A STUDY ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, ACADEMIC SELF-EFFICACY AND ACADEMIC BURNOUT OF COLLEGE STUDENTS IN SHANXI PROVINCE, CHINA*

Guoyuan Zheng, Wenhong Sun, Weiming Zhang
Master of Educational Administration, Stamford International University
E-mail: 805405844@qq.com

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Abstract

Academic burnout exists in students' learning and has been explored in depth by many researchers to mitigate this phenomenon. This study investigated the mechanisms of influence between variables and used a questionnaire to complete the data sampling. According to the study's results, it was found that emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy negatively influenced the occurrence of academic burnout. In contrast, emotional intelligence positively contributed to academic self-efficacy. To this end, this study explores the relationship between the variables, which has important theoretical implications for mitigating the occurrence of academic burnout.

Keywords: College students; Emotional intelligence; Academic self-efficacy; Academic burnout

Introduction

Academic burnout is a phenomenon that scholars have studied in the field of education as it affects the future development and direction of students. Studies have shown that academic burnout affects students worldwide (Rahmatpour et al., 2019). It has also been suggested that academic burnout is widespread among college studentand that this phenomenon can lead to health risks (Salgado & A†u-Yong-Oliveira, 2021). Furthermore, Koropets et al. (2019) suggest that students' burnout in their studies can lead to physical and mental fatigue and interpersonal indifference, and it is also noteworthy that when students are disgusted and disenchanted with the content of their studies, this represents a high level of academic burnout (Oyoo et al., 2020).

This research aims to investigate the effects of the variables and address academic burnout to contribute to the theoretical value of enhancing the core competencies of college students as they enter society. A detailed and comprehensive exploration of the underlying causes of academic burnout among college students will provide theoretical support for college students to address academic challenges actively. While research on academic burnout has focused on multiple age groups, including adolescents, secondary school students, and college students, this study focuses on college students with the aim of exploring the extent of academic burnout in this group and providing theoretical guidance for college students to engage fully in their studies.

Research Objectives

(1) To examine the current state of emotional intelligence, academic self-efficacy, and academic burnout among college students.

(2) To analyze the correlations between emotional intelligence, academic self-

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efficacy, and academic burnout among college students.

(3) To explore the effects of emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy on academic burnout among college students.

(4) To investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence, academic self-efficacy, and academic burnout among college students.

Literature Review

The effect of emotional intelligence on academic self-efficacy

In Turkish state schools, an increase in emotional intelligence has been shown to promote academic self-efficacy in secondary school students (Akbasli et al., 2022). Chinese scholars Zhang et al. (2018) and Jia (2019) also indicate that secondary school students with high levels of emotional intelligence promote adequate progress in their academic self-efficacy. Some Korean scholars indicate a positive correlation between nursing students' emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy (Kim, 2018). In addition, Peng et al. (2016) found that emotional intelligence was related to academic self-efficacy in their study of college students. Similarly, García-Álvarez et al. (2021) concluded a correlation between emotional intelligence, academic burnout, and mental health levels among Venezuelan college students. Several scholars have found that college students' levels of emotional intelligence positively contribute to self-efficacy (Agus-Sudraja et al., 2022; Kazmi et al., 2021; Colomeischi & Carstiuc, 2017). It has also been found in a study of 200 college students that academic self-efficacy plays a mediating role in emotional intelligence and academic engagement (Tang, 2018).

The impact of emotional intelligence on academic burnout

In previous studies, a negative correlation between emotional intelligence and academic burnout has been found. Furthermore, task-oriented students have higher emotional intelligence and thus lower academic burnout than the average student (Supervía et al., 2020). Mandaviya (2016) and Loi & Pryce (2022) also showed a negative correlation between emotional intelligence and academic burnout in their study. One scholar who taught a course on emotional intelligence to 47 college students in pharmacy in Granada, Spain, during the COVID-19 epidemic found that a decrease in academic burnout accompanied an increase in emotional intelligence after the intervention (Moreno-Fernández et al., 2020). In addition, Sadoughi et al. (2017) showed that emotional intelligence harmed burnout in college students, Molero-jurad et al. (2021) and Li et al. (2019) showed that promoting emotional intelligence in secondary school students helped to reduce the onset of academic burnout. Chinese scholars have also shown that enhancing the emotional intelligence of senior nursing students can reduce academic burnout (Xu et al., 2018).

