

The Relationship Between Self-Concept and Anxiety Among College Students During the Online Learning Modality

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Abstract

Due to the overall high number of COVID-19 cases in the Philippines, students are restricted from studying in their homes. Hence, online learning developed consequences that influenced their self-concept and anxiety. The sudden and unexpected adjustment from face-to-face classes to online learning had significant effects on students' self-concept and educational achievement. Even though many students have received awards for their determination and hard work, their psychological health and self-concept remain their main priorities during the current pandemic. Anxiety is something that students face from time to time, as being lonely can impact their confidence. Moreover, this study investigates the relationship between self-concept and anxiety among college students. The statistical findings revealed a significant relationship between self-concept and anxiety ($r = .148$).

Keywords: Anxiety, Self-concept, College Students, Online Learning, COVID-19 Pandemic

Introduction

College students frequently suffer from mental health issues. In reality, it is one of the most widely discussed and publicized concerns in academics, with students being the primary sufferers (Narang, 2022). As a result of the pandemic's restrictions, university students are more likely to develop mental health concerns, which could significantly impact their academic progress, social relationships, and future professional and personal opportunities (Chen & Lucock, 2022). Under normal circumstances, college students experience increased psychological strain and subsequent unfavorable academic effects (Chen & Lucock, 2022). (American College Health Association, 2019). Physical distance measures enforced in response to COVID-19, which is expected to aggravate academic expectations for students, have forced tertiary education institutions to adopt an emergency online learning style. COVID-19 impacts daily living, including educational, social, and recreational activities, posing both familial and emotional obstacles. Moreover, psychological conditions such as self-fulfillment, self-esteem, and dynamic relationships become more important when both physiological and security needs are addressed. It's worth noting that one's self-concept, defined as one's perception of oneself or one's overall judgment of self-esteem, can help people cope with their psychological suffering (Valero et al., 2020).

Self-concept is the cognitive part of how people see themselves. It refers to a broad concept we have about

ourselves, including who we are physiologically, mentally, behaviorally, intellectually, and in other ways. It's the complex system through which people learn their beliefs, opinions, and attitudes about themselves (Misbah et al. 2016). A healthy self-concept is a depiction of the self that is consistent with reality (actual self); however, there will be gaps if the image of the ideal self-concept is not compatible with reality. A person will experience discomfort as a result of these gaps. The wider the chasm, the more discomfort it will inflict (Susana, 2017). Negative self-perceptions lower students' self-concepts, which leads to a rise in anxiety among students (Senthil, 2016). A negative self-perception can harm one's capacity and growth. A person's self-concept is constant, mainly during adolescence. They may have a high and low self. Adolescents with a negative self-concept have considerably lower consciousness stability than those with a positive mind in the early stages of development. If a person does not create a positive and healthy self-concept, he may experience anxiety (Kaur, 2017).

Anxiety is classified as an emotional response because it alerts the individual, raises his activity levels, and unquestionably raises the threshold for numerous anticipatory reactions. Nervousness tends to help learn new stimulation reaction connections in its milder versions (Kaur, 2017). Anxiety is a sensation of unease over a future event. Anxiety is virtually identical to fear, except that fear has a distinct subject and object, whereas anxiety is caused by unreasonable imaginative projections (Buhari, 2018). In addition, when we are anxious, we may believe that our ability to deal with

the situation is inadequate, that we are concerned about what will happen in the future, or that we are dwelling on the past (Orsillo, 2016). Anxiety is a typical response to stretching, and it can be beneficial in specific situations by making a person more conscious, plan, and focus (Muskin, 2021). This research investigates the relationship between consciousness and anxiety among college students. As a result, it would provide sufficient knowledge and understanding of students' self-concept and anxiety.

There is a connection between self-concept and anxiety about communicative ability, according to Buhari et al. (2018). According to the researchers, students showed considerable anxiety and a mildly favorable self-concept. In Rameshk et al. (2016) study, anxiety and self-esteem have nothing to do with each other. However, there was a substantial link between age and anxiety, with anxiety decreasing as age increased. Thus, it appears that self-concept and anxiety are unrelated. On the other hand, younger kids are likely to require greater assistance in managing their anxiety.

