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## Undergraduates' Achievement Goal Orientations, Academic Self-Efficacy and Hope as the Predictors of Their Learning Approaches \*

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**Abstract:** The aim of the present study was to figure out whether university students' learning approaches were shaped via their achievement goal orientations, academic self-efficacy and hope or not. The other objective was to examine if these psychological constructs varied in accordance with the demographic variables including gender, age and class level. 332 undergraduates from two different universities who were in the year of junior and senior participated in the study. The Achievement Goal Orientations Scale, the Academic Self-Efficacy Scale, the Dispositional Hope Scale and the Demographic Form were utilized to reveal the predictive power of these constructs on their learning attitudes measured by the Revised Two-Factor Study Process Questionnaire. Multiple linear regression analysis indicated that learning goal orientation was a pivotal predictor of both deep and surface approach to learning. Academic self-efficacy and hope were the crucial precursors of deep approach while performance-avoidance goal inclination was a considerable predictor of surface approach. Independent samples t-test analysis displayed that the female undergraduates were superior to the male ones in terms of the learning goal tendency. And the students (20 to 22 aged) demonstrated higher scores on the same variable than the other ones (23 to 25 aged). On the basis of class level, there were no significant differences in the scores of achievement goal orientations, academic self-efficacy, hope and learning approaches. The results pointed out the fact that such concepts pertinent to an undergraduate's academic performance could be viewed as distinctive features engendering different learning attitudes toward scholastic training.

**Keywords:** *Achievement goal orientation, academic self-efficacy, hope, undergraduates, learning approaches.*

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### Introduction

Higher education, a complex structure of studying, learning and teaching level, contains lots of academic and amicable struggles students should handle with. Especially, the burden from which university education demands makes students figure out the effective learning strategies for their academic survival. These learning approaches derive from the interaction between the student and the material that should be learned (Ramsden, 2003). Therefore, how a student deals with the learning material determines his potential academic pathway, constituting his educational improvement during his training. Thus, it is pivotal for instructors, counselors and educational policy makers to focus on students' distinctive learning tendencies so as to increase the status of higher education in general via providing a proper learning environment for them.

Learning approach has become one of the most thoroughly research topic in psychology during 1970s and 80s (Cano, Martin, Ginns and Berben, 2018). Nowadays, learning approach is considered as a significant component to analyse high students' success (Hall, Ramsay, & Raven, 2004; Everaert, Opdecam, & Maussen (2017). For Marton and Säljo (1976), students produce divergent academic outcomes emanating from the discrepancies in coping with the learning task. Based on their distinctive objectives, they differ in emphasizing either the comprehension of the task or the clues of passing it. The former is called as deep; the latter is labeled as surface degree of processing. Students' approaches to learning (SALs, e.g., deep and surface), aim to reveal how students compose their structure of learning which has been constitute of intentions (motives) as well as methods (strategies) (Biggs, 2001). Students acquiring a deep learning approach aim to understand the material while the students with a surface approach target to reproduce the material (Biggs, 2001).

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Entwistle, Hanley and Hounsell (1979) state that they should be regarded as learning approaches instead of learning processes in order to broaden their conceptual framework pertinent to learning. According to these theorists, there are three components of learning – “intention, process and outcome (p.367)” – which must be taken into account profoundly when focusing on students’ learning approaches. For them, the term processing is inadequate to include these aspects, by encompassing only intention and process.

Learning approaches play an essential role in understanding how a student manages the academic problem at hand. Biggs (2001) and Ramsden (2003) suggest that; deep and surface approaches can be summarized in terms of how to arrange a piece of information and utilize it effectively. Students using deep approach make tremendous efforts to discern a learning task, transfer their knowledge about it to the real world, create its new use in the area and synthesize all information related to the task. Yet, students employing surface approach try to replicate the information about the subject via the technique of rote memorization so as to obtain high marks from the exams and satisfy the lecturers as well. Hence, there is no room for actual appreciation of the learning material in this approach.

