Impact of Public Speaking Anxiety on Perceived Public Speaking Skills of HUMSS Students

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Abstract: Public speaking has long been seen as a steppingstone in students' career planning, whether it is just reporting in front of the class or participating in a debate and giving a speech in front of the entire school. However, in certain cases, there are nerve-wracking moments that evolve into a much greater catastrophe if not managed appropriately, such as when a person develops Public Speaking Anxiety (PSA). Using the random sampling technique for descriptive correlation research, the researchers conducted a survey on 174 HUMSS students from Marcelo H. del Pilar National High School to determine the impact of public speaking anxiety on the student's academic performance. Findings showed that public speaking anxiety has a negative impact on the public speaking skills of HUMSS students evident with the research correlation coefficients of -0.5167. It can be observed from here on that the more a student avoided public speaking activities, the more they associate the act with negative outcomes, which also ends up becoming a more potent threat to the individual's communication skills. The researchers recommend (1) addressing and revising any negative impressions, ideas, thoughts, pictures, or predictions individuals have about public speaking performances, (2) learning techniques for managing fear-induced thoughts, (3) understanding cognitive-behavioral skills, and (4) administering more public speaking activities to enhance skills and minimize the effect of PSA.

Keywords – Public speaking anxiety, stage fright, confidence of students, public speaking skill

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the most important requirements that schools have for their pupils around the world is public speaking. Whether it's simply reporting to the class or taking part in a debate and delivering a speech in front of the entire school, public speaking has long been regarded as a necessary step in students' career planning. Oral presentations and public speaking are essential components of the higher education experience in the UK. Numerous modules (self-contained courses usually found within a program of study) employ presentations as a method of evaluation and encourage students to vocally interact in small and large group settings to improve their learning. [1] The ability to successfully exchange ideas, persuade others, and make a concrete difference requires public speaking. [2] Though oral presentations are widely used in higher education across the world, there are still plenty of data to support the link between oral presentations and anxiety. [3]

One of the most common social anxieties is public speaking, especially among first-generation college students and people from marginalized or minority groups. Public-speaking anxiety, which is typically seen as a type of social phobia, is a strong and agonizing fear of being "on" in front of others. It is a state of great anxiety or trepidation that occurs before or during a public performance and is also referred to as "stage fright" (DSM-IV). As a result of this viewpoint, those who are scared of speaking in front of a crowd experience a loss of confidence and self-esteem [5]. According to a study, between 15% and 30% of the general population suffers from public speaking anxiety. [6] There are cognitive, physiological, and behavioural reactions that are distinctive of fear-related responses, as per popular theories on emotion. However, the majority of tools used to assess public speaking anxiety (PSA) focus just on one or two of these factors. [7]

When students have to stand in front of everyone and speak anything, regardless of their level of competence on the subject, it may be rather nerve-wracking. After all, this is a talent that can be polished and improved over time rather than something that people are born with. However, in certain cases, these nerve-wracking moments can evolve into a much greater catastrophe if not managed appropriately, such as when a person develops Public Speaking Anxiety (PSA): Stage Fright. Anxiety is described as a feeling of discomfort and dread brought on by the expectation of something undesirable. Public speakers deal with is anxiety disorders [8]. People who are anxious about speaking in front of groups try to avoid situations where they must perform, but when they do, they go through intense agony and concern. Many students have avoided presenting speeches and/or reports because they are afraid of speaking in front of people, which has led to the expected academic problems. In a study conducted by Asia Pacific of Journal of Academic Research in Social Sciences, Students who have low self-confidence might show a low performance and also hesitate to participate in every activity. Students must enhance their communication skill and include some interest and learning competencies indicated in the curriculum guide as required by the department of education [9].

This was to determine the impact of public speaking anxiety in public speaking skills of HUMSS students. The researcher aimed to understand more about the long-term implications of public speaking anxiety and how it impacts a student's academic performance, as well as what can be done to prevent it and help them acquire confidence in speaking in front of an audience. The study hopes to benefit teachers, learners, and administrators in creating appropriate policies on countering

the negative impacts of public speaking anxiety for students in public speaking.

