

Mental Health among College Students: How Confident Are You?

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The purpose of this study was to ascertain the impact of school confidence levels on anxiety among college students. Researchers hypothesized that lower school confidence levels would increase anxiety. The National College Health Assessment reported that 53% of college students report moderate to extreme levels of anxiety (Nguyen-Feng, 2017). This study utilized a quantitative, non-experimental cross-sectional design (n=175). Data analyses included descriptive and inferential statistics. Instrumentation consisted of 27 Likert-type questions to measure participants' perceived school confidence and anxiety levels. Majority of participants were between 19-20 years old (59.4%), and female (84.6%). Overall, mean score on school confidence levels of participants was 53.72 indicating high confidence, and 44% of college students disagreed that they have a hard time understanding course assignments. Overall mean anxiety scores for participants was 37.73 indicating high anxiety levels. Approximately half (47.1%) of participants reported feeling nervous or stressed very often. ANOVAs found statistical difference in school confidence levels by race ($p=0.007$), with African-Americans reporting the lowest school confidence level. Statistical differences were found by anxiety level and gender ($p = 0.05$), with males reporting higher anxiety. Pearson correlation analysis found a statistically significant relationship ($p<0.01$). As scores for confidence in school performance increased, the scores for the outcome, anxiety, increases. Recommendations included targeted interventions for students identified with low school confidence scores to lower anxiety and positively impact mental health. Public health messaging should emphasize building confidence to safeguard your mental health.