

Emotional Regulation and its Relationship to Self-Efficacy among Academic Leaders in Amman Arab University

Dr. Dina Said Bazadough¹, Dr. Bahjat Abu Sulaiman²

Abstract

This study aims to examine the relationship between emotional regulations, stress, and job security concern towards and self-efficacy among academic leaders in Amman Arab University. The presented sample for analysis included 30 questionnaires distributed among academic leaders. The study instrument is a questionnaire that consists of four parts: demographic information, emotional regulations' items, stress items, job security concern items, and self-efficacy items. The study found that emotional regulations and stress as main study factors significantly impact on self-efficacy; while it is found that job security concern has no significant relationship with self-efficacy. In addition, it is also found that the following dimension of emotional regulation (rumination) significantly affects self-efficacy. On other hand, it is found that self-blame, receptivity, and re-evaluation have no significant impact on self-efficacy. This study provides further insights for organizations on how to adapt such factors to fit different national and cultural contexts. Further studies are recommended to investigate the effect of these factors on context with looking at the effect of unexpected event such as COVID 19.

Keywords: Self-Efficacy, Emotional Regulation, Stress, Job Security Concern, Academic Leaders.

Introduction

Undoubtedly, it is always seen that emotions play an important role among individuals affecting their personality, thinking and behavior (Davis, & Panksepp, 2018; Nørgaard, 2018). Emotions are also known to be associated with complex situations shaped by particular cognitive aspects, sensations, and physiological reactions (Bastiaansen et al., 2019). This is, in fact, observed as an individual daily confronts several situations and events involving various types of emotions that

¹ Assistant Professor, Amman Arab University, Faculty of Education and Psychology, Amman, Jordan, dina.bazadough@aau.edu.jo

² Associate Professor, Amman Arab University, Faculty of Education and Psychology, Amman, Jordan, b.abusuliman@aau.edu.jo

could affect his/her adaptability and psychological health. Such events and situations require individuals to organize their emotions effectively implementing suitable strategies (Drigas, & Papoutsis, 2020; Eisenberg & Fabes, 1990).

Emotional regulation strategies represent the cornerstone of the concept of emotional regulations and refer to the methods that individuals use and employ to modify the expression of emotional experiences, and this includes both positive and negative emotions (Braun, et al., 2021; Greaves, 2019). The theoretical literature related to these emotional strategies indicates that there are individual differences, whether between individuals or within an individual him/herself, in the implementations of such strategies, as some have the ability to choose suitable and positive strategies/emotions over negative ones (Madrid, et al., 2019; Oplatka, 2018). It is important for individuals to enhance the ability to positively and successfully respond to situations in an emotionally controlled manner known to be appropriate to the situation itself. Hence, there must be a highly positive awareness of individuals' own competence raising his/her abilities and preparations in all areas.

Overall, emotions can manifest among university academic leaders, impacting their self-efficacy. Academic leaders who have a lot of negative self-conscious feelings including blame, remorse, and discouragement are more likely to have low self-esteem (Buonomo, et al., 2019; Kuppens & Van Mechelen, 2007; Naser & Hamzah, 2018). As a result, these feelings are likely to play a role in lowering self-efficacy (Buonomo, et al., 2019). Academic leaders, lecturers, and teachers play an essential role in building and advancing societies. Accordingly, they need more social as well as emotional skills to deal with this complexity since emotional regulations and self-efficacy have been identified in the literature as factors affecting education process (Jennings, & Greenberg, 2009; Zee, & Koomen, 2016). A study to investigate university academicians' experience regarding stressful attitudes and events in their university life is important as it can identify the relationship between emotional regulations and self-efficacy and this, surely, in turn affects their mental health and then the way they deal with such negative and compressive attitudes and events.

Multiple studies over the last decade show that educators and educational institutions acknowledge the need for a wide educational agenda to increase not only academic achievement but also the social-emotional competence of leaders, lecturers, and students. In addition to academic accomplishment, improving self-efficacy, social skills, polite ways, and practicing positive, safe, and healthy behaviors are also important (Hadar et al., 2020; Humphries, 2018).

