



# Self-esteem and Anxiety among Asian and European students.

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Spring 2013  
Department of Psychology  
Master thesis-1 year level, 15 credits  
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I would like to thank my wife and my two sons for making my studies possible. Without their constant support, nothing would have been possible. I would also like to extend my gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Kalyani, for her constant guidance and endless advice. Also, I want to thank Maria Nordin, a charismatic lecturer for her guidance and patience during my hard moments. And I want to thank all my teachers for their support.

## SELF-ESTEEM AND ANXIETY AMONG ASIAN AND EUROPEAN STUDENTS

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Self-esteem and Anxiety have been widely studied back-to-back on the premises of academic settings, since research has shown that they interact with each other. The current study compares the score of self-esteem and anxiety of international students currently studying at Umeå University. Thirty students from Europe and Asia have been accessed respectively through usage of a questionnaire designed for its purpose. Overall, Europeans has higher self-esteem than Asians, however, there is no significant difference between Europeans and Asians regarding to anxiety. When taking the lowest ten subjects and the highest ten subjects' self-esteem scores and compared them within the two cultural groups, significant difference was shown in anxiety, especially in the high self-esteem group of Asians. Asian Top-10 students' self-esteem tend to have extra worries than others. The implication of this study suggests whether high self-esteem will also exacerbate the level of anxiety among Asians and buffer the anxiety of Westerns due their higher self-esteem.

There are many advantages for students participating in academic exchange programs held by their own universities. These students will become more independent on the fact that they will be away from the comfort zone of their natural habitat. It would be common for this change to become a challenge when faced with problems that they will need to deal with on their own. The inevitability of meeting new people from other parts of the world will make them learn differences between cultures, for which may enhance a deeper knowledge, understanding and harmony between individuals' cultural backgrounds. On the other hand, different experiences during these academic exchange programs, may bring students feelings of anxiety in the process of planning the trip abroad. They also will need to acclimate to their new future environment in the early part of the trip, as well as to balance the academic content with cultural activities (Koernig, 2007). Beside all this, international students have to maintain their expectation of academic achievement in the context that they are not familiar with. Hence, it is not difficult to understand that international students may have to uptake more worries and anxiety than their local counterparts.

There are different elements, which show correlation with the level of anxiety and depression, and among those, self-esteem is one of the elements that have widely been discussed (Sowislo & Orth, 2012). Self-esteem may act as antecedent, moderator or consequence of the stressor. In this research, we will focus on the relation between self-esteem, which act as moderator, and anxiety that is experienced by the European and Asian international students currently studying in Umeå University; we will also explore the possible relationship between self-esteem and the level of anxiety with expectancy of academic result.

According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), coping strategy takes an important role for a subject to appraise the challenge they have faced. The model has suggested that internal resources such as self-esteem, which is one of the important elements for self-concept that may lead a positive or negative attitude toward one self as totality (Rosenberg, 1986), may also facilitate both the evaluation of demands and the process of coping (Eisenbarth, 2012; Suis, David, & Harvey, 1996). Studies had particularly depicted that differences in self-esteem may be inclined to different coping skills; high levels of self-esteem may lessen the perceived stress due to their adaptive coping, whereas, negative aspects or poor perception

of one's ability to cope with external demands may be aroused within low self-esteem people (Dumont & Provost, 1999). Other study also supported that individuals with higher self-esteem also have been found to engage in more beneficial problem-focused coping such as active coping and planning than individuals with lower self-esteem (Griva & Anagnostopoulus, 2010; Lo, 2002; Scheier, Carver, & Bridges, 1994; Smith & Dust, 2005). Besides coping strategy, there are many descriptions, which are detrimental to the behavior of low self-esteem individuals, such as claiming that self-esteem has been negatively correlated with externalizing problems (Donnellan et al. 2005) and engagement in antisocial activities (Dumont & Provost, 1999), and also there are connection between low self-esteem and weak school performance (Harter et al, 1998; Wiest et al., 1998; Filozof et al., 1998).

