

ANXIETY OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN PREPARATION FOR UNIVERSITY ADMISSION

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ABSTRACT

Anxiety is the main of mental health problem in adolescent, mostly in adolescent who preparation for university admission. This is descriptive researches that aim to explore levels of anxiety among senior high school in Samut Songkhram province in preparation for university admission. The samples consist of 364 persons. The research instruments include the questionnaire on personal information and the anxiety assessment form. The data analysis is conducted by using descriptive and correlation statistics. According to the findings, most senior high schools have a moderate level of anxiety (67.0%), followed by a low level of anxiety (25.8%). Family expectation is positively associated with anxiety with a .05 level of statistical significance. Family income and family support are negatively associated with anxiety with a .01 level of statistical significance. The findings can be filling a gap of knowledge and benefit for teacher and health care team to facilitate quality of life of senior high school.

Key word--- ANXEITY, ADOLESCENT

INTRODUCTION

Adolescents are in the age susceptible to face mental health problems since they have to adjust themselves to rapid changes from childhood into adulthood physically, emotionally, and socially (Crandell, Crandell & Zanden, 2012; Feldman, 2008; Slee, Campbell & Spears, 2012). Common mental health problems among adolescents include stress, anxiety, depression, and suicide (Horwitz, Hill & King, 2011). Anxiety is another significant common problem (Horwitz, Hill & King, 2011) as adolescents need to encounter the transition from childhood into adulthood. Anxiety is referred to as insecurity, uncomfortable feeling, fearfulness, and stress of individuals in response to unknown threats (Varcariolis, 2013; Shives, 2012), as well as unknown situations causing such feelings, while it is difficult for individuals to decide to fight against or escape from conflicts, stress, and uncomfortable feeling (Shives, 2012). Adolescents' anxiety may include to be afraid of not being accepted by surrounding people, and to be afraid of more responsibilities when they are entering adulthood. Particularly, during the transition to higher education in Thailand, Mathayomsuksa 6 students are required to undergo the Ordinary National Educational Test for admission purpose. As earlier mentioned regarding age-related development, adolescents are susceptible to basically face mental health problems. During the significant period affecting their future education, adolescents would have self-expectation, coupled with the awareness of their family's expectation of studying in the university, as well as lack of preparation of adolescents themselves.

Based on the literature review, it was found that there has not been any study in Samut Songkhram province on anxiety, especially among adolescents studying in Mathayomsuksa 6 who are preparing for the Ordinary National Educational Test. It is unfavorable to lack the information in preparation for preventing problems and providing assistance to adolescents susceptible to face mental health problems. Therefore, the researcher is interested in studying the anxiety of secondary students in Samut Songkhram province who are

preparing for the entrance examination in order to provide significant information to related organizations and health service providers so as to further plan how to prevent and assist with mental health problems of adolescents who are preparing for the Ordinary National Educational Test.

Research Questions

1. How about the anxiety of adolescents in secondary schools in Samut Songkhram province who are preparing for the Ordinary National Educational Test?
2. What factors are associated with the anxiety of adolescents in secondary schools in Samut Songkhram province who are preparing for the Ordinary National Educational Test?

OBJECTIVES

1. To explore the level of anxiety of adolescents in secondary schools in Samut Songkhram province who are preparing for the Ordinary National Educational Test.
2. To explore the factors associated with the level of anxiety of adolescents in secondary schools in Samut Songkhram province who are preparing for the Ordinary National Educational Test.

Scope of the Research

This is a descriptive research conducted with students in secondary schools in Samut Songkhram province, comprising 3 districts, namely, Muang district, Bangkhontee district, and Amphawa district. The research project had been carried out from December 2015 to June 2016.

METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive research aiming to explore the level of anxiety of adolescents studying in Mathayomsuksa 6 who are preparing for the entrance examination.

Population and Samples: The samples in this study consist of Mathayomsuksa 6 students in secondary schools in Samut Songkhram province who can communicate well in Thai, and agree to participate in the study.

Sampling: Because the school size in 3 districts in Samut Songkhram province is substantially different, this study randomly selected the samples by means of the stratified sampling in order to ensure that the populations represent Mathayomsuksa 6 students in Samut Songkhram province, being stratified by district, and 1 school in each district was randomly selected. Then, the size of populations representing the sub-group, i.e., each school, was calculated. All of these 3 schools had different number of students. With regard to the calculation of the population size, the researcher used the current number of Mathayomsuksa 6 students from the selected schools in Samut Songkhram province. The calculation of the sample size was made by using the following formula:

The formula for calculating the populations

$$n = \frac{P(1-P)}{\frac{E^2}{Z^2} + \frac{P(1-P)}{N}}$$

N is referred to as the population size.

n is referred to as the required number of populations.

P is referred to as the required ratio of populations, generally being determined at 30%.

E is referred to as the deviation being determined at 0.05.

Z is referred to as the confidence level being determined at 1.96 (based on 95% of the confidence level).

There was a minimum of 332 populations in total from the calculation. In order to prevent the loss of questionnaires by approximately 10%, the researcher collected the data from a total of 364 populations.

