

Chapter 8

Social and Emotional Implications of the Academic Self- Efficacy Concept: A Systematic Literature Review Focused on China and Spain

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ABSTRACT

This chapter represents a reflection on the concept of academic self-efficacy in two different cultures: China and Spain. The purpose of this study was to compare the approach of both cultures in the definition and exploration of the academic self-efficacy concept. The choice of two such disparate cultures is based on the idea that the evident cultural distance can favor the identification of the decisive factors that explain the differential academic results between Eastern and Western cultures. To achieve this objective, a systematic literature review has been conducted following

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the PRISMA protocol. Various studies examining the emotional and cognitive implications of academic self-efficacy within both cultural contexts have been selected for review. The results indicate that there are differences between the two cultures in the way the concept of academic self-efficacy is explored, especially in factors such as social support, interest in long-term goals and achievement motivation.

1. RELEVANCE OF CROSS-CULTURAL COMPARISON BETWEEN CHINA AND SPAIN: CHOICE OF CULTURES

China and Spain represent two substantially different cultures in terms of beliefs and values. According to the cultural dimensions defined by Hofstede (*e.g.* 1980, 1991, 2001) or Triandis (1995, 2004), China is typically characterized as a collectivist culture, where group interests are prioritized over individual ones, and with a strong emphasis on discipline and achievement. It is a society with a greater capacity for adaptability and perseverance and tends to establish long-term goals. Indeed, if China is analyzed according to the parameters proposed by Hofstede (*e.g.* 2011), it scores 43 out of 100 for individualism, which indicates that it is a preferably collectivist society. Power distance with a score of 80 indicates that hierarchical differences are very marked, authority is respected and accepted to a greater extent than in societies with smaller power distances. China also has high scores in achievement motivation (66) and long-term orientation (77). High achievement motivation indicates that it is a society that promotes competitive education oriented toward professional success and economic status. A high long-term orientation, on the other hand, illustrates a view of decisions aimed at long-term goals and achievements. By contrast, China presents lower scores in indulgence (24) and uncertainty avoidance (30). Indulgence is considered a parameter opposite to the restriction of hedonistic tendencies, therefore, in Chinese culture it can be considered a society that controls and restricts the orientation towards pleasure and one's own desires. Finally, China is a society that is comfortable with uncertainty and its avoidance is not encouraged.

On the other hand, Spain is a more individualistic culture (67), focused on the needs and goals of the individual. Consensus is prioritized over competitiveness, showing lower achievement motivation (42), with a greater aversion to ambiguity and uncertainty (86). In Spain, there is more likely to be a greater tendency to set short-term goals, with a preference for immediate results (47). Regarding the conception of hierarchy, in Spain the power distance is smaller than in China (57), and the tendency to satisfy one's desires through indulgence is greater (44).

Therefore, they represent two cultures with marked cultural differences in all the dimensions mentioned above, especially in uncertainty avoidance, long-term orientation and indulgence. In both cultures, education is of vital importance for

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