

Influence of Academic Self-Efficacy on Learning Related Emotions among Emerging Adults

Poornima Pavithran^{1*}, Dr. Jasseer J.², Dr. C. Jayan³

ABSTRACT

Emerging adulthood is a developmental period from ages 18 to 29 marked by transition, changes in their education, identity exploration, self-efficacy, emotional regulation, marriage, parenthood etc. During this phase, the college-going emerging adults may face several challenges and this may even develop different emotions related to learning. The present study aims to examine the role of self-efficacy on learning related emotions among emerging adults. The current study used a descriptive research design. The study was conducted among 400 emerging adults residing in Kerala. The measures used were the General Academic Self-Efficacy Scale and Achievement Emotions Questionnaire (short version). Three groups of self-efficacy were formed as low, average, and high scoring groups based on the mean and standard deviation. In the present study, learning related emotions encompass enjoyment, hope, pride, anger, anxiety, shame, hopelessness, and boredom. The results of the study indicate that the three groups of self-efficacy were found significantly different on the eight learning related emotions. The current study can provide more evidence to help psychologists in educational and clinical settings as well as the educators to plan educational courses or programs in order to foster self-efficacy and to manage their learning related emotions in emerging adults.

Keywords: *Self-efficacy, Learning related emotions, Emerging adults*

Emerging adulthood is a stage of development marked by transition, change, and discovery (Arnett, 2000). This period, which lasts from about the ages of 18 to 29, may be both thrilling and demanding. Many college-attending emerging adults have problems that raise their likelihood of academic failure and dropout, particularly during their initial years in University.

Social-cognitive aspects may influence the impact of stressful situations. Self-efficacy is considered a significant component in interpreting behaviour in unknown situations (Bandura, 1977). This is especially critical throughout the college years, when students may

¹Research Scholar, Department of Psychology, University of Kerala, Kariavattom Campus, Thiruvanthapuram, Kerala

²Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Kerala, Kariavattom Campus, Thiruvanthapuram, Kerala

³Visiting Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Kerala, Kariavattom Campus, Thiruvanthapuram, Kerala

*Corresponding Author

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face several new challenges. Research suggests that self-efficacy is a key motivator for student persistence and academic progress (Tinto, 2017).

Although the idea of self-efficacy is not novel, it remains an essential issue in understanding the experiences of college-aged emerging adults. The transition into adulthood and pursuit of higher education occurs with changes and challenges (Arnett, 2000). Furthermore, for many, it marks the beginning of their independence from the family unit, as well as the beginning of their accepting responsibility for their acts and being aware of their skills (Bandura, 2006). Self-efficacy is a key factor in determining which college-aged individuals will succeed and flourish in their educational institution.

Academic self-efficacy is a belief in one's own ability to do academic activities successfully (Schunk, 2009). In an academic setting, self-efficacy serves as a self-regulatory mechanism that has an immense effect on students' academic behaviour because it impacts the subject's evaluation of their own capacity to learn and finish a specific activity, which is an essential factor in one's capacity to adapt to future conditions. (Khan, 2013). According to Bandura (1999), self-efficacy beliefs are derived from four basic sources. These are both direct and indirect experiences offered by social models, verbal persuasion, and individuals' bodily and emotional states. Direct experiences are the most helpful in shaping self-efficacy beliefs. Successful experiences can strengthen a person's confidence in self-efficacy, but failures can negatively impact these views. Self-efficacy is recognised to help people learn new things and improve their skills for a better life or for purposes of their own (Bandura, 1995). From another point of view, low self-efficacy might be viewed as related to non-adaptive educational behaviours, resulting to decreased effort towards educational tasks and poor academic achievement (Mao et al., 2019), as well as mental health conditions in students, such as anxiety, stress, and even depression (Keye & Pidgeo, 2013). As a result, increasing students' own resources, such as self-efficacy, would help to attain the goals of the education system.

