

# The Predictive Power of Psychological Defeat and Emotional Regulation in Relation to Academic Passion among Female Student Teachers

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## **Abstract**

*The current research aimed to identify the relationship between psychological Defeat, emotional regulation, and academic passion among female student-teachers at the College of Education for Early Childhood. It also sought to examine the differences in psychological defeat, emotional regulation, and academic passion between the first and fourth- year students, as well as between students enrolled in the general program and those in the special program. In addition, the research investigated the predictive contribution of psychological defeat and emotional regulation to academic passion among the selected sample. The sample comprised 91 first-year students and 102 fourth-year students (from general and specialized programs). Data collection tools included the emotional regulation, psychological defeat, and academic passion scales. Results revealed that there was a statistically significant negative correlation between psychological defeat and harmonious academic passion, and a positive correlational relationship between psychological Defeat and obsessive academic passion. Similarly, expressive suppression was negatively correlated with harmonious passion and positively correlated with obsessive passion. There were also statistically significant differences between first- year and fourth-year students in academic passion in both dimensions of psychological defeat, while significant differences emerged in emotional regulation in the dimensions of cognitive reappraisal. Furthermore, no significant differences were found between students in general and special programs in academic passion, whereas significant differences were revealed in psychological defeat and both dimensions of emotional regulation, in favor of students in the special program. Finally, certain dimensions of psychological defeat and emotional regulation contributed to predicting both forms of academic passion.*

**Keywords:** *Academic passion, Emotional regulation, psychological defeat, Predictive power, Female student teachers*

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## **Introduction**

Behaviors are shaped by a wide range of psychological and emotional factors that emerge throughout the individual's life. These internal traits affect how individuals feel, think, and respond, and they are reflected in their patterns of behavior. Consequently, individuals in the same community often differ in their behaviors, coping strategies, and building relations, especially in light of the rapid social change. Traumatic events are sudden, instant and unexpected experiences that may emerge from natural disasters, such as floods and earthquakes, or from human-related events, including wars and accidents. Such events have a strong psychological impact on children and adolescents, leading to emotional difficulties such as depression, anxiety, and stress.

One of these emotional difficulties is psychological defeat, which refers to a state in which individuals experience loss of motivation and disengagement from meaningful interaction with their environment. In this case, individuals are dominated by misfortune, deprivation, and unachievable goals, resulting in a pessimistic and anxious attitude toward the future (Mouawad, 2019). In this case, anxiety and a weakened sense of autonomy limit the self, undermining psychological resilience. Functionally, psychological defeat represents an early stage of failure, as it negatively affects the individuals' capacity to work, adapt, and persist. In contrast, a strong sense of self-awareness enhances motivation and achievement. Empirical research has consistently revealed that psychological defeat is a significant predictor of academic failure among university students (Almued, 2024; Gilar-Corbi et al., 2020; Murata et al., 2019).

Psychological defeat is destructive since it impairs both emotional and cognitive performance, in contrast to material or military defeat. It interrupts how individuals perceive themselves, others, and their failure, often leading individuals to withdraw or avoid responsibility as a way of escaping inner distress. Nowadays, psychological defeat has become a widespread response to the growing gap between aspirations and available resources (Abu Halawa, 2012; Al Shalabi, 2014).

Operationally, psychological defeat is defined as the devaluation, humiliation, and psychological fragmentation of the self in relation to others and to one's own self-concept, accompanied by the collapse of psychological resistance when confronting life demands. This condition produces chronic frustration, reduced motivation, and a pervasive sense of inadequacy. In the context of the current research, it is typically assessed using the Psychological Defeat Scale, in which higher scores reflect greater levels of psychological defeat.

Psychological defeat is related to patterns of self-defeating behavior that can obstruct goal achievement and feelings of helplessness. These behaviors in turn produce repeated experiences of failure and increase expectations of negative future outcomes (Irani Williams et al., 2013). After unexpected or adverse life events, people may act in ways that unintentionally worsen their circumstances, which increases their sense of powerlessness (Callan et al., 2014). These responses are often driven by distorted self-blame and poor self-evaluation rather than objective accountability. Psychological defeat can become a collective condition that influences common beliefs, values, and social behavior when this process transcends the individual.

Previous research asserted that psychological defeat is a multidimensional variable associated with problem-solving ability, emotional intelligence, and life satisfaction. It encompasses feelings of helplessness, shame, diminishing vitality, lack of competence, objectification, and depression. Highly psychologically

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defeated individuals have cognitive patterns characterized by pessimism, perceived lack of control, and self-blaming. They depend on others for emotional, cognitive, and behavioral regulation and often engage in self-deprecating and humiliating self-representations. These individuals lose their sense of personal identity and agency; maladaptive cognitions are dominated by weakness and pessimism; loss of vitality, reflected in emotional and behavioral dullness; and self-criticism, which involves harsh self-judgment and persistent negative self-talk (Abu Halawa, 2013; Abu Halawa and Rizq, 2013).

Chronic exhaustion, psychological weakness, and a decreased capacity to handle daily stressors are characteristics of a defeatist personality. They have pessimistic beliefs about themselves and others, fear the future, and predict failure. They frequently anticipate small setbacks to larger areas of life, which is an indicator of low vitality and self-efficacy. When faced with difficulties, accountability is often transferred to others, which preserves passivity and reliance. Cognitive, emotional, and behavioral estrangement from oneself and the social environment are the outcomes of these tendencies (Abu Halawa, 2013).