The effect of academic self-efficacy on academic burnout.

Some scholars have used medical students as subjects and taken statistical methods of regression analysis to show that academic self-efficacy negatively drives academic burnout (Lee & Jeon, 2015; Yu et al., 2016; Rohmani & Andriani, 2021), and some studies have also demonstrated that academic self-efficacy negatively predicts academic burnout (Li & Ai, 2018; Huo et al., 2017). Some studies suggest that academic burnout is reduced in secondary school students with high academic self-efficacy (Zeng & Jin, 2021). In addition, some studies have found that academic self-efficacy mediates students' academic stress and burnout

(Jung et al., 2015). Of course, some Chinese scholars have also demonstrated a mediating effect of academic self-efficacy between academic engagement and academic burnout (Zhang et al., 2021). In an analysis of college student data, researchers have suggested that self-efficacy hurts academic burnout (Rahmati, 2015; Charkhabi et al., 2013; Zahra, 2021).

Methodology

This study is quantitative in order to test the effect between variables. Undergraduates from universities in Shanxi Province were used as the overall population of the study, and a purposive sampling method was used to sample 500 undergraduates from the top 10 universities according to the 2022 Shanxi Province ranking by the Erikson China Alumni Association website.

A questionnaire with 21 items developed by Liu (2008) was used to measure emotional intelligence. For selecting the academic self-efficacy scale, a questionnaire developed by Chinese scholars was used, with 22 questions (Liang, 2000). The questionnaire developed by Lian (2005) was used for measuring academic burnout, which has 20 items. The scale used for the three scales was a five-point Likert scale. The internal consistency coefficients for emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy were more significant than 0.8, and the Cronbach's alpha for academic burnout was more significant than 0.8.A total of 500 questionnaires were collected using the Likert scale and 469 valid questionnaires were returned, with a validity rate of 93.8%.

The study used SPSS 26.0 statistical tool for data analysis. A series of descriptive statistical analyses, correlation analyses, and regression analyses were carried out using the precedent research theory as the cornerstone.

Reliability and validity

In this study, the existing questionnaire of previous scholars were used, and for this purpose, the questionnaires were distributed directly to 500 participants. According to the analysis in Table 5, Cronbach's alpha for emotional intelligence, academic self-efficacy, academic burnout, and all dimensions were above 0.7, indicating that the selected questionnaires had good reliability.

Table 1: Reliability Analysis

Variables	The variables' dimension	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Emotional intelligence	Emotional regulation to others	.787	6
	Emotional evaluation to others	.877	5
	Emotional evaluation to oneself	.763	4
	Emotional regulation to oneself	.718	3
	Emotional application	.711	3
Academic self-efficacy	Self-efficacy of learning ability	.901	11
	Self-efficacy of learning behavior	.704	11
Academic burnout	Emotional depression	.879	8
	Improper behavior	.770	6
	Low sense of achievement	.750	6

According to Table 1, the KMO values of 0.911 for emotional intelligence, 0.915 for academic self-efficacy, and 0.907 for academic burnout, as well as the KMO of 0.902 for the total questionnaire, with a Bartlett test of significance below 0.05, represent the reasonable validity of the scales used in this study.

Table 2: KMO and Bartlett Test of Sphericity

	Emotional intelligence	Academic self-efficacy	Academic burnout	Total
KMO Sampling suitability quantity	.911	.915	.907	.902

Table 3: KMO and Bartlett Test of Sphericity Continued

		Emotional intelligence	Academic self-efficacy	Academic burnout	Total
Bartlett test of sphericity	Approximate chi-square	4275.108	3789.389	3667.402	13842.987
	Freedom degree	210	231	190	1953
	Significance	.000	.000	.000	.000

Results

Table 4 shows that in terms of gender, the percentage of female students sampled was 57.36%, which was 14.72% higher than the sampling ratio of male students. Among the grades, the highest percentage of the sampled first-year sample was 36.03%. Regarding major categories, the most significant number of college students were in the science and technology category, with 45.63% of the sample. Regarding whether or not the students participated in club activities, it can be seen that 88.70% of the students participated in club activities. Regarding whether or not they were student leaders, the majority of students were not student leaders, with 54.80%.