2. RELATED WORKS

Public speaking anxiety (PSA), a type of social phobia that affects about 70% of people to varied degrees, is a prevalent and crippling problem for many professions. Those with high PSA may find that professional options and advancement become constrained when communication skills like public speaking become more and more in demand in the workplace, presenting impediments to career success [10].

Stage fright is the extreme and crippling fear of being "on" in front of others. It goes by many many names, including fear of public speaking, performance anxiety, communication apprehension, etc. A state of extreme worry or trepidation before or during a performance in front of an audience is known as "Stage Fright" (DSM-IV). This attitude causes those who experience anxiety at the mere prospect of speaking in front of a crowd to lose their confidence and self-esteem. Although we've all experienced stage anxiety at some point, getting ready for a performance doesn't just happen on stage or during practice sessions. It simply refers to how we bring ourselves into play in our daily life [11].

Public speaking is key to effectively exchanging ideas, persuading others, and making a tangible impact. Yet, public speaking anxiety ranks as a top social phobia in the U.S., especially among first generation college students, and those who belong to underrepresented or minority groups [12]. Existing measures for examining fear of public speaking are somewhat limited in content, and there is a need for scales that assess a broader area including cognitive, behavioral, and physiological dimensions of the fear. A study examined the psychometric properties of the Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety (PRPSA) in a sample of university students (n, 273). Participants completed the PRPSA and measures of depression, social and general anxiety, and quality of life [13]. Anxiety that arises when a language learner uses a second or foreign language is known as language anxiety, a complicated psychological concept. The grades that students receive in the English course are referred to as their academic performance. The purpose of the study was to assess the respondents' English Anxiety in relation to their academic achievement. [14]. In contemporary EFL environments, it is without a doubt believed that mastery of communication skills is the most crucial component. However, as it is influenced by a variety of elements, such as affective factors, developing communicative competence is particularly challenging for language learners who are learning a foreign language. Anxiety stands out as the key emotional element that has a devastating impact on students' oral performances among the many other affective factors that affect foreign language learning, especially speaking. This essay examines the phenomena of speaking anxiety in the context of learning foreign languages. According to the major themes that emerge from a review of pertinent research, the potential causes of speaking anxiety are outlined and analyzed. [15].

Good public speaking skills are essential for a person's relationship development, educational achievement, and career success. Yet, public speaking anxiety poses great challenges to developing these skills. Approximately 15% to 30% of the general population suffer from public speaking anxiety, which is the most common type of social phobia. Excessive public speaking anxiety can lead to enormous stress and frustration, impaired speech performance, and further avoidance of social situations that require making public presentations. Individuals who struggle with this anxiety may be well aware of their irrational amount of fear, but it is usually difficult for them to control their responses without appropriate practice and training [16].

The research focuses on the fear of public speaking, or glossophobia, in postgraduate students of Spain. The main objective is to evaluate the levels of glossophobia of this group, with special attention to online public speaking. COVID-19 has forced the on-line performance of multiple academic activities. Vast majority of this group are aware of their oratorical weakness [17]. Anxiety disorders are highly prevalent, highlighting the need for the development of instruments that measure validly and efficiently anxiety disorders and related problems. According to predominant theories on emotion, there are cognitive, physiological and behavioral responses that are characteristic of fear-related responses [18].

The impact on students' performance anxiety was examined using a positive, pre-speech self-talk experience across a range of disciplines. The results indicate that requiring students to say aloud a self-affirming remark in unison just before giving a mandatory speech or presentation reduces performance anxiety more effectively than not requiring them to do so [19].