Psychologically defeated individuals suffer from continuous cognitive and motivational issues that cause them to perform ineffectively. In this regard, Jassim and Al-Tamimi (2014) illustrated that self-defeating personality traits are common among university students regardless of their gender or academic specialization. Avoidance, critical self-evaluation, and procrastination are further signs of psychological defeat. They usually engage in negative self-talk, such as thinking that tasks are beyond their capabilities, and retreat from difficult or emotionally taxing circumstances (Sherry et al., 2016). A major coping mechanism, procrastination is linked to reliance, low self-esteem, and poor decision-making. It is motivated by fear of failure and irrational performance expectations.

Psychological defeat gradually progresses via a sequence of phases created by continuous failure and a sense of losing control. People put up a lot of work and dedication while first feeling frustrated. Emotional surrender is then encouraged by increased self-doubt, fatigue, and poor self-evaluation. Reduced energy, worsened withdrawal, and the use of harmful coping strategies like substance addiction or avoidance are examples of later stages. Over time, enthusiasm fades, skepticism rises, and social and professional interactions lose their significance. The final stage, which is often accompanied by significant psychological and physical incapacity, is characterized by desperation, inner emptiness, and resignation (Al-Shalabi, 2014).

Emotions represent a fundamental dimension of human life and are closely connected to cognition, personality, and behavior. They constitute complex and relatively enduring affective states that emerge from the interaction of sensory perceptions, cognitive systems, and physiological responses in various situations. Through these processes, emotions influence how individuals interpret, perceive, and respond to their environment. In contemporary psychology, emotion regulation has become a central construct, referring to the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral skills through which individuals control expressive responses, manage emotional experiences, and adapt to situational demands. This concept emphasizes that individuals are influenced not only by their own emotions but also by the emotional expressions of others, indicating the interpersonal nature of emotional experiences.

Early research investigating emotion regulation concentrated primarily on how individuals regulate their emotions independently of social contexts, while more recent research has extended this framework to include

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the regulation of both positive and negative emotions through social interaction, concentrating on the concept of interpersonal emotion regulation.

Faiq and Ayash (2016) defined emotion regulation as “a strategy involving the restructuring of thoughts and behaviors that affect an individual’s emotions, controlling them, and determining how they are subsequently expressed”. Rizq (2017) described emotion regulation as both a necessity and a challenge, especially in light of the widespread prevalence of psychological disorders such as depression, anxiety, and behavioral disorders. In a similar context, Afaneh (2018) conceptualized emotion regulation as a group of conscious and unconscious strategies through which individuals control, modify, enhance, or inhibit emotional experiences. Operationally, within the current research, emotion regulation refers to an individual’s use of strategies to restructure thoughts and behaviors that constitute emotional responses to situations and to express emotions appropriately; statistically, it is measured by scores obtained on the emotion regulation scales prepared by the researchers.

Emotional processes are real, observable, and measurable in both humans and animals. They are partly innate and partly learned and serve descriptive and regulatory functions in behavior while remaining closely linked to motivation. Emotional experiences may occur at conscious or unconscious levels: some are clearly felt and recognized along with their sources, whereas others occur without awareness of their origins. Cultural norms also play a decisive role in shaping how emotions are expressed, influencing their physiological, psychological, and environmental components and determining the intensity and behavioral manifestations of emotional responses. Wolters (2011) described emotion regulation as the monitoring and evaluation of emotional experiences and affective responses in order to eliminate their intensity and impact on oneself and others and to maintain emotional stability. From these perspectives, researchers suggest that emotion regulation consists of interrelated processes through which individuals monitor, evaluate, and modify emotional responses, regulate their intensity and expression, and align them with cultural values, social expectations, and personal goals.

Emotional dysregulation arises when individuals utilize maladaptive strategies that sharpen rather than relieve emotional distress. Sheppes et al. (2015) noted that such deficits occur when regulatory efforts illogically increase the emotions individuals seek to control. Beauchaine (2015) described these difficulties as dysfunctional patterns of emotional experience, with or without explicit expression. Cole et al. (2017) pointed out four main forms of emotion regulation deficits associated with psychopathology: the persistence of emotions accompanied by ineffective regulation, as in anxiety and depression; the interference of emotions with appropriate behavior, as seen in conduct disorder; the experience or expression of emotions that are inappropriate to the context, as in callous–unemotional traits or post-traumatic stress disorder; and excessively rapid or slow emotional fluctuations, characteristic of disorders such as bipolar disorder. Individuals may exhibit one or more of these patterns, particularly in the context of mental illness.