In addition, there is a need for job security concern. Job security is an important element that may influence individuals to change behaviors. Job security is a crucial part of working life. Its prevalence or non-occurrence has an impact on employee lives, making it an interesting issue to research. Human capital can be saved once it is identified and quantified (Alam, Ismail, & Mishra, 2010). Employees' reactions to their organizations and the roles they play in their organizations' uplift are referred to as job security. This will undoubtedly be determined by their amount of work security (Gholamreza, et al., 2011). In today's society, employees are required to focus on adding value to their employment in order to keep their jobs in the face of increased competition and performance expectations (Ahmad, et al., 2020; Ameer et al., 2022; John & Dani, 2021). More employees are fearful of losing their employment as a result of the ongoing trends in changing work arrangement definitions and downsizing.

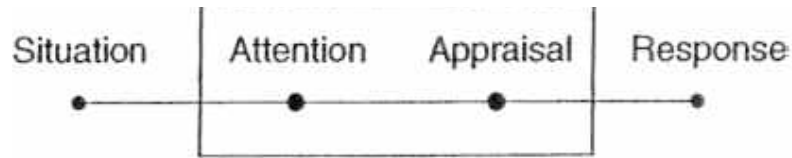
The concern about job security persists even when employment status or remuneration are appropriately adjusted to employees' desires. Because of the ongoing organizational changes and the lack of secure employment, the feeling of job security becomes relevant. These contractual terms can be seen in the tension that short-term contracts cause job security concern, which hinders a lifetime career. In other words, while desirable long-term contracts are important, negative behavioral and emotional reactions occur when they are not realized (Fleming, 2017; Vo-Thanh, et al., 2020). Therefore, being able to control emotions is essential to managing reactions to threats to job security. Thus, the current study aims to investigate the other factors including job security concern and stress towards self-efficacy among academic leaders in Amman Arab University.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

Emotional Regulations

This term is used to mean the emotional and non-sensory strategies used by an individual to increase, decrease or maintain one or more components of an emotional response (Gross, 2002). Grosse and Thompson (2007) developed a theoretical model for the interpretation of emotion, showing the main features of emotion that have been strongly emphasized in practice in all fundamental theories and are an agreed formality of emotion illustrated in the figure. 1.

Figure 1: emotional regulation model (Grosse & Thompson, 2007)



This sequence begins with a situations whether it is internal or/and external and then affecting responses (Ellsworth & Scherer, 2003). The emotional response may change the personal situation in which an individual chooses from two or more situations to be in one situation. The main idea here is that emotional responses often lead to changes in the environment, changing the likelihood of subsequent cases of such emotions and others. This emotional regulation is a modern concept in psychology and is based on the idea that people prefer and organize good emotions over unpleasant ones accordingly (Gross & Thompson 2006; Tamir, & Ford, 2009; Ochsner & Grosse, 2008), and refers to the process used by individuals to modify the type, severity and duration of an emotional expression.

In the university context, Gratz and Roemer (2004) define the concept of emotion with a range of capabilities that include: Awareness and understanding of emotions, acceptance of emotions, control of reckless behaviors and acting in accordance with desired objectives when experiencing negative emotions, position and flexible use of emotional university strategies, the relative absence of any or all of these abilities reveals difficulties in regulating emotion.

James Gross -Lange Theory

It is the oldest theory in psychology that is interpreted and understood by James and Lange confirming that emotions appear because of physiological or organic changes. More deeply, this theory states that emotions are the product of physical reactions to experiences (physiological responses to stimuli directly cause subjective feelings) (Gross, 1999).

Canon-Bard theory: (Cannon – Bard)

This theory, also called “Thalamic emotion theory”, the theory states that physiological changes and emotional experience occur at the same time, and explains that sensory signals are transmitted to the reaction center of the brain and once the signal is received, the information is transmitted to the goose. At the same time, these sensory signals are sent to the involuntary nervous system and go to the muscles or organs of the body to limit the required physiological change, as the theory is supported by biological and neuroscience, which is different from the James-Lange theory (Dror, 2014).

The Cognitive Model of Emotion Regulation:

This cognitive model of emotion regulation is presented by Philip, Baines, Duelez and Frankart, in which they suggested that emotion regulation may not be a simple phenomenon, but a process involving several associated systems, namely perception, attention, memory, decision-making and awareness. For example, perception of loss may lead to emotional responses, although a variety of information can be imagined from different sources, but there is a reason for an individual to pay attention to a particular part of the information. Moreover, memories and past experiences of an individual are cognitive schemes that in turn affect an individual's emotional behavior and have an impact on decision-making, and that decision-making and appropriate action can also work on the individual (Philip et al. 2004).

