

Demotivation and Self-Efficacy: Exploring Causes, Effects, and Solutions Through Bandura's Theory

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Article Info	Abstract
Keywords: Demotivation, Self-efficacy, Bandura, Motivation, Fear of judgment.	Demotivation is a recurring problem in education, work, and personal development because it weakens effort, persistence, and confidence in goal pursuit. This article examines demotivation through Albert Bandura's self-efficacy theory in order to clarify its causes, effects, and possible solutions. Using a qualitative conceptual design based on literature review and Socratic analysis, the study synthesizes established scholarship on self-efficacy, motivation, anxiety, social persuasion, and academic performance. The analysis shows that demotivation often emerges when valued tasks are reinterpreted as threatening, particularly under conditions of stress, fear of judgment, fatigue, and low confidence. In such situations, self-efficacy becomes a crucial mediating belief that shapes whether individuals persist, withdraw, or recover. The discussion identifies four major pathways for restoring motivation: mastery experiences, constructive vicarious experience, supportive social persuasion, and regulation of emotional and physiological states. At the same time, the article argues that Bandura's framework, while highly influential and practically useful, has limitations when demotivation is shaped by structural constraints, repeated social failure, or forms of inner meaning not fully captured by efficacy beliefs alone. The article contributes a focused conceptual synthesis that positions demotivation as a confidence-related disruption in goal-directed action and offers practical implications for students, educators, and professionals seeking to rebuild motivation in demanding contexts.

Submitted: March 2026, Reviewed: April 2026, Accepted: May 2026

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I. INTRODUCTION

Demotivation has become a significant issue in learning and performance contexts because it weakens persistence, confidence, and active engagement in goal-directed tasks. In many situations, individuals do not lose interest in the activity itself, but begin to withdraw when the activity is associated with pressure, fear of negative evaluation, repeated difficulty, or emotional strain. This condition is particularly important in educational settings, where performance is not determined solely by skill or knowledge, but also by the learner's confidence in handling challenges. When individuals begin to doubt their ability to perform successfully, they are more likely to avoid tasks, reduce effort, and interpret difficulties as confirmation of inadequacy rather than as part of the learning process. This makes demotivation an important psychological issue that requires closer conceptual attention.

Recent studies have consistently shown that self-efficacy plays a central role in shaping academic engagement, persistence, and performance (Fitriani, 2025). Academic self-efficacy is positively

associated with achievement and self-regulated learning, while low self-efficacy is linked to weaker persistence and poorer performance outcomes (Honicke & Broadbent, 2016; Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020). Other studies have also shown that self-efficacy is related to emotional regulation and anxiety management, suggesting that individuals with stronger efficacy beliefs are more likely to cope effectively with stressful performance situations (Morales-Rodríguez & Pérez-Mármol, 2019; Roick & Ringeisen, 2017). In addition, research on the sources of self-efficacy has highlighted the importance of mastery experience, social persuasion, vicarious learning, and affective states in shaping confidence and action (Pfitzner-Eden, 2016; Shi et al., 2025; Usher & Pajares, 2008). These studies show that Bandura's self-efficacy theory remains one of the most influential frameworks for explaining motivation, confidence, and persistence in educational psychology.

Recent scholarship has further confirmed that self-efficacy is not only related to achievement, but also to academic engagement, study satisfaction, stress management, and motivational resilience. Academic self-efficacy can influence academic performance both directly and indirectly through academic engagement (Meng & Zhang, 2023). It also plays an important role in the relationship among perceived psychological need support, motivation, and academic achievement (Basileo et al., 2024). Studies on university students further show that anxiety and psychological distress tend to weaken academic self-efficacy, while stronger self-efficacy supports study satisfaction and academic engagement (Carranza Esteban et al., 2022; Simón et al., 2024). These findings suggest that demotivation should be understood not simply as a loss of interest, but as a weakening of capability belief under academic, emotional, and social pressure.