Emotion regulation theory was developed by James Gross, who defined it as the conscious and unconscious strategies that individuals use to increase, decrease, or maintain one or more components of an emotional response (Rizq, 2017). Gross (1998) distinguished between higher and lower levels of regulation based on the adjustment of three core components of emotion: the behavioral component, which involves observable

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actions; the experiential component, which reflects subjective feelings; and the physiological component, which includes responses such as changes in blood pressure, heart rate, and muscle tension (Yaqub, 2011). Gross conceptualized emotions as adaptive response tendencies that facilitate physiological and behavioral adjustment to significant situations and argued that emotion regulation emerges when there is a discrepancy between emotional impulses and actual behavior (Faiq & Ayash, 2016). John and Gross (2007) further distinguished between antecedent-focused strategies, which are implemented before an emotional response is fully generated, and response-focused strategies, which are applied after an emotional response has occurred. The former involve processes such as reinterpreting a situation to alter its emotional impact, whereas the latter comprise modifying the expression or experience of emotion after it has been activated.

Gross (2004) also illustrated five major processes through which emotions may be regulated at different stages of the emotional response. These include selecting situations to approach or avoid based on their anticipated emotional consequences, modifying situations to alter their emotional impact, spreading out attention to influence emotional experience when the situation itself cannot be changed, cognitively reappraising the meaning of a situation to modify its emotional significance, and modulating emotional responses after they occur through strategies such as relaxation, physical activity, medication, or dietary changes. Through these processes, individuals can decrease, maintain, or enhance emotional components in ways that support adaptation and goal achievement.

Emotion regulation is essential for effective coping with everyday life challenges and has gained increasing attention across psychological research and practice (Macklem, 2008). Individuals regulate their emotions both to reduce the intensity of negative emotions such as fear, anger, and sadness and to increase or maintain positive emotional states such as joy, pleasure, and comfort (Gross, 2007). Several empirical research has demonstrated the significance of emotion regulation in psychological and social functioning. Aslan et al. (2019) found that interpersonal emotion regulation and difficulties in regulation significantly predicted interpersonal competence of university students, accounting for 18% of the variance. Altan-Atalay (2019) reported significant relationships between interpersonal emotion regulation, sensitivity, and social support. Hatkevich et al. (2019) identified strong associations between deficits in emotion regulation and suicidal ideation and attempts among adolescent psychiatric patients.

Previous research indicates varied yet generally adequate levels of emotion regulation across different populations. Studies have reported moderate to high use of emotion regulation strategies among gifted students, university students, and secondary learners, with limited or no significant differences attributable to gender, academic specialization, or academic level (Ayash & Faiq, 2016; Basyouni, 2019; Slom, 2015). While some studies found no significant relationships between emotion regulation and problem-solving (Basyouni, 2019), others identified meaningful associations between cognitive appraisal and personality traits (Zhang, 2014). Furthermore, emotion regulation has been shown to relate negatively to anxiety and positively to psychological resilience (Sajadi et al., 2012). In a related domain, emotional intelligence components were found to be positively associated with friendship quality, with males outperforming females in certain motivational and self-regulatory dimensions (Mohamed, 2011).

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Modern societies have achieved remarkable technological and civilizational progress, but an equivalent growth in self-understanding has not accompanied this advancement. Rapid changes in technological, social, and economic domains have required increasing psychological demands on individuals, heightening emotional sensitivity and disrupting emotion regulation, consequently contributing to psychological distress. Among university students, self-awareness and emotional understanding play a crucial role in shaping responses to environmental stimuli, adaptability, and social and psychological adjustment. Accelerated societal change has also complicated the expression of emotions, both verbally and nonverbally, so challenging emotional balance and regulation (Al-Barahma, 2017). Emotions remain a natural and essential part of university students' lives, forming behavior and reflecting the human experience. As dynamic components of personality that evolve with experience, emotions require effective regulation to promote well-being and mental health and to reduce sensitivity to psychological disorders such as anxiety (Afaneh, 2018).

Passion is widely regarded as an essential factor in education because it generates excitement and enthusiasm among students during their engagement in academic activities, contributing positively to their performance and supporting higher achievement levels (Vallerand & Houliort, 2003). It also enhances favorable attitudes toward the learning environment, which facilitates students' adaptation to academic settings and is reflected in their academic success and goal achievement (Cho & Lee, 2008). Besides, university students' awareness of their personality, their emotions, and their affective states plays a significant role in determining their response to environmental stimuli and how effectively they adapt and enhance their psychological and social adjustment.

Rapid developments in educational, social, professional, and psychological contexts have imposed new challenges for university students through transforming the patterns of their lifestyles and interpersonal relationships. These changes have influenced how students express emotions, verbally and nonverbally, and have impacted their emotional regulation, psychological balance, and adjustment to their environments. Hence, increasing attention must be paid to students' emotional states, particularly because their experiences do not follow a single emotional pattern but swing between sadness, happiness, anxiety, hope, and feelings of psychological security (Al-Barahmeh, 2017). Within this dynamic emotional context, academic passion has emerged as a sensitive variable in learning and is frequently described as one of the most influential factors shaping students' academic lives. Academic passion is the energy students invest in academic tasks and the degree of competence and effectiveness they demonstrate. Yang et al. (2022) defined academic passion as a form of psychological power that reflects students' efforts to learn, acquire skills, and improve their level of success, leading to greater engagement in school activities and tasks, adaptation to institutional culture, and the development of positive relationships with teachers and peers.

