

## Application of Sociocognitive Psychology Counseling Techniques Alberd Bandura Faces Student Academic Failure

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### ABSTRACT

Students often face academic failures during their studies, academic failures in college, such as graduation delays, trial failures, unplanned leave, and dropouts. This can trigger psychological impacts such as stress, anxiety, low self-esteem, and loss of motivation to learn. This article aims to: (1) analyze the psychological dynamics of students who experience academic failure; (2) examine key concepts in sociocognitive psychology theory, especially self-efficacy, modeling, and self-regulation; and (3) explain the application of sociocognitive counseling techniques in helping students bounce back from failure. This study uses a narrative literature review of research on student academic failure, and its application to sociocognitive theory. The literature was searched through Google Scholar, PubMed, and PsycINFO, and then analyzed thematically to integrate relevant concepts into the explanatory framework. The results of the study showed that academically failing individuals were prone to psychological disorders, but were able to recover by strengthening self-efficacy, observational learning, and self-regulation strategies. Sociocognitive theory provides a powerful conceptual framework for understanding and facilitating adaptive behavior change. The application of sociocognitive-based counseling techniques such as modeling, mastery experiences, goal setting, and cognitive restructuring has been shown to be effective in improving self-confidence and learning strategies. These findings provide important implications for educational counselors and college institutions in designing counseling services oriented towards recovery and psychological capacity development.

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## Introduction

Student mental health has become one of the priority issues in the world of higher education. This trend may indicate that students are experiencing periods of increased demand, and for some of them, this could be a direct cause of mental disorders ( Nerdrum et al., 2009 ) Internationally, student mental health is highlighted as a major public health challenge (Stallmann, 2008). The phenomenon of academic stress is a real challenge for students of various forms of academic stress that originate from internal factors, such as time management difficulties, anxiety, and lack of confidence, as well as external factors such as communication barriers (Zulfah, 2025)

Students often experience increased academic stress and psychological distress, which results in many students leaving the lecture without completing their studies (Salim & Fakhrurrozi, 2020) The Ministry of Higher Education, Science, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia revealed that the number of students dropping out of college in Indonesia until 2025 will reach 289 thousand people. This figure increased by around 2.62 percent compared to the previous year. The majority of students who dropped out came from private universities with a percentage of 73.81 percent. Economic factors, demands To work immediately, to the pressure of completing studies are said to be the main causes of high dropouts, especially in the age group of 21 to 30 years. (Ministry of Higher Education Science and Technology, 2025)

Higher mental health problems occur among college students compared to the general population in the same age group (Bewick et al., 2010) When a student experiences trial failure, study delay, or the threat of dropping out, the experience can be interpreted not just as a failure to complete a task, but as a threat to the belief about who he is and whether he is capable of achieving his life goals. In Albert Bandura's theory, this is known as self-efficacy which is not just an assessment of ability, but the main driver that determines how an individual survives in the face of difficulties(Salim & Fakhrurrozi, 2020)

For students, the self-efficacy needed is academic self-efficacy, because the existence of academic self-efficacy in students shows that they are able to solve the

problems they face related to lecture activities and academic achievements.(Scientific et al., 2026)

The concept of self-efficacy refers to sociocognitive psychology explaining that an individual's behavior is influenced by three main factors: personal (cognition), behavior, and environment. an individual's belief in the ability to organize and carry out the actions necessary to achieve a certain achievement (Bandura, 1997). The main concept is self-efficacy, which describes an individual's belief in their own ability to deal with various situations. Low self-efficacy affects achievement, ambition, and motivation (Bandura, 1986)

In addition, the ability of students to handle emotional stress during the study period was found to be an important factor in preventing academic delays and dropouts, which is one of the challenges that are quite common experienced by college students during the study period.(Risma Anita Puriani<sup>3</sup>, 2025) This failure not only impacts academic achievement, but can also reduce motivation, confidence, and lead to stress, anxiety, and even hopelessness. (Hidayat & Ramli, 2019) Failing students often feel inadequate, lost, and tend to withdraw from the social and academic environment.

In this situation, a counseling approach that is able to rebuild students' internal motivation and confidence is essential. One relevant approach is sociocognitive psychology developed by Albert Bandura. This approach assumes that individuals learn and develop through the interaction between thoughts (cognition), behavior, and the social environment. In the context of academic failure, students need to relearn to manage their thoughts, modify behavior, and adjust to the academic environment in a healthy way. The students managed to get out of their boredom after rebuilding their confidence through past success experiences and the support of those closest to them, as well as making future dreams a reason to persevere.(Scientific et al., 2026)

This study not only shows that behavior can be learned through observation, but also highlights the importance of social context in the formation of behavior and that individuals can learn new behaviors without having to experience the direct consequences of those actions. Mischel also emphasizes that self-control involves complex cognitive processes, including planning and

evaluation of consequences, which are very important in decision-making. (Mischel, 2014). The application of Albert Bandura's Social Learning theory can be an effective solution to overcome this problem. Social Learning Theory emphasizes that human behavior is formed through observation and research from the environment. With the application of this theory, it is hoped that it will be able to help students overcome the academic failures they face.