Numerous researches indicate that learning approaches are shaped by various factors such as the learning subject, students’ scholastic background, and their study area, lecturers’ methods of teaching and evaluation, students’ mindset to plan of study, learning atmosphere, students’ motivation, levels of self-regulation, academic self-efficacy, achievement goal orientation and so on (Entwistle and Smith, 2002; Kong and Hau, 1996; Ramsden, 2003; Smith and Miller, 2005; Phan, 2011). Among these factors, academic self-efficacy and achievement goal orientations are particularly significant as they are the crucial components of students’ self-regulative skills, making up their motivation (Ames, 1992; Bandura and Wood, 1989). They are important tools for the students seeking for a change in their academic status and striving for attaining accomplishments during their educational process. They are essential drives for students’ scholastic developments.

Academic self-efficacy reflects the student’s belief in his competencies to fulfill required academic duties successfully (Bandura, 1982; 1993). It causes him to ponder whether he is able to solve the scholastic problem without difficulty or not. According to the social cognitive theory; students with high self- efficacy tend to persist in facing the difficulty, seek for challenging learning tasks and consider failure as a learning opportunity. All these aspects are theoretically consistent with the mastery goal orientation characteristics. Students set personal expectations for their learning effort in accordance with their academic self efficacy (Bandura, 1982, 1993). Al- Harthy et al (2010) and Multon, Brown, &Lent (1991) argued that these expectations affect students’ goals in a direct or indirect way and by which students pursue specific goal orientation. On the other hand, achievement goal orientations are the underlying mechanisms of students’ outstanding behaviors in their academic fields (Ames, 1992). These tendencies can be categorized into three types: learning / task, performance-approach / ability-approach and performance-avoidance / ability-avoid goals (Midgley, Kaplan, Middleton, Maehr, Urdan and Hicks-Anderson, 1998). Students adopting learning goals try to improve their comprehension about the subject they are studying. They want to enhance their abilities in the area they are specialized. The ones embracing performance-approach goals want to get positive feedbacks from others about their proficiencies in the subject. They largely pay attention to display how they are better than the others in terms of the learning material. But, students employing performance-avoidance goals avert from showing themselves as deficient in the subject. In this respect, they evade from any negative feedback from the others (Pastor, Barron, Miller,&Davis; 2007).

Furthermore, one of the essential notions in positive psychology, hope, must be taken into account as an influencing factor on learning approaches. It is a necessary element for students to deal with lots of challenging conditions at university. It allows them to fight against both academic and social difficulties (Levine and Cureton, 1998). According to Synder, Rand and Sigmon (2002), hope embraces two kinds of reasoning, which may help the student obtain the targeted level of academic success: Pathways thinking and agency thinking. The first one is pertinent to one’s belief in his skills about engendering potential solutions for the objective he would like to attain. In other words; pathway thinking refers to one’s belief on him about his ability to find a solution to any problem he might be faced or reaching a desired goal he aims for. Pathway thinking can be considered as an edited version of the concept ‘self- efficacy’ which has been entitled by Albert Bandura. He describes ‘self- efficacy’ as ‘one’s belief in one’s ability to succeed in specific situations or to accomplish a task’ (Bandura, 1994 Cited in Bashant, 2006). On the other hand, the latter as it has been mentioned above, is the motivational component of Hope Theory which emphasizes one’s motive to apply his efforts to attain the goal targeted. Hence, through hopeful thinking, students have the opportunity to ameliorate their academic achievement effectively.

Consequently, investigating the factors on students’ learning approaches applied in their training is very vital in order to enhance their academic progress accurately. Specifically, scrutinizing these influential elements provides a great information resource for educational researchers, counselors and instructors to find out what kind of teaching strategies should be utilized to boost the quality of university education. Besides, it discloses the possible reasons for their academic failures. Therefore, the objective of the present research was to analyze whether students’ learning approaches were formed through their achievement goal orientations, academic self-efficacy and hope or not. The other aim was to test if these concepts varied in terms of demographic variables including gender, age and class level.

## Methodology

### Design

The study design was constituted on the basis of descriptive survey research pattern. It focused on obtaining lots of pivotal data related to the topic investigated from a peculiar number of individuals in a limited time (Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle, 2010). It represented a cross-sectional inquiry aiming to get adequate information for once from a specified group of individuals at disparate educational levels, economic states, ages and so on (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007).

