

***Relationship between Homesickness, Self-Efficacy, and Achievement Motivation
among Non-Native Students of Urmia University of Medical Sciences***

Marzieh Arefi, Islamic Azad University, Iran
Roya Ghodsi shekh Jan, University of Medical Sciences, Iran

The IAFOR International Conference on Education - Dubai 2016
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract

The transition to university often involves separation from home can lead to the challenge of adapting to a new academic environment. For most new students, adjusting to an unfamiliar academic setting can induce homesickness.

The present study investigated the relationship between homesickness, achievement motivation, self-efficacy among non-native students of Urmia University of Medical Sciences in the academic year of 2013-2014. The sample comprised 150 females and 129 males first year university students which living in university dormitory. The instruments for data collection were academic motivation scale (Vallerand et al., 1992), self-efficacy scale (Owen & Froman, 1988), and homesickness questionnaire (Archer et al., 1998). The gathered data were analyzed through stepwise regression and Pearson correlation by SPSS software. Results indicated that self-efficacy and achievement motivation have a significant correlation and reverse relationship with homesickness, implying that increased self-efficacy and achievement motivation decreased the level of homesickness among students. Furthermore, regression analysis revealed that demotivation, gender and self-efficacy significantly predict homesickness, respectively.

Keywords: achievement motivation, self-efficacy, gender, homesickness

iafor

The International Academic Forum

www.iafor.org

Introduction

Students who have gone away from their families and friends might feel lonely and face with deficiency in terms of love and belonging. If students who enjoy motivation and effectiveness begin to learn to have some creative thinking and be optimistic, resist against problems, control their own stress and have proper choices in life, the likelihood of success will rise among them (Spurling, 2010). It appears that the feeling of homesickness is a concern which results from a real separation from home and special people or it is predicted that such a separation could happen in the future. Feeling of homesickness influences a substantial percentage of the students newly admitted to higher education institutions (Thurber, et al, 2007). Displacement and pressure of movement to another place results in creation of despair and feeling of homesickness. Compulsory or voluntary movement and separation from the places is accompanied by despair. Losing this bond with the place will leave negative impacts (Scopelliti, 2010).

Whitbourne (2002) maintained that it was difficult for the first year students of universities to adjust themselves to new situations, balancing a variety of responsibilities with extracurricular activities, figuring out how to manage their time effectively, feeling academically unprepared and low in academic self-efficacy, and worrying about financial matters (Gabriel,2014).

Lent et al, (2009) stated that the first year in the university could be a time filled with new exciting experiences. It also could be a challenging experience to most students. In other words, the better adjusting students to their academic environment, the better their academic performance.

Chemers et al, (2001) found that self- efficacy and optimism are strong predictors of adjusting to university among first year American undergraduates. Students' self-confidence and optimism more likely to perceive challenge rather than a threat and reported less stress and better adaptation (Denovan, 2010).

Nikfal (2014) demonstrated that self- efficacy and motivation to achievement are among predicting factors of adaptation with the university. These two variables are positively and significantly related with first year students' adaptations to university. Elias et al (2010) demonstrated that there is a strong and positive correlation between self-efficacy and motivation to achievement. This indicates that students who are self-confident for reaching success in their studies are inclined to have the need for promotion. Both variables of motivation to achievement and self-efficacy are related with students' adaptations at the university.

Bandura (1994) emphasized on self- efficacy as an influencing trait in persons' adaptation to changes, which indicates the importance of self-efficacy during the first year of university. High self-efficacy subjects are more confident about their potentialities, they take the stressful situations as challenging and believe in their achieving abilities there by increase their efforts to cope with them as compared to the low self-efficacy subjects.

Yousef (2012) conducted an investigation of relationship between self-efficacy, social support perceived and life satisfaction and feeling of homesickness on a sample of 185

of international students who were educating in the State University of Malaysia and argued that there was a significant relationship between self-efficacy and feeling of homesickness where the sense of self-effectiveness would result in reduction of feeling homesickness.

Edmund and Brazil (2007) maintained student motivation acts as a facilitator for college success and graduation. Academic self-efficacy beliefs and achievement motivation are strongly related to college GPA and retention.

Studies have also reported significant differences in the feeling of homesickness related to the effects of gender, in which women are more likely to have despair compared to men (Stroebe, Vliet, Hewstone, Duru, Elkazie, 2010).

The summary of these findings reveal that self-efficacy and motivation for achievement as well as gender are factors that affect the feeling of homesickness.