However, despite the strength of existing research, most studies have focused on the predictive role of self-efficacy in achievement, persistence, or test performance, rather than on demotivation as a specific psychological condition. Less attention has been given to how demotivation develops when individuals face evaluative pressure, fear of judgment, emotional overload, or repeated negative experiences in tasks they actually value. This gap is important because demotivation is not always caused by the absence of interest. In many cases, individuals may still value a task but begin to withdraw because they no longer believe they can perform successfully under pressure. As a result, the literature has provided strong evidence that self-efficacy matters, but has not sufficiently clarified how declining efficacy beliefs contribute to the emergence of demotivation, how demotivation affects behavior and performance, and how motivation may be restored once confidence has weakened.

In this study, demotivation is operationally defined as a decline in goal-directed engagement in a task that remains personally, academically, or socially valued, but becomes difficult to continue because the individual's belief in successful action has weakened. This definition distinguishes demotivation from several related concepts. Low motivation refers to a generally weak desire or intention to engage in a task from the beginning. Lack of interest refers to the absence of personal attraction or perceived value toward an activity. Anxiety refers to emotional tension or fear in response to perceived threat, while

burnout involves more chronic exhaustion and depletion caused by prolonged demands. Academic disengagement refers to behavioral withdrawal from learning activities. Demotivation may overlap with these conditions, but in this study it specifically refers to a decline in engagement that occurs when a valued task becomes psychologically threatening and self-efficacy weakens.

This study addresses that gap by examining demotivation through Albert Bandura's self-efficacy theory. The novelty of this study lies in its specific analytical emphasis on demotivation as a decline in goal-directed engagement caused by weakening capability beliefs under psychological and social pressure. Rather than discussing self-efficacy only in relation to success, achievement, or performance outcomes, this article explores how self-efficacy helps explain the causes of demotivation, the effects of demotivation on persistence and performance, and the practical pathways through which motivation may be rebuilt. In doing so, the article also critically considers the strengths and limitations of Bandura's framework in explaining motivational decline.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the causes, effects, and possible solutions of demotivation through Bandura's theory of self-efficacy. More specifically, the article addresses the following research question: how can Bandura's self-efficacy theory explain the emergence of demotivation, its impact on behavior and performance, and the strategies that may help restore motivation? By answering this question, the study seeks to contribute a clearer conceptual understanding of demotivation and a more focused theoretical basis for addressing it in educational and performance-related settings.

II. METHODS

This study employed a qualitative conceptual review design based on literature-based synthesis, Socratic analysis, and a reflective vignette. The study was conceptual rather than empirical; therefore, it did not collect participant data, conduct field observation, or test statistical relationships. Its purpose was to develop a theoretically grounded explanation of demotivation through Bandura's self-efficacy theory by synthesizing relevant literature and critically examining the assumptions underlying motivational decline, avoidance, fear of judgment, and motivational recovery.

In this design, literature-based evidence and interpretive reflection served different functions. The reviewed literature provided the theoretical and empirical foundation for explaining the relationship among self-efficacy, motivation, anxiety, academic performance, social persuasion, and emotional regulation. Socratic analysis was used as an interpretive procedure to clarify assumptions, examine conceptual boundaries, and organize the implications of the reviewed literature. The reflective vignette was not treated as empirical data or as evidence for generalization, but as an analytic illustration that helped connect abstract theoretical claims with a concrete performance-related situation. This distinction was made to ensure that the article remained grounded in scholarship while still allowing critical conceptual interpretation.

The literature review was conducted through academic search engines, journal databases, and publisher platforms relevant to educational psychology, motivation studies, and social-cognitive theory. The databases and platforms included Google Scholar, Semantic Scholar, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, and other academic publisher platforms. The search used combinations of keywords such as “self-efficacy,” “Bandura self-efficacy theory,” “academic motivation,” “demotivation,” “student anxiety,” “fear of judgment,” “vicarious experience,” “social persuasion,” “academic performance,” “motivational recovery,” and “social cognitive theory.”

As a qualitative conceptual review, the literature selection focused on conceptual relevance, theoretical contribution, and alignment with the research question rather than exhaustive systematic coverage. The final body of literature analyzed in this study consisted of 27 sources, including recent peer-reviewed studies on self-efficacy, motivation, anxiety, academic engagement, emotional regulation, and foundational or critical works on Bandura’s self-efficacy theory. Recent sources were prioritized to capture current developments in educational psychology and motivation research, while older foundational works were retained when they provided essential theoretical grounding or major critiques of Bandura’s framework.

