AJAMATES
African Journal of Educational Management, Teaching and Entrepreneurship Studies
VOL.6, May-August, 2022 https://ajemates.org

RELATIONSHIP EXISTING BETWEEN TEST ANXIETY AND SELF-ESTEEM OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN NNAMDI AZIKIWE UNIVERSITY, AWKA, NIGERIA

Chigbu, Eberechukwu Fransisca PhD)
ef.chigbu@unizik.edu.ng

Nwosu, Ikechukwu Augustine
ia.nwosu@unizik.edu.ng

Etele, Valentina Anulika (PhD)
av.etele@unizik.edu.ng

Obi, Joy-Sylvia Chisara (PhD)
js.obi@unizik.edu.ng

Nwankwo, Christopher Amobi
ca.nwankwo@unizik.edu.ng
Department of Guidance and Counselling, Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

ABSTRACT
The study was designed to determine the relationship between test anxiety and self-esteem among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Three research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. Correlational research design was adopted. Population of the study comprised 102 undergraduate students consisting of 13 male and 89 female students in the Department of Guidance and Counselling of the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. No sampling technique was used for the study. Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) and Galle, Atiku and Bala (2020) adapted test anxiety inventory served as instruments for data collection. Cronbach Alpha method was used to establish the reliability of the instrument which yielded coefficients of 0.79 and 0.86 for different clusters with an overall coefficient of 0.83. The researchers administered the instrument with the help of two research assistants using direct method to the respondents. Data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient to answer the research questions and hypotheses using SPSS version 23.0. Findings revealed that a negative and low as well as a significant relationship between test anxiety and self-esteem among undergraduate students irrespective of their gender in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. It was concluded that students must respond more positively to evaluation conditions to reduce any form of insecurity on their academic aspirations in the university. The study recommended among others that university guidance and counselors should have an open counselling session with students before examinations to help students acquire test anxiety coping skills in order to handle text anxiety during evaluation settings.

Keywords: Test Anxiety, self-esteem, undergraduate students

Introduction

Due to the high value attached to academic achievement and the overbearing guilt surrounding academic failure in the Nigerian education system, Okoye and Onokpaunu (2020), opined that test anxiety seems to be responsible for the increasing high rate of suicide among Nigerian students. Test anxiety is a condition that involves excessive worry in testing situations. Students who experience test-anxiety during an examination exercise have been reported to feel tense about having a negative outcome in testing taking situations. Test anxiety, according to Spielberger in Euma and Ricea (2011), consists of two primary components; worry and emotionality. Worry includes personal thoughts regarding poor test performance and illusions of

academic failure. On the other hand, emotionality includes physiological components such as fear, panic, tension, and increased heart and respiration rates.

Test anxiety entails phenomenological, psychological, and behavioural responses that accompany concern about possible negative consequences on evaluative situations (Dami, James & Gogwim, 2019). Test anxiety is an unnecessary mental and cognitive condition that prevents students from effectively recalling learned materials before and during examinations. In the context of this study, test anxiety is any form of mental and emotional disturbances that prevent undergraduate students from doing well in examinations conditions. Test anxiety does not only lead to school failure or dropout among students but it also affects their self-esteem. Self-esteem refers to the evaluation of one's personal abilities and values.

According to Orth and Robins (2014), self-esteem is the worth or value that individuals attach to themselves. In comparison to pride peculiar among arrogant individuals, self-esteem defines the characteristics of self-acceptance, self-discipline and self-respect (Ackerman, Witt, Donnellan, Trzesniewski, Robins & Kashy, 2011). Self-esteem comes with positive and negative dimensions. Peterson-Graziose, Bryer and Nikolaidou (2013) stated that positive high self-esteem enables students to develop positive relationship with colleagues, teachers and with members of its environment while low self-esteem breeds in students, the feelings of deficiency and inability (Colquhoun & Bourne, 2012).

Traditionally, tertiary institutions use examinations tomeasure the academic excellence of students. Hence, test anxiety becomes inevitable and when they fail to make good grades, it tends to affects their self-esteem within and outside the school environment. Although, researches abound on test anxiety and self-esteem among students' in South East, Nigeria. Without doubt, test anxiety is one of the most serious academic problems faced by male and female students in universities all over the world. In Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, little is known about undergraduate male and female students' test anxiety and self-esteem and the relationship that exist between the two variables. In order to fill this observed gap in the body of knowledge, the study sought to determine the relationship existing between test anxiety and self-esteem among undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the type of relationship existing between test anxiety and self-esteem of undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka?
2. What is the type of relationship existing between test anxiety and self-esteem of male undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka?
3. What is the type of relationship existing between test anxiety and self-esteem of female undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka?