Moreover, according to the findings of Morad et al. (2020), the correlation coefficient between trait competitive anxiety and self-concept indices was 0/016 (0/05), indicating that the type of feedback to one's self without any personal judgment or comparison with others was associated with anxiety during the race. In the study of Prakash (2013), there is a correlation between self-concept and anxiety among student teachers. As a result, the researcher suggests that showing gratitude for student teachers' successes can help them strengthen their self-concept.

Moreover, this study investigates the relationship between self-concept and anxiety among college students. Thus, it would provide enough knowledge and understanding of students' self-concept correlation with anxiety. To universities and colleges, these studies could be useful for assessing and monitoring the students during new average education implementation to avoid any issues regarding the students' mental health during the pandemic.

Research Question

This study investigates the relationship between self-concept and anxiety among college students. Specifically, it sought to answer the following question:

1. Is there a significant relationship between self-concept and anxiety among college students?

Literature Review

Self-Concept

A person's personality is the wholeness of a person that can be linked to an individual's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors (Prakash, 2013). Thus, the self is the nature of a person that consists of all characteristics that make us unique for who we are as we start to grow from birth to adulthood. Self-concept is a perception of a person's insight and belief in themselves. A positive self-concept will probably empower a person to have a blessed, satisfied and prosperous life. As the study showed, there is a correlation between self-concept and anxiety of student teachers; therefore, the researcher suggests that appreciation for student teachers' success helps develop their self-concept.

Self-concept as an insight of oneself has a significant role in growing as a person. The study of Gehlawat (2019) emphasized self-concept as simple as short an appreciation of oneself, which implies thought, feeling, and the behavior of an individual. It was found to have minor and moderate relation to the self-concept and anxiety of adolescents in public and private schools. It implies that the parents, teachers, and the administrator shall do their best to motivate the adolescent's self-concept and with different strategies, adolescents will develop their career maturity.

In the study by Kaur (2017), the academic accomplishment of adolescent pupils was connected to their self-concept and anxiety, and consciousness was defined as personal insight into oneself rather than a person's true self. In this study, the researcher found out that self-concept and anxiety were correlated to each other. Having a poor self-concept of an individual can affect his growth, specifically in adolescence, where a person does not think of what other people can say or think about them; it is all about oneself that can build a self-concept among individuals. During the adolescent stage of a person's growth, having a negative self-concept can lead to an unstable self-concept. If it does not definitely develop into an individual self-concept, it can cause anxiety, or they may feel more anxious than those who have positive self-concept in adolescence.

On the contrary, the study by Rameshk et al. (2016) stated that self-concept of a person has a significant contribution to mental health professionals; it can identify a person with mental health for a positive self-concept. Determining all aspects that can affect an individual's mental and physical health, it really needs

attention, especially the learners that have been through a lot of struggles in studying. The study found that there is no link between self-concept and anxiety among the students of Kerman University but young student's need assistance in handling their anxiety.

The field of Psychology focuses on investigating personality and analytical expertise overtime on how it affects the performance of students in work and school (Castro & Díaz, 2016). The researcher found that the level of anxiety associated with the self-concept of the student, the low self-concept, the higher the level of anxiety students can get. The researcher may suggest that it could be exposed to moderate anxiety. That is why it is really important to discuss everything to students, not just to be realistic but also for us to know more about our students.

The study of Kaur and Kumaran (2016) upon investigating the relation between the academic self-concept and Test anxiety of student, generally expound on self-concept as the primary tool in psychology and other related association in social science that carefully studied and revealed that strengthening self-concept have definite effect to a different field (Branden, 1994; Marsh & Craven, 1997). Self-concept in academics refers to the potential of how students discover and conceive their potential in the academic field (Rosen, Glennie, Lennon & Bozick, 2010). The researcher found measurable differences between the two variables regarding gender, institution and education assessment. It was recommended that a school psychologist handle anxiety and low self-concept issues with proper action and solutions. The finding can also be an inspiration to build a program for students to develop their educational skills for them to be able to handle anxiety and improve their self-concept.

