The Effects of Anxiety in College Students

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To determine the relationship between anxiety and psychosocial functioning in college students?
Introduction

- Attending college related to increased stress:
  - Dorm life
  - Roommates
  - Social pressure
  - Pressure to drink or try drugs
  - Lack of social support
  - High academic demands

- Stress can result in significant anxiety.
Anxiety:
- Exists as a persistent feeling of discomfort
- Can cause or become caused by stress
  - Or the lack of ability to cope with an event
    - e.g., attending college
Anxiety can become overwhelming for some and impair their functioning.

Anxiety can prove both positive and negative. Where excessively high or low anxiety will be related to decreased performance.

Kessler, Berglund, Demler, Jin, Merikangas, & Walters, 2005
Veeraraghavan & Singh, 2002
Problems of Anxiety

- Severe anxiety can even cause a person to develop a distorted perception and can impair learning, attention, concentration, and memory.

- Therefore, understanding how anxiety affects college students proves a vital area for research.

Veeraraghavan & Singh, 2002
Hypothesis

- College students with increased anxiety will have decreased psychosocial functioning.

- In some instances, the relationship will be similar to an inverted U.
  - Where excessively high or low anxiety will be related to decreased performance.
Cross-sectional (single time point) survey of undergraduate students at UNT.

Collected a variety of measures including:

- State–Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI)
- Grade Point Average (GPA)
- Quality of Life Enjoyment and Satisfaction Questionnaire (Q–LES–Q)
- Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)
- BriefCOPE
- Perceived Stress Scale (PSS)
- Quick Inventory of Depressive Symptoms (QIDS)
- Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT)
- Marijuana Problem Scale (MPS)
UNT undergraduate students between the ages of 18 and 26 (N =1070 ).
Analysis

- Polynomial regressions:
  - Independent Variable: Trait anxiety levels (STAI)
  - Dependent Variables:
    - GPA, Q–LES–Q, MSPSS, BriefCOPE, PSS, QIDS, AUDIT, and MPS

- Controlled for experiment wise error with Bonferroni correction.
  - i.e., $p$ value must have been less than .01.
Results: Anxiety Related to

- Decreased:
  - Q-LES-Q ($R^2 = .43, p = .000$)
  - MSPSS
    - Family ($R^2 = .11, p = .000$)
    - Friends ($R^2 = .11, p = .000$)
    - Significant Others ($R^2 = .08, p = .000$)
  - Brief COPE ($R^2 = .04, p = .000$)
  - GPA ($R^2 = .01, p = .022$)
Results: Anxiety Related to

- Increased:
  - PSS ($R^2 = .55$, $p = .000$)
  - QIDS ($R^2 = .44$, $p = .000$)
  - AUDIT ($R^2 = .01$, $p = .036$)
  - MPS ($R^2 = .02$, $p = .000$)
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References