Sources were included when they met the following criteria: first, they discussed self-efficacy, motivation, demotivation, anxiety, academic performance, emotional regulation, social persuasion, vicarious learning, or related educational and psychological processes; second, they contributed directly to explaining the causes, effects, or possible solutions of demotivation; third, they were published in peer-reviewed journals or recognized academic publications; and fourth, they supported either the development, application, or critical evaluation of Bandura’s framework. Sources were excluded when they discussed motivation only in general terms, were not connected to educational or performance-related contexts, lacked clear theoretical or empirical relevance, or did not contribute to the article’s conceptual focus.

The selected literature was analyzed through conceptual synthesis. First, the sources were grouped according to the article’s three analytical concerns: causes of demotivation, effects of demotivation, and strategies for motivational recovery. Second, Bandura’s four sources of self-efficacy, namely mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological or affective states, were used as the main interpretive framework. Third, supporting and critical perspectives were compared to identify both the explanatory strengths and the limitations of self-efficacy theory. This procedure allowed the analysis to distinguish literature-based evidence from the authors’ conceptual interpretation.

Socratic analysis was used as a complementary interpretive procedure to strengthen the conceptual synthesis. In this study, Socratic analysis refers to a structured process of questioning theoretical assumptions, clarifying conceptual boundaries, and testing the implications of claims drawn from the reviewed literature. The questions were generated from recurring issues identified during the literature

review, especially fear of judgment, anxiety, repeated failure, social comparison, feedback, and motivational recovery.

The procedure was conducted in three stages. First, guiding questions were formulated to clarify the psychological condition being analyzed, such as: What happens when a person loses motivation for a task they still value? How does fear of judgment weaken confidence? Why can observing others sometimes motivate individuals but at other times increase self-doubt? When does feedback strengthen self-efficacy, and when does it become discouraging? Second, these questions were used to examine the reviewed literature and identify conceptual patterns related to the causes, effects, and recovery of demotivation. Third, the emerging interpretations were compared with Bandura's four sources of self-efficacy and with critical perspectives on the limits of self-efficacy theory. Through this procedure, Socratic analysis contributed to the development of the main themes presented in the discussion, namely demotivation as weakened efficacy under pressure, the behavioral and emotional effects of demotivation, and the practical pathways for motivational recovery.

The reflective performance vignette was used only as an analytic illustration. It was not treated as empirical evidence and was not used to make generalizable claims about a population. Instead, it helped illustrate how fear of judgment, emotional pressure, and declining self-efficacy may interact in a concrete performance situation. The vignette therefore functioned as a bridge between theoretical explanation and practical understanding, not as an independent source of data.

To maintain analytical consistency, the study applied three procedures. First, each major claim was checked against relevant literature on self-efficacy, motivation, anxiety, emotional regulation, academic performance, and motivational recovery. Second, the interpretation was kept aligned with the article's research question and did not extend beyond the educational and performance-related scope of the study. Third, the analysis included critical perspectives on Bandura's theory so that the discussion did not present self-efficacy as a complete explanation for all forms of demotivation. Through this procedure, the method supported a balanced conceptual argument that is theoretically grounded, critically reflective, and relevant to educational practice.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis indicates that demotivation is best understood as a breakdown in goal-directed engagement that occurs when confidence, emotional stability, and situational meaning become misaligned. From a self-efficacy perspective, the central issue is not merely whether a person wants success, but whether the person believes they can successfully act under the demands of the moment. When that belief weakens, effort becomes fragile, avoidance becomes attractive, and previously meaningful goals may be temporarily abandoned.

A. Demotivation and Self-Efficacy

A major finding of the conceptual analysis is that demotivation often begins with a change in appraisal rather than a complete loss of interest. A student may still value drawing, public speaking, learning, or sport, but the task becomes psychologically threatening when it is associated with embarrassment, repeated difficulty, or negative comparison. In Bandura's terms, the person's efficacy judgment shifts downward. The task is no longer experienced primarily as an opportunity for expression or growth, but as a situation that may expose inability. This interpretation explains why demotivation can emerge even in activities that individuals genuinely value.

