Anxiety in High School Students

Ansiedad en Alumnos de Bachillerato

LOZANO-GUTIÉRREZ, Jorge Luis†*, PACHECO-AMIGO, Beatriz Mabel and SOLÍS-RECÉNDEZ, Emma Perla

Universidad Autónoma de Zacatecas. Unidad Académica de Psicología

ID 1st Author: *Jorge Luis, Lozano-Gutiérrez* / **ORC ID**: 0000-0002-7294-2572, **Researcher ID Thomson**: P-8291-2016, **CVU CONAHCYT ID**: 947027

ID 1st Co-author: *Beatriz Mabel, Pacheco-Amigo* / **ORC ID**: 0000-0002-8053-3506, **Researcher ID Thomson**: P-7758-2016, **CVU CONAHCYT ID**: 514725

ID 2nd Co-author: *Emma Perla, Solís-Recéndez* / **ORC ID**: 0000-0002-1074-9811, **Researcher ID Thomson**: S-6705-2018

Abstract

General Objetive: Identify anxietyin high school students of the high school program belonging to the Autonomous University of Zacatecas. Specific objective: Design a course Workshop on anxiety. Its effects and techniques to avoid anxiety. Methodology: The research is cross-sectional, non-experimental, descriptive, the instrument used is the self-report test of anxiety in adolescents, its contains forty-one questions on a three answer Likert scale; Never score zero (0), sometimes score one (1) and always whit score of two (2). Contribution: The prevention of anxiety disorders in adolescents high school students is carried out. Promoting your mental health and generating coping skills through primary prevention. This is based on various stages, the first of diagnosis, and the second through a workshop course that allows generating mental health conditions in high school students.

Resumen

Objetivo general: Identificar la ansiedad en estudiantes de bachillerato del programa de preparatoria perteneciente a la Universidad Autónoma de Zacatecas. Objetivo específico: Mostrar los elementos constitutivos de la ansiedad en los alumnos de bachillerato de la Universidad autónoma de Zacatecas. Objetivo específico: Diseñar un curso – Taller sobre la ansiedad, sus efectos y técnicas para evitar la ansiedad. Metodología: La investigación es de tipo transversal, no experimental, explorativa, el instrumento utilizado es la prueba Autoreporte de Ansiedad en Adolescentes, contiene cuarenta y un preguntas en escala Likert de tres respuestas; Nunca, puntuación cero (0), Algunas veces puntuación uno (1) y Siempre con una puntuación de dos (2). Contribución: Se lleva a cabo la prevención de trastornos de ansiedad en adolescentes estudiantes de bachillerato. Promoviendo su salud mental y generando habilidades de afrontamiento a partir de una prevención primaria. Esto en base a diversas etapas, la primera de diagnóstico, la segunda a través de un curso taller que permita generar condiciones de salud mental en los estudiantes de bachillerato.

Anxiety, High school students, Mental health

Ansiedad, Estudiante de bachillerato, Salud mental

* Correspondence to Author (e-mail: jorgeluis_lic@hotmail.com)
† Researcher contributing as first author

Introduction

In Mexico, students have a preparation process in educational institutions that takes between eighteen to twenty years to acquire a degree, in some cases it can take longer, as in the case of medical degrees.

If a master's degree and doctorate are taken, it takes approximately five more years. In the case of baccalaureate, students arrive with twelve years of experience and graduate with fifteen years of study, which allows them to enter higher education when they decide to do so.

This time spent in the classroom implies the development of cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects that enable students to adapt within an effective and functional framework so that at the end of their studies they can enter the world of work. In reality, it is not so easy to achieve the objective of training and incorporation into the world of work. From the training stage, cognitive and behavioural problems arise that affect the adequate school preparation of students, but in this work the main focus is on affective aspects, specifically on anxiety and its identification, considering that the development processes are not isolated and individual, it is assumed that this process is interactive, but for the purposes of identification, its treatment is from the specific individual.

