# Self-Confidence and Interpersonal Communication Anxiety among College Students in Makassar

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| ARTICLE INFO | ABSTRACT |
|---|---|
| *Keywords:*<br>*Self-confidence,*<br>*interpersonal*<br>*communication,*<br>*anxiety,*<br>*mental health problem* | Interpersonal communication anxiety is a mental health issue that may be encountered by individuals, including those who are enrolled in academic institutions. Individuals who exhibit low levels of confidence and evaluate themselves unfavorably in social interactions may experience interpersonal communication anxiety directed towards themselves. The objective of this research is to establish a correlation between confidence and anxiety in interpersonal communication among college students residing in Makassar city. The present study employs quantitative methodologies. The present study employed an accidental sampling method, with a sample size of 470 participants (n = 470). The researcher utilized self-confidence and interpersonal communication anxiety scales that were compiled for the purposes of this study. The statistical analysis of the research data was conducted using the Spearman Rank, utilizing the SPSS 22.0 software for Windows. The findings indicate that a statistically significant inverse correlation exists between self-assurance and anxiety related to interpersonal communication among undergraduate students residing in Makassar city (p=0.000, r=-0.156). This study found that the greater the level of self-confidence, the lower the level of interpersonal communication anxiety; conversely, the lower the level of self-confidence, the higher the level of interpersonal communication anxiety in Makassar city college students. The findings of this study may help students avoid more serious mental health issues by lowering their levels of worry about interpersonal communication. |
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Mental health problems and communication abilities are inextricably linked. When it comes to mental health, good communication skills have been identified as aiding resilience, with communication issues and poor social relationships highlighted as risk factors [1]. Difficulties co-occur, and effective mental health support frequently requires excellent communication skills. Speech, language, and communication skills can be used to prevent illness and are necessary for forming and keeping friendships, participating in learning, and promoting well-being. These abilities have a significant impact on our lives, influencing our interactions, social and emotional development, mental health, behaviour, learning and attainment, and future work chances. Communication challenges affect 45% of young individuals referred for mental health treatment, which is three times the national average [2]. Language disability has also been linked to externalising behaviour, internalising behaviour [3, 4] and peer-relationship issues [5]. There is evidence that issues with social communication precede and predict mental health disorders. Social communication challenges are thought to have a negative impact on connections with peers, family, and teachers, triggering and exacerbating emotional and behavioral problems. These mental health issues, however, may lead to withdrawal and a lack of opportunity to practice and build social communication skills, creating a vicious spiral [6].

Interpersonal communication refers to the exchange of information between two individuals who share a distinct relationship [7]. This phenomenon is also observed among students who are physically present on the campus. Interpersonal communication plays a crucial role in facilitating social

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connections among students, enabling them to acquire knowledge, and fostering self-awareness and environmental understanding.

Interpersonal communication anxiety is a negative emotional state that arises when individuals engage in interpersonal communication and anticipate negative outcomes. This is typically manifested through physical, behavioural, and cognitive symptoms, as documented in previous research [8]. According to scholarly literature [9], interpersonal communication anxiety can be categorized into three distinct aspects. (a) Unwillingness can be considered a type of interpersonal communication anxiety that is marked by a lack of interest and motivation to engage in communication. (b) Unrewarding communication refers to situations where there is a lack of acknowledgement or legal support. (c) Uncontrol is a communication scenario where individuals experience a sense of perceived threat due to the reactions of others.

An initial data survey was conducted by researchers on a sample of 89 students in Makassar city. The findings of the survey indicated that among the participants, 14 individuals exhibited elevated levels of anxiety, while 59 individuals demonstrated moderate levels of anxiety, and 16 individuals displayed low levels of anxiety. Mild manifestations of anxiety that manifest in individuals are characterized by low intensity, and the etiology of such anxiety is often unknown to the affected individuals. This phenomenon occurs within a brief timeframe. Mild anxiety is characterized by a level of intensity that is typically acute and is often accompanied by physiological changes in the body's organs, including respiratory, cardiovascular, and gastrointestinal disturbances. During a high anxiety episode, an individual experiences a heightened state of anxiety that may escalate into a maximum anxiety attack. The intensity of tension experienced by an individual may lead to aggressive behaviour, reduced self-awareness, and panic reactions.