There are of course positive correlation in self-esteem and academic achievement (Bankston & Zhou, 2002; Lockett & Harrell, 2003; Ross & Broh, 2000). Nevertheless, studies have also indicated that anxiety and academic achievement have shown a significant relationship (El-Anzi, 2005; Diaz, et al, 2001). In other words, one of the major stress sources of students is academic achievement. When students are under the challenges of school exam performances and achievements, stress and fear kicks in. Test anxiety is one of the most debilitating factors in schools and other settings where testing is performed (Birenbaum & Nasser, 1994). Indeed, among high school and college students, it is a common and potentially serious problem. Debilitating test anxiety affects 10%-30% of all students (Peleg, 2009). Accordingly high test anxiety has been found to be associated with low self-esteem, failing grades and feelings of nervousness and dread that stem from an intense psychological distress (Peleg, 2009). Further, anxiety has been found to interfere with achievement in school or collegiate settings (Goetz, Preckel, Zeidner, & Schleyer, 2008) and to have detrimental effects on the academic performance of undergraduates (e.g., Chapell et al., 2005).

Overall, the relationship of anxiety and self-esteem are quite obvious, whereas, high self-esteem will tend to have better coping skill to cope with stressors than low self-esteem individuals. And maybe even score better in academic results than low self-esteem individuals since they can cope better under the stressful environment.

However, not only the academic achievement will influence one's level of anxiety but the expectancy of success different from the actual performance outcome may also cast doubt toward oneself. The idea that self-esteem is essential to pursue the goals is long existed (Heatherton & Ambady, 1993). The mechanism regarding expectancy of success is complex. Basically, when we talk about expectancy, attribution style is often mentioned. The attribution theory is to explain people's positive and negative outcomes which may affect their emotional reactions and expectancy for future outcome (Weiner, 1986). People who adopt negative attribution style will attribute his life events to internal, stable and global, whereas, positive attribution adaptor are in opposite manner, whereas, when they meet negative life-event, they will explain in terms of external, instead of internal fault. In studies of Chan & Wong (2011), it confirmed that self-esteem mediated the effects of positive attributional style and the effects of negative attributional style, and it shows that subjects who adopted positive attributional style also reported higher self-esteem. Similarly, in the studies of Tripp et al. (1997), self-esteem was directly influenced by positive attributional style and indirectly via expectancies. In other words, people who adopt positive attributional style may be assumed to be acquired higher self-esteem may also be encouraged by the attainable expectancies and denied it was an internal fault when one's fail to reach the goal

As mentioned above, self-esteem may have possible relationship with expectancies for success due to the attributional style tendency; therefore, it can be assumed that the level of self-esteem may differ student's expectancy.

According to the studies done earlier, Asian students are commonly reported to have lower self-esteem and self-confidence compared to other ethnicities (Kim, Peng & Chui, 2008; Ho, 2003, Leung & Wong, 1997). Besides, poor academic achievement may cause mental burden and stress, and may lead to student react in the harmful ways. There are overwhelming suicide rate of the teenagers in Asia, for instance, the student who are living in Korea they have experienced the strain from poor academic achievements (Statistics of Korea, 2013). It has emerged as a social strain that Asian students face in their academic life. What are the possible factors that make Asian seems to be more mentally stressed? Is it due to the lack of confidence and self-esteem?

There have been researched identifying the possible reasons that Asian students usually scored low in self-esteem scale. Traditionally, Asians has very much influenced by the Confucianism. Many countries have made use of the idea of Confucius to establish their social and educational system in the past, for instance: China, Singapore, Japan, Korea, Vietnam etc. The idea of "Xiào" (In English means Filial piety) has deposited in a vital position within cultures till nowadays, obedience and to be good and take care of one's parents is compulsory, good conduct and outstanding performance can give honor to the whole family; whereas, it caused Asian parents to expect good behavior and performance in their children based on the education of Confucius; and the expectation of parents affected the student's own expectation as they have to obey and practice the filial piety (Tan & Yates, 2011; Zhang et al., 2011). Therefore, students feel anxious when the discrepancy of the reality is different from the ideal standard set by parents.