Null Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. The type of relationship existing between test anxiety and self-esteem of undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka
2. There is no significant relationship existing between test anxiety and self-esteem of male undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka
3. There is no significant relationship existing between test anxiety and self-esteem of female undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

Research Method

Correlational research design was adopted for the study and was conducted in Nnamdi Azikiwe University located in Awka, Anambra State. The entire population of the study 1020 undergraduate students consisting of 130 male and 890 female year three education studentsof the 2020/2021 academic session was studied without sampling. The study adopted Galle, Atikuand Bala (2020) Test Anxiety Inventory for determining the test anxiety of students and Rosenberg (1965) Self-Esteem Inventory was adopted to measure the self-esteem of students. As standardized instruments already in use in Nigeria, the instruments were validated and have the reliability co-efficients of 0.79 for Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale while that of Galle, Atiku and Bala's Test Anxiety Inventory was 0.86. The researchers employed the services of two research assistants who assisted with the administration and collection of the research instruments used for the study. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to answer the research questions and testing the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.In answering the research questions, the coefficients of correlation were classified into the form of relationship they exhibit:

Very High correlation ± 0.80 – 1.00 High correlation ± 0.60 – 0.80
Moderate correlation ± 0.40 – 0.60
Low correlation ± 0.20 – 0.40
Very Low or no correlation ± 0.00 – 0.20

In testing the hypotheses, a hypothesis with p-value lesser than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$) was rejected while a hypothesis with p-value greater than 0.05 was accepted. Data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23.0.

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1: What is the type of relationship existing between test anxiety and self-esteem of undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka?

Table 1: Pearson r on test anxiety and self-esteem of the students

Variables	Pearson Correlation coefficient (*r*)	Remark
Test anxiety	-0.267	Low negative relationship
Self-esteem		

Table 1 shows that there is low negative relationship of -0.267 existing between test anxiety and self-esteem ofundergraduatestudents in NnamdiAzikiwe University, Awka

Research Question 2: What is the type of relationship existing between test anxiety and self-esteem of male undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka?

Table 2: Pearson r on test anxiety and self-esteem of male undergraduate students

Variables	Pearson Correlation coefficient (*r*)	Remark
Test anxiety	-0.091	Very low or no negative relationship
Self-esteem		

Table 2 reveals that there is very low or no negative relationship of -0.091 existing between test anxiety and self-esteem of male undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

Research Question 3: What is the type of relationship existing between test anxiety and self-esteem of female undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka?

Table 3: Pearson r on test anxiety and self-esteem of female students

Variables	Pearson Correlation coefficient (*r*)	Remark
Test anxiety		
	-0.136	Very low or no negative relationship
Self- esteem		

Table 3 indicates that there is negative and low relationship of -0.136 existing between test anxiety and self-esteem of female undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

Null Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship existing between test anxiety and self-esteem of undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

Table 4: Relationship between self-esteem and test anxiety of undergraduate students

N	r	df	p-value	Remark
1020	-0.267	1018	0.046	S

S – Significant

Table 4 shows that at 0.05 level of significance and 1018df, the calculated Pvalue 0.046 is less than 0.05. Therefore, the first null hypothesis is not accepted. Thus, the type of relationship existing between test anxiety and self-esteem of undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka is significant.

Null Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship existing between test anxiety and self-esteem of male undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

iTable 5: Relationship between self-esteem and test anxiety among male students

N	r	df	p-value	Remark
130	-0.019	128	0.159	NS

NS – No Significant

In table 5, it was observed that at 0.05 level of significance and 128df, the calculated P-value 0.159 is greater than 0.05. Therefore, the second null hypothesis is accepted. Thus, the type of relationship existing between test anxiety and self-esteem of male undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka is not significant.

Null Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship existing between test anxiety and self-esteem of female undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

Table 6: Relationship between self-esteem and test anxiety among female students

N	r	df	p-value	Remark
890	-0.136	888	0.058	NS

NS – No Significant

Table 6 indicates that at 0.05 level of significance and 888df, the calculated P-value 0.058 is greater than 0.05. Therefore, the third null hypothesis is accepted. Thus, the type of relationship existing between test anxiety and self-esteem of female undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka is not significant.