### Participants

Purposive sampling technique was utilized so as to generate the sample of the study. 332 undergraduates (219 females, 113 males) from Marmara University and Istanbul Commerce University who were in the year of 143 junior (43.1%) and 189 senior (56.9%) in the major of social and natural sciences participated in the research. The reason of choosing these individuals rested on the fact that the variables like academic self-efficacy examined were at more tangible levels as they became more experienced in their training (Bandura, 1982). There were two age groups: 20-22 aged (n=145) and 23-25 aged (n=187).

### Materials

The Achievement Goal Orientations Scale, the Academic Self-Efficacy Scale, The Dispositional Hope Scale, the Revised-Two Factor Study Process Questionnaire and the Demographic Form were conducted in the study.

a) *The Achievement Goal Orientations Scale (the AGO Scale):*

The AGO Scale was the scale examining undergraduates' study inclinations produced in an academic task. It scrutinized the subtle reasons of their successful deeds in a scholastic environment (Midgley et al., 1998). In the study, its adapted version formed by Akin and Cetin (2007) was employed meticulously. In the scale, there were 17 items with a three factor structure – Learning, Performance-Approach and Performance-Avoidance goal tendencies on a 5-point scale. Internal consistency coefficients of each dimension were 0.77, 0.79 and 0.78 respectively. The test-retest reliability values were 0.95 for Learning; 0.91 for Performance-Approach and 0.94 for Performance-Avoidance subscale.

b) *The Academic Self-Efficacy Scale (the ASE Scale):*

The ASE Scale was a means of assessment analyzing the levels of undergraduates' academic self-efficacy according to Jerusalem and Schwarzer (1981) (cited in Yilmaz, Gurcay and Ekici, 2007). It evaluated their assurance about their abilities of fulfilling a learning task successfully. Its Turkish version formed by Yilmaz, Gurcay and Ekici (2007) was utilized in the study. It included 7 items with one factor on a 4-point scale. Cronbach's alpha value of the scale was 0.79.

c) *The Dispositional Hope Scale (the DH Scale):*

The DH Scale developed by Synder et. al. (1991) was the scale evaluating one's hope level which was made up of two components: alternative way of thinking and actuating thinking. The first aspect was related to create potential means for attaining the purpose the one wanted to get. The second aspect, on the other hand, was pertinent to the demand to accomplish the objective and have the power to do that. The adapted version of the DH Scale formed by Tarhan and Bacanlı (2015) was utilized in the study. It encompassed 12 items with two factors on an 8-point scale: Actuating Thinking and Alternative Ways Thinking. Yet, the total score was utilized in the present research. Cronbach's alpha and test-retest reliability coefficients of the scale were 0.84 and 0.86 respectively.

d) *The Revised-Two Factor Study Process Questionnaire (the R-SPQ-2F):*

The R-SPQ-2F was considered as a tool of measurement probing students' learning pathways in their academic training (Biggs, Kember and Leung, 2001). With this scale, it was possible to grasp which kind of learning approaches they applied during their academic journey. Adaptation process to ensure the validity of the study; in order to check out the equivalency between the original and Turkish versions of the scale, both forms were administrated by 56 English Language trainee teachers in 3 weeks interval. The Pearson correlation coefficients for deep approach and surface approach were respectively .972 and .929. Exploratory factor analysis results reveal the fact that Turkish version of SPQ has a two-factor structure as it appears in the original scale although the motivation and strategy subscales were not found. Confirmatory factor analysis approved that the Turkish version of SPQ has two factors: deep and surface approaches. The Cronbach alpha coefficients of SPQ were 0.79 for deep approach and 0.73 for surface approach. The corrected item-total correlations ranged from 0.20 to 0.60. According to t-test results, for each factor and each item, differences between means of upper 27% and lower 27% groups were significant. These values display how the Turkish version of SPQ indicates a satisfying conformity to the Turkish culture. Its adapted version made by Yilmaz and Orhan (2011) was conducted in the

present research. It was composed of 20 items on a 5-point scale with two factors – Deep Approach and Surface Approach.

