

Anxiety and Academic Performance based on the school average, in Students of the Faculty of Psychology and Human Communication Therapy (FPYTCH) of the Juárez University of the State of Durango

Ansiedad y Rendimiento Académico con base al promedio escolar, en Estudiantes de la Facultad de Psicología y Terapia de la Comunicación Humana (FPYTCH) de la Universidad Juárez del Estado de Durango

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Resumen

En los estudiantes de nivel licenciatura, no es poco común escuchar que tienen algún síntoma de ansiedad, debido a la carga de trabajo que tienen. Objetivos: Identificar la presencia de ansiedad en los estudiantes de la FPYTCH, Indicar si se afecta el rendimiento académico respecto a la ansiedad en los estudiantes de la FPYTCH. Metodología: Está investigación fue de tipo no experimental, exploratoria, observacional, por encuesta, de corte transversal y descriptiva, pues no se realizó maniobra experimental alguna, en una muestra no probabilística obtenida por accidente y por conveniencia, previa firma de consentimiento informado. Procedimiento: Participaron 104 estudiantes correspondientes a los semestres de 1º, 2º, 3º, 4º y 5º, a quienes se les aplicó el cuestionario de ansiedad de Beck. Para el procesamiento estadístico se empleó el software spss versión 20.0. Contribución: .906 CRONBACH. Los resultados obtenidos, muestran que 28.8 % de los estudiantes presentan ansiedad grave y un 13.5 % no tienen ansiedad, así como el promedio de calificación mínimo encontrado es de 6.9 y el máximo es de 9.7, sin embargo, dicho promedio de calificación no se encuentra influenciado por la presencia o no de la ansiedad.

Ansiedad, Rendimiento Académico, Estudiantes universitarios

Abstract

In undergraduate students, it is not uncommon to hear that they have symptoms of anxiety, due to the workload they have. Objectives: Identify the presence of anxiety in FPYTCH students, Indicate if academic performance is affected with respect to anxiety in FPYTCH students. Methodology: This research was non-experimental, exploratory, observational, by survey, cross-sectional and descriptive, since no experimental maneuver was performed, in a non-probabilistic sample obtained by accident and convenience, after signing the informed consent. Procedure: 104 students participated corresponding to the semesters of 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th, to who were administered the Beck anxiety questionnaire. For statistical processing, spss version 20.0 software was used. Contribution: .906 CRONBACH. The results obtained show that 28.8% of the students present severe anxiety and 13.5% do not have anxiety, as well as the minimum grade average found is 6.9 and the maximum is 9.7, however, said grade average is not found. influenced by the presence or not of anxiety.

Anxiety, Academic Performance, University student

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Introduction

Studying for a university degree is a stage in the life of the individual, which implies that due to the age of the students at that time, they are consolidating their life projects, acquiring a greater number of responsibilities, such as, for example, some of them pay for their studies alone, become independent from their parents and therefore increase their commitments in all senses.

It is important to take into account what mental health is, which is defined by WHO (2018) as an integral and essential component of health. The WHO Constitution states, "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." An important implication of this definition is that it views mental health as more than the absence of mental disorders or disabilities. In recent years, anxiety has become one of the most frequently occurring psychological pathologies.

It can be said that anxiety is an emotion characterized by the feeling of fear, dread, depression, insecurity, as a consequence of the individual's feeling that his interests are threatened, that he has insufficient means, that he has difficulties in performing appropriate behaviors, that he is dissatisfied with the success he has achieved, or that he has problems in maintaining these achievements (Baeza, J., Balaguer, G., Belchi, I., Coronas, M. and Guillamón, N. 2008).

As indicated by Arco, López, Heilborn and Fernández (2005), cited by Martínez, V. (2014), entering the University, can entail significant changes in the daily activities of students (separation from the family nucleus, increased responsibilities, re-evaluation of the activities they perform). In itself, the university world presents organizational and academic characteristics and demands that sometimes lead the young person to adaptive reactions generating anxiety and considerable psychosocial disturbance with a decrease in performance.

It is worth noting that the academic load that the student takes every semester is considered a stressor that in turn can trigger anxiety (Toro, 2011. Cited in Trunce, Villarreal, Arntz, Muñoz and Werner, 2020).

Justification

Currently, anxiety can be associated with multiple factors, on many occasions, it is because it is about complying with what society sets, the expectations that are placed on individuals or what is "expected of them" in terms of academics.

The present study will focus on identifying whether anxiety has an impact on academic performance based on the students' grade point average.

For the above mentioned, there is a need to identify if there is anxiety in students, as well as if it affects academic performance.

Problem

In these times, talking about anxiety is quite common, suffering from it is something that society has had to deal with in recent years, since anxiety is present in children, adolescents and adults, regardless of age, socioeconomic level, or whether they are working students or without work or academic occupations.