Bandura's self-efficacy theory assumes that human achievements are dependent on the interactions between one's behaviours, beliefs, and circumstances in their environment. Previous studies has shown that academic self-efficacy has a substantial impact on academic performance in nursing students and serves as a source of motivation for coping with academic issues and accomplishing goals. (McLaughlin et al., 2008; Sil-vestri, 2010). Ehrenberg, Cox, and Kopman (1991) argue that self-efficacy beliefs are crucial in teenagers' physical self-confidence, academic growth, social proficiency development, and professional decision-making. (Bilge et al., 2014)

Academic self-efficacy is likewise defined as mastering of domain-based information, and it predicts both academic achievement and emotions. Academic self-efficacy can enhance challenge appraisals, which may lead to maintaining positive emotions and improving academic performance in students (Putwain et al., 2012). Reinhard Pekrun (2011) describes learning emotions, also referred to as achievement emotions, were emotions that are closely associated to academic achievement-related actions or outcomes. These emotions can be positive or negative and can include feelings such as anger, anxiety, boredom, enjoyment, hope, pride, shame, and hopelessness. Pekrun's research has demonstrated the significance of emotions in educational environments. He and others have emphasised the importance of the classroom environment, specifically the teacher, in fostering positive emotions and academic achievement (Pekrun et al., 2011).

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Students' interest and motivation to learn may be increased by eliciting positive emotions. These emotions aid in recalling positive memories as well as the positive appraisal of the value of tasks and one's ability to complete them. Activating positive emotions can also help students use flexible, innovative, and deep learning strategies. Some instances involve elaboration and organisation of learning material, as well as enhancing critical thinking. In contrast, deactivating positive emotions may hinder the systematic application of learning procedures (Pekrun, 2014).

Academic self-efficacy may have an impact on learning engagement through academic emotions. Control-value theory developed by Pekrun (2006) regards academic self-efficacy as a critical component in evaluating learning-related situations as dangers or challenges to the arousal of various academic emotions. As a result, students may feel more in control of their learning activities when they ascribe positive academic outcomes to controllable efforts, resulting in positive academic emotions like enjoyment and pride (Goetz, Frenzel, Hall, & Pekrun, 2008). Students who believe they are powerless to influence learning outcomes, on the other hand, are more likely to experience negative academic feelings such as anxiety, boredom, and fatigue (King & Gaerlan, 2014). As previously stated, different kinds of learning-related emotions will either encourage or impede learning participation (Reschly et al., 2008; Wigfield et al., 2002), implying that academic emotions play a mediating function between academic self-efficacy and learning engagement (Zhen et al., 2017).

Pekrun's control value theory integrates principles from a variety of theories, including attributional theories of achievement emotion, expectancy value approaches to emotions, theories of perceived control, and models focusing on the emotional effects on learning as well as academic performance. The three dimensions of academic emotions proposed by the CVT model as per empirical research encompass valence (positive/pleasant vs. negative/unpleasant); activation (activating vs. deactivating); and object focus (action vs. outcome).

Positive emotions in the CVT model include joy, hope, pride, gratitude, contentment, relaxation, and relief, whereas negative emotions include anger, frustration, anxiety, shame, boredom, sadness, disappointment, and hopelessness. The impact of academic emotions on learning can be divided into three categories: maladaptive, neutral, and engaged (activating). This learning effect interacts with valence, thus emotions might be positive and deactivating, or negative and engaging. In general, positive emotions are activating, with the exception of those that appear to be related with a sense of achievement that eliminates the need for more effort to learn (e.g., relaxation, satisfaction, and relief). Negative emotions, on the other hand, are nearly evenly divided between those that stimulate attempts to improve (e.g., anger, frustration, anxiety, and shame) and those that cause decreased effort (e.g., boredom, sadness, disappointment, and hopeless) (Pekrun et al., 2007). However, the impact of emotion on academic achievement varies depending on the individual's cognitive capabilities and motivating style.