The literature frequently conflates passion with motivation, conceptualizing motivation as incentivized or voluntary action characterized by intentionality and conscious regulation. Recent perspectives, such as Mudłogłagolska et al. (2022), challenge traditional distinctions among cognitive processes, proposing that motivation emerges from neural interactions rather than discrete cognitive forces, and arguing that motivational actions do not necessarily improve through repetition and may lose generalizability with increased specificity. Within education as a structured social endeavor focused on holistic human

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development, students' academic, emotional, behavioral, and personal growth requires sustained support. In this context, passion constitutes a critical yet underexplored determinant of students' academic experiences. Historically rooted in Greek philosophy and derived from the Latin *passio* ("suffering"), passion has been interpreted both negatively—as coercion or burden—and positively, as love, enthusiasm, and deep engagement in meaningful activities (Breik, 2022).

Ho and Astakhova (2018) defined passion as a strong tendency toward a particular activity, whereas other scholars have described it as a tendency to engage in activities intentionally or unintentionally in ways that produce enjoyment. These conceptualizations distinguish between harmonious passion, which is flexible and compatible with other life domains, and obsessive passion, which involves strict involvement that may interfere with other activities. Despite these variations, passion is generally understood as a vital human experience that provides the psychological energy necessary for sustained engagement in meaningful pursuits. In this regard, Sverdlik (2022) pointed out the importance of academic passion among university students, emphasizing its role in both psychological well-being and academic achievement.

In the present research, academic passion is operationally defined as an individual's strong desire for a preferred and meaningful activity, in which they invest their effort and energy, whether this tendency is internally controlled or uncontrolled. Statistically, in the current research, academic passion is represented by the score obtained on the Academic Passion Scale. Empirical research has increasingly examined academic passion in relation to a range of educational and psychological outcomes. Sverdlik et al. (2022) examined the role of academic passion in psychological well-being and self-regulated learning among university students, focusing on the mediating role of academic emotions. Their findings supported the hypothesis that harmonious passion positively predicts both self-regulated learning and well-being, demonstrating that adaptive academic emotions serve as a key mechanism through which passion affects these outcomes.

Al-Azamat (2022) investigated levels of academic passion and achievement motivation among 350 university students according to gender, grade level, and specialization, and examined the predictive power of academic passion for achievement motivation. Using the Academic Passion Scale and the Achievement Motivation Scale, results revealed that harmonious passion was high, whereas obsessive passion was moderate. Significant differences in harmonious passion were correlated with grade level, favoring third- and fourth-year students, while obsessive passion was higher among first-year students. In addition, both types of passion jointly explained 52.3% of the variance in achievement motivation, with obsessive passion accounting for 50.3% and harmonious passion contributing 1.9%, both of which were statistically significant. Al-Salmi and Al-Shahri (2025) also examined 154 female secondary school students in Jeddah and reported a moderate level of academic passion and a significant positive correlation between academic passion and achievement motivation. Harmonious passion emerged as the strongest predictor of achievement motivation, whereas obsessive passion did not significantly predict motivation in the sample.

The problem explored in the current investigation emerged from the researchers' empirical observations after the announcement of the General Secondary Examination results, during which a significant proportion of female students exhibited feelings of psychological defeat upon failing to achieve the requisite scores for entry into their desired colleges and the futures they had envisioned. As a result, a substantial number of these

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students opted to enroll in the Faculty of Early Childhood Education, which continues to be viewed by certain segments of society as possessing a diminished academic and professional esteem. This unfavorable societal perception has been correlated with a variety of psychological challenges, particularly deficiencies in emotional regulation along with elevated levels of frustration, anxiety, and depression. The incidence of such issues among university students has been substantiated in prior research, including the investigations conducted by Moawad (2019) and Abu Halawa and Rashed (2013).

Before entering university, however, these students demonstrated high levels of academic passion while preparing for the General Secondary Examination, as they were strongly motivated to achieve their desired academic futures. During this period, they demonstrated high engagement levels in academic and extracurricular activities and exhibited key characteristics of academic passion, such as optimism, perseverance, involvement, satisfaction, and happiness, all of which support the achievement of meaningful goals. The positive role of academic passion in students' academic and psychological domains has been confirmed by several studies (Fares, 2021; Ho & Astakhova, 2018; Curran et al., 2015; Braik et al., 2022). Academic passion is also associated with significant emotional investment and high aspirations, as students devote substantial time and effort to activities, they find meaningful and motivating (Fares, 2021; Vallerand, 2015).

According to Vallerand's Self-Determination Theory, harmonious passion develops when individuals freely internalize an activity as part of their identity, which leads to motivational, adaptive emotional, and performance outcomes (Vallerand, 2015; Shen, 2024). However, the transition to university represents a critical developmental period during which students may experience emotional and psychological challenges. Academic disappointment, feelings of defeat, and emotional distress can undermine students' motivation, emotional regulation, self-confidence, and overall capacity for academic success (Belanger & Ratelle, 2020; Afana, 2018; Malkoç et al., 2019).