Dolenc (2019) study used the State-Trait Anxiety Scale and the Physical Self-Description Survey to assess body heaviness in Slovenian female adolescents using the State-Trait Anxiety Scale and the Physical Self-Description Questionnaire. The study revealed the significant relation between self-concept and anxiety in association with the awareness of body mass; on the other hand, only two somatic self-concept proportions related to the scale of BMI among female adolescents. The findings recommend that awareness of one's body mass has a big role in motivating oneself to avoid risk that causes body dissatisfaction. Parents and school personnel also have a big role in monitoring the weight condition of a student and the student to monitor their

insight and reliance on themselves.

The study of Chaturvedi (2015) on anxiety's impact on self-concept and adjustment in Mumbai's teenagers with learning difficulties found no relation with self-concept. Even past research has already found that anxiety impacts self-concept in the learning of disabled children. The result indicates a contradiction of the two; if the anxiety was high, the child's self-concept was low. It also stated there that anxiety could be of any struggles we are facing to handle this is to have a positive self-concept.

Anxiety

Anxiety is the most frequent mental health worry among college students, with more than half of those polled saying they had experienced extreme anxiety in the preceding year. If a student is having trouble adjusting to one or more areas of college life, they may become depressed and have worrisome thoughts. Negative self-talk, self-doubt, concern, cycles of obsessing over potential outcomes, and other self-critical ideas are expected. As the student's views become more intense, there's a chance that they'll become more anxious and withdraw themselves to avoid being revealed (American College Health Association, 2014).

Although there are differences between stress and anxiety, according to (ACHA, 2019; Morey and Taylor, 2019), both are substantial difficulties for college students. About a third of all college students claim that stress impacted their academic performance the previous academic year. Stress is a natural part of life, and everyone experiences worry and anxiety from time to time. When stress-related reactions begin to take precedence over normal functioning, stress can morph into worry.

Anxiety has been found to have a negative impact on people's overall health. The importance of early cancer detection cannot be overstated. It is critical to understand mental health issues to determine the appropriate interventions and programs since; improving psychological health promotion programs is extremely relevant, according to the World Health Organization's Strategy in 2020 (World Health Organization, 2013). Additional in-depth research is needed to study other aspects of anxiety fully.

A nationwide survey of college students who said that depression or anxiety had a significant impact on their academic performance throughout the academic year was done by the American College Health Association College Health Assessment (ACHA-NCHA) (2014).

The most common condition among college students is an anxiety disorder. According to ACHA, 14.3 percent of 2-year and 4-year college students had severe anxiety (SAMHSA, 2015).

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on people's mental health. The unusual confusion connected with the epidemic may contribute to anxiety and stress, particularly among people who have a high tolerance for uncertainty. If stress isn't adequately managed, it can lead to worry. Anxiety is a generalized and misdirected emotion of discomfort caused by a response to a situation that is only seen as harmful subjectively (Rettie & Daniels, 2021).

Self-Concept And Anxiety

According to Prakash (2013), there is a significant association between self-concept and anxiety among student instructors. As a result, there is a link between the component of academic stress and the component of students' academic self-concept. Furthermore, Kaur(2017) discovered no significant association between self-concept and anxiety in adolescent students' academic performance. Nejad et al. (2016) discussed that anxiety is substantially related to self-concept, implying that low self-concept is associated with high academic anxiety in interpreter trainees.

However, Rameshk et al. (2016) obtained the result in the investigation at Kerman University; there is no connection between self-concept and anxiety among students. Finally, Gehwalat(2019) reported no significant differences between the self-concept and anxiety of adolescents studying in government schools. There is a possible relation between self-concept and anxiety during the pandemic with all the studies, and new normal education was implemented. The possible relation should be studied in proper and correct findings that strongly support the correlation between independent and dependent variables.

Methodology

Research Design

The study used a descriptive-correlational design to fully comprehend the relationship between self-concept and anxiety among college students.

Participants

The respondents of this study were 151 college students who were enrolled in different universities

and colleges during the school year 2021-2022. Thus, the study employed the convenience sampling technique through goggle forms that have been posted to various platforms to gather respondents needed.