Table 4: Distribution of Sample Characteristics (N=469)

Demographics characteristics category		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	200	42.64
	Female	269	57.36
Grade	First Year	169	36.03
	Second Year	93	19.83
	Third Year	94	20.04
	Fourth Year	113	24.09
Major	Science and Engineering	214	45.63
	Humanities	84	17.91
	Medicine	83	17.70
	Agronomics	19	4.05
	Arts and Sports	27	5.76

Demographics characteristics category		Frequency	Percent
Participation in community activities	Others	42	8.96
	Yes	416	88.70
	No	53	11.30
Student cadres	Yes	212	45.20
	No	257	54.80

(1) Analysis of descriptive statistical results of the survey on the current state of emotional intelligence

According to Table 5, the mean score for emotional intelligence is 3.772, which is higher than the theoretical median score of 3. This indicates that the emotional intelligence of college students is good and lies at the upper middle level. Looking at the sub-dimensions, the mean score for using emotions is 3.893. It is higher than the theoretical median score of 3, which is the highest mean score among the dimensions and represents a robust emphatic ability of the college students.

Table 5: Emotional Intelligence Descriptive Statistics Table

Variable	Frequency	Mean	SD
Emotional regulation to others	469	3.620	.588
Emotional Evaluation to others	469	3.846	.626
Emotional Evaluation to oneself	469	3.796	.566
Emotional regulation to oneself	469	3.706	.657
Emotional application	469	3.893	.630
Emotional intelligence	469	3.772	.462

Table 6 shows that the mean score of academic self-efficacy for college students is 3.369, which is slightly higher than the theoretical median score of 3. This means that college students' academic self-efficacy is moderately high. On the contrary, the mean scores for each sub-dimension of academic self-efficacy are 3.448 for learning ability self-efficacy and 3.291 for learning behavior self-efficacy, which are both higher than 3 points.

Table 6: Academic Self-efficacy Descriptive Statistics Table

Variable	Frequency	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Self-efficacy of learning ability	469	1.91	5.00	3.448	.591
Self-efficacy of learning behavior	469	2.00	5.00	3.291	.457
Academic self-efficacy	469	2.00	5.00	3.369	.473

According to Table 7, the mean academic burnout score is slightly below the theoretical median of 3 points, at 2.821. This represents a relatively positive overall level of academic burnout among college students, which is moderately low. Similarly, the mean scores for the sub-dimensions of academic burnout are lower than the theoretical median score of 3 points.

Table 7: Academic Burnout Descriptive Statistics Table

Variable	Frequency	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Emotional depression	469	1.00	5.00	2.829	.782
Improper behavior	469	1.00	5.00	2.978	.681
Low sense of achievement	469	1.00	4.67	2.655	.572
Academic burnout	469	1.00	4.75	2.821	.552

Correlation analysis

According to Table 8, there was a significant correlation between the variables. Emotional intelligence was positively correlated with academic self-efficacy with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.437$, $p < 0.05$. Also, emotional intelligence was negatively correlated with academic burnout with a correlation coefficient of $r = -0.312$, $p < 0.05$. Similarly, it can be seen that academic self-efficacy was significantly negatively correlated with academic burnout with a correlation coefficient of -0.495, $p < 0.05$.

Table 8: Matrix of Correlation Analysis of Emotional Intelligence, Academic Self-efficacy, and Academic Burnout

	Emotional intelligence	Academic self-efficacy	Academic burnout
Emotional intelligence	1		
Academic self-efficacy	.437**	1	
Academic burnout	-.312**	-.495**	1

* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001

Regression analysis

Regression modeling can help analyze the correlation between variables and the causal relationship. This study will develop regression models for emotional intelligence, academic self-efficacy, and academic burnout. The effect of these variables will be investigated.

(1) Regression Analysis of Emotional Intelligence on Academic Burnout

According to the data analysis in Table 9, the adjusted R^2 value was 0.095, and the F value was 50.259 based on the ANOVA results, which was less than 0.001. This indicates that the significance level is good and the model fits well, which means that the regression results are significant and valid.