"According to data from the World Health Organization in 2017, adolescents frequently suffer from emotional disorders. Anxiety disorders (which may present as panic attacks or excessive worrying) are the most common in this age group, and more common among older adolescents than among younger adolescents. It is estimated that 3.6% of adolescents aged 10-14 years and 4.6% of adolescents aged 15-19 years suffer from an anxiety disorder. It is also estimated that 1.1 per cent of adolescents aged 10-14 years and 2.8 per cent of adolescents aged 15-19 years suffer from depression. Depression and anxiety have some of the same symptoms, such as rapid and unexpected changes in mood". (WHO, 2021).

Aspects of anxiety

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (American Psychiatric Association, 2014) defines anxiety as "an anticipatory response to a future threat".

Anxiety can originate from a variety of causes such as some life changes that lead to be experienced as stressful, anxiety is also derived from minor annoyances that cause irritation and frustration. As a way of exemplifying an anxiety provoking activity according to Lozano (2020) "Bullying can leave various consequences both at the personal level of the participants as well as its possible social and legal consequences. As for the victim of bullying, he/she may present anxiety, depression, low self-esteem...".

Anxiety in the DSM 5

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, edition five (DSM 5), contains the classification of anxiety disorders, but it is important to clarify that anxiety is a normal developmental process that allows us to survive, like other emotions, such as fear. Anxiety becomes a disorder when signs and symptoms occur in an excessive, disproportionate way, making the person who acquires it dysfunctional and maladapted, a way of relating to anxiety disorder is the avoidance or escape from the stimulus that causes anxiety, which does not allow adequate personal development. According to the DSM 5 "Most occur more frequently in females than in males (approximately a 2:1 ratio)." (American Psychiatric Association, 2014).

The following is the brief description of anxiety disorders.

Separation anxiety disorder basically consists of fear or anxiety about separation from important figures in your life. This can happen to students who leave their community to study abroad and have to be separated for some time, and it can also occur in student mobility (formerly known as student exchange).

Selective mutism. There is a failure to communicate with other people even though he/she has the ability to speak as he/she can in other situations. It impedes school development and can lead to school failure.

Specific phobia. There is a fear or anxiety of specific objects, situations or people. There is a great variety of specific phobias, such as school, animals, etcto certain places, to people such as the teacher, etc. They can impede functional adaptation.

Social anxiety. This is the fear or anxiety that arises from a situation where the person is exposed to social evaluation. It can prevent the subject from participating in school through exhibitions, debates, and other actions that expose him/her.

Panic disorder. There is sudden fear or anxiety, even from a state of calm, there are observable physiological and behavioural reactions.

Agoraphobia. Fear or anxiety of open or closed public places, e.g. squares, cinemas. They would prevent pupils from attending school.

Generalised anxiety. Excessive anticipation of events that cause uncontrollable worry. This may be to various situations, people or objects. This may lead to a decrease in school skills and attitudes.

Substance use anxiety. This is due to medication or drugs taken, which changes cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects.

Anxiety due to medical condition. This is due to the existence of a clinically verifiable medical condition.

It is not intended to define exactly the types of anxiety, but to cover essential aspects in order to understand students who present these anxiety disorders.

Methodology to be developed

The type of research in the present study is exploratory, non-experimental as there is no manipulation of the study subjects, and cross-sectional as anxiety is measured only once.

The participants were 26 students of the Academic Unit of Preparatory Program four, of the Autonomous University of Zacatecas: 22 women and 4 men.

Instrument: The Questionnaire for Anxiety-Related Childhood Emotional Disorders of the authors of the year 2012. B. B. Birmaher, S. Khetarpal, M. Kully and D. Brent was the basis for adapting the Self-Report of Anxiety in Adolescents. It was adapted by the National Institute of Psychiatry. It is for a population of children and adolescents between 7 and 17 years of age.

It contains forty-one questions with Likert responses: never with a value of 0 (zero), sometimes with a value of 1 (one) and always with a value of 2 (two). With 5 subscales: panic-somatic, separation anxiety, generalised anxiety, social anxiety and school phobia.