From a self-efficacy perspective, the central issue is whether individuals believe they can act successfully under the demands of the moment. Efficacy beliefs influence task initiation, effort, persistence, and responses to difficulty (Bandura, 1977; Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020). When efficacy beliefs weaken, individuals are more likely to hesitate, avoid challenging tasks, disengage from feedback, or interpret stress as evidence of incapacity. Demotivation is therefore not simply a reduction in effort, but a self-protective response that occurs when meaningful action feels psychologically unsafe.

This interpretation is supported by studies linking self-efficacy with academic success, stress, anxiety, and emotional regulation. Academic self-efficacy has been shown to predict student success across several academic outcomes, while anxiety and psychological distress tend to weaken efficacy beliefs (Ampuero-Tello et al., 2022; Anicama et al., 2025; Morales-Rodríguez & Pérez-Mármol, 2019; Zajacova et al., 2005). Fear of judgment fits closely into this pattern because public evaluation shifts attention from task performance to self-protection. When individuals anticipate ridicule, comparison, or negative evaluation, motivation becomes defensive rather than agentic.

Recent evidence also supports the importance of evaluative fear and social comparison in academic behavior. Uluman Mert and Tunç (2023) found that academic self-efficacy mediated the relationship between fear of negative evaluation and answer-copying tendency, suggesting that fear of judgment may influence behavior through capability beliefs. Social comparison can also either strengthen or weaken self-efficacy depending on whether comparison is experienced as encouraging or threatening (Xing et al., 2023). These findings support the article's central argument that demotivation may develop when a valued task is reinterpreted as a threat to competence, dignity, or social standing.

The categories in Table 1 were developed through conceptual synthesis rather than direct extraction from a single empirical study. Each category reflects recurring patterns identified across the reviewed literature on self-efficacy, anxiety, social comparison, feedback, academic performance, and motivational recovery. These patterns were then interpreted through Bandura's self-efficacy framework to clarify how specific experiences may weaken capability beliefs and lead to demotivated behavior. Therefore, Table 1 should be read as an integrative conceptual map that connects literature-based evidence with the authors' theoretical interpretation.

Table 1. Major patterns of demotivation interpreted through self-efficacy theory

Cause of demotivation	Likely effect on behavior	Self-efficacy interpretation	Practical implication
Fear of judgment	Avoidance, hesitation, self-conscious performance	The task is appraised as socially threatening, lowering belief in capability	Reduce evaluative pressure, begin with manageable public tasks
Repeated failure	Withdrawal, reduced persistence, negative anticipation	Past failure becomes evidence of likely future inability	Rebuild confidence through small, successful experiences
Stress and anxiety	Distraction, emotional exhaustion, lower concentration	Physiological arousal is interpreted as incapacity	Teach emotional regulation and task preparation routines
Negative comparison with others	Inferiority, passivity, loss of initiative	Observed success of others becomes a standard of deficiency	Use relatable models and emphasize developmental progress
Harsh or dismissive feedback	Shame, self-doubt, reduced effort	Social persuasion weakens rather than strengthens efficacy beliefs	Provide balanced, specific, improvement-oriented feedback
Fatigue and overload	Inconsistency, low energy, disengagement	Reduced stamina is interpreted as inability to cope	Normalize rest and pacing as part of sustained motivation

Table 1 summarizes the main interpretive pattern emerging from the conceptual synthesis. Demotivation is not caused by a single factor, but develops through interactions among social pressure, personal belief, past experience, and emotional response. The table does not claim that each cause operates independently or universally. Rather, it shows how different conditions discussed in the reviewed literature may converge around a shared self-efficacy mechanism: they can undermine the person's judgment that successful action is possible.

B. Effects of Demotivation

The effects of demotivation extend beyond temporary reluctance. Once low self-efficacy becomes established, it can influence the full cycle of goal pursuit. Individuals may choose easier tasks, delay participation, disengage from feedback, or interpret normal difficulty as confirmation that they are not suited to the task. In educational contexts, this pattern can indirectly weaken performance because self-efficacy supports study behavior, self-regulation, and persistence over time (Doménech-Betoret et al., 2017; Honicke & Broadbent, 2016). Longitudinal evidence further suggests that the relationship among self-efficacy, motivation, and achievement is reciprocal rather than one-directional. Higher self-efficacy and motivation can predict later achievement, while stronger achievement can also reinforce later self-efficacy and autonomous motivation (Li et al., 2024). This reciprocal pattern helps explain why demotivation can become cyclical: low confidence reduces persistence and performance, and poor performance may then reinforce lower confidence.