#### *The Demographic Form:*

The form was generated by the authors so as to understand whether the academic self-efficacy, achievement goal orientations, hope and learning approaches varied in respect to the demographic variables. These variables were gender, age and class level. Class level was categorized into two degrees: junior and senior. The age groups were diversified from 20-22 to 23-25.

#### *Procedure*

The Demographic Form, the ASE Scale, the AGO Scale, the DH Scale and the R-SPQ-2F Scale were given to the participants for once during their lectures. They were informed that their data would be only used for the research and would not be shared with anyone. The administration of the scales lasted for approximately 25 minutes.

#### *Method of Analysis*

To figure out the predictive power of the achievement goal orientations, academic-self-efficacy and hope on the undergraduates' learning approaches, multiple linear regression analyses were conducted through SPSS 22. Moreover, these constructs were examined based on the demographic variables – gender, class level and age – via independent-samples-test analyses.

### **Results**

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine whether achievement goal orientations, academic self-efficacy and hope significantly predicted undergraduates' levels of deep approach toward learning.

*Table 1. The Results of Multiple Regression Analysis for the Predictive Power of the Scores of Achievement Goal Orientations, Academic-Self-Efficacy and Hope on the Levels of Deep Approach (N=332)*

<b>Model</b>	<b>b</b>	<b>SE-b</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Pearson r</b>	<b>sr<sup>2</sup></b>
Constant	12.185	3.653		3.335	0.001		
Learning Goal	0.604	0.086	0.372	6.993	0.000	0.422	0.117
Performance-App. Goal	0.047	0.062	0.038	0.748	0.455	0.100	0.001
Performance-Avoid. Goal	0.025	0.075	0.018	0.335	0.738	-0.100	0.000
Academic Self-Efficacy	0.347	0.103	0.176	3.382	0.001	0.294	0.027
Hope	-0.220	0.099	-0.108	-2.212	0.028	-0.094	0.012

As it is seen on the table above; results demonstrated that the three predictor variables explained 22% of the variance ( $R=0.47$ ,  $R^2=0.22$ ,  $F(5, 326)=18.489$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). In Table 1, the raw and  $\beta$  coefficients of the predictor variables, their correlations with deep approach and their squared semi-partial correlations are summarized. As it is indicated in Table 1, learning goal orientation ( $\beta=0.37$ ,  $t(331)=6.993$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), academic self-efficacy ( $\beta=0.18$ ,  $t(331)=3.382$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) and hope ( $\beta=-0.11$ ,  $t(331)=-2.212$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) significantly predict the levels of deep approach. However, performance-approach ( $\beta=0.04$ ,  $t(331)=0.748$ ,  $p>0.05$ ) and performance-avoidance ( $\beta=0.02$ ,  $t(331)=0.335$ ,  $p>0.05$ ) goal orientations does not significantly predict students' degrees of deep learning approach. Squared semi-partial correlations of the predictors are low.

*Table 2. The Results of Multiple Regression Analysis for the Predictive Power of the Scores of Achievement Goal Orientations, Academic-Self-Efficacy and Hope on the Levels of Surface Approach (N=332)*

<b>Model</b>	<b>b</b>	<b>SE-b</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Pearson r</b>	<b>sr<sup>2</sup></b>
Constant	42.245	3.937		10.730	0.000		
Learning Goal	-0.561	0.093	-0.330	-6.024	0.000	-0.388	0.092
Performance-App. Goal	-0.051	0.067	-0.040	-0.764	0.446	-0.048	0.001
Performance-Avoid. Goal	0.221	0.080	0.149	2.747	0.006	0.232	0.002
Academic Self-Efficacy	-0.115	0.111	-0.056	-1.039	0.300	-0.189	0.003
Hope	-0.004	0.107	-0.002	-0.040	0.968	-0.010	,002

