




Research Paper

Development of an educational package for students' academic optimism based on Tschannen-Moran theory

Seyede Fatemeh Hosseini¹, Leila Talebzadeh Shoushtari^{2*}, Ahmad Khamesan³

1. Master of Educational Psychology, Birjand University, Birjand, Iran
2. Corresponding Author: Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Psychology, Faculty of Educational Sciences and Psychology, Birjand University, Birjand, Iran 
3. Associate Professor, Department of Educational Psychology, Faculty of Educational Sciences and Psychology, Birjand University, Birjand, Iran.

Received: 2020-07-22

Accepted: 2021-06-29

Abstract

Aim: The present study aimed to develop a student academic optimism educational package based on Tschannen-Moran theory. This qualitative study used the Delphi method. The research tool was a researcher-made Delphi questionnaire based on Tschannen-Moran theory of academic optimism with 3 components and 22 subcomponents. The questionnaires were distributed in two consecutive rounds of Delphi among 10 purposefully selected samples and Delphi responses were analyzed to reach relative agreement and achieve high consensus by descriptive statistics using indices (frequency, mean, standard deviations), tables, and graphs. The findings showed that experts have reached relative agreement and consensus on the three main components of Tschannen-Moran theory of academic optimism, namely academic identity, trust, and academic emphasis, as well as nine subcomponents. Based on the results, the educational package for student academic optimism was initially designed according to the regular educational model of James Brown, then the content validity of the package was measured based on the comments of five experts, which were applied in the package and the final package was presented in 12 sessions.

Keywords: *Academic Optimism, Tschannen-Moran Theory, Educational Package, Students, Delphi*

Introduction

Tschannen-Moran et al. (2013) examined and validated academic optimism as an individual belief of learners, identified some related variables, and introduced the variable of “student academic optimism”. Student academic optimism shows a rich picture of human agency explaining students’ behavior in cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions (Ghadampour et al. 2017). This concept consists of three components of students’ sense of identity towards school, students’ trust in teachers, and students’ perception of academic pressure. Optimism is a pattern of thought that can be taught and learned, so learners will be able to develop and strengthen the skills needed to achieve academic optimism through learning and education. Students are among the most active and influential segments of society and their optimal academic performance is the source of many positive changes in the society, and hence, teaching academic optimism to students is essential. So far, research on academic optimism has used a positivistic approach, quantitative data, correlation methods and structural equation models to investigate the relationship among the variables and identify correlated and predictive factors of academic optimism construct. The present study used an interpretive approach and qualitative data and methods such as the Delphi technique to collect the data to develop a student academic optimism educational package for the first time in Iran. The present study examined three questions for the first time: (1) Based on document mining and literature review, what are the subcomponents and features of the components of student academic optimism based on Tschannen-Moran theory? (2) Does the Delphi method validate the subcomponents and features of the student academic optimism educational package based on Tschannen-Moran theory? and (3) Does the student academic optimism educational package based on Tschannen-Moran theory have face validity?

Methodology

This study was designed with a qualitative approach. Within this framework, the present study is considered applied research because of developing knowledge and its practical application for a specific theory. Also, it is a developmental research because of developing a student academic optimism educational package for the first time in Iran, validating it, and proposing it pilot implementation and dissemination in the educational system. The research was conducted in three phases. The library method (review of the literature) was used in the first phase to extract and collect indices and components, and to compile the initial educational package. The Delphi

method was used in the second phase to gain the consensus of experts on the subject and prepare the final framework of the educational package. Content and face validities were used in the third phase to check the validity of the educational package. First, the available sources related to Tschannen-Moran theory of academic optimism and its components were studied. Subcomponents and features extracted from the literature review entered the Delphi phase in the form of questionnaires with structured and focused items. In the Delphi method, the questionnaires were provided to the Delphi group in two rounds to reach a consensus. The group members consisted of ten professors and experts from the departments of psychology and educational sciences, selected via purposive sampling. During each phase, the data collected through the questionnaires were analyzed and summarized using descriptive statistics, which led to the formation of convergence of opinions among the participants. Then, an educational package was developed for academic optimism. The academic optimism educational package followed the regular educational model of James Brown and had a cognitive-behavioral approach. In the third phase, the content validity of the educational package was examined using the comments of five research experts. Table 1 lists the method and number of samples.

Table 1. Sample size and sampling method

Research stages	Statistical population	Sampling	Sample size
Library phase	Books, documents, websites, and content available	Convenience sampling	-
Delphi phase	Experts and professors of psychology and educational sciences at universities in the city of Birjand	Purposive sampling	10
Validity phase	Experts and professors of psychology and educational sciences at universities in the city of Birjand	Purposive sampling	5

Results

In the literature review phase, 190 subcomponents were extracted and recorded from 100 sources (books, articles, journals, and dissertations), and after several rounds of refinement and correction, 22 key components were categorized in the three main components of Tschannen-Moran theory and called “final edition of the extracted components of academic optimism”.

