneness.

Hypothesis:

- H₁: There is a significant relationship between Guilt and Shame proneness and Academic Self Handicapping.
- H₂: There is a significant relationship between the components/ subscales of Guilt and Shame Proneness and Academic Self Handicapping.
- H₃: There is significant impact of components/ subscales of Academic Self Handicapping on Guilt and Shame Proneness.

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Study design and participants

To investigate the relationship and the impact of components/ subscales, a Correlational Research Design was used. Using a non-probability purposive sampling strategy, (N= 102) individuals were identified from the city of Bengaluru, Karnataka, India encompassing both males (N = 23) and females (N = 79). The age range of 18 to 25 years was selected so that most participants who are students can be accustomed. The present study aims to understand Academic Self-Handicapping which occurs in an educational set up, rather than Self-Handicapping which can be observed in work places or in a social setup.

Inclusion Criteria: Participants who come under the age range of 18 to 25 years; currently students, pursuing either Undergraduate, Postgraduate or MPhil degrees; understand English.

Exclusion Criteria: Participants who are working part time while pursuing academia; diagnosed with any mental disorder by a licensed psychologist/psychiatrist

Procedure

Data collection was done through Purposive Sampling where individuals who were screened for eligibility and met the inclusion criteria, were recruited. Informed consent was taken and debriefing was done about the self-report questionnaires, outlining the study's aims and methods. Questionnaires were presented with the 2 self-report questionnaires of GASP and ASH scale and data was collected through Google forms. These forms were then circulated on university campuses online too; and data of 102 participants was collected for analysis. The data collected was coded in Microsoft Excel 2019, and then transferred to Statistical Software for Social Sciences (SPSS) 20 for analysis using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation coefficient, and stepwise linear regression to test the hypotheses.

Instructions were given to participants to complete the questionnaires with responses that best suit them and apply to their present self. The questionnaires were administered in a group setting, with researchers available to ensure that participants clarify any doubts regarding the forms or any specific items.

Variables

- Independent Variables – Guilt and Shame Proneness
- Dependent Variable – Academic Self-Handicapping

Measures

Participant Description: Initials, informed consent, gender, age, current city of residence, educational qualification.

Guilt and shame proneness will be measured using the Guilt and Shame Proneness Scale (GAPS) developed by Cohen et al. (2011). This 16-item scale assesses the tendency of individuals to feel emotions of guilt and shame in response to various situations. Cronbach's alpha value for this scale was .68, which suggests moderate internal consistency between items of the scale.

Academic self-handicapping will be measured using the Academic Self-Handicapping Scale (ASH) developed by Gupta, S and Geetika. This 32-item scale assesses the tendency of individuals to engage in behaviors that undermine their academic performance, such as procrastination or neglecting to prepare adequately for exams. The scale's Cronbach's alpha

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value of 0.917 is high and strongly suggests that the scale has good internal consistency and reliability. In simple words, the items of this scale are consistent with each other and measure the same construct of ASH.

The measures were administered online, and participants were requested to respond truthfully and in accordance to their knowledge about themselves. The measures were chosen for their established social desirability validity and reliability, as well as their relevance to the research question.

Ethical Considerations:

Adhering to the ethical guidelines outlined by the American Psychological Association (APA), informed consent of participants was taken; Debriefing was done and they were informed beforehand about the scales used, what they measure and how their data would be utilized solely for research purposes. They were further made aware that they have the right to withdraw at any time and to confidentiality. All data collected was kept confidential and stored securely. Interested participants were sent a copy of the complete research article.

RESULTS

This study aimed to investigate the relationship between Guilt and Shame Proneness with Academic Self Handicapping. For this purpose, GASPS was used which gave 4 subscales: GNB, GR, SNB and SW. Guilt and Shame items were clubbed together to find out Guilt Total (GT) and Shame Total (ST). (Cohen et al., 2011)

In addition to this, Academic Self-Handicapping Scale by Gupta. S and Geetika was administered which had the following 4 subscales: Behavioral Self Handicapping (BSH), Claimed Self-Handicapping (CSH) Problems Preparing Activity (PPA) Failure to Control Attention (FCA). Academic Self-Handicapping Total was also taken out (ASHT).

Data from 102 participants was assessed, entered into Microsoft Excel and analyzed through SPSS 20. Other socio-demographic details like Age, Gender, Academic Qualification, and Nationality were taken into consideration to understand any significant difference.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics showing Mean and Standard Deviation values of the participants' data

	Mean	S.D
Guilt Total (GT)	39.35	9.350
Shame Total (ST)	35.35	8.091
Guilt Negative Behavior (GNB)	18.44	5.476
Guilt Repair (GR)	20.91	5.070
Shame Negative Behavior (SNB)	19.98	5.332
Shame Withdraw (SW)	15.37	4.743
Academic Self-Handicapping Total (ASHT)	103.83	10.796
Behavioral Self-Handicapping (BSH)	50.40	5.650
Claimed Self-Handicapping (CSH)	23.02	5.062
Problem with Planning Activity (PPA)	14.79	2.060
Failure to Control Attention (FCA)	15.62	3.018

