

The Mediating and Moderating Effects of Perceived Social Support on Emotional Exhaustion and Academic Self-Efficacy of Peruvian University Students: A PLS-SEM Approach

Manuel Loli, Rocío Camarena, & Elizabeth Gutierrez
Universidad Peruana Los Andes, Lima, Peru

The study aimed to analyze the role of perceived social support (family and friends) in the relationship between academic emotional exhaustion and academic self-efficacy, estimating direct, indirect, and interaction effects with PLS-SEM. Method: modeling with SmartPLS 4, with measurement and structural model evaluation. Sample: 175 university students from a faculty of education in Metropolitan Lima, selected by simple random sampling. Results: The loadings were adequate (exhaustion, .505–.870; social support, .775–.974; self-efficacy, .630–.910), with α , composite reliability, and AVE in acceptable ranges; one item was eliminated due to low loading. The model explained $R^2=0.802$ of self-efficacy and showed SRMR of 0.087 (saturated) and 0.098 (estimated). Academic Emotional Exhaustion negatively predicted self-efficacy ($\beta=-0.778$), while support from friends was negative ($\beta=-0.456$) and support from family was positive ($\beta=0.378$); there were significant moderations (friends \times Academic Emotional Exhaustion $\beta=0.155$; family \times Academic Emotional Exhaustion $\beta=-0.202$) and mediations (indirect: 0.277 via family; -0.356 via friends). Conclusion: Social support is a relevant mechanism; friendships mitigate the effect of exhaustion on self-efficacy, while family shows a less favorable pattern under high exhaustion, with high variance explained by the dependent construct.

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Author info: Correspondence should be sent to: Manuel Loli, MD
Universidad Peruana Los Andes, Lima, Peru. *Email:* mloli.mloli3@gmail.com

North American Journal of Psychology, 2026, Vol. 28, No. 2, 940-955
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