Anxiety can affect the performance of individuals in various areas, but the particular interest for this study is the academic performance of students of the Faculty of Psychology and Human Communication Therapy. Therefore, the research question is: Does the presence of anxiety in the students of the Faculty of Psychology and Human Communication Therapy affect their academic performance?

Hypothesis

Hi: The students of the faculty of psychology present low academic average in relation to anxiety.

Ho: The students of the faculty of psychology do not present low academic average in relation to anxiety.

Objectives

General Objective

- To identify the presence of anxiety in FPYTCH students.

Specific Objective

- To indicate whether academic performance is affected by anxiety in FPyTCH students.

Theoretical Framework**Concept of Anxiety**

The term anxiety comes from the Latin *anxietas*, distress or affliction. It consists of a state of psychophysical discomfort characterized by a feeling of restlessness, uneasiness, insecurity or unease in the face of what is experienced as an imminent threat with an undefined cause. The basic difference between normal and pathological anxiety is that the latter is based on an unreal or distorted assessment of the threat (Virues, 2005).

Therefore, it can be said that anxiety is presented as a response to circumstances that the person feels as a threat, being able to present alterations of cognitive, behavioral or psychophysiological nature. Perez (2003) cited by Diaz and Castro (2020), defines anxiety as the adaptive response of an alarm system that prepares an organism to debate against a potential danger; under normal conditions, the symptoms of anxiety are imperceptible, but when it is intense the individual experiences a feeling of uneasiness and apprehension that is accompanied by increased vigilance of the environment, difficulty in concentrating, increased muscle tension and numerous symptoms.

In the DSM-V it is mentioned that anxiety can be classified into different types: social anxiety, selective mutism, generalized anxiety, medical condition anxiety disorder, separation anxiety, specific phobia, panic disorder, agoraphobia, substance or medication anxiety, these disorders have different criteria that classify them from each other as some disorders have similar characteristics such as anxiety and excessive fear (APA, 2014).

Triple Response System of Anxiety

According to Hernandez et al. (S/F), anxiety is not a symptomatologically unitary phenomenon, involving at least three components or response systems: subjective-cognitive (verbal-cognitive).

Internal experience of anxiety, subjective perception and evaluation of stimuli and anxiety-related states, characterized by experiences of fear, alarm, uneasiness, worries, intrusive thoughts.

Physiological-somatic. Mediated by activation of the autonomic nervous system and characterized by tremor, sweating, increased muscle tension, tachycardia, tachypnea, symptoms that are perceived as annoying and unpleasant.

Motor-behavioral. The behavior manifests escape and avoidance. The dissociation of the response systems will cause different response profiles, which will guide the individualized therapeutic choice.

Concept of Academic Performance

Himmel (2002), quoted by Bojorquez (2015), mentions that academic performance is defined as the degree of achievement of the objectives established in school programs. Academic performance, in this sense, constitutes an indicator of the level of learning achieved by the student, it represents the level of effectiveness in achieving the curricular objectives. For Tejedor (1998), most research aimed at determining success or failure in studies has reduced the concept of performance to academic certification (grades).

Anxiety and Academic Performance

One strand of the literature on anxiety and academic performance is based on Hanin's theoretical formulation of the optimal zone of individual functioning, which assumes an inverted U-shaped function relating performance and anxiety level on the ordinate and abscissa axes, respectively. According to this approach, for students to display successful academic behavior, they should exhibit average levels of anxiety that will serve them to take their studies seriously and apply themselves to them, but these levels should not exceed a certain range, since if this were to happen, students would be too overwhelmed to deal with the academic challenges they have to face, throughout their training (Hanin, 2003, cited by Bojorquez, 2015).

According to WHO (2019) cited in Rodriguez and Chaparro (2020), it is recurrent that the mental health of people is affected by anxiety being this a disorder with a usual problem index to interfere in people their performance at a high level so much that a large percentage in the world today presents anxiety disorder since several factors put the mental health of people at risk preventing a well-being for the being. In a study conducted by Serrano, Rojas and Ruggero (2013), it was found that there was almost no correlation between academic performance and anxiety, since anxiety did not figure as a cause or effect of academic performance.

In the case of anxiety, it is well known that when kept at balanced levels it can be beneficial, as it helps, for example, to face the challenges that arise in university life. However, if it is excessive it can have insidious effects on the student's trajectory, with a decrease in academic performance, deterioration of interpersonal relationships and health (Martínez, 2014). Therefore, it could be said that anxiety can also have an adaptive function to the environment in which the individual develops, but it is always necessary to be aware that the symptomatology does not worsen and make it impossible for the subject to carry out their daily activities, both in the personal, school, work and family spheres.