Table 9: Parameter Test Table for Regression Model of Emotional Intelligence on Academic Burnout

R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Error of standard estimation	F
.312[a]	.097	.095	.52537	50.259***

* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001

According to the analysis in Table 10, the standard regression coefficient value of emotional intelligence is -0.312, which is significant of p<0.001 and has reached the level of

significance, representing a negative predictive effect of emotional intelligence on academic burnout.

Table 10: Regression Analysis of Emotional Intelligence on Academic Burnout

Model		Unnormalized coefficient		Normalized coefficient	t	Significance	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Standard error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	4.225	.200		21.171	.000		
	Emotional intelligence	-.372	.053	-.312	-7.089	.000	1.000	1.000

(2) Regression analysis of emotional intelligence on academic self-efficacy

According to the results of the analysis in Table 11, the adjusted R^2 value is 0.189, and the F value from the ANOVA results is 110.274, with a significance $p<0.001$, which is a good level of significance, representing a good level of model fit and a significant and valid regression result.

Table 11: Parameter Test Table of Regression Model of Emotional Intelligence to Academic Self-efficacy

R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Error of standard estimation	F
.437a	.191	.189	.42585	110.274***

* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001

According to Table 12, the standard regression coefficient for emotional intelligence was 0.437, with a significance < 0.001, a high significance level, which means that emotional intelligence is a significant and positive predictor of academic self-efficacy.

Table 12: Regression Analysis of Emotional Intelligence to Academic Self-efficacy

Model		Unnormalized coefficient		Normalized coefficient	t	Significance	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Standard error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.683	.162		10.405	.000		
	Emotional intelligence	.447	.043	.437	10.501	.000	1.000	1.000

(3) Regression analysis of academic self-efficacy on academic burnout

According to the analysis in Table 13, the adjusted R^2 value is 0.243, and the F-value is 151.563 based on the ANOVA results, which is $p<0.001$, which means that the significance is good and the model fits well, the regression results are therefore significant and valid.

Table 13: Parameter Test Table of Regression Model of Academic Self-efficacy to Academic Burnout

R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Error of standard estimation	F
.495a	.245	.243	.48043	151.563***

* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001

Based on the analysis results in Table 14, the standard regression coefficient for emotional intelligence was -0.495, with a significance of p <0.001, indicating a good significance level. It can be seen that academic self-efficacy has a negative predictive value effect on academic burnout.

Table 14: Regression Analysis of Academic Self-efficacy to Academic Burnout

Model		Unnormalized coefficient		Normalized coefficient	t	Significance	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	standard error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	4.768	.160		29.849	.000		
	Academic self-efficacy	-.578	.047	-.495	-12.311	.000	1.000	1.000

(4) Regression analysis of emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy on academic burnout

In this paper, the regression analysis of emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy on academic burnout was done one by one. According to Table 15, the adjusted R^2 value was 0.253, and the F value was 80.284 based on the ANOVA results, with a significance of p<0.001, representing a good significance level and a good model fit, indicating that the regression results were significant and valid.

Table 15: Parameters Test Table of Regression Model of Emotional Intelligence and Academic Self-efficacy to Academic Burnout

R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Error of standard estimation	F
.506a	.256	.253	.47735	80.284***

* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001

For regression analysis, academic self-efficacy was added to the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic burnout. According to Table 16, the standard regression coefficient for academic self-efficacy was -0.443, with a significance level of p <0.001, which is a good level of significance, thus indicating that academic self-efficacy has a significant negative effect on academic burnout. Similarly, this analysis shows that emotional intelligence still negatively affects academic burnout with a regression coefficient of -0.118, a significance of p<0.001.

Table 16: Regression Analysis of Emotional Intelligence, Academic Self-Efficacy on Academic Burnout

Model		Unnormalized coefficient		Normalized coefficient	t	Significance	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Standard error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	5.097	.201		25.326	.000		
	Emotional intelligence	-.141	.053	-.118	-2.654	.008	.809	1.236
	Academic self-efficacy	-.518	.052	-.443	-9.984	.000	.809	1.236