The questionnaire in the present research is used only as a screening tool. In this work, only the general part is considered, so it is used with a general cut-off point.

This questionnaire has a cut-off point of twenty-five points, therefore, there is a seventy percent chance that the adolescent has anxiety.

Results

Reliability is obtained through Cronbach's Alpha, based on its formula and the data obtained in the anxiety questionnaire applied.
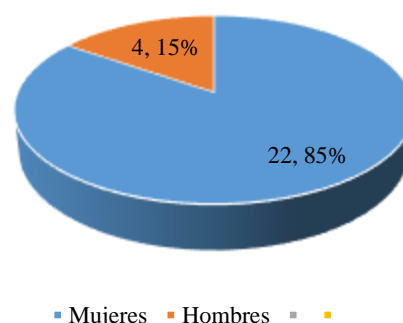
Cronbach's Alpha formula:

$$\alpha = K/K-1 * (1 - \sum S_1^2 / Sr^2)$$

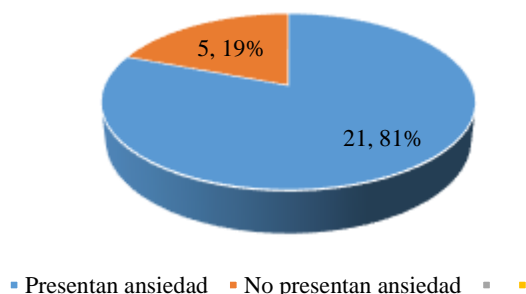$$a = 41/(41-1) * (1 - (20.03)/(240.7))$$

Cronbach's alpha .939 which is considered an excellent reliability.

Students of the Academic Unit of Preparatory School Programme number four.

Graph 1 Participants
Own Source

Eighty-five percent are women and fifteen percent are men..

Graph 2 Anxiety
Own Source

Eighty-one percent of participants show significant anxiety by passing the twenty-five point cut-off. Nineteen percent did not present significant anxiety when they did not pass the cut-off point of 25 points..
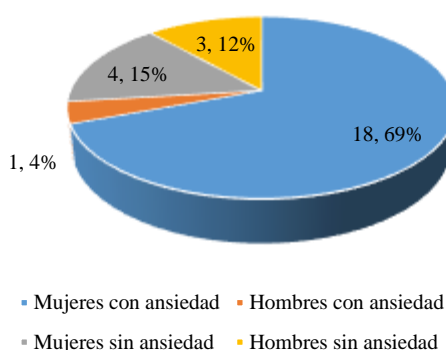
Graph 3 Anxiety by gender
Own Source

As for the occurrence of anxiety by gender in all participants, women have sixty-nine percent of anxiety, while women without anxiety correspond to fifteen percent. With regard to men, twelve percent have no anxiety, while four percent have anxiety.

Of the one hundred percent of men, twenty-five percent have anxiety, while seventy-five percent have no anxiety. Eighty-two percent of the 100 percent of women are anxious, while eighteen percent are not anxious.

Acknowledgements

Conclusions

1. According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders version five, the proportion of anxiety occurrence between women and men is in accordance with this manual. At least a ratio of two women to one man. If you look at the percentages, in women 82 percent of anxiety is present. In men, 25 per cent are anxious.

2. The initial objective of identifying anxiety in high school students is fulfilled.

3. It is important from the identification of anxiety disorder in high school students to provide knowledge and skills to cope with the appearance of anxiety disorder.

Proposal for preventive intervention against anxiety disorders in students

A course-workshop is presented with the aim of preventing anxiety through the acquisition of cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects that allow the development of coping strategies to deal with the appearance of anxiety in high school students.

Session 1. Central concepts of anxiety

Session 2. Cognitive aspects of anxiety and the importance of thinking.

Session 3. Behavioural signs of anxiety and the importance of the functioning of the nervous system.

4. Cognitive-behavioural coping strategies for anxiety.

5. Institutions involved in the prevention of anxiety.

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