All individuals experience anxiety at some stage of their lives; it is characterized by a diffuse, unpleasant and vague feeling of apprehension, manifested by the inability to sit or stand for a period of time, and often accompanied by vegetative symptoms such as headache, diaphoresis, tachycardia, chest tightness, epigastric discomfort and restlessness. In a normal clinical condition, it is a warning signal that warns of impending danger and allows the individual to take measures to cope with such threat (Kaplan, Sandock and Sadock, 2009 cited by Cardona, et al, 2015). The anxious symptomatology that a young university student may present, according to the classic approach of the triple response system (Lang, 1968 cited in Martínez, 2014), can be noticed in the psychological (fear, apprehension, catastrophism, inattention), physiological (tachycardia, feeling of suffocation, tremor, hyperhidrosis) and behavioral (drug abuse, anger, absenteeism, desertion) levels.

The anxiety faced by university students during their academic training can constitute a serious problem, since the psychological discomfort is compounded by the difficulty in obtaining a good academic performance as their resilience capacity is exceeded, even putting their health at risk (Marty, 2005, cited by Castillo, et al. 2016). However, in a study conducted by Ocampo, Jimenez, Perez, Ramirez and Vega (2007), it was found that the empirical evidence of that work showed that the levels of depression and anxiety in young psychology students of the Facultad de Estudios Superiores Iztacala are not problematic, it is worth mentioning that even though the differences were not significant between depression and anxiety by gender, we believe that the sample size was an important variable since in other studies the sample is larger than 250 people.

Methodology

This research was non-experimental, exploratory, observational, by survey, cross-sectional and descriptive, since no experimental maneuver was performed, in a non-probabilistic sample obtained by accident and by convenience, after signing an informed consent form.

Procedure

A total of 104 students from the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th semesters participated and were administered the Beck anxiety questionnaire. SPSS software version 20.0 was used for statistical processing. Contribution: .906 Cronbach.

Results

Of the 104 students evaluated that made up the total sample of the universe, 87 participants were female and 17 were male, obtaining the following results:

	Students	%
No anxiety	14	13.5
Mild anxiety	31	29.8
Moderate anxiety	29	27.9
Severe anxiety	30	28.8
Total	104	100.0

Table 1 Anxiety levels
Source: Own Elaboration

As shown in the table above, 28.8% of the students showed severe anxiety, which is significant, since only 13.5% of the respondents did not show any anxiety.

Table 2 shows that the lowest average obtained by the students is 6.9 and the highest average is 9.7, highlighting that only one student showed mild anxiety in both cases.

A relevant data in this study is that 30 students present severe anxiety one with an average of 7, one with 7.3, one with 7.7, three with 7.8, one with 7.9, two with 8, three with 8.1, one with 8.2, two with 8.4, one with 8.5, three with 8.6, two with 8.7, one with 8.8, one with 8.9, two with 9.1, three with 9.2, one with 9.4 and one with 9.5, 14 students do not present anxiety, finding one student with 7.2 grade point average, one with 7.5, one with 8, one with 8.1, one with 8.4, one with 8.6, two with 9.1, three with 9.2, two with 9.4 and one with 9.5.

Average	No anxiety	Mild anxiety	Moderate anxiety	Severe anxiety	Total
6.9	0	1	0	0	1
7.0	0	1	2	1	4
7.2	1	0	0	0	1
7.3	0	0	0	1	1
7.5	1	1	1	0	3
7.7	0	2	1	1	4
7.8	0	0	2	3	5
7.9	0	2	1	1	4
8.0	1	3	2	2	8
8.1	1	0	1	3	5
8.2	0	1	1	1	3
8.3	0	1	0	0	1
8.4	1	3	0	2	6
8.5	0	2	1	1	4
8.6	1	1	2	3	7
8.7	0	2	1	2	5
8.8	0	2	2	1	5
8.9	0	0	1	1	2
9.0	0	2	3	0	5
9.1	2	2	3	2	9
9.2	3	2	1	3	9
9.3	0	0	2	0	2
9.4	2	0	1	1	4
9.5	1	0	0	1	2
9.6	0	2	1	0	3
9.7	0	1	0	0	1
Total	14	31	29	30	104

Table 2 Average rating
Source: Own Elaboration

It should be noted that the minimum passing average is 6.0, according to the examination regulations of the School of Psychology and Human Communication Therapy.

Analysis and Conclusions

It can be concluded that, according to the results obtained, anxiety is not a determining factor affecting academic performance in terms of school average; however, the data reveal that students present anxiety at different levels, from mild to severe.

Regarding the school average, the highest average presents mild anxiety and 18 of the students who also obtain an average considered as very good, present some level of anxiety, including 5 of them with severe anxiety, which confirms that anxiety in any of its levels is not a factor that affects academic performance in terms of school average, therefore, it is significant the number of students who present severe anxiety, and are considered with Panic Disorder according to the Beck Scale.

For the above mentioned in this study, the importance and necessity of implementing a social-emotional skills program for students with anxiety was detected, in which they are given the necessary tools to have a better ability to cope and manage anxiety, as well as the importance of channeling to the competent authorities, all those students who have a severe level of anxiety, so that they are properly treated and thus the anxiety does not generate a subsequent problem.

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