The development of an individual's confidence is linked to the factor of self-confidence within their environment [12]. The concept of self-confidence comprises five distinct aspects, as outlined in reference [13]. Firstly, an individual with self-confidence possesses a sense of security, which entails being free from feelings of fear and doubt regarding the situation or individuals in their surroundings. Secondly, self-confidence involves having confidence in one's own abilities, which translates to not feeling the need to compare oneself with others and being less susceptible to external influences. Thirdly, selflessness is a crucial aspect of self-confidence, which involves acknowledging one's shortcomings and being open to accepting the views of others. Fourthly, normal ambition is a key component of self-confidence, which involves avoiding excessive ambition, completing tasks effectively, and being accountable for one's actions. Lastly, self-confidence entails being independent and not relying on others for support or assistance in accomplishing tasks. The researcher posits a hypothesis for investigation based on the provided explanation, specifically pertaining to the correlation between self-assurance and anxiety in interpersonal communication among pupils in Makassar City.

## 2. METHOD
### Participants
This study uses quantitative methods with the aim of knowing the relationship between self-confidence and interpersonal communication anxiety in college students. The population in this study were students in Makassar city aged 17-26 years. The sampling technique in this study used accidental sampling technique. Total respondents in this research amounted to 470 college students from 15 colleges and universities in Makassar.

### Data Collection Techniques
The study employs a four-point Likert scale to measure the observed variables of self-confidence and interpersonal communication anxiety. The self-confidence referred to in this study is a type of positive attitude that allows students to develop their personal abilities, interact in the environment, and recognize concepts within themselves, using a scale compiled by researchers based on aspects of Burgoon and Ruffner [9], with a total of 9 favourable items and 3 unfavourable items. Interpersonal communication anxiety, as defined in this study, is a condition that causes feelings of worry and discomfort when students will speak or interact in public, both before and during speaking, using a scale

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compiled by researchers based on aspects of Ghufron and Risnawita [13], with a total of 12 favourable items and 2 unfavourable items.

Researchers used Aiken's V formula on self-confidence with the aim of testing the validity of items based on the Aiken's V content validity coefficient from the results of expert judgement, resulting in a V value range of 0 to 1.00 where the value is closer to 1, the aitem will be considered to have strong validity. Researchers also tested the level of measurement consistency of the research scale used using the Cronbach alpha method. The test results show that the self-confidence scale has a Cronbach alpha of 0.839 and the interpersonal communication anxiety scale has an alpha value of 0.664. These results explain that the reliability level of the items on the self-confidence scale is reliable and the interpersonal communication anxiety scale is quite reliable.

**Analysis Method**

This study employs descriptive analysis as a data analysis technique to determine the percentage of demographic data and variable categorization. In addition, the study also conducted a Spearman Rank correlation analysis to test the research hypothesis using the help of SPSS.22 for windows. This analysis was conducted to see the relationship between self-confidence and interpersonal communication anxiety.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research data was categorised using empirical mean based on subject responses at each research scale. The table below presents the categorization of data processing results for self-confidence and interpersonal communication anxiety as research variables.

Table 1. Descriptive analysis result

| Variable | Empirical | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Min | Max | Mean | SD |
| Self-confidence | 12 | 48 | 34 | 4,27 |
| Communication interpersonal Anxiety | 19 | 55 | 35 | 6,65 |

Subjects range in score from 12 (lowest) to 48 (highest) according to the description in the table above. The empirical average value is 34 with a standard deviation of 4.27. One subject obtained the minimum score of 19, while another subject achieved the maximum score of 55. The empirical average value is 35 with a standard deviation of 6.65.

Table 2. Confidence categorization

| Categorization | Interval | F | % | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| $(\mu + 1,0\sigma) \leq x$ | $39<x$ | 61 | 13% | High |
| $(\mu - 1,0\sigma) \leq x < (\mu + 1,0\sigma)$ | $30<x<38$ | 320 | 68% | Moderate |
| $x < (\mu - 1,0\sigma)$ | $X<29$ | 89 | 19% | low |
| Total | | 470 | 100% | |

The tabulated data presented above indicates that out of the total sample size, 61 participants fall under the high self-confidence category, accounting for 13% of the sample. Additionally, 320 participants belong to the moderate self-confidence category, representing 68% of the sample. Finally, 89 participants are classified under the low self-confidence category, constituting 19% of the sample. The data indicates that a significant proportion of the participants in the study exhibit a moderate degree of self-confidance.