Self-Efficacy

It is known to be an individual's beliefs about his/her own abilities and capabilities to organize and implement actions, and the actions necessary to achieve positive outcomes in his/her life (Bandura, 1994). The concept of self-efficacy is brought by Bandura (1997) when he published an article entitled "Self-efficacy towards a theory of behavior modification," the article emphasizes the importance of self-efficacy, which is perceived as an intermediary for behavior modification and an indication of expectations about a person's ability to overcome different tasks, perform them successfully and plan them realistically in the sense of the magnitude of self-abilities that enable him/her to carry out a particular behavior in an acceptable manner, and the extent to which he/she endures in carrying out such behavior, and directly affects patterns of behavior and thinking.

Beliefs of self-efficacy are important dimensions of an individual's personality. More specifically, beliefs of oneself are an important basis for determining behaviors in personal, social and emotional aspects. Many studies have shown the importance of self-efficacy (Ali, 2004) to the educational achievement (Rafiola, et al., 2020; Sirakaya, et al., 2018), the higher the university staff's, teachers', lecturers, student's level of self-efficacy, the greater the educational excellence (Montgomery, 2013; Versland, & Erickson, 2017).

Pandora's Degree of Self-Efficacy

1. Direct experience: It is one of the most influential sources of individual self-competence. If an individual is able to accomplish previously difficult tasks, it feels highly self-competent. An individual with previous failure experiences leads to frustration in the performance of subsequent tasks, solving a problem and realizing the relationship between effort and result leads to higher beliefs of self-competence.

2. Indirect (alternative) experience: it is called a model and observational learning experience since an individual can obtain indirect experience by observing others in the performance of difficult tasks and how they have been able to cope with the difficulties they face, thereby increasing an individual's competence in the performance of tasks.

3. Symbolic experience (verbal persuasion): it means motivating an individual in the performance of tasks, encouraging him/her to accomplish them, and convincing him/her that he/she has the competence to accomplish difficult tasks.

4. Emotional experience: it is associated with the psychological state of an individual.

Job Security Concern

People have been said to have a need for safety or security by Maslow (1954), Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman (1959), and Super (1957) (e.g., Greenhalgh, & Rosenblatt, 1984). In other words, when a worker has a stable employment or has control over the duties they execute at work, they feel secure. Unfortunately, there have only been a few empirical studies that have carefully looked at workers' desires for job security. Job insecurity is linked to people's perceptions of their present job's long-term viability. Individuals remain insecure when a location where they currently work cannot ensure employment continuity in the future, hence it can be assumed that whether a job is secure or insecure is influenced by the chance of future employment sustainability (Maryatmi, 2020).

Once a job is secured, it is important to have job security because research has shown that individuals on temporary contracts feel their working lives are of lower quality than those with permanent contracts (Stajkovic, et al., 2009; Weng et al., 2014). In this passage, it is acknowledged that those with strong emotion regulation skills are capable of anticipating outcomes and altering their reactions to a scenario in order to maintain a balanced organizational stance. Additionally, people who are good at fostering relationships at work get better feedback from their bosses and consequently get greater merit pay (Hodzic, et al., 2015).

Stress

Stress and self-efficacy are closely related concepts. Stress play a vital role in assessing environmental demands (Zajacova, Aet al., 2005). Each external demand is viewed as a "threat" or a "challenge," and individuals with strong self-efficacy beliefs are more likely to view the demands as a challenge (Ngui, & Lay, 2020; Travis, et al., 2020). Thus, a person's confidence in his or her ability to handle a given scenario

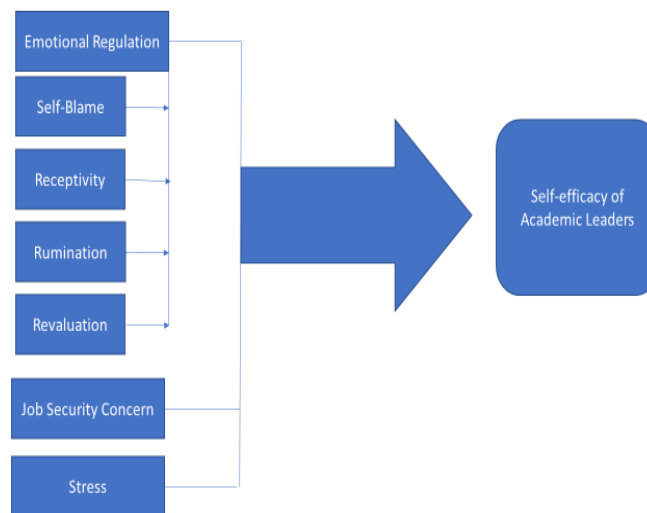
influences whether a given activity is regarded as stressful or frightening, rather than as a challenge (O'Cathain, et al., 2020; Sanderson, et al., 2020). When a task is perceived as a difficulty, an individual is more likely to adopt an appropriate coping technique and persist in completing it. Consequently, self-efficacy influences the perception of external demands and mediates the association between external stressors and psychological stress (Bandura, 1995). Physiological arousal levels related to stress and anxiety provide information that influences self-efficacy evaluations (Pajares, 1996; Solberg et al., 1998). Similarly, Hackett et al. (1992) suggested that stress and worry may diminish individuals' perceptions of their self-efficacy.