Data Collection

The data collection had been carried out after the research was approved by the Ethical Review Committee for Research in Human Subjects, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University. Subsequently, the researcher asked for permission to collect the data by submitting the letter from College of Nursing and Health, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University to all of 3 secondary schools in Samut Songkhram province. The research instruments include / set of questionnaires, consisting of the questionnaire on personal information and the anxiety assessment form as per the following details:

1) The questionnaire on personal information

The questionnaire on personal information is used to collect basic information of adolescents, namely, gender, age, academic performance, educational plan, expected higher education institute, duration of preparation for the examination, domicile, family income, number of family members, religion, marital status of father and mother, study plan, and study results, etc.

2) The anxiety assessment form

This is a standard form for the anxiety assessment. The content was validated by experts, while the confidence level was explored through the trial use with 30 persons possessing similar characteristics to the samples. The calculation of the confidence level was made by using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient, resulting in 0.78. The anxiety assessment form contained 20 questions regarding anxiety, while the anxiety was classified into 4 levels based on the score range.

Data Analysis

1. Personal information and factors affecting the anxiety of adolescents were analyzed by using the percentage.
2. The level of anxiety was analyzed by using the criterion-referenced assessment.
3. The Bivariate correlation was analyzed by using the Pearson correlation coefficient.

RESULTS

1 Personal information

There were totally 364 populations, comprising 36.8% males and 63.2% females. The majority of them aged 17-18, representing 60.5% and 39.0%, respectively. 72.0% of the populations are living in the two-parent family. The family income mostly ranged from 10,001-20,000 (38.5%), followed by over 30,001 (24.2%). Regarding the study plan of these populations, it was found that most populations were studying the science-mathematics program, followed by the language-arts program, and the mathematics-arts program, representing 65.9%, 22.0%, and 12.1%, respectively. 57.7% of the populations achieved over 3.00 grade point average, followed by 2.51-3.00 grade point average (29.1%), and 2.00-2.50 grade point average (13.2%). The findings revealed that most populations wished to continue studying in the public university (89.6%), and mostly in the field of health and medical sciences (29.1%), followed by the field of social sciences/mass communication (19.8%).

2. The anxiety of adolescents studying in Mathayomsuksa 6 – According to the study on the anxiety of adolescents studying in Mathayomsuksa 6, most of them had a moderate level of anxiety (67.0%), followed by a low and high level of anxiety, representing 25.8% and 7.2%, respectively as shown in Table 4.

Table 1:

The level of anxiety of adolescents studying in Mathayomsuksa 6 who are preparing for the entrance examination

Level of anxiety	Low	Moderate	High	Total
Number	94	244	26	364
(%)	(25.8)	(67.0)	(7.2)	(100)

3. The correlation between factors associated with the anxiety of adolescents studying in Mathayomsuksa 6 – According to the study, it was found that the family expectation of studying in the university was slightly positively associated with the anxiety with a .05 level of statistical significance ($r=.161$), the monthly family income was slightly negatively associated with the anxiety with a .01 level of statistical significance ($r=-.221$), and the family support for preparation to study in the university was slightly negatively associated with the anxiety with a .05 level of statistical significance ($r=-.188$), respectively as shown in Table 5

Table 2:
The factors associated with the anxiety of adolescents studying in Mathayomsuksa 6 who are preparing for the entrance examination

Variable	Anxiety
Factors associated with anxiety	
Family support for preparation to study in the university	-.188*
Family expectation of studying in the university	.161*
Monthly family income	-.221**

* $P<0.05$,** $P<0.01$

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

According to the study on the level of anxiety of adolescents studying in Mathayomsuksa 6 in Samut Songkhram province who are preparing for the entrance examination, it was found that the majority of these populations had a moderate level of anxiety, causing the individuals to have a deterioration in sensory function, i.e., vision and hearing, poor attention and concentration, as well as less perception (Varcarolis, 2013; Shives, 2012), followed by a low level of anxiety. With regard to the factors associated with the anxiety, it was found that high family expectation of studying in the university would be relatively associated with higher level of anxiety ($p<.05$, $r =.161$). Moreover, the monthly family income was most negatively associated with the anxiety ($p<.01$, $r =-.221$). This represented that low family income would increase the anxiety of adolescents who were preparing for the examination. Accordingly, regarding the family support for preparation to study in the university, this factor was negatively associated with the anxiety as well ($p<.01$, $r =-.188$).

SUGGESTION

As for the policy suggestion, related healthcare organizations should utilize the results of the study to formulate the policy for prevention of problems arising from the anxiety of adolescents who are preparing for the entrance examination, as well as to do the manpower planning for personnel responsible for promoting and preventing mental health problems. In addition, educational organizations should have the policy to thoroughly support fundraising for educational purpose from the secondary level since the findings revealed that the family income was associated with the anxiety of adolescents.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University for their kind assistance and financial support for conducting the research. Also, I am thankful to College of Nursing and Health, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, for their time and contribution through various stages of research.

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