Additionally, developing public speaking skills is crucial for kids who want to succeed in school and in their careers. [20]. Self-confidence refers to a person's belief in their own ability to do the tasks at hand. Students must have self-confidence in order to complete the activities [21]. However, a lack of self-confidence in pupils not only causes problems for students, but also for institutions in terms of curriculum implementation. The majority of the current educational issues are brought on by low self-esteem, which has led to inadequate engagement and growth despite spending a lot of time in class. [22].One of the most crucial abilities in learning a language, especially English, is public speaking, but many language learners find it challenging and require a lot of effort to create acceptable utterances in English [23]. In both intensive and traditional formats of a general education public speaking course, the relationships between growth mindset for public speaking (i.e., the implicit theory that public speaking abilities can be developed and improved) and beliefs about the nature of public speaking, public speaking apprehension (PSA), and self-perceived public speaking competence (SPPSC) were examined.[24]. According to the study, speaking English in the Philippines appears to be quite tough, particularly for secondary school pupils [25].

Professionals all around the world suffer owing to a lack of effective public speaking abilities, while being skilled in their fields. Because their grades and evaluations may not always reflect their professional competitiveness, it is critical for students to conquer their fear of public speaking before transitioning from academic to professional life [26]. Despite an increasing corpus of research on teacher strategies and therapies for reducing public speaking anxiety, the problem persists, particularly among university students [27]. Anxiety disorders are quite common, underscoring the need for tools that can accurately and effectively measure anxiety disorders and related issues. There are cognitive, physiological, and behavioral reactions that are distinctive of fear-related responses, according to popular theories on emotion. However, the majority of tools used to assess public speaking anxiety (PSA) focus just on one or two of these factors. The PSA Scale was created to assess fear-related cognitive, behavioral, and physiological reactions [28]. The probable causes that contribute to speaking anxiety are explained and examined in light of the primary themes that emerge from a review of the research. (1) cognitive factors such as topics, genre, interlocutors, and processing demands; (2) affective factors such as feelings toward the topic and/or participants, as well as self-consciousness; and (3) performance factors such as mode, degree of collaboration, discourse control, planning and rehearsal time, time pressure, and environmental factors [29].

Cognitive behavioral therapy is a frequent treatment for public speaking anxiety. The patient is either asked to vividly picture and describe the dreaded stimuli or is presented with it in the actual world during the therapy session. However, imagining the object of dread or creating a controlling environment that incorporates this stimulation might be difficult at times [30]. Virtual reality exposure (VRE) therapy for public speaking fear has focused on distress arousal rather than distress habituation. Understanding habituation will allow you to shorten treatment sessions, making it more economical and accessible [31].

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The main problem of this study was to determine the impact of public speaking anxiety on public speaking skills of HUMSS students. Specially, this study sought answers to the following questions:

1. How may Public Speaking Anxiety be described?
2. What is the level of perceived public speaking skills of HUMSS Students?
3. Does the Impact of Public Speaking Anxiety significantly influence the perceived public speaking of HUMSS Students?
4. What implications may be derived from the findings of the study?

4. METHODOLOGY

The researchers used the descriptive correlation research method. Correlation research is a type of research technique that includes the observation of two variables in order to establish a statistically corresponding relationship between them. Specifically, the aim of this research was to determine the impact of public speaking anxiety on MHPNHS' HUMSS students learning. The researchers also used a questionnaire method for their primary data gathering tool. The questionnaire mainly helped them to organize and collect the expected data from the respondents. It is a standardized questionnaire used on determining the impact of public speaking anxiety in MHPNHS HUMSS Students.

Guided by the Raosoft Software, a calculator for sample size, the respondents of the study were composed of 174 over 316 HUMSS students in Marcelo H Del Pilar National Highschool during the school year 2021-2022. The researchers used random sampling technique or the fishbowl technique in determining the sample from the population.

To gather the necessary data for this study, the researchers utilized a 15-item self-made questionnaire to measure the level of perceived public speaking skills of HUMSS students. This questionnaire uses a 5- point Likert scale type and was subjected to expert's validation. Meanwhile, the researchers adapted a standardized questionnaire entitled "Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety (PRPSA)" developed and validated by McCroskey, 1970; McCroskey &Richmond, 1992 to identify the level of anxiety experienced by the students during public speaking. This questionnaire is also a 5-point Likert scale type

In gathering the data, the researchers used the following procedures: With the approval of the Research Coordinator of Marcelo H Del Pilar National High School after implementing the comments, recommendations, and suggestions during the proposal defense, a letter was sent to the school principal for approval to conduct the study. With their permission to conduct the research, google forms link was prepared showing the consent form on the first part of the survey and then distribute them to the respondents with the assistance of the researcher's contact person per section.

