

Public Speaking Anxiety among Senior High School Students: A Basis for Enhancement Program

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ABSTRACT

This study addressed Public Speaking Anxiety Among Senior High School Students: A Basis For Enhancement Program. The study's primary goal was to determine the level of public speaking anxiety in terms of their respective indicators and the significant difference between the levels of public speaking anxiety among Grade 11 and Grade 12 students. The study utilized a quantitative-correlational design with 274 respondents among Senior High School Students in Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School. The average weighted mean and T-test were the statistical tools used in this study. The results showed a high level of Public Speaking Anxiety, along with the indicators of Trait Anxiety, Context Anxiety, and Audience Anxiety. Additionally, a significant difference was found between the Level of Public Speaking Anxiety of Grade 11 and Grade 12 Students suggesting a need for comprehensive enhancement program to enhance students' public speaking skills. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected. The recommendations include implementing regular workshops and training sessions on public speaking skills, integrating public speaking into the curriculum, establishing peer support programs and public speaking clubs, providing flexible assessment methods, engaging parents through informational sessions, and encouraging gradual exposure to speaking opportunities. This necessitated an enhancement program to improve the public speaking skills of Grade 11 and 12 students, the Vocal Ease: Triumph Over Public Speaking Anxiety Program.

Keywords: GAS, Public Speaking Anxiety, Enhancement Program, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

In 2021, public speaking anxiety was a common fear in Japan, affecting people of all ages and backgrounds, especially students (Inada, 2022). Furthermore, the most recent Chapman University Survey on American Fears found that 75% of people experienced some level of anxiety when speaking in public (Leith, 2019). According to a study by Li-Wei and Chuan-Chi (2023), in China, this fear could be debilitating, preventing people from sharing their ideas and perspectives, being productive, and even participating in activities.

Moreover, in Manila, a study conducted by Renquintina (2023) discovered that having confidence in public speaking was of paramount importance, it served as the foundation upon which effective communication was built. Further, Lungay (2023) posited that confidence not only enhanced the speaker's credibility and persuasiveness but also instilled trust and engagement in the audience. Confidence in public speaking not only helped individuals overcome the fear associated with addressing an audience but also fostered self-esteem and trustworthiness (Sionel, 2021).

In Region XI, specifically in Davao City, students were generally cognizant of the significant challenge posed by anxiety when it came to the public speaking, and they often expressed a strong awareness of its impact (Ong & Zambas, 2021). Also, Andoyo and Nebria (2022) confirmed that the manifestation of anxiety among Filipino students was a common scenario, especially in speaking upfront in any classroom in the Philippines. In Mawab, particularly in Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School, it was observed that students encountered trouble in speaking during class reports and oral recitation. With this, the researchers were interested to know the level of public speaking anxiety of the students in basis to know if they need an enhancement program.

The described scenario motivated the researchers to explore indicators that led to the different levels of public speaking anxiety of students. The researchers were interested in determining the level of public speaking anxiety among Senior High School students at Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School as a basis for an enhancement program in the near future since this could create awareness of the target beneficiaries of this study and perhaps establish an action plan to enhance students' ability to speak publicly.

Research Objectives

This study was conducted to determine the level of public speaking anxiety of senior high school students on the basis of an enhancement program. Specifically, the study sought answers to the following objectives:

1. What is the level of public speaking anxiety among senior high school students in terms of:
 - 1.1 Trait Anxiety;
 - 1.2 Context Anxiety; and
 - 1.3 Audience Anxiety.
2. Is there a significant difference in public speaking anxiety among senior high school students when grouped by grade level:
 - 2.1 Grade 11; and Grade 12?
3. On the basis of the results, what enhancement program can be crafted?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative non-experimental research design utilizing descriptive techniques. This method was used when the objective was to describe the status of the situation as it existed at the same time as the study to explore the causes of a particular phenomenon. It involves collecting data in order to determine whether the degree of a phenomenon exists between one quantifiable variable (Gay et al., 2006).

Population and Sample

Simple random sampling was used in the selection of respondents. The population was 944 Senior High School students and from that population, the respondents of the study were the 274 students at Senior High School of Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School. Moreover, the study employed stratified random sampling which enabled the researchers to obtain a sample population that best represents the entire population being studied, making sure that each subgroup of interest was represented. The researchers chose senior high school students as the respondents because they experienced different school activities that dealt with public speaking.

Statistical Tool

The following statistical tools were utilized for the data analysis and interpretation.

Mean. This statistical tool was used to determine the level of public speaking anxiety of Senior High School Students of Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School.

T-test. This statistical tool was used to determine the significant difference between the level of writing skills of grade 11 and grade 12 students.

RESULTS

Level of Public Speaking Anxiety

Table 1 displays the mean scores for the indicators of public speaking anxiety among senior high school students enrolled in school year 2023-2024 at Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School, revealing an overall mean of 4.10, characterized as high, with a standard deviation of 0.67. The elevated level can be attributed to the commendable ratings provided by respondents across all indicators. This suggests that respondents exhibit trait anxiety, display context anxiety, and demonstrate audience anxiety.

Furthermore, the aforementioned overall mean score resulted from computed mean scores, ranked from highest to lowest as follows: 4.16, indicating a high level for audience anxiety with a standard deviation of 0.65; 4.09, signifying a high level for trait anxiety, accompanied by a standard deviation of 0.70; 4.06, reflecting a high level for context anxiety, with a standard deviation of 0.66.