## Method

This study uses a conceptual approach with a narrative literature review design. The design was chosen because the purpose of the research is not to calculate the size of the effect or test hypotheses, but to connect concepts from educational psychology and clinical psychology to build a theoretical proposition. The focus of the study includes the psychological dynamics of students who experience academic failure. The main concepts in the theory of sociocognitive psychology, especially *self-efficacy*, *modeling*, and *self-regulation*. The search was conducted through Google Scholar, PubMed, and PsycINFO. The application of counseling techniques based on a sociocognitive approach in helping students rise from academic failure. Inclusion criteria include peer-reviewed journal articles that discuss student populations or psychological mechanisms that can be applied to students; are available in full text; and use Indonesian or English. Empirical sources are prioritized in the 2000-2026 publications, while older works remain used when they are the primary foundation of theory, as well as having direct relevance to the topics of self-efficacy, sociocognitive counseling, academic failure, and higher education psychology.

The selection of primary sources is carried out based on their contribution to development model, not to claim exhaustive coverage such as systematic review. A total of 11 sources were designated as primary sources because each provided a direct basis for at least one component of the model, namely the characteristics of academic failure. The coding process was carried out through repeated reading and comparison between sources. In the initial stage, the information was given a descriptive code, such as the type of Adversity, the repetitive code was then grouped into three analytical themes: academic distress and sociocognitive psychological theory, as well as contextual factors. The synthesis was then poured into an integrative model that was positioned as a conceptual proposition and required empirical validation.

## Results and Discussion

### Academic Failure in Students

Academic failure is a condition in which students are unable to achieve set academic goals, such as not passing courses or obtaining low GPAs. According to Corey (2013), academic failure can have an impact on decreased self-esteem, stress, anxiety, and even depression. Students who fail often experience an inability

to self-regulate, negative mindsets, and a loss of motivation to learn. Academic failure is a condition in which students do not meet set academic standards, such as not passing courses, having a low Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA), or not meeting certain academic criteria. According to Santrock (2011), academic failure can affect psychological aspects such as self-esteem, motivation, and emotional well-being of individuals.

Students who experience academic failure tend to show symptoms such as decreased interest in learning, inability to manage time, lack of confidence, and decreased internal motivation (Corey, 2013). If not handled appropriately, this failure can develop into more serious psychological problems such as severe stress, academic anxiety, and even mild depression.

### **Sociocognitive Psychology – Albert Bandura**

Sociocognitive psychology is a theory developed by Albert Bandura. This theory emphasizes that human behavior is formed through the reciprocal interaction between cognitive factors (thoughts, beliefs, expectations), behavior, and the social environment (Bandura, 1986). The learning process occurs not only through direct experience, but also through observation of others (modeling).

Sociocognitive psychology explains that a person's behavior is influenced by three main factors: personal (cognition), behavior, and environment. These three elements interact with each other in the learning process (Bandura, 1986). Key concepts in sociocognitive psychology:

- a. Self-Efficacy: A person's confidence in his ability to complete a task. Individuals with high self-efficacy will be more persistent and resistant to failure (Bandura, 1997).
- b. Observational Learning (Modeling): The learning process by imitating the behavior of others, which can be used as a strategy in counseling.
- c. Self-Regulation: The Individual's Ability to plan, monitor, and evaluate oneself in the learning process (Zimmerman, 2000).

In this case, the ability of students to handle emotional stress during the study period was found to be an important factor in preventing academic tarpaulins and school dropouts. In an article it was explained that students have a number of concerns about their studies, expectations of achievement, and also report financial insecurity (Stallmann, 2008).

In a higher education environment that demands independence and high competitiveness, the sociocognitive approach encourages students to become resilient, confident, and able to face academic pressure. Through counseling with this approach, students are not only helped to rise from failure, but also equipped with long-term psychological skills that are useful in the world of work and life

Counseling techniques based on sociocognitive psychology approaches are highly relevant and effective in helping students cope with academic failure. This approach emphasizes the development of self-efficacy, self-regulation, and learning from social experiences, all of which are important factors in rebuilding the confidence and enthusiasm of failed individuals.

The application of sociocognitive techniques in academic counseling, such as modeling, self-efficacy enhancement, self-regulation, cognitive restructuring, goal setting, and social support, has been shown to be effective in helping students who experience academic failure. Through experiences of small successes, positive interactions, and cognitive reinforcement, students become more confident, motivated, and able to change their learning behaviors to achieve better academic outcomes.

## **Psychological Factors That Affect Students in Dealing with Failure**

### **Academic.**

These factors affect how students interpret failure, emotional responses, and their ability to bounce back. Here are some of the key psychological factors:

### 1. Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is an individual's belief in his or her ability to complete a task or deal with a particular situation (Bandura, 1997). Students with high self-efficacy will be more confident in facing re-exams or follow-up assignments and see failure as a challenge, not the end of everything. On the other hand, students with low self-efficacy tend to: Give up easily, feel incapable of correcting mistakes.

