

SELF CONFIDENCE AND PUBLIC SPEAKING ANXIETY AMONG YOUTH ASPIRANTS

Jessythavanayagi M

M.Sc. Psychology

Aswathy C S

M.Sc. Psychology

Ranjithkumar P

M.Sc. Psychology

J. Sujathamalini

Professor and Head

K. Gunasekaran

Assistant Professor

Department of Special Education and Rehabilitation Science,

Alagappa University, TN

Email – jessyissac2003@gmail.com

Abstract

Public speaking anxiety is a common psychological concern that negatively impacts the academic performance, communication, and social interaction of individuals despite having adequate knowledge and abilities. Self-confidence plays a significant role in enabling individuals to manage fear, anxiety and stress while speaking in front of others. Present study explores the relationship between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety among youth aspirants. The study follows a descriptive survey research design in order to measure the levels of self-confidence and public speaking anxiety and analyse the relationship between these two variables. Simple random sampling was used whereby youth aspirants as participants aged 18 to 26 years in Sivaganga district, especially around Karaikudi, were selected for this research. The data were collected using standardized and reliable tools, namely the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE) to measure self-confidence and Public Speaking Classroom Anxiety Scale (PSCAS) to measure English public speaking anxiety. All the statistical analyses in this research were performed with the help of SPSS and Excel software using Pearson's correlation. The Result reveals that, a weak negative correlation ($r = -0.226$) was seen between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety, indicating that higher the levels of self-confidence, the lower the level of public speaking anxiety among youth aspirants.

Key words: self-confidence, self-efficacy, public speaking anxiety.

Introduction

Humans are social beings that cannot be separated from their environment and always live in groups that range from small, such as families to large, such as social groups, organizations. Humans interact in every group, one of them, by communicating with others around them in the environment. The real potential of a person is often masked by the fear of forgetting words, being judged or not sounding "good enough." While public speaking anxiety is common, it quietly undermines the self-confidence required to inspire conviction in ideas to be shared. In a place where communication is esteemed as a stamp of success, this struggle better be understood. A community leader, a leader, students and educators should possess the knowledge to present ideas and thoughts through formal and informal forums. A student no matter how brilliant his achievements, he cannot express his knowledge in public. Otherwise, it will not be easy to earn the trust of other people either. Building self-confidence at such moments does not involve eliminating fear. It involves transforming that fear into courage-the courage to express one's authentic voice. Self-confidence is that positive attitude/confidence in an individual's abilities, which is able to form positive appraisals of the self and the environment in order to be optimistic, objective, responsible and able to think rationally in dealing with the situation at hand (Yulianto et al., 2020). Self-efficacy is an individual's confidence in their ability to successfully perform something specific behaviours and to reach desired goals. Social connectedness has been identified as a consistent factor across age groups and contexts that influences self-efficacy. Supportive networks, meaningful interpersonal provide relationships, a sense of belonging, emotional validation, guidance and resources. That promotes confidence in one's abilities. (Srivastava, J. & Srivastava, S. (2025). One personal quality that helps individuals to learn a foreign language is Successfully is self-confidence. It can either enhance or hinder academic performance. Foreign language learners who are confident tend to Excel and are likely to see themselves as able learners. The effectiveness of the practice of self-introduction contributes to enhancing the speaking ability and self-confidence (Akbar, L. O., et al 2025.). Anxiety as an unpleasant emotional state or condition that was characterized by changes in the nervous system and subjective Feelings of stress, uneasiness and fear. (Spielberger, C. D. (1972). Anxiety of this kind can positively or negatively affect the individual's ability to learn. In making the student unsettled, Anxiously and psychically, tension may lower the effectiveness of the learning process. In some other instances, anxiety may increase students' motivation to Instead, learn because they feel pressurized. (Caingal, C. A., 2024). Public speaking that causes anxiety above all other kinds of speaking activities for EFL students. Meanwhile, in more traditional settings, Lecture-based classrooms hinder EFL learners' constant practice and frequent interaction due to large class sizes and limited time. It forms part of the learning process a student feels anxious at school (Chen, Y. (2022). Language anxiety has been proven to have crippling effects on language learners and one of the best measures of the success of language learning. Whereas although encouraging anxiety improves the performance of learners, too much anxiety could lead to inferior performance. (Caingal, C. A., 2024.). Youth aspirants, particularly those preparing for

academic, competitive or professional roles are frequently exposed to situations that demand effective oral communication. However, limited opportunities for practice, fear of judgment, and inadequate confidence contribute to elevated public speaking anxiety among this group. However, previous studies have examined self-confidence and public speaking anxiety separately, empirical research focusing on their relationship among Indian youth aspirants remains limited.