Discussion of Findings

Findings of the study revealed a low negative relationship existing between test anxiety and self-esteem of undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. This means that the higher the self-esteem of a student is, the lesser he or she will experience test anxiety and vice versa. This finding is in consonance with that Okoye and Onokpaunu (2020) which reported that test anxiety has a low relationship on students' self-esteem. They further asserted that, the negative relationship between test anxiety and self-esteem which occurs among students means that if one factor increases, the other will decrease. This study lends credence to the work of Rezazadeh and Tavakoli (2009) which revealed a low and negative correlation between students' test anxiety and self-esteem. The reason why there was a negative relationship between undergraduate students' test anxiety and self-esteem as reported in this study may be attributed to the fact, that test anxiety gives rise to desperation which adversely affects students' ability to recall academic information studied after examination exercise. This supports, the earlier study of Butt and Akram (2013) which reported a negative relationship between test anxiety and self-esteem among students.

More so, the result of this study further revealed that there is significant relationship between test anxiety and self-esteem of undergraduate students. This finding means that test anxiety has significant relationship on how undergraduate students handle their self-esteem during evaluation setting. This is in line with the study of Bayani (2016) who reported a significant relationship between test anxiety and self-esteem among undergraduate students. The researcher opined that undergraduate students may be developing test anxiety elements due to the seriousness attached to academic certificate in Nigeria. This finding is consistent with

Furthermore, the study reported a very low negative or no relationship between test anxiety and self-esteem among male and female undergraduate students in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The result obtained could have been as a result of the fact that male and female undergraduate students are anxious about examinations despite their gender. This fear may equally increase test anxiety in both male and female undergraduate students. This finding aligned with the study of Iroegbu (2016) who discovered a low negative relationship between test anxiety and self-esteem among male and female students. This finding goes to reinforce the fact that test anxiety is a major feature among both male and female students each time their intellectual ability is being assessed in the university. The findings of this study corroborates that of Sowislo and Orth (2013) which discovered a low negative relationship existing between the test anxiety and self-esteem of male and female students.

Sowislo and Orth (2013) which reported a significant relationship between test anxiety and self-esteem. This could be why; Damer and Melendres (2011) asserted that test anxiety leads to poor self-esteem.

Conclusion

From the findings of this study, it is clear that test anxiety have an inverse relationship with self-esteem.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study and conclusion drawn, the following recommendations are made:

1. University guidance and counsellors should have an open counselling session with students before examinations to help students acquire test anxiety coping skills in order to handle text anxiety during evaluation settings and in their academic setting.
2. Management of universities should establishment of an environment that is relaxed and stress free to stimulate students preparation for test exercises.
3. The university Guidance counselors should develop strategies that help in working towards increase or enhancement of the students' self-esteem.

References

Ackerman, R.A., Witt, E.A., Donnellan, M.B., Trzesniewski, K.H., Robins, R.W., & Kashy, D.A. (2011). What does the Narcissistic Personality Inventory really measure? *Assessment, 18*, 67–87.

Bayani, A.A. (2016). The effect of self-esteem, self-efficacy and family social support on test anxiety in elementary students: A Path Model. *Int J School Health, 3*(4), 1 – 5.

Butt, M. M., & Akram, O. (2013). Test anxiety among students of pure science and social science. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences, 3*(3), 30-38.

Colquhoun, L.K., & Bourne, P.A. (2012). Self-esteem and academic performance of 4th graders in two elementary schools in Kingston and St. Andrew, Jamaica. *Asian Journal of Business Management, 4*(1), 36-57.

Crişan, C., Albulescu, I., & Copaci, I. (2014). The relationship between test anxiety and perceived teaching style: implications and consequences on performance self-evaluation. *Procedia - SocBehav Sci., 142*, 668–72.

Damer, D. E., & Melendres, L. T. (2011). 'Tackling test anxiety: A group for college students. *Journal for Specialists in Group Work, 36*(3), 163-177.

Dami, B.E., James, C.A., & Gogwim, P.C. (2019). Test anxiety as predictor of academic performance in biological science examination among secondary school students. *Clin Res Psychol., 2*(1), 1-6.

Euma, K., & Ricea, K.G. (2011). Test anxiety, perfectionism, goal orientation, and academic performance. *Anxiety Stress Coping, 24*(2), 167–178

Iroegbu, M.N. (2016). Influence of self-concept and anxiety on the academic excellence of undergraduate students. *Advances in Research, 6*(2), 1-5

Okoye, K. R. E., & Onokpaunu, M. O. (2020). Relationship between self-esteem, academic procrastination and test anxiety with academic achievement of Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) students in Delta State University, Abraka. *International Scholars Journal of Arts and Social Science Research, 2*(3), 37–51

Orth, U., & Robins, R.W. (2014). The development of self-esteem. *CurrDirPsychol Sci., 23*(5), 67 – 72

Peterson-Graziose, V; Bryer, J., & Nikolaidou, M. (2013). Self-esteem and self-efficacy as predictors of attrition in associate degree nursing students. *J Nurs Educ., 52*(6), 351-354