Multiple regression analysis was applied to scrutinize if the same variables significantly predicted students' levels of surface approach toward learning. The findings displayed that these variables explained 17% of the variance ( $R=0.42$ ,  $R^2=0.17$ ,  $F(5, 326)=13.829$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Table 2. shows their raw and  $\beta$  coefficients, correlations with surface approach and squared semi-partial correlations. As it is manifested in Table 2, learning ( $\beta=-0.330$ ,  $t(331)=-6.024$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) and performance-avoidance ( $\beta=0.149$ ,  $t(331)=2.747$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) goal orientations significantly predict the degrees of surface approach unlike academic self-efficacy ( $\beta=-0.056$ ,  $t(331)=-1.039$ ,  $p>0.05$ ), performance-approach goal tendency ( $\beta=-0.04$ ,  $t(331)=-0.764$ ,  $p>0.05$ ) and hope ( $\beta=-0.002$ ,  $t(331)=-0.04$ ,  $p>0.05$ ). The same result is obtained for the squared semi-partial correlations of the predictors as it was mentioned above.

Table 3. Independent-Samples-t-Test Results for the Levels of Deep and Surface Approaches Based on Gender

Scores	Groups	N	$\bar{x}$	Sd	SEM	t Test		
						t	Df	p
Deep Approach	Male	113	27.69	7.26	0.68	2.302	330	0.02
	Female	219	29.53	6.71	0.45			
Surface Approach	Male	113	30.41	6.66	0.63	-3.600	330	0.00
	Female	219	27.43	7.38	0.50			

Independent-samples-t-tests were employed to compare the levels of deep and surface approaches toward learning in male and female undergraduates. As it is indicated in Table 3, there is a pivotal difference in the scores of deep and surface approach for male and female students ( $t(330)=2.302$ ,  $p<0.05$ ;  $t(330)=-3.600$ ,  $p<0.01$  respectively). Female ones ( $M=29.53$ ,  $SD=6.71$ ) display higher scores in deep approach than male ones ( $M=27.69$ ,  $SD=7.26$ ). Yet, male ones ( $M=30.41$ ,  $SD=6.66$ ) demonstrate higher levels in surface approach than female ones ( $M=27.43$ ,  $SD=7.38$ ).

Table 4. Independent-Samples-t-Test Results for the Scores of Achievement Goal Orientations Based on Gender

Scores	Groups	N	$\bar{x}$	Sd	SEM	t Test		
						t	Df	p
Learning Goal Orientation	Male	113	21.63	4.69	0.44	3.417	330	0.00
	Female	219	23.29	3.92	0.26			
Performance-Approach Goal Orientation	Male	113	19.91	6.15	0.58	1.576	330	0.12
	Female	219	20.95	5.44	0.37			
Performance-Avoidance Goal Orientation	Male	113	11.23	5.04	0.47	-0.260	330	0.79
	Female	219	11.08	4.85	0.33			

In order to figure out whether the scores of achievement goal orientations differed in male and female students, independent-samples-t-test analyses were conducted meticulously. In Table 4, the findings reflect that there is a significant difference in the scores of learning goal tendency for male and female undergraduates as opposed to performance-approach and performance-avoidance goal tendencies ( $t(330)=3.417$ ,  $p<0.01$ ;  $t(330)=1.576$ ,  $p>0.05$ ;  $t(330)=-0.260$ ,  $p>0.05$  respectively). Female students ( $M=23.29$ ,  $SD=3.93$ ) reveal higher degrees in learning goal orientation than male ones ( $M=21.62$ ,  $SD=4.69$ ).

Furthermore, the levels of hope and academic self-efficacy were examined via independent-samples-t-tests so as to understand if they diversified in respect to gender. Yet, there were no significant differences in both hope ( $t(330)=-0.002$ ,  $p>0.05$ ) and academic self-efficacy ( $t(330)=-1.791$ ,  $p>0.05$ ) variables for male and female students.

Moreover, independent-samples-t-tests were applied whether the scores of achievement goal orientations, academic self-efficacy, hope and learning approaches altered in accordance with the class levels (junior and senior) the students were included. The results showed that there were no significant differences in the scores of learning ( $t(330)=-0.228$ ,  $p>0.05$ ), performance-approach ( $t(330)=0.928$ ,  $p>0.05$ ), performance-avoidance ( $t(330)=-1.264$ ,  $p>0.05$ ) goal predispositions, academic self-efficacy ( $t(330)=1.985$ ,  $p>0.05$ ), hope ( $t(330)=0.231$ ,  $p>0.05$ ), deep ( $t(330)=0.220$ ,  $p>0.05$ ) and surface ( $t(330)=-0.675$ ,  $p>0.05$ ) learning approaches, depending on the class levels.