In light of the above-mentioned literature and empirical findings, a clear gap emerges regarding the factors that may explain variations in academic passion among student teachers, particularly those who have experienced psychological defeat and difficulties in regulating their emotions after entering university. Hence, the current research aimed to explore the predictive ability of psychological defeat and emotional regulation with respect to academic passion among female student teachers. In line with this objective, the following hypotheses are developed:

1. There is a statistically significant correlational relationship between psychological defeat, emotional regulation, and academic passion among female university students.
2. There are no statistically significant differences between first-year and fourth-year female students in psychological defeat, emotional regulation, and academic passion.
3. There are no statistically significant differences between students in the general program and those in the special program in the variables of psychological defeat, emotional regulation, and academic passion.
4. Psychological defeat and emotional regulation contribute to predicting academic passion among female student- teachers.

## **Methodology**

### *Research Design*

The **descriptive-analytical research methodology was utilized**, as it is the most appropriate approach for the nature of the current research. This method involves collecting information about the phenomenon under investigation, followed by its description and analysis.

### *Participants*

The psychometric verification sample consisted of 220 female students from the first and fourth years at the College of Education for Early Childhood, Minia University (ages= 19- 22 years, mean = 21.35, SD =  $\pm 0.768$ ); and the main study sample comprised 91 first-year students and 102 fourth-year students from the same College. The total population of first- and fourth-year students was 1,850, and this sample represented approximately 16% of the original population. The main sample was selected randomly, with ages ranging from 19 to 22 years (mean age = 19.25, SD=  $\pm 1.75$ ).

### *Data Collection Tools*

#### *Psychological Defeat Scale (Mohamed Al-Saeed Abu Halawa & Rashid Marzouk, 2013)*

The Psychological Defeat Scale consists of 53 items distributed across six dimensions. The scale is scored using a five-point Likert scale: Always = 5, Usually = 4, Sometimes = 3, Rarely = 2, and Never = 1. Students select one of these options for each item according to its direction, and higher scores indicate a higher level of psychological defeat. The six dimensions of the scale are as follows: Self-Deprecation (13 items), Lack of Self-Vitality (8 items), Shame (8 items), Objectification (8 items), Cognitive Perceptions (8 items), and Self-Punishment (8 items). The developers of the scale assessed factorial validity using the principal components method with orthogonal rotation through Varimax.

In the current research, the researchers calculated the internal consistency of the items with the total score of each dimension (excluding the item itself from the total score of the dimension). The correlation coefficients between the items and the total scale score ranged up to 0.703, all of which were statistically significant at the 0.01 significance level. After confirming the validity of the scale, the reliability coefficients for its dimensions were calculated using Cronbach's Alpha, which was 0.944 for the scale as a whole, reflecting a high level of reliability and internal consistency. At the level of individual dimensions, the values ranged across the six subscales, all of which indicate strong reliability, demonstrating that each dimension possesses a high degree of internal consistency.

#### *Emotional Regulation Scale*

The current research employed the Emotional Regulation Scale developed by Gross and John (2004) and translated into Arabic by Najlaa Ibrahim Abu-Alwafa (2021). The scale consists of 10 items designed to assess emotional regulation in two dimensions: cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression. It evaluates two essential aspects of emotional life, namely emotional experience (what the individual feels internally) and emotional expression (how emotions are expressed in behavior and communication). Responses are rated on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). In the current study, lower

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scores indicate weaker emotional regulation abilities, reflecting difficulties in controlling and managing emotional responses.

The psychometric properties of the Arabic version were examined through analyses of internal consistency and reliability. Item–dimension correlation coefficients ranged from 0.413 to 0.691, indicating acceptable homogeneity levels among the items and supporting their relevance to the construct of emotional regulation. Furthermore, the correlations between each dimension and the total scale score were statistically significant, with the cognitive reappraisal dimension correlating at 0.92 ( $p < .01$ ) and the expressive suppression dimension correlating at 0.85 ( $p < .01$ ), illustrating strong coherence between the subscales and the overall construction.

In the original validation of the scale, reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, revealing coefficients of 0.633 for the cognitive reappraisal subscale, 0.618 for the expressive suppression subscale, and 0.660 for the total scale, which are considered acceptable for research purposes. In the present study, internal consistency was further verified by computing item–total correlations, which ranged from 0.643 to 0.796, indicating high correlation between individual items and the overall scale score. These results confirm that the Arabic version of the Emotional Regulation Scale demonstrates adequate reliability and internal consistency and is therefore suitable for application in the main study sample in this research.

### *Academic Passion Scale (Prepared by the Researchers)*

The Academic Passion Scale was developed by researchers. In its initial form, the scale consisted of 27 items, which were constructed based on an extensive review of the theoretical literature on passion in general and academic passion in particular, as well as relevant experimental studies, including Al-Azamat (2022), Vallerand et al. (2003), and Sverdlik et al. (2022). The initial scale version was submitted to a panel of mental health and psychology experts to evaluate the relevance of the items to the two dimensions of the construct and the clarity and appropriateness of their wording.

To ensure face validity, the scale was reviewed by five faculty members specializing in mental health and psychology at the Faculty of Education, Minia University. Items that achieved an agreement rate of 90% or higher were retained. Based on the experts' comments, minor modifications were made to item wording, but no items were deleted or added at this stage.