Table 1. Level of Public Speaking Anxiety

Indicator	Mean	SD	Descriptive Level
Trait Anxiety	4.09	0.70	High
Context Anxiety	4.06	0.66	High
Audience Anxiety	4.16	0.65	High
Overall	4.10	0.67	High

Significant Difference of Public Speaking Anxiety between Grade 11 and Grade 12 students

One crucial aim of this study is to ascertain whether there is a significant difference in the levels of public speaking anxiety between Grade 11 and Grade 12 students at Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School. The results of the computation are presented in Table 2.

Additionally, the findings indicated that the levels of public speaking anxiety between Grade 11 and Grade 12 students exhibit a significant difference. This determination is based on a p-value of 0.006, which does not exceed the significance threshold of $p < 0.05$. Consequently, the decision to reject the null hypothesis, suggesting no significant difference in public speaking anxiety between Grade 11 and Grade 12 students in Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School, is justified. This implies the presence of a significant difference in public speaking anxiety between the two grades.

Table 2. Significant Difference of Public Speaking Anxiety between Grade 11 and Grade 12 students

	Grade Level	N	Mean	SD
Public Speaking Anxiety	Grade 11	123	4.00	0.59
	Grade 12	151	4.20	0.58

$P < 0.05$ T= 2.765 df= 271 p-value= 0.006

DISCUSSIONS

Level of Public Speaking Anxiety

The level of public speaking anxiety among senior high school students at Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School is assessed as high, signifying trouble in speaking publicly. This observation is indicative of a high manifestation of public speaking anxiety. However, there is potential for improvement in various aspects. Trait anxiety, a signifying tendency or personality trait in which individuals consistently experience feelings of apprehension, worry, and nervousness across various situations. Context anxiety is not confined to a single context; rather, it permeates various facets of life, influencing individuals in different ways, from social interactions to academic settings and professional environments, anxiety can manifest uniquely, shaping the lived experiences of those who grapple with its effects. Audience Anxiety is the nervousness or apprehension that individuals may experience when they are required to speak or perform in front of an audience. Overall, addressing these indicators will contribute to a more comprehensive intervention program to further elevate the public speaking skills of senior high school students at Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School.

Moreover, this result is aligned with the social learning theory by Bandura's (1977) that emphasized, that each individual may develop public speaking anxiety through social learning processes, such as observing others' reactions to public speaking or experiencing negative feedback themselves. If someone witnesses or experiences humiliation, embarrassment, or criticism in a public speaking situation, they may internalize those experiences and develop a fear of similar situations in the future. Public speaking anxiety as described by Herrity (2023) is a heightened sense of fear, nervousness, or apprehension when an individual is faced with the prospect of speaking in front of an audience. Additionally, it is often associated with various emotional, and cognitive responses that can significantly impact a person's ability to communicate effectively in public settings. Prepare thoroughly and gradual exposure, as noted by Moore (2022), is anticipated to function as a motivator for students in their endeavors to improve their public speaking skills.

Significant Difference of Public Speaking Anxiety between Grade 11 and Grade 12 students

The present study reveals a significant difference in Public Speaking Anxiety between Grade 11 and Grade 12 Students at Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School. This implies the public speaking skills of Grade 11 and Grade 12 students differ, indicating that moving from Grade 11 and Grade 12 involves worsening or

changes in how well students can speak in public and how they handle it. This confirms the main anchor of this study, the theory of Bandura (1977) social learning theory, which emphasized that individuals may develop public speaking anxiety through social learning processes, such as observing others' reactions to public speaking or experiencing negative feedback themselves and a notable portion of high school students, especially in Grade 11 and 12, lack awareness regarding the importance of public speaking, leading to a lack of awareness regarding the importance of public speaking can result in missed opportunities and hinder personal and professional growth. Individuals may fail to recognize the pivotal role effective communication plays in various aspects of life, from career advancement to interpersonal relationships and their academic performance.

The significant difference in public speaking ability between Grade 11 and Grade 12 students at Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School highlights the importance of self-esteem and confidence in Grade 11. As students advance to 12th grade, they experienced an increase in their public speaking anxiety. The study aimed to understand why students struggle with reporting and oral presentations, with a focus on improving their public speaking skills. The findings confirm that to enhance students' public speaking skills, it is essential to understand the entire public speaking process, which involves communicating ideas, information, or opinions in a clear, organized, and persuasive manner (Fritscher, 2021). The study focuses on students with low public speaking ability and identifies internal challenges such as fear, nervousness, perfectionism, and lack of self-confidence (Montijo, 2022). Many students are graduating without the necessary public speaking skills required for the Information Age, putting them at risk of struggling with multiple reports and oral presentations in college unless they receive proper guidance (Cunic, 2023).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings of the study conducted at Lorenzo S. Sarmiento Sr. National High School provide a nuanced understanding of the public speaking skills among senior high school students, particularly in Grade 11 and Grade 12. The assessment indicates a high public speaking anxiety, with room for improvement in audience anxiety towards public speaking, handling nervousness, being prepared, and using relaxation techniques before handling a crowd. Notably, the students demonstrate an alarming receptivity to context anxiety and a high level of trait anxiety in public speaking anxiety.

The disparities between the two grades underscore the importance of addressing challenges faced by students, such as confidence, nervousness, and preparedness. The study recommends a holistic approach self-awareness, cognitive strategies, behavioral techniques, handling the crowd and self management. In essence, the study's comprehensive insights provide a foundation for tailored intervention programs to elevate public speaking skills, ensuring that students not only meet academic requirements but also develop critical skills essential for success in both their educational journey and future careers.

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