Thus, the current study investigates the relationship between motivation to achievement and gender with feeling of homesickness among first year non-local students at the Medical Science University, Urmia.

Method

Participants:

Participants in this study included 279 non-local students of Medical Sciences University in Urmia city (150 female and 129 male). As much as 11/8% of female students and 15/41% of male students were having previous records of presence in dormitories.

Measurements:

The data gathered by questionnaires consisted of three parts:

1-The Academic Motivation Scale. This scale was developed by Vallerand in 1992. The academic motivation scale was prepared based on the self-adjusted theory and investigated three main dimensions of motivation, i.e. internal motivation, external motivation and lack of motivation.

2-College Academic Self-efficacy Scale. This questionnaire was developed by Uven and Framen in 1988 in order to measure students' academic educational self-efficacy beliefs.

3-The Homesickness Questionnaire. This scale was developed by Archer et al, in 1998 in order to assess the level of students' homesickness.

Reliabilities of measures in this study

Table (1) shows Cronbach's coefficient alpha for three measures. Alpha coefficients in this study were excellent and ranged between .85 and .91.

Table 1. Cronbach's alpha of various measures

| Scale (variable) | Index | Size |
|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Academic Motivation | Cronbach's alpha | 0/85 |
| | Number of questions | 28 |
| | Sample size | 279 |
| Academic Self-efficacy | Cronbach's alpha | 0/91 |
| | Number of questions | 32 |
| | Sample size | 279 |
| Feeling of Homesickness | Cronbach's alpha | 0/90 |
| | Number of questions | 30 |
| | Sample size | 279 |

Result

In this study, the relationship between self-efficacy and motivation to achievement as well as gender with feeling of homesickness among first year non-local students of the University of Medical Sciences were examined.

In line with the first hypothesis, Table 2, shows the correlations of students' academic self-efficacy and feeling of homesickness (-0/36), and this means that there is a significant relationship between academic self-efficacy and feeling of homesickness with 99% confidence level. Also, the direction of this relation is negative and inverse, suggesting with a rise in the degree of self-efficacy, the level of feeling of homesickness will also decrease.

Table 2. Pearson correlation coefficient between academic self-efficacy and feeling of homesickness

| Variable | Feeling of homesickness | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|---------|
| Academic self-efficacy | R | -0/36** |
| | Sig. | 0/001 |
| | n | 279 |

We next examined the extent that motivation to achievement and homesickness correlated with each other. Table 3 shows there was a moderate correlation link between these two variables, (-.20), which shows the direction of this relation is negative and inverse, suggesting with a rise in the degree of academic motivation, the level of feeling of homesickness will also decrease and vice versa.

Table 3. Pearson correlation coefficient between Academic Motivation and Homesickness

| Variable | Feeling of homesickness | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|---------|
| Academic motivation | R | -0/20** |
| | Sig. | 0/001 |
| | n | 279 |

Finally, we examined the gender differences with feeling of homesickness. As presented in Table 4, female students had higher homesickness scores than male students. The results of using t-test indicated significant differences was between

gender and feeling of homesickness. It means that female students had more feeling of homesickness compared to male students.

Table 4. Homesickness and Gender: male vs female students

| Variable | Gender | M | t value | df | Sig. |
|-------------------------|--------|-------|---------|--------|-------|
| Feeling of homesickness | Male | 58/67 | -4/71 | 275/68 | 0/001 |
| | Female | 67/21 | | | |

Discussion

The study took into account different factors that contribute to homesickness among students who living far from their homes. The first result implicating that students having higher scores on self-efficacy experience little feeling of homesickness. This result implied that academic self-efficacy was having significant impacts on the feeling of homesickness. Findings were consistent with the previous literature demonstrating that higher self-efficacy would predict adaptation with the new setting and reduce the risk of affection with feeling of homesickness among people who were gone away from their relatives (Co, 2013; Elias, 2010; Gabriel, 2014; Gregory, 2007; Soltani, 2011, Noori pour, 2013). To explain the findings, we can state that given the fact that Bandura considers self-efficacy as a factor which serves as an intermediate and thus affects understanding, thoughts and feelings of people, it is not far from expectation to obtain such a result, because, when learners are exposed to negative occurrences, they will be subjected to academic stressful situations filled with new experiences.

Higher feeling of self-efficacy helps them administer and control those situations and occurrence and protect themselves against many of the mental issues. Bandura (2006) emphasised on self-efficacy as an influential trait that affects peoples' adaptations while facing changes, where this will specify the significance if self-efficacy during the first year of the university (Gabriel, 2014).

