

Introduction

- Each September, a new cohort of students enters postsecondary education (PSE), facing challenges in academic, social, and emotional transitions.
- While institutions provide structural support, **psychosocial factors like mindset** may also influence students' success.
- Mindsets:**
- Growth mindset** – belief that abilities can develop with effort.
- Fixed mindset** – belief that abilities are static and unchangeable.
- This study explores whether mindset predicts **academic and emotional outcomes** at the end of the first term.

Methods

Participants:

- First-year undergraduate students at a mid-sized university in Western Canada.
- Completed surveys at **two time points**: beginning and end of first term.
- Grouped based on **z-scores** on a mindset scale:
 - Growth mindset** (n = 103)
 - Fixed mindset** (n = 84)

Analysis:

- Conducted **independent samples t-tests** to compare outcomes.
 - Self-Efficacy** (e.g., I will be able to successfully overcome many challenges.)
 - Resilience** (e.g., I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times.)
 - Positive Emotions** (e.g., happy, excited)
 - Negative Emotions** (e.g., anxious, stressed)
 - Acquisition of Knowledge and Skills** (e.g., Critical thinking skills)
 - Overall Satisfaction** (i.e., Please rate your satisfaction with your overall postsecondary experience)



University
of Manitoba

Empowering Students: Mindsets as a Key to First-Year Success

Jeremy Roberts, Stephanie Young, & Lauren D. Goegan

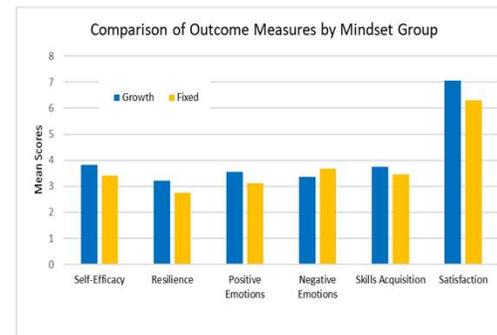
Students with a growth mindset do better than those with a fixed mindset on various academic and emotional outcomes.



Results

Independent Samples T-Test

Variable	Group Means (Growth / Fixed Mindset)	Levene's Test (p)	Equal Variances Assumed?	t (df)	p-value (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval
Self-Efficacy Average	3.82 / 3.40	0.565	Yes	3.332 (184)	0.001	0.411	[0.168, 0.655]
Resilience Average	3.21 / 2.74	0.262	Yes	3.866 (185)	<0.001	0.468	[0.229, 0.707]
Positive Emotions	3.55 / 3.12	0.556	Yes	3.173 (185)	0.002	0.430	[0.163, 0.697]
Negative Emotions	3.36 / 3.69	0.484	Yes	-2.327 (184)	0.021	-0.323	[-0.597, -0.049]
Skills Development Average	3.76 / 3.46	0.029	No	2.466 (158.25)	0.015	0.293	[0.058, 0.528]
Satisfaction with Learning	7.07 / 6.31	<0.001	No	2.742 (137.92)	0.007	0.754	[0.210, 1.299]



Summary & Recommendations

- Growth mindset is linked to **greater self-efficacy, resilience, satisfaction, and fewer negative emotions** in first-year students.
- Institutions should consider:
 - Embedding **mindset-promoting interventions** in orientation programs.
 - Training instructors to **encourage growth language** and feedback.
 - Providing **resources** to foster resilience and adaptive learning attitudes.

Jeremy Roberts
rob235@myumanitoba.ca

Stephanie Young
stephanie.young@umanitoba.ca

Dr. Lauren D. Goegan
Lauren.Goegan@umanitoba.ca

A Growth Mindset versus Fixed Mindset in Post-Secondary Education based on Carol Dweck's *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*

This research is being conducted in partnership with UM Student Affairs