Methodology

This study adopted quantitative methods using a questionnaire in order to reach to a large number of respondents (Wilkinson & Birmingham, 2003). Wellington and Szczerbinski (2007), in this regard, stated that the purpose of quantitative approach is used for explaining, controlling, and predicting social phenomena. In addition, Sakaran (2003) indicates that a quantitative approach attempts to contribute to explain as well as solve complex issues. Besides, a quantitative approach is able to address the study's objectives by implementing empirical valuations including numerical measurements as well as analysis (Zikmund et al., 2013). They also point out that the common quantitative research purpose is to testing specific research questions or hypotheses. Furthermore, it is indicated by Sekaran (2003) a quantitative research design enables researchers to focus on a particular issue, to pursuing rigorous methods, and to generating valid conclusions.

Study Model

Figure 1: Research Model



Research Hypotheses

H1. There is a statistical significant relationship between emotional regulations with its dimensions (self-blame, receptivity, rumination, and revaluation) and self-efficacy

Based on this hypothesis, the following sub-hypotheses are presented:

H1.1. There is a statistical significant relationship between self-blame and self-efficacy

H1.2. There is a statistical significant relationship between receptivity and self-efficacy

H1.3 There is a statistical significant relationship between rumination and self-efficacy

H1.5. There is a statistical significant relationship between revaluation and self-efficacy

H2. There is a statistical significant relationship between job security concern and self-efficacy

H3. There is a statistical significant relationship between stress and self-efficacy

Demographic Information

The study consists of the leaders (Deans of Faculties and heads of departments) of Amman Arab University in the academic year of 2021/2022.

Table 1 Demographic Information of Respondents

Demographic Information	Information Dimensions	Number	Rate
Sex	Female	5	16.6%
	Male	25	83.4%
Faculty	Humanity	20	70%
	Science	10	30%
University Degree	Assistant Professor	17	56.6%
	Associate professor	8	26.7%
	Professor	5	16.65%
Total			100%

Table 1 explains that most respondents are male with the percentage of 83.4, 70% of them are in humanity faculties, and they are mostly assistant professors with the percentage of 56.6%.

Descriptive Statistics Analysis of Study's Variables

The Method of Correcting the Scale

The five-stage Likert scale was adopted to correct the study measures, where each of its items is given one score out of its five degrees (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree), and it is represented numerically (5, 4, 3, 2,1). The following scale was adopted for the purposes of analyzing the results as shown by using the following equation:

$$\frac{\text{The upper limit of alternatives} - \text{the limit the minimum for alternatives}}{\text{The number of levels}} = \frac{5-1}{3}$$

The values of the mean of the individuals' responses were calculated according to the following equation: The response range is $5 - 1/3 = 4/3 = 1.33$, so the values are as follows:

- The mean value from (1 to less than 2.33), the response is of a low degree.
- The mean value (2.34 to less than 3.67) is of moderate degree.

C. The mean value from (3.68 to less than 5) the response is high.

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics of the Study Variables

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
Self-Blame	3.42	.303	Intermediate
Receptivity	3.77	.293	High
Rumination	3.46	.271	Intermediate
Revaluation	3.88	.419	High
Emotional Regulations	3.69	.177	High
Self-efficacy	1.89	.221	
Job Security Concern	3.94	.487	High
Stress	3.92	.368	High
Valid N (listwise)			

It is vital to identify the highest mean of study variables to highlight how respondents replied to the distributed questionnaire. Thus, table 2 presents the means for all variables illustrating the highest as well as the lowest ones. More precisely, it shows that emotional regulations scored the highest mean (3.69) ranking (high) and a standard deviation of (0.177); and the highest mean of emotional regulations' dimension is for revaluation (3.88) ranking (high) with the standard deviation of (0.419). As receptivity variable, the mean is (3.77) ranking (high) and standard deviation is (0.293). The rumination dimension scored the mean of (3.46) ranking (intermediate) and standard deviation of (0.271). In addition, this table presents the mean of self-efficacy as ranking (1.89) being (low) and the standard deviation is (0.221). In regard to the job security concern, the mean is (3.94) ranking (high) and standard deviation is (0.487). For stress, its mean is (3.92) ranking (high) and the standard deviation is (0.368).