### 2. Self-Regulation (Self-Regulation)

Self-regulation includes the ability to control emotions, plan and manage time, and monitor self-progress. Students who are unable to self-regulate often procrastinate, do not have a consistent learning strategy, have difficulty waking up because they cannot set realistic goals (Zimmerman, 2000)

### 3. Resilience (Mental Toughness)

Resilience is the ability to bounce back from pressure or failure. Resilient students are able to see failure as a learning process, not be stuck in disappointment for too long, and recover emotionally faster. This factor is strongly influenced by life experiences, social support, and mindset.

## **Stages of Psychological Reaction to Academic Failure**

Students who experience academic failure generally go through several psychological phases, which can be explained as follows:

- a) Shock & Denial by showing an initial reaction: confusion, disbelief, or denial of failure.
- b) Negative emotions (frustration, sadness, anger). Feelings of helplessness, shame, disappointment, or anger at oneself or others. These emotions can lower confidence and motivation.
- c) Self-evaluation. Individuals begin to examine the causes of their failure: whether it is due to the wrong way of learning, lack of effort, or external pressures. This stage is heavily influenced by attribution styles
- d) Adjustment (Adaptation) or Withdrawal (Withdrawal). Resilient individuals

will begin to adjust their learning strategies and improve themselves. On the other hand, individuals who do not have good support or self-regulation tend to withdraw, lose enthusiasm, and even risk dropping out of college.

## **Psychological factors involved in academic failure**

### *a. Self-Efficacy*

Individuals with low self-efficacy tend to: Feel incapable of improving grades. Give up before trying again. Avoid the next academic challenge. On the other hand, students with high self-efficacy will rise faster because they believe their abilities can be improved through effort (Bandura, 1997).

### *b. Motivation*

Failure often lowers motivation, especially if students don't see a connection between their efforts and the results obtained. A person who has intrinsic motivation is more likely to rise than those who are only driven by extrinsic motivations (such as grades, parental demands, or scholarships).

### *c. Causal Attribution*

According to attribution theory, college students who blame failure on stable internal factors (e.g. "I'm stupid") tend to feel discouraged. In contrast, those who see it as internally unstable (e.g. "I haven't learned enough") have a greater chance of changing

### *d. Self-Regulation (Self-Regulation)*

Students who are able to monitor learning progress, manage time, and control emotions will be better able to deal with failure constructively. Lack of self-regulation is often the root of repeated failure.

### *e. Self-Esteem and Self-Concept*

Academic failure can lower students' self-esteem, especially if academic achievement is an important part of their identity. Individuals with a healthy self-concept are usually better able to separate their grades from test results alone.

*f. Stress and Anxiety*

Failure often creates psychological stress, which if left unchecked will interfere with focus, concentration, and motivation to learn further.

### **The Relevance of Sociocognitive Psychology Approaches in Academic Contexts**

This approach is particularly relevant in the world of higher education because it emphasizes the formation of mental resilience, internal motivation, and learning independence. In the face of academic pressure, students need to have the ability to adjust their thoughts and behaviors flexibly. Counseling with this approach provides space for students to learn from their own and others' experiences, as well as encourage long-term development through increased self-efficacy and self-regulation.

The meta-analysis showed self-efficacy as the strongest predictor of academic achievement among 241 educational variables (e.g., learning strategies, motivation) (Qian Meng, 2023). Another study stated that individuals with high self-efficacy were more persistent, set high goals, and were more likely to use self-regulation strategies and help in the face of adversity (Yanping Kong 2022)

The peer context or peer environment is a source of vicarious experience and social persuasion that is important in shaping self-efficacy and outcome expectations. Students who see peer success and get positive social encouragement, tend to have *stronger academic beliefs* and are more involved in learning activities (Getachew tassew Wore, 2015)

Campus counselors need to identify the psychological stages that students are experiencing. Provide support to improve self-efficacy and self-regulation. Train students to reflect on and restructure their cognitive experiences based on the experience of failure. Provide realistic modeling and goal-setting strategies.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the results of the literature review that has been conducted, it can be

concluded that the Psychological Dynamics of Students Who Experience Academic Failure include emotions, feelings of shame or inferiority, stress, anxiety, and the emergence of doubts about a person's abilities. This psychological response is greatly influenced by factors such as self-efficacy, emotion regulation, self-esteem, attribution style, and social support. Students with high resilience and good self-regulation tend to be more able to rise and learn from the failures experienced.

Key Concepts in Sociocognitive Psychology Theory, developed by Albert Bandura, explain that individual learning behaviors and psychological changes are influenced by the interaction between cognition, the social environment, and the behavior itself (reciprocal determinism). Three main concepts in this theory: Self-efficacy plays an important role in shaping students' confidence in facing academic challenges. Modeling (observational learning) helps students learn from real-life examples that successfully overcome failure. Self-regulation allows students to plan, monitor, and evaluate the learning process independently and adaptively. These three components are interrelated and play a role in shaping students' responses to failure as well as their capacity to develop academically.

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