The components of Tschannen-Moran theory containing the extracted key components are (1) Academic identity (with 9 subcomponents), (2) Trust (with 7 subcomponents), and (3) Academic emphasis (with 6 subcomponents). In the Delphi phase, the researcher used the extracted key components of the previous phase, set up and constructed the Delphi tool in the form of a questionnaire with three main components and 22 subcomponents. By calculating the parameters of descriptive statistics including frequency, frequency percentage, mean, and standard deviation, the researcher analyzed the Delphi phase data and made conclusions about the subcomponents according to the consensus criteria. Extracted variables from the literature review phase were reduced to three main components and nine consensus subcomponents including: academic identity (commitment, sense of belonging, self-knowledge), trust (sharing, collaborative tendencies), and academic emphasis (academic engagement, task orientation, research, educational autonomy) and consolidated with the social approval of the panel of research experts as a basis to develop the student academic optimism educational package (Figure 1).

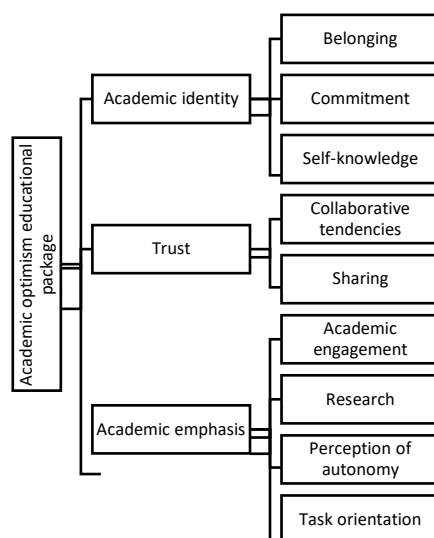


Figure 1. Default experimental model of academic optimism educational package (product of Delphi phase)

Then, considering to the default model, the student academic optimism educational package was developed in accordance with the regular educational model of James Brown. The educational package designed based on the consensus subcomponents of the Delphi phase included twelve 90-minute sessions in which students are taught techniques according to the

extracted subcomponents or provided with materials to raise their awareness. It runs for at least six weeks. The last phase involved determining the content validity of the educational package. The research tool at this stage was a questionnaire containing the objectives, content, techniques, and tasks of each session of the educational package, as well as a section for comments and suggestions of experts about the objectives, techniques, and tasks of each session. The qualitative validity questionnaire and students' academic optimism workbook were delivered to five professors of psychology and educational sciences in person and collected after two weeks. The experts made some minor recommendation, which were applied, and approved the objectives, content, techniques, and tasks of the educational package for preparing the final report. Hence, the participating professors and experts of psychology and educational sciences at universities in the city of Birjand approved the educational package with three main components and nine subcomponents.

Discussion and conclusion

Subcomponents resulting from the Delphi consensus were consistent with studies by Berzonsky (2002), Farjami (2013), Marcia (1966), Was and Isaacson (2008), McNealy & Nonnemaker (2002), Jensen & Jetten (2018), Alsharo, Gregg, & Ramirez (2017), Gill, Ramsey, Leberman, & Atkins (2016), and Fraser et al. (1998). Among the limitations of this research were the reliance on questionnaires in both Delphi and content validity phases, not using observation and interview, and not evaluating the effectiveness of the educational package due to time limitations. A recommended executive and practical solution would be the use of the student academic optimism educational package based on Tschannen-Moran theory by counselors in counseling centers, by educational counselors at schools, and by professors at universities.

Reference

- Alsharo, M., Gregg, D, & Ramirez, R. (2017). Virtual team effectiveness: The role of knowledge sharing and trust. *Information & Management*, 54(4), 479-490.
- Berzonsky, M. D. (2003). Identity style and well-being: Dose commitment matter? *International Journal of Theory and Research*, 3, 131-142.
- Farjami, H (2013). Academic Identity and Learning Sustainability / The need to develop academic identity for sustainable foreign language learning. *Language Teaching*, 27 (4), 4-11. (Text in Persian).
- Fraser, B. J.; Fisher, D.L.; McRobbies, C.J. (1996) *Development, validation and use of personal and class forms of a new classroom environment instrument*. Paper

presented at the Annual of the American Educational Research Association, New York, USA.

- Gill, L., Ramsey, P., Leberman, S, & Atkins, S. (2016). Using Word Café to enhance relationship-building for the purpose of developing Trust in Emotional Intelligence Training Environments. *Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods*, 14(2), 98.
- Jensen, D, H., Jetten, J. (2018). Exploring interpersonal recognition as a facilitator of students' academic and professional identity formation in higher education, *European Journal of Higher Education*, 8(2), 168- 184.
- Marcia, J.E. (1966). Developmental and validation of ego identity status. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 3, 551-558.
- McNealy, C & nonnemaker. J., (2002). Promoting school connectedness: evidence from the national longitudinal study of adolescent health. *Journal of school health*, 72 (4), 138-146.
- Qadmpour, E; Amirian, L; Khalili Gashnigani, Z & Naghi Biranvand, F. Z (2017). Evaluation of psychometric properties of students' academic optimism questionnaire. *Educational measurement*, 27, 45-64. (Text in Persian).
- Tschannen-Moran, M., Bankole, R.A., Mitchell, R.M. & Moor J.r, D.M. (2013) Student academic optimism: A confirmatory factor analysis. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 51(2), 150-175.
- Was, C. A., & Isaacson, R. M. (2008). The development of a measure of academic identity status. *Journal of Research in Education*, 18, 94-105.



This article is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons AttributionNoncommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0) (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0>)