The present study thus aims to examine the role of self-efficacy on learning related emotions in emerging adults especially those who are undergoing higher education such as undergraduates, postgraduates, research scholars, etc. in various educational institutions.

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Objective of the study

To examine the role of academic self-efficacy on learning related emotions among emerging adults.

Hypothesis

There will be a significant difference between levels of academic self-efficacy on learning related emotions.

METHOD

Research design:

The current study used the descriptive research design.

Participants:

The participants of the study consisted of 400 emerging adults belonging to the age group of 18-29 years. The participants were selected randomly from several districts of Kerala.

Measures:

The following measures were used for testing the hypothesis, and the details include:

- **The General Academic Self-Efficacy scale** (Nielsen et al., 2018) The scale measures academic self-efficacy. It is a five-item likert-type rating scale. The concurrent and predictive validity were estimated using a structural model to determine criterion validity. The Internal Consistency reliability of the test through Cronbach's alpha and McDonald's Omega was ranging from 0.74 to 0.78. The scale was translated to the regional language and then restandardized for the present study. Cronbach's alpha was used to measure the reliability and the score for reliability after restandardization was found to be 0.91.
- **Achievement Emotions Questionnaire**- Short version by Bieleke, Gogol, Goetz and Pekrun (2021): It measures the following eight emotions, viz., a) enjoyment, hope, pride, anger, anxiety, shame, hopelessness, and boredom in class-related settings, b) the same emotions in learning-related settings, and c) same emotions in test-related settings. Concurrent and divergent validity was established by Pekrun et al. The total items of the questionnaire include 96 items. In the current study, we used only the items related to learning related settings (32 items). The questionnaire was translated to the regional language and then restandardized for the present study. Cronbach's alpha was used to measure the reliability and the reliability score was found to be 0.95.

Administration and Scoring

The permission was sought from the concerned authorities of the institutions. After the permission was granted, the aim of the study was explained to the participants. Each participant was met individually, and the questionnaires were given to them. The instructions were given to the participants. Their doubts were cleared as required. The ethic of confidentiality was kept intact. The scoring of the questionnaires were done as per the manual.

Statistical analysis

Descriptive statistics, One way ANOVA and Tukey HSD were used to analyse the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Initially, the data collected were analysed using the descriptive statistics. Three groups of self-efficacy were formed as low, average, and high scoring groups based on the mean and standard deviation. In order to test the hypothesis, the mean differences among the three groups of self-efficacy on eight different learning related emotions (enjoyment, hope, pride, anger, anxiety, shame, hopelessness and boredom) were tested, which shows differences in these three groups (Table 1). Further, in order to rule out whether there is a statistically significant difference among the groups, One way ANOVA was used and presented (Table 2). From the table, it can be seen that the F values of all groups on learning related emotions showed a significant difference at 0.01 level. Post hoc tests were also done.

For enjoyment, the mean scores of the three groups were 8.76, 13.45 and 17.04 respectively (vide Table 1). The F value for enjoyment was found to be 76.63 ($p < 0.01$) (vide Table 2). Group 3 shows the highest mean score on enjoyment. Post hoc tests reveal that Group 1, Group 2 and Group 3 significantly differ on enjoyment (vide Table 3). The result suggests that as the self-efficacy increases, enjoyment also increases in Group 2 and Group 3. This indicates that the students may find learning more enjoyable with higher levels of self-efficacy.

For hope, the mean scores of the groups were 8.92, 15.20 and 18.70 respectively (vide Table 1). The F value for hope was found to be 112.38 ($p < 0.01$) (vide Table 2). Post hoc test shows that Group 1, Group 2 and Group 3 significantly differ on hope (vide Table 3). The findings indicate that Group 3 has the highest mean score in hope, which may be due to the students having higher academic self-efficacy, and this may lead to higher expectations regarding future achievements or success.