With reference to Table 1, Guilt and Shame were both found to be prevalent in the sample as means scores were observed to be 39.35 and 35.35 and Standard Deviation of 9.35 and 8.09,

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respectively of GT and ST. This suggests that experiences of guilt and shame are common for participants in the given sample. Under Guilt subscales, the mean score for GR (M= 20.91, S.D= 5.07) was higher than the mean score for GNB (M= 18.44, S.D= 5.47). Under Shame subscales, mean scores of SW (M= 15.37, S.D= 4.74) were lower than SNB (M= 19.98, S.D= 5.32)

Observed mean scores and S.D of BSH (M= 50.40, S.D= 5.65) were higher than the mean scores for CSH (M= 23.02, S.D= 5.06) As compared to this, mean scores for PPA (M= 14.79, S.D= 2.06) and FCA (M= 15.62, S.D= 3.01) were observed to be relatively low.

Table 2: Associations between subscales of Guilt and Shame Proneness and ASH using Pearson's Correlation Coefficients

	Guilt Total	Shame Total	Guilt Negative Behavior	Guilt Repair	Shame Negative Behavior	Shame Withdraw	Academic Self-Handicapping Total	Behavioral Self-Handicapping	Claimed Self-Handicapping	Problems Planning Activity	Failure to Control Attention
Guilt Total	1	.623**	.895**	.877**	.749**	.221*	-.019	.163	-.232*	.120	-.064
Shame Total	.623	1	.563**	.541**	.827**	.776**	-.043	.055	-.100	-.019	-.073
Guilt Negative Behavior	.895**	.563**	1	.571**	.659**	.220**	-.023	.090	-.191	.080	.015
Guilt Repair	.877**	.541**	.571**	1	.670**	.170	-.009	.203*	-.222*	.135	-.134
Shame Negative Behavior	.749**	.827**	.659**	.670**	1	.287**	-.106	.068	-.223*	.038	-.160
Shame Withdraw	.221*	.776**	.220**	.170	.287**	1	.047	.018	.079	-.076	.055
Academic Self-Handicapping Total	-.019	-.043	-.023	-.009	-.106	.047	1	.705**	.731**	.512**	.682**
Behavioral Self-Handicapping	.163	.055	.090	.203*	.068	.018	.705**	1	.161	.290**	.181
Claimed Self-Handicapping	-.232*	-.100	-.191	-.222*	-.223*	.079	.731**	.161	1	.167	.523**
Problems Planning Activity	.120	-.019	.080	.135	.038	-.076	.512**	.290**	.167	1	.328**
Failure to Control Attention	-.064	-.073	.015	-.134	-.160	.055	.682**	.181	.523**	.328**	1

Note: * $p < 0.05$

** $p < 0.01$

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Table 2 displays the associations between subscales of guilt and shame proneness and academic self-handicapping, using Pearson's correlation coefficients. The rows and columns represent the different subscales of guilt and shame proneness, and different types of academic self-handicapping respectively. Internal validity of the GASP and ASH scale was observed as subscales showed high to very high correlations with each other.

With reference to Table 2, we can see that there is a negative correlation between GT ($r = -.232$), GR ($r = -.222$) and SNB ($r = -.223$; where $p < .05$) and CSH.

There is a positive correlation between GR and BSH ($r = .203$; where $p < .05$). No other significant correlation was observed between the subscales of Guilt and Shame Proneness and ASH.

The statistical significance of the correlations is indicated by the p-values, which are less than .05 for each of the four correlations. This suggests that it is unlikely that the observed correlations occurred by chance alone. Thus, H1 and H2 are rejected.

Table 3: Multiple Linear Regression to assess the impact of GR on BSH and CSH

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Statistics		
		Standardized Beta	T-value	Model Summary
Behavioral Self-Handicapping, Claimed Self-Handicapping	Guilt Repair	.245	2.548	R Square = .108 F = 5.973 Sig = 0.012 0.008
		-.261	-2.715	

Table 3 shows the statistical data and model summary of Multiple Linear Regression done to assess the impact of GR on BSH and CSH. The standardized beta coefficient of GR and BSH were found to be .245, which suggest a positive relationship; while for GR and CSH, it was found to be -.261 suggesting a negative relationship.

The t-values of BSH and CSH (2.548 and -2.715 respectively) indicate that each independent variable is statistically significant. The overall fit of the model can be interpreted from the model summary. A variance of 10.8% in GR by the presence of BSH and CSH can be observed as R Square value was found to be .108; while F-value (5.973) and Sig. values for BSH and CSH (0.012, 0.08 respectively) suggest that the model is adequately fit and is statistically significant. These results suggested a significant impact of GR on BSH and CSH.

