

# Self-Efficacy and Academic Anxiety among Undergraduate Students

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## ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to study the relationship between self-efficacy and academic anxiety among undergraduate students. The sample comprised 200 undergraduate students aged between 18 and 20 years, selected from various departments of U.R. College, Rosera, Samastipur. To assess the study variables, the General Self-Efficacy Scale (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995) and the Academic Anxiety Scale (Siddiqui & Rehman, 2017) were administered. Correlation analysis was employed to analyse the data. The results revealed a significant negative correlation between self-efficacy and academic anxiety among undergraduate students. The findings indicate that higher levels of self-efficacy are associated with lower levels of academic anxiety. Thus, the study confirms that self-efficacy plays a significant role in reducing academic anxiety among students.

**Keywords:** Self-efficacy, academic anxiety and undergraduate students

## Introduction

Bandura has made the major contribution in the development of self-efficacy concept in different areas of human behavior. According to Bandura's (1977a) social learning theory, the self-efficacy concept refers to the degree to which people assume that they have the ability to perform an intended action. In addition, the more individuals believe they can perform the behavior, the more possible they will be to employ in the particular behavior. He believed that particular adequate motivation to employ in a behavior, it is a human's self-efficacy beliefs that decide the choice of behavior that the individual will initiate, the amount of effort that will be expended, and what extent the individual will persist in the face of obstructions and aversive conditions. He then explained self-efficacy as the individual's confidence in their ability to carry out a specific behavior in a specific situation. Bandura (1977b) has been also made the distinction between self-efficacy expectancies and outcome expectations. He defined self-efficacy expectancies as "the conviction that one can successfully execute the behavior required to produce the outcomes" (p. 79) and outcome expectations as "a persons' estimate that a given behavior will lead to certain outcomes" (p. 79). Educational researchers have paid plenty of attention to this construct. Prior studies have provided strong evidence that self-efficacy is a positive predictor of performance outcomes in different subjects (Schunk et al., 2008; Usher & Pajares, 2008). For instance, Usher and Pajares (2008, p. 751) argued that self-efficacy "predicts students' academic achievement across academic areas and levels." Purwanti, Wangid, and Aminah (2019) reported self-efficacy brought an effect on the decrease of academic anxiety of college

students. Research evidence suggests that self-efficacy plays a significant role in enhancing students' academic achievement and reducing their academic anxiety. In this context, the present study was undertaken to examine the relationship between self-efficacy and academic anxiety among undergraduate students in the Indian setting.

### **Hypothesis**

For the present study, the following hypothesis was formulated:

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There will be a significant negative correlation between self-efficacy and academic anxiety among undergraduate students.

### **Method**

#### **Sample and Procedure**

The sample for the present study consisted of 200 undergraduate students aged between 18 and 20 years. Participants were selected from various departments of U.R. College, Rosera, Samastipur, Bihar. Prior to the administration of the measures, the purpose, relevance, and utility of the study were clearly explained to the participants. They were requested to extend their cooperation for the successful completion of the research. The participants were assured that their responses would remain confidential and would be used solely for research purposes. The questionnaires were administered collectively, and the students were instructed to complete them independently in accordance with the instructions provided at the top of each questionnaire.

#### **Measures**

In the present investigation, the General Self-Efficacy Scale and the Academic Anxiety Scale were employed to assess the levels of self-efficacy and academic anxiety among undergraduate students. The brief descriptions of the scales are provided below:

#### **General Self-Efficacy Scale**

The General Self-Efficacy Scale was developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995). The scale was originally constructed in German and consisted of 20 items. It was later translated into English and reduced to 10 items. The scale employs a four-point Likert-type response format. The total score ranges from 10 to 40, with higher scores indicating greater levels of self-efficacy and lower scores reflecting lower self-efficacy. The reported reliability coefficients of the scale range from 0.76 to 0.90. In the present study, the reliability of the scale was established on the target sample, and Cronbach's alpha was found to be 0.83, indicating satisfactory internal consistency.

#### **Academic Anxiety scale**

Academic anxiety was measured using the Academic Anxiety Scale developed by Siddiqui and Rehman (2017). The scale is designed to assess anxiety experienced by students in academic settings. It consists of items that evaluate concerns related to examinations, classroom performance, and academic expectations. Participants respond to the items using a Likert-type response format. The total score is obtained by summing responses across items, with higher scores indicating greater levels of academic anxiety. The scale has demonstrated satisfactory psychometric properties, including acceptable internal consistency reliability. In the present study, the scale also showed adequate reliability (Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.79$ ).

**Result**

**Data Analysis and Interpretation**

Keeping in view the objectives and hypothesis of the present study, a zero-order Pearson Product–Moment Correlation was computed to examine the relationship between self-efficacy and academic anxiety. The analysis was conducted using SPSS software. The results presented in Table 1 revealed a significant negative correlation between self-efficacy and academic anxiety. This indicates that higher levels of self-efficacy among students are associated with lower levels of academic anxiety, and conversely, lower self-efficacy is associated with higher academic anxiety. Thus, the hypothesis stating that “there will be a significant negative correlation between self-efficacy and academic anxiety among undergraduate students” is supported, as the obtained correlation was statistically significant at the  $p < .01$  level.

Table 1		
<i>Correlation between Self-Efficacy and Academic Anxiety of Students</i>		
Variable	Self-Efficacy	Academic Anxiety
Self-Efficacy	1	
Academic Anxiety	-0.51**	1
** $p < .01$		

**Discussion**

From the data analysis and interpretation, it is found that self-efficacy and academic anxiety negatively and significantly correlated with each other. Based on findings, enhancing self-efficacy may serve as an effective strategy for reducing academic anxiety, particularly through approaches such as self-regulation and problem-solving. It has played pivotal role in different academic domains, therefore students, who has a high level of self-efficacy, can be solve the problems and avoid negative feelings effectively. It also has strengthened the mental health, promotes self-confidence, develops ability to solve the given task, achieved the goals and improves the quality of students. Hence, high level of self-efficacy beliefs is also more likely to see their work as a calling rather than simply a career. Therefore, teachers should also take it into account at the very beginning of the course. Accordingly, implementing actions and programs at college is recommended to improve students' academic skills to, in turn, improve academic self-efficacy.

**Implication**

Findings confirm that self-efficacy has profound implications for how undergraduate students experience and manage academic anxiety. Strong self-efficacy helps students perceive academic challenges as manageable, lowering stress and worry. Confidence in one’s abilities leads to persistence, better preparation, and higher achievement, which further reduces anxiety. Students with high self-efficacy adopt proactive coping strategies rather than avoidance or procrastination. Incorporating mastery experiences can strengthen students’ self-efficacy and reduce anxiety. Students with higher self-efficacy are more likely to engaged and less likely to drop out due to anxiety. Strengthened self-efficacy contributes to overall mental health, reducing the risk of burnout and academic disengagement.

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