In addition, independent-samples-t-test analysis indicated that there was an important discrepancy in the points of deep approach toward learning for 20-22 aged and 23-25 aged groups of students ( $t(330)=2.473$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) unlike surface approach ( $t(330)=1.728$ ,  $p>0.05$ ). Students who were 20-22 aged ( $M=29.96$ ,  $SD=6.54$ ) had higher scores in this variable than the ones who were 23-25 aged ( $M=28.08$ ,  $SD=7.14$ ).

Moreover, the degrees of achievement goal orientations were examined in terms of whether they changed based on the students' age groups. Independent-samples-t-test demonstrated that there was a significant difference in the levels of learning goal orientation for 20-22 aged and 23-25 aged groups ( $t(330)=3.063$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) as opposed to performance-approach ( $t(330)=-0.455$ ,  $p>0.05$ ) and performance-avoidance ( $t(330)=-1.473$ ,  $p>0.05$ ) goal inclinations. Specifically, 20-22 aged students ( $M=23.53$ ,  $SD=4.08$ ) showed higher levels in learning goals than 23-25 aged ones ( $M=22.10$ ,  $SD=4.32$ ).

Finally, the age groups were investigated if they displayed disparities in the scores of academic self-efficacy and hope via independent-samples-t-tests. The results showed that there were no vital variations in these variables ( $t(330)=-1.407$ ,  $p>0.05$ ;  $t(330)=0.173$ ,  $p>0.05$  respectively) for 20-22 aged and 23-25 aged groups of undergraduates.

## Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of the present study was to elaborate on whether the undergraduates' learning approaches were formed by achievement goal tendencies, academic self-efficacy and hope. The findings indicated that one's learning goal inclinations had a predictive role on his deep and surface approaches toward learning. Specifically, there was a significantly positive correlation between the levels of learning goal orientation and deep approach ( $r=0.422$ ,  $p<0.001$ ).

Yet, it had a negative correlation with the surface approach ( $r=-0.388$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Besides, his performance-avoidance goal predispositions were the noteworthy precursors of his degrees of surface approach. These outcomes are in line with the theoretical frameworks of Marton and Saljo (1976), Biggs (1979), and some other researchers' findings (Entwistle et. al.,1979; Ramsden, 2003; Kreber, 2003; Phan, 2009, and McLaughlin & Durrant, 2017; Everaert, Opdecam, and Maussen, 2017). The findings of this current research are also supported by the study results of Kong and Hau (1996) and Diseth, (2011). The students adopting the learning goal predisposition have a profound concern about comprehending the topics in the courses. They long for being proficient at these subjects instead of getting the highest grades in the class (Entwistle & McCune, 2004). However, the students having lower degrees of learning goal tendencies, and higher degrees of performance-avoidance goal tendencies try to demonstrate their skills at best so as to surpass the others in the class, which in turn leads to adopt the surface approach toward learning. In other words, they would like to duplicate the knowledge in the assessments via the rote memorization method in order to be the most outstanding student in the course.

Another remarkable finding in the current study was how both levels of academic self-efficacy and hope create a pivotal influence on shaping the levels of deep approach. This result can be considered as the fact that the students having high levels of academic self-efficacy and hope lean to think that they can possess the adequate capacities and skills, and strength to accomplish the learning task (Bandura, 1993). This result can be assessed as the students having high self-efficacy beliefs, have also high confidence about their ability to perform well on certain tasks and to set mastery goals. Nietfeld & Enders (2003) suggested that students acquiring high levels of hope also tend to maintain a mastery goal orientation. This can be explained as students who have high hope levels also adopt deep learning approaches. In this respect, they ponder that they can learn the subtle essence of the learning material thoroughly. Such an opinion triggers the preference of deep approach toward learning. The same finding was obtained by Phan (2011) and Diseth (2011), whose objective was to figure out the predictive power of academic self-efficacy on learning approaches. Expectancy refers to students' beliefs about whether they can perform a task or not. Likewise, Al-Harthy et al (2010) found that self-efficacy and task value directly predict specific achievement goal orientations. Their model demonstrates how students with high sense of self efficacy and task value adopt mastery goals for their learning. In other words, self efficacy and the value assigned to a task function impel students to pursue a specific goal-orientation. According to Entwistle & McCune (2004), deep approach students are intrinsically motivated towards the learning content and have also content mastery goals. This particular trait, may also lead to think of having high level of Hope.