Table 4: Linear Regression for the assessment of Predictive impact of SNB on CSH:

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Statistics		
		Standardized Beta	T-value	Model Summary
Claimed Self-Handicapping	Shame Negative Behavior	-.223	-2.284	R Square = .050 F = 5.215 Sig = .025

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Table 4 shows the data summary of Linear Regression done to assess the impact of SNB on CSH. The standardized beta coefficient for SNB was -0.223 which signifies a negative relationship of SNB and CSH. The obtained t-value (-2.284) was found to be statistically significant at the 0.05 level. Obtained R Square value (0.50) indicates that 5% of the variance in CSH can be explained by SNB. F-value (5.215) and Sign value (.025) both are taken into consideration to determine the overall fit of the model, which in this case was found to be statistically significant.

Table 5: Linear Regression for the assessment of Predictive impact of GT on CSH:

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Statistics		
		Standardized Beta	T-value	Model Summary
Claimed Self-Handicapping	Guilt Total	-.232	-2.389	R Square = .054 F = 5.707 Sig = .019

With reference to Table 5, Linear Regression was done to assess the impact GT could be causing on CSH. The standardized beta coefficient of -.232 suggests a negative relationship between the GT and CSH. Since t-value (-2.389) is less than -2, it is considered statistically significant at 95% confidence level. Leaving only a 5% chance of random error, this indicated that it is highly unlikely that this occurred by chance.

DISCUSSION

The central focus of the present study was to examine the relationship between Guilt and Shame Proneness and ASH. However, study's results show that there is weak to no correlation between the subscales of Guilt and Shame Proneness and ASH, suggesting that other factors may also be involved in the relationship between guilt and self-handicapping.

Referring to Table 1, it was observed that there was higher engagement in GR than GNB as the mean scores for the former was higher than the latter. This can be interpreted as participants being more likely to engage in behaviors aimed at repairing their sense of guilt than engaging in negative behaviors associated with guilt. Of the four GASP subscales, mean score for SW were the lowest which can be interpreted as participants in this sample being less likely to display behavior like withdrawal or isolating themselves.

Since mean scores of BSH were higher than the mean scores for CSH, this can indicate that participants are more likely to act in a way that hinder their academic goal accomplishment (creating obstacles) than claiming to have obstacles or excuses for their academic performance.

Table 2 shows Correlation coefficients of Pearson's correlation, where there was a weak negative correlation between GR and CSH. Thus, suggests that as GR would increase, CSH would decrease or vice-versa. Along with this, there is a positive correlation between GR and BSH suggesting that with increased GR, BSH would also increase. Since GR has negative correlations with CSH, and positive with BSH, it can be interpreted that participants who reported higher levels of GR are less likely to externalize factors for their performance (as seen in CSH) and are more likely to actively put obstacles in their goal achievement (as seen in BSH). However, taking into consideration that these correlations are

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weak in strength, there is a possibility that future research can better explain the relationship between these variables. Another weak negative correlation observed is GT, SNB and CSH. These results do not align with previous studies. This can be interpreted as the influence of other factors playing a stronger and bigger role in predicting ASH. Since the correlations found are all weak, the 1st and 2nd hypothesis 'There is a significant relationship between Guilt and Shame proneness and Academic Self Handicapping' and 'There is a significant relationship between the components/ subscales of Guilt and Shame Proneness and Academic Self Handicapping' is rejected.

With reference to Table 3, 4 and 5, where the aim was to understand the level of impact of variables that showed correlation on each other, we found that although the correlation were weak between certain subscales, there was a significant relationship between predictor variable (Guilt Repair, Guilt Total and Shame Negative Behavior) and outcome variable (Claimed and Behavioral Self-Handicap). Thus, the third hypothesis 'There is significant impact of components/ subscales of Academic Self Handicapping on Guilt and Shame Proneness' was accepted.

Although the findings of present study do not align with previous studies, it must be taken into account that previous studies were conducted a significant amount of years ago. Since then, the Academic field and students have changed vastly with new regulations and curriculums into practice. Recent researchers and theories are also limited. However, the contradictory results might open a new door to new interpretations. Therefore, this study can be taken up as a starting point to understand what other factors might be causing students to Self-Handicap. Along with this, the social desirability factor should be accounted for too. Thus, the contradictory findings can lead to new insights and understanding in the education field, which can ultimately advance knowledge and establish a deeper understanding of the causal factors of ASH.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Where previous studies strongly suggest that individuals who have a predisposition to experience guilt would be less likely to Self-Handicap, and individuals who are prone to feeling shame would be comparatively more likely to ASH, the results of this study suggest otherwise.

Limited research on the relationship of these variables also puts the casual relationship between GT, GR, CSH and BSH into question. However, since this study was conducted on a rather small sample and within a limited geographical area, it suggested to future researchers that work with a larger sample might yield deeper understanding of the variables.

In conclusion, Guilt and Shame Proneness cannot be taken as strong predictors of ASH and there might be other factors like Non-contingent Success Feedback, Imposter Phenomenon, Maladaptive Perfectionism might play a bigger role. (Török, Lilla & Szabó, Zsolt.)

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Acknowledgement

The author(s) appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: Ullah, A.I.A.M.V. & Joy, M. (2023). The Predictive Role of Guilt and Shame Proneness on Academic Self-Handicapping. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 11(2), 1355-1368. DIP:18.01.145.20231102, DOI:10.25215/1102.145