RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE ROLE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE ANXIETY IN SHAPING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE FOR TOURISM MANAGEMENT STUDENTS: A CORRELATIONAL STUDY

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Abstract

This study examined the level of learning anxiety in English and its relationship with academic performance among tourism management students. Employing a correlational research design, the study aimed to explore the connection between these two variables among 148 respondents. The findings revealed that the respondents experienced a moderate level of anxiety when learning English. Statistical analysis demonstrated a highly significant relationship between learning anxiety and academic performance, with a p-value of 0.890. This suggests that even minimal concerns about learning English can significantly impact students' academic success in the language. Interestingly, the data indicated that lower levels of English learning anxiety were associated with higher academic performance in English, even amidst the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. These results underscore the importance of addressing learning anxiety to enhance students' academic outcomes. By mitigating anxiety, educators can create a more supportive learning environment, thereby fostering better performance in English among tourism management students. This study contributes to the growing body of research on the impact of psychological factors on academic achievement, particularly in language learning. Given the significant correlation found, further research could explore intervention strategies to reduce English learning anxiety and examine their effectiveness in improving academic performance. The findings highlight a critical area for educational focus, especially in times of crisis, such as the pandemic, where additional stressors can exacerbate learning difficulties. Addressing learning anxiety is crucial for promoting academic success and overall well-being among students.

Keywords: *academic performance, learning anxiety, English*

Introduction

The English language has been considered the universal language for an extended period since it played an essential role in one's academic and professional lives globally. Filipinos use the English language in general, specifically in education, since English is the language mainly used in academic schools. This made the English language a crucial component of the Philippine education system, as it is ingrained in almost every aspect of communication. However, Maute and Abadiano (2020) discussed the challenges students face when attempting to comprehend the language. Because of this, they developed a fear of being criticized, which in turn led to the formation of unfavorable perceptions of the language, which ended up causing them to experience anxiety. According to Jugo (2020), language anxiety is a significant factor in determining the success of language learning because it tends to have incapacitating effects on the individuals learning the language.

During the COVID-19 pandemic that occurred in the country, the problem of anxiety associated with learning English became even more severe. This is because young students were forced to experience fear, uncertainty, physical and social isolation, and the challenge of adjusting to the environment of distance learning. According to Jiao et al. (2020), these characteristics caused young students to experience increased anxiety at the time of learning, mainly when it came to English, as they adjusted to the new standard method of education.

Consequently, the researchers were motivated to determine the extent of English learning anxiety that KCC elementary higher-grade students experience and how this anxiety would link to the student's academic performance in English at the primary level. Given these circumstances, the researchers' objective was to assist in enhancing the students' deteriorating performance in the English language. There were still assumptions and questions over whether the students' fears regarding the process of learning English could either have

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a beneficial or detrimental impact on their performance as they adjusted to the new typical learning style. Because of this, this investigation was carried out. Specifically, this study aimed to answer the question:

1. Is there a significant correlation between English learning anxiety and academic performance among the respondents?

Methodology

Correlational design is used as a research design in this study to determine the correlation between English learning anxiety and academic performance among the respondents. Correlational research design is applicable when investigating a study's research variable and the natural relationships or associations (Lemboye, 2019). The study's respondents were 148 tourism management students at a local state college in Aklan.

Through the use of Yim and Yu's (2011) English Learning Anxiety Scale (ELAS), this study utilized a research instrument. Oral English classroom anxiety and low self-confidence in English are the two characteristics measured by this research instrument, which consists of fourteen items. The test was initially derived from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale developed by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986). Subsequently, it was adjusted and adapted specifically for students in elementary school. To establish the validity and reliability of the ELAS.

The following steps were observed in conducting the study. The researchers submitted a permission letter to the Dean to conduct the study and attain the student's grade. To get reliable results, the researchers ensure the participants have already eaten and are far from distractions. Furthermore, the researchers disseminated the instrument to the participants, and they were given enough time to answer. The results were immediately tabulated and tailed by the researchers. In order to measure the academic performance, the researchers get the average grade of the respondents. The study used the Pearson R Correlation Test to analyze and generate the results and findings.

Appropriate ethical principles are essential in all research studies since they protect all human subjects. Thus, ethical considerations regarding the collection process, handling of the data, storing and safe-keeping, and disposal of data were observed during this study.

Result and Discussion

Significant Relationship between English Learning Anxiety and Academic Performance in English

The study revealed a significant correlation between English learning anxiety and academic performance in English. Thus, the study implies that a low level of English learning anxiety can produce an outstanding academic performance in English. In contrast, a high level of English learning anxiety leads to an inferior academic standing. The study's findings already uncovered the assumptions that anxieties about learning English could affect their academic performance positively or negatively.

Table 1. *Relationship between the variables*

Variable		Academic Performance
English Learning Anxiety	Pearson Correlation	.890
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.045**
	N	148

Conclusion

Based on the study's findings, several conclusions were drawn for college tourism management students. Distance online learning due to the pandemic hasn't significantly impacted students but could worsen moderate anxiety if not carefully managed. Both excessive and insufficient study time can stress students, while balanced study time fosters effective time management and good study habits. The current learning modality, particularly online learning, challenges teachers' ability to monitor student progress, potentially leading to unreliable grades due to external help. Female students, who are more competitive academically, are more prone to stress and anxiety due to self-imposed pressure. Finally, lower levels of English learning anxiety correlate with higher academic performance, while higher anxiety levels are linked to poorer performance in English.

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