The data were tabulated and processed using statistical packages for social sciences (SPSS). To analyze and interpret the data gathered, the following statistical measures were used: mean procedures, frequency contents and person correlation coefficient/regression analysis.

In accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012, this study ensured that ethical standards set by generic research ethics were followed. Participants were informed about the steps and procedures taken in this research. The respondents are more important than the research therefore they were always respected and prioritized. The study is completely voluntary and did not impact towards their individuality. Confidentiality was provided, and the respondent's personal information was not used by anyone. Lastly, the data collection material was kept and destroyed upon the completion of the study.

5. RESULTS
Level of Perceived Public Speaking Skills of HUMSS Students

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation

1. I have a wide range of vocabulary that I often use in my impromptu speeches	2.88	Medium Level
2. I do not jumble words on my tongue during presentations	3.16	Medium Level
3. I pronounce words precisely using the right tone	3.14	Medium Level
4. I always make sure to stand straight during public speeches	3.56	High Level
5. I do not cross my arms or slouch during public speeches	3.84	Medium Level
6. I always remember to face the audience whenever I deliver public speeches	3.44	Medium Level
7. I use formal but easy-to-understand words to make my points clear during public presentations	3.40	Medium Level
8. I use simple style of words in delivering my speeches	3.73	High Level
9. The words I use in my speeches are brief and concise to avoid confusion with my audience	3.59	High Level
10. I keep my audience entertained during my speeches	3.77	High Level
11. My audience/listeners engage with my speeches all the time	3.52	High Level
12. My speeches create huge impact on my listeners	2.88	Medium Level
13. I use accurate hand gestures in my delivery depending on the presentation I am doing	3.40	Medium Level
14. My hand gestures during presentation align with the prominent words in my speech	2.60	Medium Level
15. I have a set of hand gestures I always use during a presentation	3.31	Medium Level
Average	**3.29**	**Medium Level**

Level of Perceived Public Speaking Skills of HUMSS Students. It can be observed in Table 1 that the perceived public speaking skills of HUMSS students in Marcelo H. del Pilar National High School are at a satisfactory level with an average of 3.45. The students have great confidence in their public speaking skills shown through their composure, vocabulary, pronunciation, hand gestures, and audience impact. The students are observed to have a high level of understanding of the right and formal way of presenting, giving speeches, and/or undergoing public speaking activities.

Public Speaking Anxiety

Table 2. Public Speaking Anxiety

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation
1. While preparing for giving a speech, I feel tense and nervous	4.02	High Level
2. I feel tense when I see the words "speech" and "public speech" on a course outline when studying	3.28	Medium Level
3. My thoughts become confused and jumbled when I am giving a speech	3.37	Medium Level
4. Right after giving a speech, I feel that I have had a pleasant experience	3.63	High Level
5. I get anxious when I think about a speech coming up	3.77	High Level
6. I have no fear of giving a speech	2.60	Medium Level
7. Although I am nervous just before starting a speech, I soon settle down after starting and feel calm and comfortable	3.49	Medium Level
8. I look forward to giving a speech	3.07	Medium Level
9. When the instructor announces a speaking assignment in class, I can feel myself getting tense	3.60	High Level
10. My hands tremble when I am giving a speech	3.35	Medium Level
11. I feel relaxed while giving a speech	2.53	Medium Level
12. I enjoy preparing for a speech	2.64	Medium Level
13. I am in constant fear of forgetting what I prepared to say	3.30	Medium Level

14. I get anxious if someone asks me something about my topic that I don't know	3.56	High Level
15. I face the prospect of giving a speech with confidence	3.05	Medium Level
Average	**3.28**	**Medium Level**

Impact of Public Speaking Anxiety on the Speaking Skills of HUMSS Students. Through the gathered data, it can be seen that public speaking anxiety takes a big toll on the students' confidence in their speaking skills. With an average of 3.53, the table shows that students display tenseness (4.02) and nervousness at the thought of public speech and/or the act of giving a speech in their course (3.28). It is also observed that words jumbled in their thoughts (3.37) causing them to forget what they prepared (3.30), and their hands tremble due to the anxiousness brought by the act of speech (3.35). Being unready for a certain topic gives anxiousness to the students (3.56), as well as stress whenever the instructor brought up a speaking assignment (3.60).