The current research is aimed at measuring the degree of self-confidence and public speaking anxiety of young people who want to speak in public and to analyse the link between these two factors. It is important to understand this connection as it can help to design psychological interventions, communication training programs and educational methods that will be able to increase confidence and decrease anxiety of young people.

Review of Literature

This section presents a review of the related studies and literature relevant to the investigation of the topic at hand. The discussion follows the following topics: self-confidence, public speaking anxiety and the relationship between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety for young aspirants.

SELF-CONFIDENCE

Devi et. al., (2024). The study examined the effectiveness of individual Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) in increasing self-confidence in a Class XI student at SMA Negeri 2 Bontang during the 2024 or 2025 academic year. Using a single subject A-B experimental design, the student selected for frequent absenteeism and low confidence was assessed with a self-confidence scale. Results showed a significant improvement post-intervention, with a high confidence score (42.7), zero overlap, positive trend and stable behaviour, it demonstrating CBT's effectiveness in boosting self-confidence.

Akbar et. al., (2025). The study investigated the correlation between communicative competence, self-confidence, and speaking performance among 144 tenth-grade students at Senior High School PGRI Number 2 Palembang. Using quantitative correlational methods, data were collected through tests and questionnaires, including the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). Analysis with Pearson's correlation. The result showed a significant and strong relationship confirming that communicative competence and self-confidence significantly influence speaking performance.

Srivastava, J. & Srivastava, S. (2025). The study examined the relationship between social connectedness and self-efficacy among 403 school going adolescents using a quantitative survey design. Data were collected with the Social Connectedness Scale (SCS) and **General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE)**. Results showed that higher social connectedness was significantly associated with greater self-efficacy and its positive impact on adolescents' confidence and ability to handle challenges.

PUBLIC SPEAKING ANXIETY

Findıklı, S., & Büyükkarçı, K. (2023). The study investigated high school students' foreign language speaking anxiety differed by gender, grade level, self-perceived English proficiency, prior speaking support, and English exam scores. Using a quantitative survey design, data was collected from 250 students at a state high school during the 2022-2023 fall semester. The English-Speaking Anxiety Scale (Orakçı, 2018) was used to measure anxiety levels. Descriptive and inferential analyses showed that students experienced a moderate level of speaking anxiety. The result indicated that speaking support had no significant effect, gender, grade level, exam scores and self-perceived proficiency significantly affected anxiety levels.

Caingal et. al., (2024). The study examined English public speaking anxiety among third-year tertiary students in Olongapo City, Philippines, using a quantitative survey design. A purposive sample of 197 students participated and data were collected through **Usaha and Yaikhong's Public Speaking Class Anxiety Scale (PSCAS)**. Analyses conducted using Excel 2019 and SPSS 26 with nonparametric tests. The result showed that no overall significant difference in anxiety levels and significant variations appeared when grouped by sex and academic program. The researchers recommended seminar-workshops to boost students' self-esteem and confidence in using English.

Septiawan et. al., (2025). The study explored English speaking anxiety, attitudes, and causes among first-year English majors at a state university in Lampung, Indonesia, using a mixed-method design with 64 participants. Data were collected via questionnaires (MFLCAS and Foreign Language Anxiety Inventory) and interviews. Findings showed generally low speaking anxiety, but students viewed speaking ability as the main anxiety trigger. While they had positive attitudes toward English in class, they negatively evaluated their speaking skills, citing limited vocabulary, low self-confidence and lack of speaking opportunities as key anxiety causes.

SELF CONFIDENCE AND PUBLIC SPEAKING ANXIETY

Aqso et. al., (2023) The relationship between self-confidence and public speaking ability of students of the Faculty of Education Ahmad Dahlan University Yogyakarta. The study at Ahmad Dahlan University investigated the relationship between self-confidence and public speaking ability among Faculty of Education students from the 2002-2004 batches. Using a quantitative correlational design with cluster random sampling, data were analyzed with Pearson's correlation. Results showed a strong positive relationship, indicating that higher self-confidence is linked to better public speaking performance.

Ahmed et. al., (2025). The study examined the relationship between public speaking anxiety (PSA) and self-efficacy among 1,130 Sudanese medical students using a cross-sectional survey. Data were collected with the PRPSA and General Self-Efficacy scales. Results showed 45% had moderate PSA, 11.5% high PSA, and 87% high self-efficacy. Significant links were found

between PSA and factors like gender and academic performance. A weak but significant negative correlation indicated that higher self-efficacy reduces public speaking anxiety.