For pride the mean scores of groups were 8.76, 14.85 and 17.79 respectively (vide Table 1). The F value for pride was found to be 95.69 ($p < 0.01$) (vide Table 2). Post hoc test shows that Group 1, Group 2 and Group 3 significantly differ on pride (vide Table 3). The result shows that Group 3 scores the highest in pride. Thus, indicating those students may be more proud of their learning process and achievements.

For anger, the mean scores of groups were 11.84, 12.16 and 9.12 respectively (vide Table 1). The F value for anger was found to be 11.42 ($p < 0.01$) (vide Table 2). Post hoc test shows that Group 1 significantly differ from Group 2 and similarly, Group 1 differs with Group 3 on anger (vide Table 3). The result shows that Group 3 has less anger compared to Group 1 and Group 2. This may indicate that students with higher academic self-efficacy seem to be having less anger. Anger is one of the negative academic emotions that can diminish the positive effects of self-efficacy (Pekrun, 2011). The negative emotions including anger may tend to reduce students' cognitive resources as well as self-regulation in learning related activities. Studies on negative academic emotions suggest that the positive influence of self-efficacy was more markedly observed for those students with low levels of anger (Villavicencio & Bernardo, 2013).

For anxiety, the mean scores of groups were 11.65, 11.72 and 8.58 respectively (vide Table 1). The F value for anxiety was found to be 15.01 ($p < 0.01$) (vide Table 2). Post hoc test shows that Group 1, Group 2 and Group 3 significantly differ on anxiety (vide Table 3). The result shows that Group 3 has less anxiety than Groups 1 and 2. This denote that students due to their higher levels of academic self-efficacy may tend to feel less anxious in learning environments. Anxiety is one negative academic emotion that can negatively influence

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academic achievement but, at the same time, anxiety can also motivate the students if their expectation of the outcome is more likely to be positive in nature. The anxiety related to failure in examinations among students may also thus motivate students to enhance their performance. The higher the self-efficacy of students, the lower rates of anxiety seen in academic settings. Anxiety was considered one significant predictor of self efficacy in previous studies which was due to its stable nature to trigger more negative thoughts and cause distress especially in college going students (Rodriguez & Marmol, 2019).

For shame, the mean scores of groups were 10.97, 12.35 and 8.84 respectively (vide Table 1). The F value for shame was found to be 15.85 ($p < 0.01$) (vide Table 2). Post hoc test shows that Group 1, Group 2 and Group 3 significantly differ on shame (vide Table 3). The result shows that Group 3 may have experienced less shame than Groups 1 and 2. The result means that students may tend to feel less self-critical when their self-efficacy is much higher related to learning. Even though shame can decrease interest in learning, it can also motivate students to invest effort in order to avoid failure. (Pekrun, 2014).

For hopelessness, the mean scores of groups were 11.97, 12.37 and 8.16 respectively (vide Table 1). The F value for hopelessness was found to be 22.26 ($p < 0.01$) (vide Table 2). Post hoc test shows that Group 1 significantly differs from Group 2 and similarly, Group 1 differs with Group 3 on hopelessness (vide Table 3). The result shows that Group 3 have felt less hopeless than Groups 1 and 2, which may be due to higher self-efficacy in students. The students usually feel negative emotions like hopelessness when they face repeated failure in academic activities or examinations. According to Young et al. (1996), hopelessness does not change from person to person but it may change in the same person over time. The undergraduates mostly experience hopelessness due to various challenges faced including changes in living conditions, social pressure, identity crises, financial management etc. From the result of present study, it can be understood that with higher self efficacy, students may have lower rates of hopelessness.