In accordance with the results of this study, students who experience little feeling of homesickness have higher motivation for achievement compared to those having more feeling of homesickness. Findings reveal that there is a negative relation between motivations for achievement and feeling of homesickness, Findings obtained implicate that the results of this test are in line with those of Elias (2010) and Soleimani Far (2012). It is possible that students with higher motivation for achievement had certain goals and as a result they had better adaptations because they needed to know they had to make hard efforts to reach their goals. On the other hand, if the person faces a problem and considered his own abilities as neutral, his internal motivation will be undermined (Elias, 2010). Given the issues stated one can expect that the motivation for achievement assumes a considerable portion in reducing the feeling of students' homesickness.

In the end, we assumed that male and female students differ in terms of feeling of homesickness. Results indicated significant relationship between gender and feeling of homesickness where the findings demonstrated that female students have more feeling of homesickness compared to men. Further study will need to investigate variables like distance from homeland and interest in educational majors and having friends in new settings are factors that affect feeling of homesickness.

References

- Al-Qaisy, L. (2010). Adjustment of College Freshmen: the Importance of Gender and the Place of Residence. *International Journal of Psychological Studies* , 142-151.
- Ames, c. (1992). Classrooms: goals structures and student motivation. *Journal of Educational Psychology* , 84 (3), 261-271.
- Bandura A (1994). Self-Efficacy. In V. S. Ramachaudran (Ed.). *Encyclopedia of human behavior* (Vol. 4, 71-81). New York: Academic Press.
- CO, U. (2013). Self- Efficacy, Self Esteem, and Gender as Factors Predicting Homesickness of Freshmen. *AFRICAN JOURNAL FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES ISSUES* , Vol.16 No.2, 263-270.
- Denovan, A. (2012). An interpretative phenomenological analysis of stress and coping in first year. *Educational Research Journal. ISSN 0141-1926*
- DURU, E. (2013). The Psychometric Properties of the Utrecht Homesickness Scale: A Study of Reliability and Validity. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research* (52). 61-78.
- Elias, H. (2010). Achievement Motivation and Self-Efficacy in Relation to Adjustment among University Students. *Journal of Social Sciences* , 6 (3). 333-339.
- Finn, J. (1989). Withdrawing From School. *Review of Educational Research* , 59, No. 2, 117-142.
- Gabrielle, M. (2014, Mar 24). Ethnic and Gender Differences in First-Year College Students' Goal Orientation, Self-Efficacy, and Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation. *The Journal of Educational Research* , 340-356.
- Gregory, S. (2007, May 3-6). Effects of Self-Efficacy and Self-Esteem on Homesickness and College Adjustment. Retrieved from *The Education Resource Information Center (ERIC)*: <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED497507>
- Kumar, R. (2006). The Role of Self-Efficacy and Gender Difference among the Adolescents. *Journal of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology* , 32, 254-249.
- Nikfal, N., Reshadatjoo, H., & Reshadatjoo, A. (2014). Designing a model to improve first year student adjustment to university. *Management Science Letters* , 4, 1051-1058.
- Nooripour, R. (2013). Self-efficacy and homesickness in Iranian students in India. *Indian Journal of Health and Wellbeing* , 4(5). 1054-1056.
- Pajares, F., & Graham, L. (1999). Self-efficacy, motivation constructs, and mathematic performance of entering middle school students. *Contemporary Educational Psychology* , 24, 124-139.

Scopelliti, M. (2010). Homesickness in University Students: The Role of Multiple Place Attachment. *Environment and Behavior*, 42(6), 533-572.

Solimanifar (2012). Relationship between self-efficacy and achievement motivation with first year students' academic adjustment in Shahid Chamran University in Ahvaz. *Journal of Educational Psychology Studies*. Volume 17, 83-104

Soltani, R. (2011). Survey the relationship between attachment style and general self-efficacy with homesickness among college students. *Social and Behavioral Sciences (ELSEIER)*, 30, 538-541.

Spurling, T. P. (2010). A Study of Motivation and Self-Efficacy in University Students. *Campbellsville University Online* Volume 3, 145.

Thurber, C. (2008). Preventing and Treating Homesickness. *Child Adolesc Psychiatric Clin N Am*, 843-858.

Wilder, B. (1989). Implication of the current theory of achievement motivation. *Psychology in School*, 8, 164-171.

Yusoff, Y. M. (2012). Self-Efficacy, Perceived Social Support, and Psychological Adjustment in International Undergraduate Students in a Public Higher Education Institution in Malaysia. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 14.1, 353-71.