Another possible factor is the difference in parenting style between cultures, more direct intervention approach towards one's learning and schooling are especially found among Asia parents. In contrast, European parents are tending to concern for building their children's self-esteem and less directive approach to learning explained under facilitative model (Chao, 1996), and as a result independence will vary as well. Students in Asia feel obligated to demonstrate loyalty to their parents because parents make economical sacrifice so their children will have a better life through schooling performance, whereas the European countries design dif students can enjoy the high quality education with are free from paying any tuition fees. It is a known fact that in Asian countries, everyone pays tuition fees for studying in universities; therefore it could be a source of anxiety for students to study hard, but still show signs of high anxiety. One prediction may lie in the cultural dimensions explained by a prominent Dutch cross-culture researcher, and that it may be relevant for discussion of our participants' cultural backgrounds. Studies in cross culture (Hofstede, 2001) have suggested that people living in European countries are more individualistic than people living in Asian countries. Konopaske and Ivancevich (2004), characterize individualistic individuals as being motivated by self-concept, self-ego and self-interest and collective individuals as group orientated and with a higher awareness of the group's interest rather than the individual. These dimensions consider that different cultures have a sense of contrast in their individual responsibilities, such that Asians sees family and their older members (the students parents) as the central role this social organization, so the anxiety may be reasoned to be higher than Europeans, because Asians parents has not taught them to feel such individualistic accomplishment. As stated earlier,

Asian students do not only study for themselves, but for their parents as well, so parent-pressure may be a factor in this anxiety discrepancy.

As above-mentioned, the evidence and the cultural impact seems to tell that Asians have to coordinate and consider more comprehensively about external strain. In summary, the present study tested the following sets of hypotheses with European and Asia students. First, it has hypothesized that Europeans would have higher self-esteem than Asian students due to cultural differences in beliefs, norms and values. The level of self-esteem of European students will help moderate their anxiety rate, which may show lower anxiety score than Asia students as well. Additionally, it was hypothesized that European students have higher academic expectation in relation to their foreseen higher self-esteem, which may be also positively correlated with self-confidence and self worth.

The aim of this study is to see how different in anxiety is there between Asian and European students that have been labeled as having lower and higher self-esteem respectively. Therefore, based on our research aim, we accordingly hypothesize:

*Hypothesis 1:* There are significant differences between the self-esteem scores of European and Asian students.

*Hypothesis 2:* There are significant differences between the anxiety scores of European and Asian students, under the assumption that low self-esteem will heighten the level of anxiety in Asians.

Furthermore, this study will try to explore the possibility of getting an understanding regarding the pattern of grade expectation and self-esteem between European and Asian students.

## Method

### *Participants*

The participants were 61 international students (European=30, Asia=31), who are studying in undergraduate or Master level. The following tables show further details regarding European and Asian Students in the dimension of Gender, Education Level, Age group and the distribution of ethnicity.

Table 1a

*The proportion of Gender, Education Level and Age of European students*

Categories	Sub-categories	Number of students	Number in %
Gender	Male	15	50%
	Female	15	50%
Education Level	Undergraduate 1	4	13.3%
	Undergraduate 2	3	10%
	Undergraduate 3	5	16.7%
	Undergraduate 4	1	3.3%
	Master 1	9	30%
	Master 2	8	26.7%
Age Group	18-21	9	30%
	22-25	15	50%
	26-29	4	13.3%
	30+	2	6.7%