Through the data gathered from the students, it is shown that the highest mean taken is with the statement "**While preparing for giving a speech, I feel tense and nervous**" while the lowest is "**I tend to join debates and any open forum with different people**", thus proving Hoffman, Ehlers & Roth, (1995) theory about how an individual tends to avoid public speaking opportunities such as public speaking, oral recitations, and oral communications because of the fear that grows inside their minds. Due to these situations, a person suffering from Public Speaking Anxiety misses out on the crucial experience, skill-building, and opportunities, making oral communication as their fear-induced stimulus. This means that the more an individual avoided public speaking activities, the more they associate the act with negative outcomes, which also ends up becoming a more potent threat to the individual's communication skills.

Effects of Public Speaking Anxiety on HUMSS Students' Perceived Public Speaking Skills

Findings reveal that public speaking anxiety has a weak connection to the perceived public speaking skills of HUMSS students evident with the research correlation coefficients of -0.5167. This shows that the performance of the students involving oral communication such as public speaking, speeches, reporting, and presentation fluctuates depending on how worse their public speaking anxiety is. Moreover, it can be concluded that the more the students' PSA rises, the greater its effect on their public performance.

Implications Based on the Findings of the Study

HUMSS Students tend to feel more confident depending on their level of preparedness on their assigned task. They also have the ability to adapt on the fly, but they still tend to get nervous or sometimes create minor mistakes in their presentation. Although, HUMSS students have a vibrant aura when presenting up front, having proper posture and using hand gestures when necessary, especially engaging with an active crowd. They tend to focus on simplicity and conveying their message on the other end of the spectrum and sometimes entertainment can be an option when they're really prepared and confident on their assigned task.

When the subject of giving out speeches or speaking in public is mentioned, students aren't that nervous or concerned, but when they are asked to prepare, have a role in a speech, or be part of a public speaking activity, they tend to get nervous, and this might sprout from the idea of failing in front of a crowd or the idea of not being capable of the given task. Students tend to be more nervous in the preparation phase rather than being upfront with an audience. The thought of failing or getting embarrassed builds up but when the time comes for them to perform, it fades away and most students give their best shot in fulfilling their task.

Students show more signs of being nervous in their preparatory stage than in the performing stage. Their anxiousness kicks in at the start, they might tend to think that it's a road that will lead them to failure, but when it's time for them to stand in front of the stage, signs of anxiety and nervousness are there but it's only subtle or sometimes there are none at all. Nervousness and anxiety creep in when their capabilities are questioned and put to the test in preparation.

7. CONCLUSION

Based on the finding of the study, the researchers drew the following conclusions: First, there is a medium level of impact of public speaking anxiety observed on the perceived public speaking skills of HUMSS students. Second, the perceived public speaking skills of the students shown through the survey evaluated by the researchers also indicate a medium level of expertise. Third, it can be observed that there is a negative but weak connection linking the students' public speaking anxiety and their perceived public speaking skills. Fourth, the result of the study indicates that students experience this anxiety mostly during the preparation of the activity rather than the moment they are doing public speeches, which gives us the position that their anxiety about public performance does not necessarily affect how they perceive their skills were.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS
The researchers recommend the following:
(1) addressing and revising any negative impressions, ideas, thoughts, pictures, or predictions individuals have about public speaking performances,
(2) learning techniques for managing fear-induced thoughts,
(3) understanding cognitive-behavioral skills, and
(4) administering more public speaking activities to enhance skills and minimize the effect of PSA

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