Instruments

In collecting accurate data, the researcher utilized the Adolescents' Self-concept Short Scale (ASCSS), a short version of Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (PHCSCS) that has been recommended to different fields in psychology. The scale has excellent psychometric characteristics concerning inside consistency and outer legitimacy that is useful to examine and psycho educational application, to assess the self-concept of adolescents' separation, growth and advancement. The short version of PHCSCS contains 30 statements with the response or rating scale of 1 (total disagreement) to 6 (total agreement) as evaluation or representation of oneself in relation with others (Veiga & Leite, 2016).

On the other hand, in collecting the level of anxiety Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale - 21 Items (DASS-21) was used in this study. The Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale were intended to fill the hole in recognizing normal mental disorder. One valuable advantage of the DASS-21 is that it was planned as a solitary instrument to quantify side effects of depression, anxiety and stress (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995). Supported the study of Coker et al.(DASS-21 is a particular and appropriate exploration instrument convenient for fast screening of depression, anxiety, and stress. It has a decent interior consistency and sufficient simultaneous legitimacy. This scale was composed of 21 items with 3 self-report scales with the same contents to measure the level of depression, anxiety and stress of an individual that applied for over the past week. Thus, the study only utilized the 7 items indicators of the anxiety subscale to measure the respondents' anxiety level.

Procedures

Permission of the participants was sought and acquired for the survey, and student participants were asked to consent. The Adolescent Self-concept Short Scale and the Social DASS21 were used to complete the questionnaire that was used to determine the relationship between the self-concept and anxiety of the college students. The collected data served as a basis for developing an objective interpretation of the data and generating a discussion of the findings. Thus,

the gathered data from the participants is prioritized for the respondents' confidentiality and security under the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (RA 10173).

Ethical Considerations

By the COVID 19 pandemic regulations, the ethical standards were strictly implemented on the various online platforms. Therefore, the survey questionnaire was distributed through Google Form, and the research professor also approved the instruments and methods used to collect data. Moreover, participants also can agree to the terms and conditions or disregard the form. Personal information and data obtained will be used strictly for scholarly purposes, and the researcher will guarantee that the respondents have given their consent before answering the questionnaires. Using the given factors above, the language used in the survey form was suitable for both Filipino and English speakers. Thus, ethical regards were explicitly applied.

Result

This section reveals the study's findings through the use of the research question. The Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated using SPSS. With this, the comparison and determination of the mean and the relationship between variables were concluded.

Relationship Between Self-concept and Anxiety

The study is focused primarily on the relationship between self-concept and anxiety. As shown in Table 1, the statistical analysis revealed that the variables are significantly correlated. As a result, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 1

Relationship Between Self-Concept and Anxiety

CORRELATION		
	<i>Self-Concept</i>	<i>Anxiety</i>
<i>Self-Concept</i>	-	.143*
<i>Anxiety</i>	.143*	-

Discussion

This study investigates the relationship between self-concept and anxiety among college students. This evaluation can be concluded that self-concept has a significant relation to anxiety. Thus, the results show the possibility that the adverse influence of the pandemic on the students' self-concept can also increase the students' level of anxiety.

Therefore, the schools and institutions should consider guiding the students to develop self-concept by improving the implemented method, adapting new learning techniques, and monitoring the level of students' anxiety. It is reflected that students with negative self-concept are more liable to anxiety. Thus, the study proposed to promote priority in monitoring the students' circumstances, potential, perceptions, and coping strategies with the guidance of parents and schools as to avoid anxiety for students. Consequently, students' self-concept will increase as the exposure of anxiety in students would be evitable and tended to in advance.

Conclusion

In the middle of the pandemic, current online learning has had a limited impact on self-concept and anxiety. As stated in the result, there is a significant correlation between self-concept and anxiety among students in the Philippines, implying that the null hypothesis is rejected. A massive number of respondents ascertained that during COVID-19, there was instability in their cognitive and companionable capability. Based on the given table above, the result of the statistical analysis was that self-concept and anxiety have a significant relationship. By depending on a student's general self-concept, it is possible to determine a student's ability to develop effective strategic mechanisms by depending on their broad knowledge; they have been able to work more efficiently. Therefore, the study strongly encourages monitoring students' health and coping capacities be monitored. Students cannot concentrate on their study because of their anxiety and stress. Teachers and parents should be courteous and helpful throughout their academic careers.

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