

Relationship Between Perceived Competence, Social Acceptance, and Communication Patterns with Adolescent Anxiety and Depression

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Abstract

Modern society presents various challenges that can affect adolescents as they transition into adulthood. Those who navigate this phase with fewer obstacles—particularly those who effectively manage crises like anxiety and depression—are more likely to achieve greater happiness and success. This study investigates the roles of self-esteem, social acceptance, and communication patterns in influencing anxiety and depression levels in adolescents. Employing a descriptive-correlational research design, the sample consisted of 250 adolescents, selected based on the Tabachnik and Fidel formula through an available sampling method. The findings indicate that higher levels of self-esteem, greater social acceptance, and effective communication patterns significantly contribute to reducing anxiety and depression among adolescents.

Keywords: Self-esteem, social acceptance, communication patterns, depression, anxiety, adolescent

Introduction and Statement of the Problem

In today's world, individuals face significant tension and anxiety, often leading to a disconnection from their unique identities. Many people overlook their distinctive qualities and instead internalize external feedback, resulting in self-doubt (Naseri Karimvand & Azami, 2021). A robust self-concept is crucial for navigating social situations effectively, as it enhances communication skills and helps individuals manage anxiety and depression. According to Harter (1980), a well-formed self-concept enables individuals to recognize their abilities, which positively influences their social and personal relationships. Self-acceptance fosters mental health; those who embrace themselves are better equipped to accept others, contributing to their social well-being (Shadan, 2010). Harter identifies five specific areas of perceived

competence: academic performance, social acceptance, athletic skills, body image, and interpersonal behavior. Together, these dimensions significantly impact an individual's personality and self-concept (Harter, 1980). Social acceptance not only enhances individual health but also contributes to the overall health of society (2018). Individuals who experience social health view society as a collective of diverse individuals, fostering trust and confidence in others' capabilities and kindness. They maintain a positive perspective on human nature and feel comfortable in social interactions. Social acceptance reflects self-acceptance, as it involves a positive attitude toward oneself and one's life experiences, embracing all aspects of one's identity, including weaknesses (Shapiro, 2004, quoted by Zaroufi, 2015). A strong sense of competence and social acceptance is essential for effective communication. Communication patterns, rooted in family dynamics, reflect both the social, cultural, and economic conditions of the family and the internal dynamics among its members. The family communication model is shaped by the encoding and decoding of messages exchanged among family members, influencing future interactions (Rashidi, Sharifi, & Naqshineh, 2016). McLeod and McCuffie (1972) argue that family communication patterns arise from interactions rather than being inherent personality traits. These patterns can be categorized into two forms: dialogue, which encourages open and spontaneous discussions, and conformity, which reflects the pressure to align values and beliefs within the family (Rashidi et al., 2016). Parental communication styles significantly impact a child's mental, social, and physical health (McLeod & McCuffie, 1972). Fitzpatrick and Ritchie (1994) identified two fundamental dimensions of family communication patterns: dialogue orientation and conformity orientation. The dialogue orientation fosters an open environment where family members are encouraged to share their thoughts and engage in discussions on various topics (Fitzpatrick & Connor, 2002).

Research Method

This study employed a statistical research method with a descriptive correlational design for data collection. The sample collection utilized an accessible sampling technique, ensuring that participants were readily available to the researchers.

	1	۲	۳	۴	۵
1.Perceived competence	۱				
2.Social acceptance	۰/۷۸	۱			
3.Communication patterns	۰/۵۳	۰/۶۹	۱		
4.Anxiety	-۰/۶۸	-۰/۷۳	-۰/۸۳	۱	
5.Depression	-۰/۸۱	-۰/۷۹	-۰/۵۴	۰/۸۷	۱

Findings

The matrix of two-way Pearson correlation coefficients indicates that at a 0.95 confidence level, there is a strong positive relationship between perceived competence and social acceptance, suggesting that higher perceived competence can lead to greater social acceptance. Additionally, a relatively strong positive correlation exists between communication patterns and perceived competence, implying that effective communication within families fosters self-actualization and self-sufficiency in individuals. The results of the regression table are as follows:

Furthermore, a strong positive relationship between communication patterns and social acceptance indicates that effective communication enhances an individual's acceptance in society. Conversely, the analysis reveals strong negative correlations between these variables and levels of depression and anxiety. This suggests that deficits in perceived competence, social acceptance, or communication skills contribute to increased anxiety and depression in individuals.

	Square of variables	Degree of freedom	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	5178.000	1	5178.000	131.574	.000

Results Summary

The results indicate that the criterion variables—perceived competence, social acceptance, and communication patterns—can significantly predict

and influence the predictor variables of anxiety and depression. This suggests that enhancing perceived competence, fostering social acceptance, and improving communication patterns may help mitigate anxiety and depression in individuals.

Model	Standard correlation	Standard deviation	t	Sig.
Perceived competence*Social acceptance*Communication patterns	.042	.790	11.471	.000

Conclusion

The results of the regression analysis demonstrate the significance of the predictor variables: perceived competence, social acceptance, and communication patterns. These variables effectively influence the criterion variables of anxiety and depression, indicating that they can either mitigate or exacerbate symptoms in individuals. Consequently, it can be concluded that the main hypothesis of the study—asserting that perceived competence, social acceptance, and communication patterns affect anxiety and depression—is confirmed.

Research Conclusion

The primary objective of this research was to examine whether perceived competence, social acceptance, and communication patterns significantly contribute to anxiety and depression among adolescents. Conducted as a descriptive-correlational applied study, the research involved a sample of 250 adolescents selected using the available method, based on the Tabachnik and Fidel formula. The findings indicate that perceived competence, social acceptance, and communication patterns play a significant role in influencing adolescent mental health, particularly in relation to anxiety and depression. These results align with previous studies conducted by Sahraroudi (2010), Shadan (2012), and Ashrafian Lak and Bagheri (2010), further supporting the notion that these factors are crucial in understanding adolescent psychological well-being.

Research Limitations

- 1. **Geographical Limitation:** The research population was restricted to residents of Tehran, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions.

- 2. **Sampling Challenges:** Given the vast number of schools in Tehran, it was nearly impossible to sample from all areas, which may have introduced bias in the selection process.
- 3. **Time Constraints:** Due to time limitations, the study did not encompass a larger population, confining the research to the selected sample group.
- 4. **Data Validity Issues:** Some adolescents did not respond carefully to the questionnaire items, leading to invalid responses. These questionnaires were excluded from the analysis, necessitating a repeat of the sampling process.

Research Suggestions

- 1. **Explore Additional Variables:** Future researchers should consider investigating other variables related to the study, as well as developing more comprehensive questionnaires to enhance the validity of their findings.
- 2. **Expand the Research Community:** Increasing the sample size and diversity can lead to more robust results, saving both time and resources while improving the generalizability of the research outcomes.
- 3. **Utilize Organizational Support:** To access larger research areas and samples, researchers can collaborate with organizations and institutions that can facilitate the advancement of their studies.

Practical Research Suggestions

1. **Focus on Enhancing Self-Awareness:** Future studies should emphasize variables that help individuals recognize their capabilities and improve their quality of life, both individually and socially. Providing necessary training can empower individuals to perform better in society and foster a sense of confidence in their contributions.
2. **Strengthen Communication and Social Skills:** Programs aimed at enhancing communication and social skills should be developed for capable individuals, ensuring they are well-equipped to engage effectively in social contexts.

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