This cycle also explains why demotivated individuals may underperform even when they possess the required skill. Self-efficacy has been associated with lower test anxiety and better academic performance over time ((Cassady & Finch, 2020; Roick & Ringeisen, 2017). Therefore, poor performance should not automatically be interpreted as low ability or weak character. In many cases, it reflects an unstable interaction among skill, stress, and self-belief. A person may know what to do but no longer trust themselves to do it under pressure.

C. Motivational Recovery

A central contribution of Bandura's theory is its explanation of how self-efficacy can be developed. Four major sources of self-efficacy have been identified, namely mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological or affective states (Usher & Pajares, 2008). The present analysis shows that these four sources can also be read as four pathways for restoring motivation. Motivational recovery should also be connected to self-regulated learning and need-supportive environments. Meta-analytic evidence shows that self-regulated learning training can improve academic performance, learning strategies, and motivational outcomes, including self-efficacy (Theobald, 2021). Another meta-analysis found that competence is a particularly strong predictor of self-determined student motivation (Bureau et al., 2022), while different forms of motivation are associated with important outcomes such as achievement, persistence, and well-being (Howard et al., 2021). These findings strengthen the argument that restoring motivation requires both internal efficacy rebuilding and supportive learning environments.

Mastery experiences are the most powerful source. When individuals succeed at a task, especially after effort or difficulty, they acquire evidence that they can cope effectively. This is why demotivated individuals often benefit more from small successful steps than from repeated verbal encouragement alone. A student who is afraid to perform publicly may first need manageable opportunities to succeed in lower-pressure settings. Each successful performance weakens the link between the task and anticipated failure. The person does not merely hear that they are capable; they experience themselves as capable. Mastery experience is typically the strongest source of self-efficacy (Usher & Pajares, 2008), and the present analysis fully supports that view.

Vicarious experiences involve observing others. These experiences can strengthen self-efficacy when the model is perceived as relevant, credible, and sufficiently similar. Seeing another student speak, draw, or solve problems successfully may create the impression that success is attainable rather than exceptional. Social models have been shown to matter, with the predictive value of vicarious experience varying depending on the type of model involved, such as teachers, peers, or family members (Ahn et al., 2017; Zander et al., 2020). This suggests that motivation is not equally influenced by every example. Relatable models are more persuasive than distant ideals. For demotivated individuals, therefore, carefully chosen examples are important.

At the same time, the present analysis highlights a critical point already implicit in the source material: vicarious experience can also work negatively. Observing others fail, or observing others succeed in ways that seem unreachable, may intensify self-doubt rather than reduce it. This is one area where Bandura's theory remains practically useful but requires careful application. Modeling should not assume that any exposure to others' performance will be motivating. Its motivational value depends on interpretation.

Social persuasion refers to evaluative communication from others, including feedback, encouragement, and reassurance. Social persuasion is especially relevant in demotivation because fear of judgment is often socially triggered. Supportive messages from teachers, mentors, peers, and family can help individuals reinterpret difficulty as manageable and temporary. The effect of social persuasion has been shown to vary by source, meaning that feedback is not socially neutral (Ahn et al., 2017). Encouragement from a trusted person may strengthen efficacy more than praise from someone perceived as uninformed or insincere.

However, this source must be handled carefully. Empty praise is rarely enough, and harsh criticism can directly undermine efficacy beliefs. The most effective persuasion is specific, credible, and oriented toward improvement. Instead of saying “You are amazing” or “Do not worry,” a more effective form of persuasion says, in effect, “You handled this part well, here is what to improve, and with further practice you can do the rest.” Such feedback protects dignity while preserving standards. It also aligns with the source text’s concern for balanced feedback, namely, the idea that destructive comments should not define self-worth, but constructive criticism remains necessary for growth.