The other aim was to assess whether these variables were diversified in accordance with the demographic variables – gender, age and class level. Independent-samples-t-tests manifested that the degrees of the female students' learning goal inclinations were higher than the male ones. This finding is consistent with the results of the previous studies (Anderman & Anderman, 1999; Cavallo, Potter & Rozman, 2004; Splan, Brooks, Porr and Broyles, 2011; Everaert, Opdecam, and Maussen, 2017). To the contrary, Phan (2009) reported on his research that no statistically significant gender differences existed in performance goal orientation and deep processing strategies on studying. It can be interpreted as the fact that female undergraduates depict their achievements in terms of lots of endeavors they put into the course subjects. Yet, male undergraduates describe their attainments based on their skills and competences manifested to exceed the others in these topics. The differences of learning approaches among male and female students as stated above may be based upon the gender oriented features the students possess. Another possible reason that should take into consideration is the cultural effect: in Turkish culture, in many fields, there are high expectations for females whose perceptions of success in return become an inevitable way to build their academic and social status.

Moreover, the undergraduates (20 to 22 aged) indicated higher levels in learning goal tendency than the other ones (23 to 25 aged). This outcome can be seen as the fact that the students are more concerned about having higher GPAs to be part of a graduate program as they move forward in their academic pathway. Such an understanding leads them to prefer performance goals more than learning goals. Roebken (2007) describes this condition as one of the situational effects like culture on achievement goal orientations. Hence, the students' age level is a determinant factor on the choice of deep or surface approaches toward learning. In current research; there is no significant difference between class levels of students as a demographic variable, and learning approaches. In contrast to this research, on a study conducted by Everaert, Opdecam and Maussen (2017), it is found that the first grade students had deep learning approaches.

In conclusion, the present research contributes to a new perspective on the literature of undergraduates' learning approaches. It contemplates the different components of self-regulative learning – achievement goal orientations, academic self-efficacy and hope – as vital effects on students' learning strategies at their majors. And the study also probes the socio-demographic variables – gender, age and class level of the students - in each component meticulously.

As this research contributes to the literature by providing important and useful findings, the research also contains some limitations; First of all, the previous studies have generally focused on the relation between the academic achievement and goal orientation and the learning approaches. However, this study tries to emphasize the relationship between the students' motivational features and goal orientation and learning approaches. In spite of the fact that the significant relationship between Hope and Learning became as an emerging topic in literature and as it also appears in

this research, there is a need for further examination. Secondly, this research has conducted on undergraduate students living in a particular city. A further research is needed to be designed in diversified regions for larger sample groups. Thirdly, it is common to encounter on the findings which indicate the cultural effects on learning approaches. (Kember, 2000; McLaughlin, & Durrant, 2017). Therefore, to identify the learning approaches of students', cross cultural studies should be considered as one of the key component of all relevant studies. Lastly, to disclose the relationship between hope and deep learning approach, it can be benefit from causal modeling procedures –such as SEM-.

Based on this research's findings; some recommendations can be listed in order to enrich students' learning abilities/ experiences and to help them overcoming the academic challenges they face: Educators can be encouraged to provide appropriate learning materials, create convenient study surrounding which will certainly lead to ease the students' learning process. Educators need to adopt approaches to increase students' motives to learn. Psychological counselors at the universities can diversify the academic as well as motivational activities to guide students' career development processes. Furthermore, they can develop practical programs to identify students' social and academic problems. Finally; it is recommended for counselors to develop and implement programs building Hope -as a leading cognitive construct of academic achievement- as well as to promote academic self- efficacy percepts for each student.

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