
College Students And Anxiety: Factors And Effects

Anxiety is something that is experienced by everyone. It occurs in our everyday lives, causing us to worry and stress over the things that are happening to us. Having a busy schedule or a large workload can have considerable impacts on the amount of anxiety a person experiences. College students are expected to manage their schedules to do tasks such as meet deadlines for coursework or set aside time for studying. This study aims to observe any relations between the anxiety that college students experience and several factors that may impact it such as their year in college, their gender, and how many credits they're taking.

How many years a student has been in college can play a large role in the amount of stress that they feel. College freshmen can feel especially anxious moving away from home for the first time, leading me to hypothesize that first year students will report experiencing higher stress levels than other years of students. A previous research study indicates that around 21% of college freshmen are affected by separation anxiety (Seligman & Wuyek, 2010). This research doesn't examine or compare the other years of students, but it does provide a statistic that would indicate that freshmen are experiencing high levels of anxiety. Another research study supports this hypothesis by finding negative correlations between anxiety and age, where younger students reported experiencing higher levels of anxiety (Balo?lu et al., 2007). I didn't find much prior research pertaining to the impacts of a student's year in college and their levels of stress, but the two mentioned studies would indicate that first year students tend to be more stressed.

Gender is another factor that could have a possible impact on the level of anxiety a student reports having. A previous study examining the differences of anxiety experienced by male and female students of varying ages found that there was not a significant influence of anxiety on gender (Balo?lu, 2003). A similar study observed relationships between anxiety and self-consciousness in public, finding that women tend to experience higher levels of stress than men when it comes to taking tests and social situations (Sowa & LaFleur, 1986). Another study looked for a correlation between financial strain experienced by college students their levels of anxiety. The researchers found a positive correlation between financial strain and anxiety for female participants, while male participants indicated less anxiety. Male participant's levels of anxiety were only shown to have statistically significant increases if they had reported low levels of family support in addition to their financial strain (Tran et al., 2018). It would appear from this study that there is a correlation between the level of anxiety that a student reports experiencing and their financial situation, with a larger impact for females than males. The findings of these studies would lead me to conclude that the gender of a student does play a role in the anxiety that they report having.

A student's course load is another factor that could have an effect on their reported level of anxiety. A student who takes a lot of credit hours has a busier schedule and will have less free time, spending more time in class. Additional classes will also involve more assigned homework or projects, and more time required to study for exams. This overload of schoolwork may cause increases in stress and anxiety as students struggle to perform well and meet deadlines. A study on Pakistani students observed the effects of stress on a student's academic performance. The study found that there was a positive correlation between the workload that a

student has and their reported levels of stress (Talib & Sansgiry, 2011). Higher amounts of work assigned to students led to increases in the anxiety that they experience. Based on the findings of this study, I would expect to see that students with more credit hours will report having higher levels of anxiety.

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