Physiological and affective states form the fourth source. People interpret bodily tension, fear, fatigue, and stress as cues about whether they are ready to act. When anxiety is intense, individuals may conclude that they are not capable, even if the anxiety reflects situational pressure rather than true inability. This makes emotional regulation crucial in addressing demotivation. Anxiety has been found to be negatively associated with self-efficacy, while emotional clarity is positively associated with it (Morales-Rodríguez & Pérez-Mármol, 2019). This suggests that helping individuals read and manage their emotional states is not secondary to motivation. It is part of motivation. For this reason, practical responses to demotivation should include not only cognitive encouragement but also restorative breaks, preparation routines, breathing regulation, and realistic pacing. Fatigue and overload can distort efficacy judgments by making difficult tasks feel impossible. Rest, in this sense, is not the opposite of motivation. It can be one of the conditions that allows motivation to recover.

D. Theoretical Strengths

One of the strongest findings of this study is that Bandura’s theory remains highly useful because it connects thought, emotion, and action in a way that is both theoretically coherent and practically applicable. It explains why people facing similar tasks behave differently, why some persist under pressure while others withdraw, and why encouragement works in some situations but fails in others. It also provides a language for designing intervention: increase mastery, improve models, strengthen constructive feedback, and regulate stress. The breadth of the theory’s relevance is reflected in its continued use across domains such as education, mental health, and performance research. Self-efficacy remains central to social cognitive accounts of motivation, particularly because it links agency with self-regulation (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020). In applied settings, this makes the theory especially valuable. Educators can use it to structure feedback and task progression; students can use it to reinterpret

setbacks; professionals can use it to understand why competence sometimes collapses under evaluation pressure. Another strength of the theory is its refusal to reduce motivation to either internal desire or external reward alone. Instead, it explains motivation as a process involving personal belief in interaction with environmental conditions. That balance is important. Demotivation is not fully internal and not fully external. It emerges through interaction. Bandura's framework captures that interaction effectively.

E. Theoretical Limitations

Even so, the analysis also confirms that Bandura's theory should not be treated as complete in every respect. It has been questioned whether efficacy expectations are always clearly separable from outcome expectations (Eastman & Marzillier, 1984). This critique matters because a demotivated individual may say, "I cannot do this," when what they actually mean is, "The likely outcome is too painful, embarrassing, or not worth the effort." In practice, perceptions of capability and anticipated consequences may be tightly interwoven. If the distinction is unclear, intervention may fail, as one may attempt to build confidence when the deeper issue is fear of humiliation or concern about social cost.

A different concern highlights that environmental contingencies can explain some behaviors attributed to self-efficacy (Biglan, 1987). This is also relevant to demotivation. Individuals do not lose motivation in a psychological vacuum; they may be responding to persistent criticism, unfair standards, lack of opportunity, or unsupportive environments. Under such conditions, low self-efficacy may be an understandable response rather than the primary cause of demotivation. This does not invalidate self-efficacy theory, but it implies that restoring motivation may require changes in the environment, not only in individual belief.

A third limitation concerns vicarious experience. The theory rightly treats observation as a source of efficacy information, yet practical discussions often assume that observing success is automatically helpful. The present analysis suggests otherwise. When comparison becomes threatening, observation may intensify demotivation. Watching a peer succeed can either inspire or discourage, depending on perceived similarity, prior confidence, and the emotional meaning of the comparison. This is why supportive modeling must be carefully selected and interpreted.

A fourth limitation involves inner resources that are not fully reducible to efficacy judgments. Emotional intelligence, particularly through its relationship with emotional clarity, coping, and perceived self-efficacy, has been shown to play a role (Morales-Rodríguez & Pérez-Mármol, 2019). Spiritual meaning is less directly documented in the present reference base, but remains an important line of inquiry. Some individuals persist not only because they believe they can succeed, but because the activity is anchored in faith, personal calling, or ethical purpose. Whether such meaning enhances self-efficacy, operates alongside it, or sustains motivation independently deserves further study.

These limitations lead to a balanced conclusion. Bandura's theory is strong enough to organize a convincing explanation of demotivation, yet modest enough to require contextual and critical use. It is best treated as a powerful central lens rather than a complete account of all motivational processes.