Table 1b  
*The proportion of ethnicities of European students*

Country in Europe	Number of Student	Number in %
Austria	2	3.2%
Belgium	2	3.2%
Czech	1	1.6%
Finland	2	3.2%
France	6	9.8%
German	5	3.2%
Greece	1	1.6%
Italy	5	8.1%
Lithuania	2	3.2%
Portugal	1	1.6%
Switzerland	1	1.6%
Ukraine	2	3.2%

Table 2a  
*The proportion of Gender, Education Level and Age of Asian Participants*

Categories	Sub-categories	Number of students	Number in %
Gender	Male	16	51.6%
	Female	15	48.4%
Education Level	Undergraduate 1	1	3.2%
	Undergraduate 2	4	12.9%
	Undergraduate 3	7	22.6%
	Undergraduate 4	12	38.4%
	Master 1	4	12.9%
	Master 2	3	9.7%
Age Group	18-21	11	35.4%
	22-25	16	51.6%
	26-29	3	9.7%
	30+	1	3.2%

Table 2b  
*The proportion of ethnicities of Asian students*

Country in Asia	Number of Student	Number in %
China	16	26.2%
Japan	1	1.6%
South Korea	7	11.4%
Taiwan	1	1.6%
Vietnam	6	9.8%

*Measure*

A cross-sectional, self-report survey was used to collect data. *Self-esteem*: Rosenberg Self-Esteem Inventory (Rosenberg, 1965), is one of the most widely used self-esteem measures in social science research as well as it has been tested for reliability and validity in many settings (Tinakon & Nahathai, 2012) and which contains 10 statements to measure the global self-esteem, will be used to measure participants self-esteem. Participants have to respond by either strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree the statements. Numerical equivalents will be converted base on the responses. Higher self-esteem will be indicated based on the higher scores after calculating the mean score from the statement.

*Anxiety*: Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (Zigmond & Snaith, 1983), which contains 14 items that would measure participants' level of anxiety and depression that participant, are or were experiencing before their examination periods. This scale has been tested its validity and reliability which is a well screening instrument for anxiety and depression (Bjelland et al., 2002; Poole & Morgan, 2006) This inventory is a Likert scale and every response may elicit a numerical score from 0-3, and the higher score indicate the higher level of anxiety that one may experience. The creator of the scale has indicated that there is lack of any mental disorder when the score less than 8, whereas, here will represent lack of anxiety.

*Expectation of success*: The descriptive data will also be collected regarding to the expectation of success concerning the subjects' academic result. Based on the Swedish Educational system, there are three grading levels, which is VG, G and U, meaning 'Pass with distinction', 'Pass' and 'Fail'. Participants were free to opt to offer their past three course result, which included the expected grading and the actual outcome of those expected courses. Each pattern of expectation from each group will be calculated in percentage so as to compare the possible tendency within the specific group.

*Procedure*

After approval from the master thesis committee, participants were approached by the interviewers in Umeå university library and in the lobby of IKSU gym center, which is located in Umeå, Sweden. Students were informed that the participation in the survey was voluntary and that their responses would be anonymous. The participants could withdraw at any point in time if they are not interested in participating in the relevant survey. After that, the purpose of the survey, the rights of the participants and the brief introduction on how to complete the two questionnaires were presented by the interviewers in order for the participants to proceed with the filling of the survey.

**Result**

First, the data were examined whether there were any outlier in the data, after making sure there were no outlier as it assessed in the boxplot; this study went on to run the independent t-test in order to see the mean difference between these two cultural groups.



Table 3  
*Mean for all the European and Asian students on Self-esteem and Anxiety dimension*

Variable	Culture group	N	Mean	SD	Sig (2tailed)
Self-esteem	European	30	21.57	4.48	.007**
	Asia	31	18.68	3.53	
Anxiety	European	30	11.77	4.96	.168
	Asia	31	13.71	5.85	

Self-esteem score shows significant difference between two cultural group, however, the overall mean anxiety score show no significant. Supplementary analyses have also been done in order to understand more about the phenomena:

Table 4a  
*Anxiety for students who had the top ten scores on self esteem*

Variable	Culture group	N	Mean	SD	Sig (2tailed)
Anxiety	European	10	7.50	4.60	.028**
	Asia	14	12.57	5.43	

Table 4b  
*Anxiety for students who had the bottom ten scores on self esteem*

Variable	Culture group	N	Mean	SD	Sig (2tailed)
Anxiety	European	13	14.23	3.11	.187
	Asia	14	16.90	5.14	

The significantly difference shown in anxiety from students who acquired higher self-esteem between two cultural groups. Nevertheless, the anxiety scores within the Bottom-10 scores of low self-esteem students show no difference. Furthermore, there were comparisons on the difference in self-esteem and anxiety within culture groups in the following two tables:

Table 5a  
*Mean for the student who scored Top-10 and Bottom-10 self-esteem scored within European group on Self-esteem and Anxiety dimension*

Variable	European	N	Mean	SD	Sig (2tailed)
Self-esteem	Top 10	10	26.90	2.33	<0.001*
	Bottom 10	13	17.54	1.61	
Anxiety	Top 10	10	7.60	4.60	<0.001*
	Bottom 10	13	14.23	3.11	

Table 5b

*Mean for the student who scored Top-10 and Bottom-10 self-esteem scored within Asian group on Self-esteem and Anxiety dimension*

Variable	Asian	N	Mean	SD	Sig (2tailed)
Self-esteem	Top 10	14	21.64	1.91	<0.001*
	Bottom 10	10	14.70	2.21	
Anxiety	Top 10	14	12.57	5.43	.082
	Bottom 10	10	16.90	6.14	

The Table 5a shows that the European group has a significantly difference in the anxiety score between the Top-10 and the Bottom-10 self-esteem student. The Top-10 self-esteem students scored under the cut off point from the HADS, which is supposed to be 8 out of 21 points, they scored 7.60; however, the Bottom-10 self-esteem students scored above the cut-off point. On the other hand, in Table 5b, Asian students group show no significant difference in anxiety scores between them, the anxiety of Top-10 and the Bottom-10 self-esteem Asian students have both scored above the cut off point from the HADS Scale. In the measurement of expectancy of success, it shows the overall distribution in percentage of the expectancy of success with European and Asian students.

Table 7a.

*Overall distribution of the expectancy of success of European students.*

Result	Number of course (out of 90 course)	Number in %
VG	28	31.1%
G	50	55.6%
U	1	1.1%
Left in blank	11	12%

Table 7b.

*Overall distribution of the expectancy of success of Asia students.*

Result	Number of course (out of 93 course)	Number in %
VG	26	28%
G	60	64.5%
U	3	3.2%
Left in blank	4	4.3%

Since there are special pattern in the anxiety score between the top-10 self-esteem score in European and Asian students, therefore, this study also looked into the expectancy of success of them from the two cultural groups.

Table 8a

*The percentage of the expectancy of success Top-10 score in Self-esteem European students.*

Result	Number of course (out of 30 course)	Number in %
VG	13	43.3%
G	14	46.7%
U	0	0
Left in blank	3	10%

Table 8b

*The percentage of the expectancy of success Top-10 highest score in Self-esteem Asian students.*

Result	Number of course (out of 42 course)	Number in %
VG	13	31%
G	25	59.5%
U	1	2.4%
Left in blank	3	7.1%

### Discussion

The purpose of this study is to see how different in anxiety is there between European and Asian students, which in previous research have been labeled as having lower self-esteem than westerners (in our case Europeans). The pattern of the expectancy of success will be also explored in this research. Previous research has showed that Asian students score lower in self-esteem compared to westerners (Kim, Peng & Chui, 2008; Ho, 2003; Leung & Wong, 1997) and that self-esteem & anxiety have inverse relations (Sowislo & Orth, 2012) and that Asians out-perform their western counterpart in academic achievements (Crystal et al., 1994).