Factorial validity was also investigated statistically after verifying the suitability of the sample and the scale for factor analysis. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure was 0.828, indicating that the sample was adequate for factor analysis, and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was statistically significant at the 0.01 level, confirming that the correlation matrix was appropriate for factor extraction. Factor analysis was conducted on 26 items using Hotelling's principal components method. The correlation matrix was first inspected to ensure that most inter-item correlations exceeded 0.30, satisfying the basic requirement for factorability. The Guttman criterion (eigenvalues  $\geq 1$ ) was used to determine the number of factors, and the extracted factors were rotated using the Varimax orthogonal rotation method.

The analysis revealed two factors, which together accounted for 30.32% of the total variance. Accordingly, the final version of the scale consisted of 24 items. The first factor comprised 15 items with factor loadings ranging from 0.657 to 0.851, an eigenvalue of 4.695, and an explained variance of 19.562%. This factor was

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labeled Harmonious Passion. The second factor consisted of 9 items with loadings ranging from 0.864 to 0.932, an eigenvalue of 2.582, and an explained variance of 10.759%, and was labeled Obsessive Passion.

Reliability was assessed using Cronbach’s alpha, indicating coefficients of 0.824 for the Harmonious Passion dimension and 0.620 for the Obsessive Passion dimension, indicating acceptable internal consistency for the scale.

**Results and Discussion**

*The First Hypothesis Results*

*“There is a statistically significant correlational relationship between psychological defeat, emotional regulation, and academic passion among female university students.”*

To test the validity of this hypothesis, Pearson’s correlation coefficient was calculated, and the results are presented in Tables 1 and 2.

**Table (1):** Pearson Correlation Coefficients between Psychological Defeat (and Its Dimensions) and Academic Passion (N = 193)

Dimensions	Psychological Defeat						Total Score
	Feelings of Shame	Self-Devaluation	Objectification	Cognitive Perceptions	Lack of Vitality	Self-Blame	
<b>Obsessive Passion</b>	0.295**	0.293**	0.207**	0.293**	0.284**	0.296**	0.329**
<b>Harmonious Passion</b>	-0.223**	-0.189**	-0.246**	-0.164*	-0.012	-0.175*	-0.199**

\*\* Correlations are statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

The table illustrated that there was a statistically significant negative correlation between harmonious academic passion and the dimensions of psychological defeat, as well as its total score. This finding agrees with the results of Almueed (2024), who demonstrated that psychological factors represented by the dimensions of psychological defeat play an essential role in influencing the academic domain, leading to academic failure. In addition, Rahimi et al. (2023) reported that negative emotions are positively correlated to obsessive passion, which in turn reinforces feelings of failure or academic failure, while positive emotions are positively correlated to harmonious passion.

**Table (2):** Pearson Correlation Coefficients between Emotional Regulation and Academic Passion (N = 192)

Dimension	Emotional Regulation	
	Cognitive Reappraisal	Expressive Suppression
<b>Obsessive Passion</b>	-0.127	0.216**
<b>Harmonious Passion</b>	0.188**	-0.204**

\*\* Correlations are statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

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In this regard, several studies, such as Mudlo-Glagolska et al. (2023), have illustrated that harmonious passion is positively correlated with more adaptive emotion-regulation strategies, whereas obsessive passion is positively associated with less adaptive strategies. Emotional variables, particularly negative reactivity, avoidance, active approach, and cognitive reappraisal, reveal that passion for studying is positively related to more adaptive emotion-regulation strategies (e.g., cognitive reappraisal and active approach), while it is also associated with less adaptive strategies (e.g., expressive suppression and avoidance). This illustrates that study-related passion is linked to task-oriented coping styles, whereas obsessive passion may be related to avoidant coping styles, indicating that study passion is associated with different emotion-regulation strategies.

Similarly, Mudlo-Glagolska (2021) discovered that obsessive passion exhibited a negative correlation with cognitive reappraisal while demonstrating a positive correlation with expressive suppression among employees. A positive correlation was identified between harmonious passion and adaptive cognitive emotion-regulation strategies, whereas a negative correlation was established between obsessive passion and maladaptive strategies. Consequently, the two dimensions of passion are delineated by contrasting patterns regarding emotion-regulation strategies.

*The Second Hypothesis Results:*

*“There are no statistically significant differences between first-year and fourth-year female students in psychological defeat, emotional regulation, and academic passion”.*

To verify the validity of this hypothesis, the independent-samples *t*-test was utilized to examine the differences between students in general and special programs on the study variables. Table 3 presents the significance of these differences.

**Table (3):** Results of the Independent-Samples *t*-Test Comparing General and Special Program Students on the Study Variables (N = 193)

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b><i>t</i> value</b>	<b><i>Sig.</i></b>
<b>Psychological Defeat</b>	General	95	117.93	38.32	0.529	0.05
	Special	98	121.13	45.19		
<b>Cognitive Reappraisal</b>	General	95	20.22	5.53	3.47	0.001
	Special	98	23.79	8.36		
<b>Expressive Suppression</b>	General	95	12.45	3.31	5.232	0.001
	Special	98	16.15	5.92		
<b>Harmonious Passion</b>	General	95	35.57	4.67	0.340	0.734
	Special	98	35.35	4.18		
<b>Obsessive Passion</b>	General	95	15.09	2.55	0.140	0.889
	Special	98	15.04	2.88		

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The above table indicates statistically significant differences in psychological defeat in favor of students enrolled in the special program. This may be attributed to the fact that these students were forced to enter this program to improve their academic level and to change their future career paths after graduation. Instead of being limited to working in kindergartens, their career opportunities may extend to private centers working with children with special needs. However, feelings of psychological defeat among fourth-level students in the special program may decrease after they begin their practical training.