Inferential Analysis and Discussion

This section discusses the inferences that may be gleaned from the data. It addresses the research main goals.

Do emotional regulations with its dimensions affect self-efficacy? To answer this question, the study tested the associated hypotheses using regression analysis.

Table 3 Regression Analysis to discern the relationship between emotional regulations and self-efficacy

		Coefficients ^a					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	f	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	.112	.803		.140	4.918	0.149
	Emotional Regulations	.482	.217	.387	2.218		.035
a. Dependent Variable: Self-efficacy							

Table 3 displays the relationship's findings between emotional regulations and self-efficacy. It is found that there is a significant relationship between emotional regulations and self-efficacy as the P.Value is (0.035) which below (0.05) accepting the main hypothesis H1. It also shows that f value is (4.918) and R² is (0.149).

In addition, the study tested the relationship between the dimensions of emotional regulations (self-blame, receptivity, rumination, and revaluation) and self-efficacy.

Table 4 Regression Analysis to discern the relationship between self-blame, receptivity, rumination, and revaluation as dimensions of emotional regulations and self-efficacy

		Coefficients ^a				
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.490	.946		-.517	.610
	Self-Blame	.037	.149	.052	.251	.804
	Receptivity	-.114	.131	-.151	-.871	.393
	Rumination	.364	.145	.448	2.505	.019
	Revaluation	.035	.118	.067	.297	.769
a. Dependent Variable: Self-efficacy						

Table 4 illustrates the relationship's findings between self-blame, receptivity, rumination, stress, and revaluation and self-efficacy. It is found that there are significant relationships between all of rumination and stress toward self-efficacy as the P.Value is below (0.05). More precisely, rumination is (0.019) which is below 0.05 and

stress is (0.014) which also below (0.05) such results accept the following hypotheses: H1.3. As for dimensions of emotional regulations, the table shows that there are no significant relationships between self-blame, receptivity, and revaluation towards self-efficacy. More specifically, the P Value of self-blame is (0.804) which is above (0.05). Receptivity's P Value is (0.393) and revaluation's P Value is (0.769). These findings reject the following hypotheses: H1.1, H1.2, and H1.4.

In order to identify the relationship between job security concern and self-efficacy, the following table is presented.

Table 5 The relationship between job security concern and self-efficacy

Coefficients ^a								
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients				
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	f	R ²	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.525	.332		4.590	1.231	0.042	.000
	Job Security Concern	.093	.084	.198	1.109			.277

a. Dependent Variable: Self-efficacy

Table 5 shows the relationship's findings between job security concern and self-efficacy. It is found that there is no significant relationship between job security concern and self-efficacy as the P.Value is (0.277) which is above (0.05) rejecting the main hypothesis H2. It also shows that f value is (1.231) and R2 is (0.042).

Table 6 The relationship between stress and self-efficacy

		Coefficients ^a						
		Unstandardized		Standardized				
		Coefficients		Coefficients				
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	f	R ²	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.965	.410		2.354	5.137	0.155	.026
	Stress	.236	.104	.394	2.266	.014	Stress	.031

a. Dependent Variable: Self-efficacy

Table 6 illustrates the relationship's findings between job security concern and self- efficacy. It is found that there is no significant relationship between job security concern and self-efficacy as the P.Value is (0.031) which is below (0.05) accepting the main hypothesis H3. It also shows that f value is (5.137) and R2 is (0.155).

Table 7 The Pearson Correlation Matrix for the Variables of the Study Model

Correlations					
		Self-efficacy	Emotional Regulations	Job Security Concern	Stress
Self-efficacy	Pearson Correlation	1	.387*	.205	.394*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.035	.277	.277
	N	30	30	30	30
Emotional Regulations	Pearson Correlation	.387*	1	.019	.641**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.035		.920	.920
	N	30	30	30	30
Job Security Concern	Pearson Correlation	.205	.019	1	-.181
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.277	.920		.339
	N	30	30	30	30
Stress	Pearson Correlation	.394*	.641**	-.181	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.277	.920	.339	1
	N	30	30	30	30
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).					