Table 3. Categorization of interpersonal communication anxiety

| Categorization | Interval | F | % | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| $(\mu + 1,0\sigma) \leq x$ | $43<x$ | 57 | 12,12% | High |

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| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| $(\mu - 1,0\sigma) \leq x < (\mu + 1,0\sigma)$ | 28<x<42 | 317 | 67,44% | Moderate |
| $x < (\mu - 1,0\sigma)$ | X<41 | 96 | 20,42% | low |
| **Total** | | **470** | **100%** | |

Table 4 presents the findings indicating that out of the total participants, 57 individuals (12.12%) were classified as high, 317 individuals (67.44%) were categorized as moderate, and 96 individuals (20.42%) were classified as low. The findings indicate that a significant proportion of the participants exhibit moderate levels of anxiety related to interpersonal communication. The present study posits a hypothesis regarding the potential association between self-confidence and interpersonal communication anxiety among students residing in the urban area of Makassar. The analysis of this hypothesis is conducted through the utilization of the Rank Spearman correlation technique test, which is executed via SPSS 22.0 for windows. The results of this analysis are presented in the table below.:

Table 4. Results of research hypothesis testing

| Variable | R | p-value |
|---|---|---|
| Self-confidence | | 0,000 |
| Communication and | -0,156 | |
| Interpersonal Anxiety | | ($p$<0,01) |

The previous table displays the outcomes of the correlation examination, indicating a correlation coefficient of -0.156 and a statistically significant level of 0.000. The present findings indicate that the hypothesis (Ha) posited in this investigation is supported. It may be inferred that there is a negative link between self-confidence and interpersonal communication anxiety among Makassar students, implying that the higher the self-confidence, the lower the interpersonal communication anxiety. The correlation coefficient (r) of -0.156 indicates that in this study, self-confidence contributes 15.6% to interpersonal communication anxiety, while the remaining 84.4% is determined by other factors.

The findings of a descriptive analysis on interpersonal communication anxiety among 470 active students in Makassar City indicate that the students exhibit moderate levels of interpersonal communication anxiety. Individuals with moderate levels of interpersonal communication anxiety exhibit a decreased inclination towards task-oriented behavior, a reduced proclivity for socializing, a disinclination towards leadership roles, and a lower level of productivity. Individuals may experience physical or psychological symptoms as a manifestation of anxiety when faced with the task of engaging in interpersonal communication [14].

Empirical evidence indicates that a detrimental association exists between self-assurance and apprehension regarding interpersonal communication among college students, as evidenced by a negative correlation coefficient of r = -0.156 and a statistically significant p-value of 0.000 (p < 0.01).

According to research, a decline in self-confidence can lead to the experience of anxiety during communication [14]. Individuals who engage in communication may experience anxiety due to their lack of trust. Interpersonal communication anxiety is a commonly encountered hindrance to effective communication in various contexts, including student groups. It is imperative for students to possess the ability to engage with their surroundings, participate in collaborative dialogues, and articulate their viewpoints during academic lectures. Interpersonal communication anxiety refers to a state of unease arising from apprehension about a particular circumstance while engaging in verbal exchange. This claim aligns with existing literature on the correlation between self-confidence and interpersonal communication among students. The literature indicates that self-confidence plays a significant role in enhancing interpersonal communication, as evidenced by previous research [15]. Self-confidence plays a crucial role in fulfilling fundamental human necessities, including communication [16]. The skills for life method, which emphasizes the development of reading, language, and numeracy, is most effective when students enter it with a high level of self-confidence [17].

Various factors can contribute to the development of interpersonal communication anxiety, such as negative cognitions, avoidance tendencies, heightened emotional reactivity, and diminished self-confidence [7]. Individuals who suffer from anxiety related to interpersonal communication tend to hold the belief that they are being evaluated unfavorably by their peers. Anxiety can lead to alterations

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in an individual's physical state, as noted in previous research [18]. Physical symptoms of communication anxiety include rapid heartbeat, cold hands and feet, a flushed face, "stomach butterflies" and possibly even a feeling of nausea, trembling and shaking limbs, pacing nervously, and a "dry mouth" that makes it hard to form even the simplest of words. Respiration accelerates and, in severe instances, a sensation of vertigo or faintness may arise. The experience of anxiety related to communication can be deeply unsettling as individuals may perceive a lack of control over their physical responses [19]. This demonstrates how anxiety disorders can have a negative effect on one's ability to communicate with others in regular settings, such as classrooms. The present study suggests that self-confidence may have an impact on communication anxiety. Specifically, individuals who possess a higher level of self-confidence are more likely to engender positive feelings in others, who may perceive them as competent and capable in various domains of life, including communication [20].

## 4.    CONCLUSION

The present study's data analysis indicates a significant correlation between self-confidence and interpersonal communication anxiety among students residing in Makassar city. There exists an inverse relationship between self-confidence and interpersonal communication anxiety among college students, whereby higher levels of self-confidence correspond to lower levels of anxiety, and conversely, lower levels of self-confidence correspond to higher levels of anxiety. The study is anticipated to serve as the foundation for the creation of intervention and prevention initiatives that prioritize the cultivation of self-confidence as a means of mitigating the negative impact of communication apprehension on students. For prospective researchers seeking to investigate with analogous variables, it is recommended that they select alternative factors associated with interpersonal communication. Researchers also suggest taking samples with different demographic conditions from this study.

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