Linao et. al., (2025). The study explored the relationship between self-esteem and public speaking skills among 300 Humanities and Social Sciences students using a descriptive-correlational design. Results showed a moderate positive correlation and it indicates that higher self-esteem is linked to better public speaking performance. The study emphasizes the need for supportive environments and practice to improve anxiety management and communication skills.

Need for the Study

In the technological era, public speaking skills are of primary concern in every sphere. It may be related directly or indirectly to intrapersonal relationships such as self-confidence, self-esteem, self-efficacy and self-resilience. Although there is, on one hand, an increasing body of empirical evidence that self-confidence and self-efficacy are inversely related to Public Speaking Anxiety (PSA) and positively related to speaking performance, revealed certain conceptual and contextual deficiencies within existing studies provide a prima facie justification for the present investigation. Intervention-based studies indicate that individual CBT interventions can result in improved self-confidence. Correlational studies have identified confidence-related constructs linked with PSA. Though, these studies are predominantly restricted to non-Indian populations and pertain to either the aspects of outcome efficacy or mere association without considering the influences of culturally embedded psychosocial variables. Further, PSA studies among adolescents and young adults, especially in EFL and academic contexts, have suggested average levels of anxiety linked to gender, language proficiency, and low levels of confidence with these findings being theoretically unintegrated and highly fragmented. Thus, against this backdrop, the present study will be necessary to bridge this deficit by systematically investigating the relationship between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety of the young Indian aspirants while placing this relationship within the schema of culturally appropriate developmentalism thereby presenting context-specific evidence to educational psychology and adolescent mental health research

Operational definition:

Self-confidence

Self-confidence is a positive attitude/confidence in an individual's abilities that is able to

develop positive assessments of both oneself and the environment so that they can be optimistic, objective, responsible and think rationally in dealing with the situation at hand (**Yulianto et al., 2020**). Self-confidence defined as a quantifiable degree of an individual's belief in their capacity to undertake tasks or cope with a situation effectively.

Public Speaking Anxiety

Public speaking anxiety is considered a social anxiety disorder and refers to the anxiety that an individual experiences when giving a speech or preparing to speak in front of others. (Gallego, A., et al.,2022). Public speaking anxiety refers to the measurable level of fear, nervousness, or discomfort experienced by an individual when speaking in front of an audience.

Objective of the Study

- To assess the level of self confidence among young aspirants.
- To assess the level of public speaking anxiety among young aspirants.
- To find out the relationship between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety among youth aspirants.
- To find out the significance difference in the mean score of Self-confidence and Public Speaking Anxiety among young aspirants based on gender.

Hypotheses of the Study

- There is no significant difference in the level of self confidence among young aspirants.
- There is no significant difference in the level of public speaking anxiety among young aspirants.
- There is no significant relationship between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety among youth aspirants.
- There is no significance difference in the mean score of Self-confidence and Public Speaking Anxiety among young aspirants based on gender.

Methodology

Research Design

The current research used a descriptive, cross-sectional, correlational research design in order to investigate the connection between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety in the case of young aspirants.

Sample and sampling Technique

The sample was made up of 106 youth aspirants who were between the ages of 18 and 26 years and were selected from the Sivaganga district in Tamil Nadu. To guarantee equal representation and reduce sampling bias, the simple random sampling technique was used. The study included male and female participants.

Variables

- **Independent Variable:** Self-confidence
- **Dependent Variable:** Public speaking anxiety

Tools used:

Self-confidence: The self-confidence is assessed by using General Self-efficacy Scale, and it was developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem in 1995. It is developed for adults and adolescents over 12 years old. The scale contains 10 items, scoring of 4-point scale. The reliability of GSE is strong (Cronbach's alpha from .76 to .90). Recent study using GSE (Srivastava, J. & Srivastava, S. (2025).

Public speaking anxiety: Public speaking classroom anxiety scale (PSCAS) developed by Yaikhong and Usaha in 2012. The scale consists of 17 closed-ended statements using 5-point Likert scale. The internal consistency of PSCAS is .84 (Cronbach's alpha). The recent study using PSCAS is (Caingal, C. A., et al. (2024).

Procedure

After the informed consent was secured, participants were first given the purpose of the exploration and the confidentiality given to them as a guarantee. The questionnaires are administered through the survey method and the participants get the sign to give their honest responses. The demographic files are gathered and the total scores for each scale are computed for the analysis.

Statistical Analysis

The data that has been collected were subjected to statistical analysis using two software programs: SPSS and MS Excel. Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were the first step to measuring self-confidence and public speaking anxiety. The next was to apply independent samples t-tests aimed at detecting any gender differences. The correlation was measured through Pearson's product-moment correlation between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety. The threshold for statistical significance was determined at $p < .05$.