The results also reveal statistically significant differences in emotional regulation—specifically in cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression—in favor of the special program. In contrast, no statistically significant differences were found between students in general and special programs with respect to obsessive and harmonious passion. This indicates that students in both programs possess academic passion, as reflected by the similarity in their mean scores across the two programs.

*The Third Hypothesis Results*

*“There are no statistically significant differences between students in the general program and those in the special program in the variables of psychological defeat, emotional regulation, and academic passion.”*

To ensure the validity of this hypothesis, the two researchers employed an independent-samples *t*-test to examine the differences between first-level and fourth-level students on the study variables. Table 4 presents the significance of these differences.

**Table (4):** Results of the Independent-Samples *t*-Test Comparing First-Level and Fourth-Level Students on the Study Variables (N = 193)

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b><i>t</i> value</b>	<b><i>Sig</i></b>
<b>Psychological Defeat</b>	First	91	117.32	40.51	0.704	0.567
	Fourth	102	121.58	43.20		
<b>Cognitive Reappraisal</b>	First	91	21.05	6.52	3.85	0.000
	Fourth	102	22.93	7.88		
<b>Expressive Suppression</b>	First	91	12.88	4.51	1.78	0.07
	Fourth	102	15.65	5.36		
<b>Harmonious Passion</b>	First	91	35.71	4.58	0.746	0.546
	Fourth	102	35.23	4.27		
<b>Obsessive Passion</b>	First	91	14.89	2.94	0.858	0.763
	Fourth	102	15.22	2.49		

The previous table illustrates that there are differences between first-level and fourth-level students in psychological defeat in favor of fourth-level students; however, these differences are not statistically significant. This may be because these students are approaching graduation, and many of them have lost opportunities for university appointments. In contrast, first-level students still maintain hope that they may be

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appointed as compensation for having joined this college, as many of them enrolled based on their admission scores rather than personal preference. Therefore, as graduation approaches and employment opportunities decline, fourth-level students tend to experience higher levels of psychological defeat than first-level students. The results of the current study differ from those reported by Ali and Reis (2023), who found that psychological defeat was lower among fourth-level students than among first-level students. However, the findings are consistent with those of Salih et al. (2023), who reported no significant differences in psychological defeat across university levels.

The table also points to the differences in emotional regulation in the dimension of expressive suppression in favor of fourth-level students, indicating that they use emotional-regulation strategies—particularly cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression—more frequently. However, these differences were statistically significant only for cognitive reappraisal. This finding is consistent with the study by Jameel et al. (2024), which was conducted among students of the College of Education for Early Childhood and found that the use of emotional-regulation strategies varied by academic level, with first-level students demonstrating greater ability to understand situations and regulate their emotions. This result is also in agreement with the findings of Guyer et al. (2014), but it differs from the study by Ayyash and Faiq (2016), which found no differences by academic level.

Furthermore, no statistically significant differences were found between first- and fourth-level students in academic passion, either harmonious or obsessive. This finding contrasts with some previous studies, such as Al-Adamat et al. (2022), which reported differences in favor of first-level students in obsessive passion. The current result may be attributed to the nature of the study and coursework within the college, which relies heavily on students' individual effort. This may lead students to exert greater effort to achieve higher grades, therefore maintaining a relatively high and acceptable level of academic passion throughout their years of study. Students endeavor to realize their personal goals either by obtaining a university appointment or by achieving high grades to pursue postgraduate studies. In this regard, Zhao et al. (2021) found that academic passion was strongly associated with academic self-efficacy and academic engagement among university students.

### ***The Fourth Hypothesis Results***

*“Psychological defeat and emotional regulation contribute to predicting academic passion among female student- teachers.”*

To test this hypothesis, the researchers utilized a stepwise multiple regression analysis, in which the dimensions of psychological defeat and emotional regulation were treated as independent variables, while academic passion (both its obsessive and harmonious dimensions) was treated as the dependent variable.

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**Table (5):** Multiple Linear Regression of Harmonious Academic Passion as the Dependent Variable and Dimensions of Psychological Defeat as Independent Variables (N = 193)

Dependent Variable	Independent Variables	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F	Sig.	Constant	B	Beta	t	Sig.
<b>Harmonious Academic Passion</b>	Objectification	-0.246	0.060	12.22	0.01	37.819	-0.160	-0.246	3.49	0.01
	Objectification	-0.302	0.091	9.47	0.01	36.703	-0.248	-0.382	4.35	0.01
	Lack of Vitality						-0.125	-0.222	2.52	0.01
	Objectification	-0.354	0.125	8.96	0.01	37.010	-0.210	-0.323	3.63	0.01
	Lack of Vitality						-0.227	-0.403	3.69	0.01
	Self-Blame						-0.158	-0.289	2.70	0.01

As shown in Table 5, the stepwise multiple regression procedure maintains only the variables that had a significant effect on the dependent variable. Three dimensions—lack of vitality, objectification, and self-blame—were retained, while three dimensions (self-devaluation, feelings of shame, and cognitive perceptions) were excluded because they did not contribute to the prediction of harmonious academic passion. Thus, the regression analysis proceeded in three steps.