Table 7 shows that there is a statistically significant correlation between emotional regulation, stress, and self-efficacy. Furthermore, this correlation test presents the relationship direction, whether it is positive or negative. Accordingly, it is shown that the relationship is positively significant. On the other hand, there is no significant correlation between job security and self-efficacy.

Discussion

Social cognitive theorists have focused on the self-efficacy beliefs' role in emotion-related self-regulations, a complex process of initiating, inhibiting, avoiding, modulating internal feelings, or maintaining and various emotion-related components. These theorists emphasize the generative, creative, proactive, and reflective qualities of mind.

Despite the conceptual differences between feeling competent and being able to perform effectively, studies have discovered that self-efficacy beliefs can serve as proxies for measures of effective

performance (Bandura, 1997). As a result, it is reasonable to assume that regulatory emotional self-efficacy may act as a stand-in for it by aiding in efficient emotion control. It can be assumed that people vary greatly in how well they control their emotional reactions to everyday events, not just because their skill levels vary, but also because they perceive their capacity to control their emotions differently. In fact, it is unlikely (even if it is feasible) for people to handle their affect in an effective manner if they do not believe they are capable of doing so, particularly in fields related to education. Additionally, people's perceptions of their own ability to regulate their emotions are significant in and of themselves because they probably have a role in psychological wellbeing and comfort with their emotions.

Using this justification, we created a tool to measure self-efficacy in relation to emotional regulation, with a focus on perceived self-efficacy in controlling negative affect in response to challenges or frustrating events, as well as in expressing or controlling positive emotions. Self-efficacy in controlling negative affect relates to views about one's capacity to alleviate unpleasant emotional states when they are sparked in response to difficulty or frustrating occurrences and to prevent being overcome by feelings like self-blame, receptivity, rumination, and revaluation. Beliefs in one's ability to feel or allow oneself to express positive feelings in reaction to achievement or pleasurable experiences, are referred to as self-efficacy in expressing positive emotions. According to predictions made by Eisenberg, et al., (2000), regulatory emotional self-efficacy beliefs are associated with low levels of internalizing and externalizing problems as well as low levels of psychopathic problems insofar as they maintain self-regulatory mechanisms and regulate the urgency of emotions.

This study also aimed at investigating effect of job security concern and stress towards self-efficacy. As mentioned earlier, the fear over job (in)security persists even when employment status is adequately adjusted to employees' desires. Because of the on-going organizational changes and the lack of secure employment, the feeling of job insecurity becomes relevant. As a result, the capacity to control one's emotions becomes essential to modifying unfavourable reactions to job security. Hence, the role of job security concerns has received an essential position on the relationship between emotional regulations and self-efficacy.

Conclusion

Undoubtedly, the present study is a preliminary platform for future research aiming to explore self-efficacy in depth in university level using similar variables or/and other variables. This study examined the

dependency relationship between emotional regulations with its dimensions and self-efficacy. In addition, it examines the effect of stress and job security concern towards self-efficacy. The findings shed light on the importance of emotional regulation and stress as they are effective dimensions affecting self-efficacy. In addition, it is important to re-study job security concern, self-blame, receptivity, and re-evaluation using different context as well as measurable to examine their effect on self-efficacy. This study strengthens as well as refines the prediction relationship between selected variables. Accordingly, it is important to organizing training courses for university academic leaders to clarify what are the desired and undesirable administrative behaviors? And then regulate and control such desires that are creating emotions. This study agrees with Ayash, et al., (2016) and Pocnet et al., (2017) stating that emotional regulation has effective relationship with self-efficacy.

It is also significant for universities to activate the role of professional guidance within universities to control negative practices in administrative behavior. Administrative staff and lecturers have to pay attention to the following points: they have to feel responsible for what happen in the university and have think about how to make a change to the situation they face at university. They also have control their negative behavior and do not have to change their behavior due to employees' actions at university. Besides, they have to control their behaviors by the positive attitudes of their colleagues. In addition, universities' policy and decision makers have to pay attentions to job security concerns as a factor that may affect employees' self-efficacy and effective performance. As some employees, especially, in private sectors worry about their job security and their incomes are likely to be unstable and uncertain in most cases. Their position is likely to be made redundant and some other related job security concern factors. Further studies might be suggested to examine the effectiveness of emotional regulations implementing other dimensions aiming to find further information.

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