

Exploring Classroom Anxiety among Library and Information Science Undergraduates in Sri Lanka

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The phenomenon of anxiety is a crucial issue in the higher education context related to fear, unpleasantness and worries at present. It is a widespread feeling of apprehension due to a natural reaction to stress disorder. On the other hand, it is an anticipated belief of psychological distress. Therefore, this study aims to find classroom anxiety among Library and Information Science (LIS) undergraduates at the Department of Library and Information Science (DLIS), University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka. The objectives of the study are to identify the sources of classroom anxiety, to assess the impact of classroom anxiety on academic performance, and to explore coping strategies employed by students. The study used a qualitative research method based on the case study approach. A total of 72 BA honours undergraduates from 1st year (35), 2nd year (20) and 3rd year (17), out of the Bachelor of Arts degree undergraduates, were selected under the purposive sampling technique because it fulfilled the purpose of research. The response rate was 100% and the collected data were analyzed accordingly. The study results indicated that failing to attend classes regularly, getting nervous when they don't understand the lessons, speaking in front of the class, performing poorly in classroom activities, and receiving lower grades in activities were significant factors that affected the feeling of anxiety. Furthermore, the relationship between classroom anxiety and academic performance was also at a standard level. To cope with classroom anxiety, undergraduates found some strategies, such as seeking help from their peers and meeting student counselors at the university. Undergraduates proposed to arrange friendly discussions in the classroom and for lecturers to become closer to the students to help overcome their fear, unpleasantness and worries. In conclusion, classroom anxiety feelings impact LIS undergraduates at a standard level, and peer support, counseling, and closer lecturer-student relationships will help to overcome the anxiety feelings and enhance well-being.

Keywords: *Classroom anxiety; Library and Information Science; Sri Lanka; Undergraduates; University of Kelaniya*