In the first step, objectification emerged as the independent variable most strongly correlated to the dependent variable and the largest contributor to it, with a correlation coefficient of -0.246, accounting for 6% of the variance (R<sup>2</sup> = 0.06). Secondly, lack of vitality was entered as the second most important predictor of the dependent variable. The multiple correlation between objectification and lack of vitality and harmonious passion reached 0.302, explaining 9% of the variance, indicating an increase in the explained variance with the inclusion of the second predictor.

Thirdly, self-blame was added, yielding a multiple correlation of 0.354 between the three predictors (lack of vitality, objectification, and self-blame) and harmonious academic passion, with a shared explained variance of 12.5%.

**Table (6):** Multiple Linear Regression of Obsessive Academic Passion as the Dependent Variable and Dimensions of Psychological Defeat as Independent Variables (N = 193)

Dependent Variable	Independent Variables	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F	Sig.	Constant	B	Beta	t	Sig.
<b>Obsessive Academic Passion</b>	Self-Blame	0.296	0.087	18.209	0.01	13.27	0.296	0.296	4.267	0.01
	Self-Blame	0.334	0.111	11.839	0.01	12.328	0.064	0.189	2.275	0.05
	Feelings of Shame						0.070	0.188	2.253	0.05

As indicated in Table 6, the stepwise multiple regression analysis maintained only the most influential independent variables—self-blame and feelings of shame—as predictors of obsessive academic passion. Therefore, the regression analysis proceeded in two steps.

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In the first step, self-blame emerged as the independent variable most strongly associated with obsessive academic passion and the largest contributor to it, with a correlation coefficient of 0.296, accounting for 8.7% of the variance in the dependent variable ( $R^2 = 0.087$ ). This illustrates that self-blame makes a statistically significant contribution to obsessive academic passion.

In the second step, feelings of shame were introduced as the second most important predictor. The multiple correlation between self-blame, feelings of shame, and obsessive academic passion reached 0.334, with a shared explained variance of 11.1%. Hence, the inclusion of the second predictor increased the explained variance by 2.4%, illustrating the significance of feelings of shame in predicting obsessive academic passion.

**Table (7):** Multiple Linear Regression of Obsessive Academic Passion as the Dependent Variable and Dimensions of Emotional Regulation as Independent Variables (N = 193)

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F	Sig.	Constant	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Obsessive Academic Passion	Expressive	0.216	0.046	9.269	0.01	13.43	0.01	0.216	3.045	0.01
	Suppression									

The stepwise multiple regression analysis maintained only one independent variable—expressive suppression, which accounted for 4.6% of the variance in obsessive academic passion.

**Table (8):** Multiple Linear Regression of Harmonious Academic Passion as the Dependent Variable and Dimensions of Emotional Regulation as Independent Variables (N = 193)

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F	Sig.	Constant	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Harmonious Academic Passion	Expressive	-0.204	0.042	8.26	0.01	37.97	0.175	0.204	2.874	0.01
	Suppression									

Based on the multiple regression analysis, only one independent variable—expressive suppression—was retained in the model, explaining 4.2% of the variance in harmonious academic passion.

Gross (1998), as cited in St-Louis (2021), defined cognitive reappraisal as an activity aimed at altering the emotional impact of a stressful situation by changing one’s thoughts, whereas expressive suppression refers to the inhibition or suppression of emotional experience after it has already occurred. Empirical evidence has shown that harmonious passion is positively associated with cognitive reappraisal; moreover, it tends to be negatively associated with expressive suppression.

**Conclusion**

The findings of the present research provide clear evidence of the significant role played by psychological defeat and emotional regulation in shaping academic passion among female university student-teachers. Psychological defeat was found to be negatively associated with harmonious academic passion and positively

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associated with obsessive academic passion, indicating that negative self-perceptions and depleted psychological vitality undermine adaptive academic engagement while reinforcing maladaptive forms of passion. In contrast, emotional regulation strategies demonstrated differential effects, as cognitive reappraisal was linked to harmonious passion, whereas expressive suppression was associated with obsessive passion. Moreover, although academic passion appeared relatively stable across academic programs and levels, variations in psychological defeat and emotional regulation reflected the influence of academic demands, future career expectations, and accumulated educational experiences. Collectively, these results underscore the importance of addressing students' emotional and psychological well-being as a core component of academic success and sustainable motivation.

Based on these conclusions, several recommendations may be suggested. Higher education institutions are encouraged to design and implement counseling and intervention programs aimed at reducing psychological defeat—particularly feelings of self-blame, shame, lack of vitality, and objectification—while promoting adaptive emotion-regulation strategies such as cognitive reappraisal. Integrating emotional regulation training into university curricula, especially within teacher preparation programs, may help students develop healthier forms of academic passion and resilience. Additionally, academic advising and career guidance services should be strengthened to support students, particularly those approaching graduation, in coping with academic and career-related stressors. Future research is recommended to adopt longitudinal approaches, include diverse student populations, and examine additional psychological and contextual variables to further clarify the mechanisms underlying academic passion in higher education.

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