Result

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics – Mean, Median, Mode, SD, Skewness & Kurtosis of Self-confidence and public speaking anxiety among young adults.

variables	No. of Sample	Mean	Median	Mode	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Self-confidence	106	29.1	30.0	32	5.07	-0.278	-0.555
Public speaking anxiety	106	53.7	55.5	60	10.3	-0.683	0.737

Table 1 provides the data of descriptive statistics on Self-confidence among young adults. The descriptive analysis revealed in Self-confidence, the Mean is 29.1, the Median is 30.0, the Mode is 32, the SD is 5.07, the skewness is -0.278 which represents the distribution is negatively skewed and the kurtosis is -0.555 indicates the mesokurtic. In Public Speaking Anxiety, the Mean is 53.7, the Median is 55.5, the Mode is 60, the SD is 10.3, the skewness is -0.683 which represents the distribution is negatively skewed and the kurtosis is 0.737 indicates the mesokurtic. The descriptive statistics adherence to the normal distribution allows the study to continue.

Table 2: provides the data on the level of Self-confidence and Public Speaking Anxiety among young aspirants.

Variables	No. of sample	High	Moderate	Low
Self -confidence	106	34	25-33	24
Public Speaking Anxiety	106	64	45-63	44

The levels were calculated using Mean \pm SD of Self-confidence and Public Speaking Anxiety. The participants who scored 34 and above denote a high level of Self-confidence. The participants who scored 64 and above denote a high level of public speaking Anxiety.

In Self-confidence, the participants who scored 24 and below denotes a low level of Self-confidence. In Public Speaking Anxiety, the participants who scored 44 and below denotes a low level of Public Speaking Anxiety. In Self-confidence, the participants who scored between 25 to 33 denote a moderate level of Self-confidence. In Public Speaking Anxiety, the participants who scored between 45-63 denote a moderate level of Public Speaking Anxiety.

According to Table 2, in Self-confidence 22 participants falls under the high level of Self-confidence, 61 participants fall under the moderate level and 23 participants falls under the low level. Hence the stated hypothesis "There is no difference in the level of Self-confidence among young aspirants" is rejected. To sum up there is difference in the level of Self-confidence.

In Public Speaking Anxiety 11 participants falls under the high level of Public Speaking Anxiety, 76 participants fall under the moderate level and 19 participant falls under the low level of Public Speaking Anxiety. Hence the stated hypothesis "There is no difference in the level of Public speaking Anxiety among young aspirants" is rejected. To sum up there is difference in the level of public speaking Anxiety among young aspirants.

Table 3: Mean difference 't' test analysis of self-confidence among young aspirants based on gender.

Variables	Gender	No. of sample	Mean	SD	t value
-----------	--------	---------------	------	----	---------

Self-confidence	Male	49	28.8866	5.090588	0.1821
	Female	57	29.06604	5.069552	

From analysing the data this table shows the mean score of Self-confidence among young aspirants based on gender is 0.1821. It denotes there is significant difference at the level of 0.05. Hence the stated hypothesis "There is no significant difference in the mean score of Self-confidence among young aspirants based on gender " is accepted.

Table 4: Mean difference ‘t’ test analysis of public speaking anxiety among young aspirants based on gender.

Variables	Gender	No. of sample	Mean	SD	t value
Public Speaking Anxiety	Male	49	53.78351	10.32011	0.0249
	Female	57	53.73585	10.31809	

From analysing the data this table shows the mean score of public speaking anxiety among young aspirants based on gender is 0.0249. It denotes there is significant difference at the level of 0.05. Hence the stated hypothesis "There is no significant difference in the mean score of Public speaking anxiety among young aspirants based on gender " is accepted.

Table 5: Correlation between Self-confidence and Public Speaking Anxiety among young aspirants.

Variables	r value
Self-confidence	-0.226
Public Speaking Anxiety	

Table 5 presents between Self-confidence and Public speaking anxiety among a sample of 106 young aspirants. The correlation coefficient was $r = -0.226$, indicating a negative relationship between the two variables. This result suggests that, self-confidence plays a role in reducing public speaking anxiety and Other psychological, situational and experiential factors may also influence the level of anxiety experienced during public speaking among young aspirants.

Discussion

The current study investigated self-confidence and public speaking anxiety of youth aspirants in relation to each other. The results showed a weak negative correlation ($r = -0.226$), so that the higher the self-confidence, the lower the public speaking anxiety. The relationship, though modest, is in favour of the idea that self-confidence facilitates the management of anxiety in public speaking scenarios. The current results are in line with earlier work by Ahmed et al. (2025), who presented a negative relationship between self-efficacy and public speaking anxiety in case of medical students, implying that characteristics related to confidence enable people to deal with fear connected with performance. In the same way, Linao et al. (2025) reported that higher self-esteem was correlated with better public speaking performance, thus drawing attention to the necessity of self-affirmation in communication contexts.

