

Predictors of Academic Satisfaction and Life Satisfaction:
Exploring the Precursors of Well-Being in Immigrant
Language-Minority Undergraduate Students.

Maryam Saroughi

IIIT - AMES

Advancing Education in Muslim Societies

Statement of Problem

- College transition and college life can be a challenging period for students and affect their well-being negatively.
- Some of common stressors include:
 - Adjustment issues, new academic and daily life responsibilities, new relationships, and financial problems
- College can be even more difficult for immigrant students as many face different stressors:
 - Language barrier
 - They often face different schooling system, hold different cultural norms, beliefs and values
 - Many have low social capital, low SES and social mobility
 - Many experience stereotype threat, discrimination and marginalization

Sample

- Participants – 502 students studying in various undergraduate programs at GMU.
- Student Age – 94.0% ($n = 472$) of the participants were between 18-24 years old, Only 6% ($n = 30$) were older than 24 years old.
 - 39.6 % ($n = 199$) were 18 years old, and 23.7% ($n = 119$) were 19 years old.
- Level – 51% Freshman; 21% Sophomore; 17 % Junior; 11% Senior.
- Gender – (57 %) females , 43% males
- Ethnicity– 10.0% White; 6.6% Black or African American; 20.% East Asian; 23% South/South East Asian; 14.5% Middle Eastern; 1.2% Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 7.6% Multiethnic; 2.6% Other.

Preliminary Data Analysis

- Screening for missing data- list-wise deletion
 - from 521 participants, ($n=502$) who responded to all the variables' items remained in the data.
- Examining statistical assumption: All the variables of the study were screened for normality, linearity, multicollinearity, univariate and multivariate outliers.
 - Testing for normality: checking histograms and values of skewness and kurtosis (all were less than 2)
 - Testing for linearity: scattered and q-q plots
 - Testing for multicollinearity: VIF less than 2.1 found for all instances. Lowest value of TOL was .48
 - Multivariate outliers: Mahalanobis distance and Cook's distance statistics
 - A curvilinear estimation was run and verified that all relationships in the model were found to be sufficiently linear to be tested using covariance-based structural equation modeling using AMOS software.

Correlation Analysis

- The Pearson product moment coefficients of correlation revealed that Majority of correlations were significantly and positively correlated.
- All correlations were equal or less than .60. Significant Pearson's correlation ($p < .01$) values ranged from ($r = -.13$ to $.60$).
- Stereotype threat had a significant and negative correlation with self-efficacy, and ST significantly and positively correlated with negative affect as expected.
- Pearson correlations indicated that there was a significant positive correlation between SE and SRL ($r = .52$). Self-efficacy significantly correlated with Positive affect ($r = .50$); negative affect ($r = -.41$); life satisfaction ($r = .39$); and academic satisfaction ($r = .48$).
- The mean, standard deviation, and Cronbach's α for each measure, as well as the correlations among all measures, are presented in Table 1. The Cronbach's alpha of all scale were above .82, which indicated adequate internal consistency and reliability in this sample

Data Analysis

- Data analysis was conducted in two phases:
 - Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used as it was considered the most powerful to test the validity of all of the factors through multiple, item-level indicators.
 - Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used. SEM presents several advantages for this type of analysis:
 - Indicates if the hypothesized model fit with the actual data.
 - Represent both direct and indirect paths among different variables.
- Amos v.23 and SPSS 23 were used for statistical analyses.

Summary

- Sense of belonging directly and strongly predicted all the outcome variables positively and
- Higher level of sense of belonging predicted higher levels of well-being
- Sense of belonging and stereotype threat had negative relationships
- Higher level of stereotype threat is related to lower level of sense of belonging and lower level of well-being
- Self-efficacy predicted positive affect, self-regulation and academic satisfaction

Limitation and Future Research

- This study doesn't collect a national dataset is limited to a particular area, a location with a very diverse population.
- This study was self-report and students' response might have been affected by social desirability.
- A threat to validity- data collection occurred in a social context that there were anti-immigrant propaganda of radical right parties and when there were new policies such as Muslim Ban, Mexico-U.S. border wall, separation of families based on documentation status, limitations and uncertainty for DREAMers studying in U. S. universities.
- For future studies, qualitative and longitudinal research can be helpful in gathering in-dept data
 - How higher education institutions' leaders and organizations can facilitate or hinder students' sense of belonging and stereotype threat.

Implications

- Instructors, educational psychologist, student-services and organizations need to consider developing curriculum and interventional programs to support;
 - Promoting students' self-efficacy beliefs and self-regulated learning to enable students to regulate their emotions, thoughts and behaviors and effectively adjust to college demands and stressors and be able to overcome their negative emotions and develop positive emotions and academic and life satisfaction.
 - Promoting positive relationships, peer collaborations and peer advising and mentoring to foster students' sense of belonging.
 - Improving students' well-being from a preventive point of view, by designing curriculums and programs that focus on reducing stereotype threat and promoting sense of belonging by designing different interventions.
 - Promoting diversity and intercultural awareness to reduce stereotype thinking and stereotype threat and its negative consequences.

Conclusion

- Improving well-being:
 - Promoting sense of belonging
 - Combating stereotypes and stereotypical thinking
 - Promoting diversity, intercultural awareness and intercultural dialogue among different sociocultural groups