Discussion

According to the statistical results, it can be seen that college students' emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy are better, showing a medium to a high level. In contrast, the academic burnout of college students is currently seen to be at a medium to the low level. This may be related to the fact that the college students tested are enrolled in major universities. According to the descriptive statistics of emotional intelligence, college students have higher mean scores in the dimension of evaluation of others' emotions, indicating that college students are better at sensitively capturing others' emotional states. The mean scores for regulation of one's own emotions and regulation of the emotions of others were relatively lower, so college students need to improve their problem-solving skills further. In Zhao's (2020) study, the mean score for the dimension of emotion regulation of others was also lower for college students. Students' academic self-efficacy and all dimensions are moderately high. However, they need to continue to strengthen their learning self-confidence to promote academic progress and avoid burnout. In the descriptive analysis of academic burnout, it was found that the score of academic burnout was moderate to low. The researcher Li (2020) also concluded that college students' academic burnout was moderate to low. Similarly, this study's dimensions of academic burnout had low mean values. However, the mean score for misbehavior was relatively slightly higher, indicating that college students still need to improve their sense of self-discipline.

Analysis of the data revealed that there was a significant correlation between the three variables in this study. There was a significant positive correlation between the two regarding the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy. In addition, it has been found that emotional intelligence positively contributes to academic self-efficacy (Saeed & Ahmad, 2020). According to the study's results, emotional intelligence negatively contributes to academic burnout. In addition, Yusoff et al. (2021) also showed that increased emotional intelligence effectively reduced academic burnout. This suggests that students should focus on socializing with others, creating a harmonious learning environment, and improving emotional intelligence to reduce academic burnout. It has been found that academic self-efficacy is negatively correlated with academic burnout. Previous researchers have also shown that college students are prone to academic burnout due to low academic self-efficacy and a lack of self-confidence in learning (Guo, 2014). It has also been suggested that when students' intrinsic self-efficacy is increased, it reduces the level of academic

burnout (Zhang, 2018). Therefore, college students must build self-confidence during school to prevent academic burnout by promoting academic self-efficacy. In addition, this study shows that increasing the academic self-efficacy of college students can help students with high emotional intelligence to reduce their feelings of academic burnout.

Conclusion

In conjunction with the purpose of this study, 500 questionnaires were collected from college students in Shanxi Province using a convenience sampling method. After the questionnaire survey and data analysis, the following conclusions can be drawn:

First, according to the descriptive statistical analysis, it can be seen that college students in the top ten universities in Shanxi Province have a moderately low level of academic burnout overall but still need to be prevented in advance. The score of emotional intelligence is slightly higher than that of academic self-efficacy. However, there is still a need to improve the emotional intelligence of college students in many aspects.

Second, according to the correlation statistics, there is a significant positive correlation between emotional intelligence and academic self-efficacy, a significant negative correlation between emotional intelligence and academic burnout; and a negative correlation between academic self-efficacy and academic burnout. This suggests that students with high levels of emotional intelligence also have high levels of academic self-efficacy; Students with higher levels of emotional intelligence are less likely to experience academic burnout. In addition, when academic self-efficacy is at a higher level, students' academic burnout is less likely.

Third, according to the regression analysis, emotional intelligence positively affects academic self-efficacy; emotional intelligence negatively affects academic burnout, and academic self-efficacy negatively affects academic burnout.

Recommendations

(1) Colleges should hold regular psychological seminars so that college students can have a correct self-concept

According to this study, academic self-efficacy negatively affects academic burnout among college students. Therefore, it is essential to enhance students' academic self-efficacy to help reduce the occurrence of academic burnout. To this end, schools need to actively engage the power of campus counseling rooms to help students understand themselves better and objectively evaluate themselves so they can confidently and efficiently engage in their studies.

(2) Colleges should organize special activities regularly to enhance students' emotional intelligence in all aspects

According to the results of this study, there is still a need to make more efforts to enhance the emotional intelligence of college students. However, students must undergo training in various areas to improve their emotional intelligence. To this end, schools can organize social activities on a regular basis to help students learn to work together as a group, thus improving their ability to get along with others and to deal with things; similarly, schools can offer special lectures to help students improve their emotional intelligence.

(3) Colleges need to plan for their personal development to prevent academic burnout

According to the study results, academic burnout among college students is moderately low but still needs to be prevented. Therefore, during the four years of college

life, students need to arrange their study time reasonably to cultivate their self-discipline and learn to plan for their studies and life; for example, they should know what goals they want to accomplish in their first year and what they will have achieved by the end of their fourth year. By organizing your study time properly, you will be able to increase your motivation and thus prevent and reduce the occurrence of academic burnout.

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