For boredom, the mean scores of groups were 11.90, 11.98 and 8.84 respectively (vide Table 1). The F value for boredom was found to be 13.44 ($p < 0.01$) (vide Table 2). Post hoc test shows that Group 1 significantly differ from Group 2 and similarly, Group 1 differs with Group 3 on boredom (vide Table 3). The result shows that Group 3 may have experienced less boredom than Group 1 and Group 2 in learning related emotions because they have higher self-efficacy. This may indicate that students with higher self efficacy, may be actively involved in learning and feels less bored when compared to those students with lower self efficacy. This may even denote the less likelihood of students with higher self-efficacy to procrastinate in performing academic activities or the even less tendency to drop out of educational institutes. The students often feel bored when they are not able to enjoy the study material or when they feel less confident in performing tasks. The higher self-efficacy in students may thus help them to overcome the challenging tasks and enhance their academic performance.

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Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of three groups formed on the basis of scores on learning-related emotions.

Sl No.	Variables	Group 1 (n=50)		Group 2 (n=307)		Group 3 (n=44)	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1	Enjoyment	8.76	3.93	13.45	3.27	17.04	2.43
2	Hope	8.92	4.21	15.20	3.29	18.70	1.84
3	Pride	8.76	4.07	14.85	3.37	17.79	2.18
4	Anger	11.84	4.45	12.16	4.15	9.12	4.09
5	Anxiety	11.65	4.05	11.72	3.74	8.58	3.79
6	Shame	10.97	5.33	12.35	4.12	8.84	3.59
7	Hopelessness	11.97	5.65	12.37	4.05	8.16	2.94
8	Boredom	11.90	4.58	11.98	3.92	8.84	3.85

Table 2: F values of the three groups of Self-efficacy on Learning related emotions.

Variables	Between Groups		Within groups		F
	Sum of squares	Mean squares	Sum of squares	Mean squares	
Enjoyment	1654.79	827.39	4297.18	10.79	76.63**
Hope	2450.71	1225.35	4339.49	10.90	112.38**
Pride	2162.51	1081.26	4497.25	11.30	95.69**
Anger	400.20	200.10	6968.35	17.50	11.42**
Anxiety	430.32	215.16	5703.53	14.33	15.01**
Shame	563.14	281.57	7070.28	17.76	15.85**
Hopelessness	765.20	382.60	6839.61	17.18	22.26**
Boredom	429.37	214.68	6356.23	15.97	13.44**

** significant at 0.01 level.

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Table 3- Post hoc test

Dependent variable	Self-efficacy code (I)	Self-efficacy code (J)	Mean difference (I-J)	Standard error	Sig.
Enjoyment	1.00	2.00	-4.69*	.50111	.000
		3.00	-8.28*	.67921	.000
	2.00	1.00	4.69*	.50111	.000
		3.00	-3.58*	.52967	.000
	3.00	1.00	8.28*	.67921	.000
		2.00	3.58*	.52967	.000
Hope	1.00	2.00	-6.28*	.50357	.000
		3.00	-9.78*	.68254	.000
	2.00	1.00	6.28*	.50357	.000
		3.00	-3.49*	.53228	.000
	3.00	1.00	9.78*	.68254	.000
		2.00	3.49*	.53228	.000
Pride	1.00	2.00	-6.09*	.51264	.000
		3.00	-9.03*	.69484	.000
	2.00	1.00	6.09*	.51264	.000
		3.00	-2.93*	.54186	.000
	3.00	1.00	9.03*	.69484	.000
		2.00	2.93*	.54186	.000
Anger	1.00	2.00	-0.32	.67450	.878
		3.00	2.72*	.86492	.005
	2.00	1.00	0.32	.67450	.878
		3.00	3.04*	.63812	.000
	3.00	1.00	-2.72*	.86492	.005
		2.00	-3.04*	.63812	.000
Anxiety	1.00	2.00	-0.07*	.57731	.000