The results of the descriptive statistics made it clear that the majority of the participants had the same degree of self-confidence and public speaking anxiety, meaning the youth aspirants usually feel anxious even though they have a certain level of confidence. This is consistent with the results of Caingal et al. (2024), who found that public speaking anxiety among university students was of a moderate degree.

The analysis gave no reason to infer that there were significant differences in confidence or public speaking anxiety based on gender. It means that public speaking anxiety is a common feeling of the youth aspirants all around the world, and it does not matter if they are male or female. The same sentiment was expressed by Septiawan et al. (2025), pointing to a possible greater influence of situational and psychological factors over demographic ones.

Overall, the findings support the idea that self-confidence alone may not be enough to completely get rid of public speaking anxiety, but it is still an essential mental resource, that when paired with practice, exposure, and supportive learning environments, could at least lessen the intensity of anxiety.

Conclusion

The present study concludes that in youth aspirants, self-confidence and public speaking anxiety are related to a significant effect. It was clear from the result that there is a weak yet significant negative correlation between the two variables. The null hypotheses that had been formulated in the study were thus partially rejected according to the study's findings. The hypotheses which declared that there is no difference in self-confidence and public speaking anxiety levels among the youth aspirants were all rejected, thus revealing considerable variation in both parameters within the sample. The hypothesis which claimed that there is no significant relationship between self-confidence and public speaking anxiety was also rejected, as a weak but significant negative correlation was noted. This finding implies that higher self-confidence goes along with lower public speaking anxiety among youth aspirants. Nevertheless, the hypotheses related to gender differences in self-confidence and public

speaking anxiety were accepted since no statistically significant mean differences were found between male and female participants. In summary, the rejection of important hypotheses underlines the role of self-confidence as a psychological factor influencing public speaking anxiety among youth aspirants.

References

- Ahmed, W. M. M., Abdalmotalib, M. M., Mohammed, G. T. F., Siddig, M. M. Y., Salih, H. S., Ahmed, A. A. A., & Abdullateef, S. S. (2025). Public speaking anxiety and self-efficacy among Sudanese medical students: a cross-sectional study. *BMC psychology*, 13(1), 600.
- Akbar, L. O., Firdaus, M., & Mulyadi, M. (2025). Communicative Competence, Self Confidence and Speaking Performance: Correlation Study. *ALACRITY: Journal of Education*, 644-655.
- Caingal, C. A., Alla, E. R. N., Bulan, W. J., Marcial, M. B., & Asio, J. M. R. (2024). English Public Speaking Anxiety of Third-Year Students from a Tertiary Education Institution. *Journal of Educational Analytics (JEDA)*, 3(1), 9-22.
- Devi, R. C., Pratiwi, Y. S., Sona, D., & Hidayanti, N. (2024). Individual Counseling Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) To Improve Self-Confidence In Grade XI Students At SMA Negeri 2 Bontang Academic Year 2024/2025. *Santhet (Jurnal Sejarah Pendidikan Dan Humaniora)*, 8(2), 2391-2396.
- Fındıklı, S., & Büyükkarcı, K. (2023). Factors affecting students' speaking anxiety in English language classroom. *Focus on ELT Journal*, 5(1), 98-114. <https://doi.org/10.14744/felt.2023.5.1.6>
- Gallego, A., McHugh, L., Penttonen, M., & Lappalainen, R. (2022). Measuring public speaking anxiety: self-report, behavioral, and physiological. *Behavior Modification*, 46(4), 782-798.
- Liniao, S. S., Sison, M. E. S., Garcenila, G. A. K. M., Tutor, D. P. B., Garcia, H. M., Odin, N. A., ... & Pondang, K. A. (2025). The Relationship of Self-Esteem and Public Speaking Skills among Humanities and Social Sciences Students. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Applied Science*, 10(2), 290-307.
- Septiawan, H., Setiyadi, B., Mahpul, M., Sukirlan, M., & Nisa, K. (2025). The anxiety in English for foreign language speaking class: the case of university students in Lampung context. *Journal of Education and Learning (EduLearn)*, 19(1), 362-370.
- Srivastava, J. & Srivastava, S. (2025). The Effect of Social Connectedness on Self-Efficacy Among School-Going Adolescents. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 13(3), 3449-3455. DIP:18.01.314.20251303, DOI:10.25215/1303.314