Taken together, these limitations suggest that self-efficacy should be used as a central but not exclusive explanation of demotivation. Structural constraints, repeated social failure, unfair evaluation, lack of opportunity, and unsupportive learning environments may weaken motivation in ways that cannot be resolved by individual confidence alone. In such cases, low self-efficacy may not be the original cause of demotivation, but a psychological consequence of repeated contextual pressure. Therefore, motivational recovery should involve both the rebuilding of personal efficacy and the improvement of social and educational conditions that make meaningful action possible.

F. Research Contribution

The main conceptual contribution of this article is the reframing of demotivation as a confidence-related disruption in goal-directed action that occurs within specific emotional, social, and contextual conditions. This framing helps distinguish demotivation from simple disinterest. A person may remain attached to the value of a goal while losing the belief that successful action is possible under present conditions. At the same time, the analysis shows that weakened self-efficacy should not always be treated as an isolated individual problem. In some cases, it may reflect structural constraints, repeated social failure, harsh evaluation, or environments that make successful action difficult to imagine or sustain.

A second contribution is the integration of practical solutions into a clear sequence. Motivation is restored most effectively when the person is given manageable success, exposed to constructive models, supported through credible feedback, and assisted in regulating emotional strain. These are not isolated techniques. Together, they help rebuild agency. A further contribution is the article's critical extension of Bandura's theory. By emphasizing fear of judgment, emotional overload, social comparison, and contextual pressure, the article shows that demotivation often begins in ordinary interpersonal and institutional settings. Classrooms, workshops, workplaces, and families may either strengthen or weaken efficacy beliefs. Therefore, addressing demotivation requires more than encouraging individuals to believe in themselves; it also requires creating conditions in which effort, failure, feedback, and recovery can be experienced safely and constructively.

IV. CONCLUSION

This article set out to explore demotivation, its causes, effects, and possible solutions through Albert Bandura's self-efficacy theory. The analysis shows that demotivation often emerges when a valued task becomes psychologically threatening and the individual's belief in their ability to act successfully declines. Stress, fear of judgment, repeated failure, fatigue, and discouraging comparison can all weaken self-efficacy, leading to avoidance, reduced persistence, and poorer performance. Conversely,

motivation can be rebuilt when individuals experience success, observe relatable models, receive constructive encouragement, and learn to regulate emotional and physiological strain.

The study also confirms the continuing value of Bandura's framework. Self-efficacy remains one of the most useful concepts for explaining why people with comparable skills do not always act with comparable confidence. It helps clarify the links among belief, emotion, effort, and resilience. However, this article also argues that self-efficacy should be understood as a central lens rather than a complete explanation of demotivation. Structural constraints, repeated social failure, harsh evaluation, discouraging comparison, and unsupportive environments may weaken motivation beyond what can be explained by individual belief alone. For this reason, motivational recovery requires both the rebuilding of personal efficacy and the creation of social conditions that support safe effort, constructive feedback, and renewed participation.

This study has several limitations. It is a conceptual paper based on literature review and interpretive analysis rather than participant-based empirical investigation. Its conclusions therefore clarify mechanisms and implications, but they do not claim statistical generalizability. In addition, the paper prioritizes the educational and personal performance context, which means that other domains of demotivation, such as organizational burnout or clinical depression, require separate and more specialized treatment. The discussion of spirituality is intentionally limited because the present article does not include a dedicated empirical literature base on that specific issue.

Future research may extend this work in several directions. Longitudinal studies could examine how self-efficacy and demotivation influence each other over time. Further studies could investigate how vicarious failure, not only vicarious success, shapes motivational recovery. Researchers may also explore how emotional intelligence, family background, cultural expectations, and spiritual meaning interact with efficacy beliefs in sustaining persistence. Finally, online and hybrid learning environments deserve closer attention because they alter feedback, comparison, and emotional support in ways that may intensify or reduce demotivation. In conclusion, demotivation should be understood not merely as a decline in effort, but as a disruption in the belief that meaningful action is still possible. By identifying how self-efficacy is weakened and how it can be rebuilt, this article offers a theoretically grounded and practically useful approach to restoring motivation in learning, performance, and everyday life.

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