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Dependent variable	Self-efficacy code (I)	Self-efficacy code (J)	Mean difference (I-J)	Standard error	Sig.
		3.00	3.07*	.78250	.000
		2.00	1.00	0.07*	3.14313*
	3.00	3.00	3.14	.61022	.994
		1.00	-3.07*	.78250	.000
		2.00	-3.14	.61022	.994
		3.00	3.07*	.78250	.000
Shame	1.00	2.00	-1.38*	.64277	.000
		3.00	2.13*	.87122	.039
	2.00	1.00	1.38*	.64277	.000
		3.00	3.51	.67941	.106
	3.00	1.00	-2.13*	.87122	.039
		2.00	-3.51	.67941	.106
Hopelessness	1.00	2.00	-0.4	.66824	.823
		3.00	3.81*	.85689	.000
	2.00	1.00	0.4	.66824	.823
		3.00	4.21*	.63220	.000
	3.00	1.00	-3.81*	.85689	.000
		2.00	-4.21*	.63220	.000
Boredom	1.00	2.00	-0.08	.64419	.993
		3.00	3.06*	.82606	.001
	2.00	1.00	0.08	.64419	.993
		3.00	3.14*	.60945	.000
	3.00	1.00	-3.06*	.82606	.001
		2.00	-3.14*	.60945	.000

**significant at 0.05 level.*

Students with high self-efficacy beliefs are more determined to participate in learning activities than students with low self-efficacy. The students with higher self-efficacy tend to

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invest more effort into their tasks and may create more effective solutions to overcome the barriers they have encountered (Eggen & Kauchak, 1997). As per the results in the present study, the higher the self-efficacy, it was seen that students may also tend to enjoy more in their learning process, be proud of their achievements, and hope for better future experiences.

In the current study, table 1 shows that Group 3 encompasses the highest levels of positive emotions (enjoyment, hope, and pride) related to learning and relatively lower levels of negative emotions (anger, anxiety, shame, hopelessness, boredom), whereas Group 1 encounters the lowest levels of positive emotions and higher levels of negative emotions. The lower variability in Group 3's emotional scores implies that their experiences seem to be more consistent among students than Group 1, which has a higher variability.

From Table 2 and 3, The significant F-values obtained for all variables indicate that the groups have significantly different experiences with both positive and negative learning-related emotions. In the present study, positive emotions (hope, enjoyment, and pride) exhibit the greatest between-group differences, suggesting that self-efficacy may have a greater influence on creating positive emotions in learning situations than negative emotions. Some of the previous research has also found that experiencing positive emotions such as happiness, hope, or pride helps children establish self-regulated learning strategies, put up more effort, and attain higher academic goals (Pekrun et al., 2002). Certainly, experiencing positive emotions in the classroom encourages students to enjoy and focus their attention on the processes of learning (Camposet al., 2004; Davey et al., 2005).

According to Fredrickson's (2001) broaden-and-build model, learning-related positive emotions such as pride and enjoyment can broaden the scope of individuals' cognition and activities, as well as promote setting up of goals and challenges and focusing minds on more positive thoughts (Fredrickson & Branigan, 2005). Positive academic emotions can encourage individuals to actively seek out learning opportunities and resources, as well as achieve increased persistence and effort (Pekrun et al., 2002a, 2002b), which may aid the students in feeling more involved in the learning process (Reschly et al., 2008).

Students who experience negative academic emotions, such as anxiety and boredom, are more likely to focus on risks involved, limiting the cognitive resources required for learning tasks (Derakshan et al., 2009). Thus, learning-related negative emotions can have an adverse impact on students' cognition and behaviours (Owens et al., 2014), reducing students' learning engagement (Putwain et al., 2013). In short, academic emotions may be considered a significant factor in students' engagement and learning. Positive academic emotions encourage learners forward, whereas negative academic emotions reverse the process. (Zhen et al., 2017).

The present study thus concludes that self-efficacy has been found to have a significant role and influence on learning related emotions, especially in emerging adults. The study can lend more evidence to help the educators and higher education officials to plan educational courses and programs in order to foster self-efficacy in emerging adults and equip them to manage their learning related emotions.

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Conflict of Interest

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