The belief that Asian students differ in having lower self-esteem compared to Westerners is supported by our data,  $t(59)$ ,  $p=0.007$ . It shows that there is a significant difference in terms of self-esteem between European and Asian, and for which we can answer positively to our first hypothesis, thus replicating what other research findings have posited about this phenomena.

However, based on the anxiety scores, the second hypothesis has been rejected in the circumstance that the result didn't show any significant difference between the two cultural groups,  $t(59)$ ,  $p=0.168$ . In other words, European and Asian international students may also be disturbed by the same level of the anxiety occurring from studying abroad and the need to cope with their new environment. The result show support in the finding of Persike & Krenke (2012), which Western and Asian adolescent show similar result in the levels of perceived stressfulness from four domains which include school, parent, peer and romantic relationship.

Although there were not mentions in the hypotheses, supplemental analysis has been done based on the data, for which we compared the Top-10 highest and Bottom-10 lowest scores in self-esteem from the two cultural groups. Asians scoring higher in self-esteem spectrum showed significantly higher anxiety from their European counterparts in relation to the

anxiety scores,  $t(22)=-2.351$ ,  $p=0.028$ . That being said, present data showed that it is not always so that the inverse relation of self-esteem and anxiety is present, which states that the higher the level of someones' self-esteem, the lower level of anxiety one may be experiencing, likewise of previous literature have demonstrated. Some other studies, however, have indicated inverse relationships between self-esteem and anxiety, suggesting that adolescents with high self-esteem show low levels of state-trait anxiety (Fickova, 1999; Garaigordobil et al., 2003; Newbegin & Owens, 1996; Yang, 2002).

The current study suggests that the level of self-esteem might not be a good indicator to analyze the level of anxiety among international students, especially when cultural factors may play a role. As the present study demonstrates, overall, the European students have higher self-esteem, but the anxiety level shows no difference when comparing with the Asian students. However, within their respective groups, there is significant difference, especially in the European students, where the Top-10 have low anxiety and the Bottom-10 have more anxiety,  $t(-4.20)$ ,  $p<.001$ , confirming the inverse relation of Self-esteem and Anxiety. As already mentioned, this pattern was not true for the Asian students, where the Top-10 has the same significance of anxiety as their Bottom-10,  $t(-1.83)$ ,  $p=0.082$ . Perhaps it can be understood in a sense that the previous studies of self-esteem with anxiety may have been measured based on mono-cultural situations. The idea promoted that the higher self-esteem can assist oneself to have better skill to handle stressful event may only be applied to western participants coming from the same cultural background, as most studies of self-esteem were done. When coming across cultural differences, it seems that it is not appropriated to claim that self-esteem level may moderate one's anxiety level.

As we speculated, Asian students for whom are considered as having lower self-esteem than other western ethnicities will tend to adapt emotional-oriented coping style in order to deal with a stressor, in our case, academic achievement through examination process. However, the culture itself may show impact on their coping styles; Persike & Krenke (2012) suggested that coping style characterized by negotiating, seeking support and emotional outlet were used more often by adolescents from the western region than those from the Eastern countries (Asia), whereas the importance of social relations in the collectivistic-oriented countries may possibly Asian to be more tolerant.

Cultural differences explained by Geert Hofstede (1980), a prominent researcher in organizational and management culture, posits in his cultural variability model, that culture (national culture) can be partitioned into differences or dimensions, as he calls them. They are however, tools for analysis, which may or may not clarify a situation in cultural norms and values, meaning that such dimensions are just a guideline and not an affirmative narration labeling a country or a culture from that country is or is not as Hofstede describes it.

Accordingly, Hofstede (1991) states that 'national culture shapes people from early childhood through values, beliefs and assumptions inherent in it. And is a learned characteristic and none of it is genetic' (Hofstede, 2007).

People's thinking is determined by national culture factors and the effect of early life experience and educational experiences whilst growing up (Hofstede, 1983). Two of such dimensions are the Individualism-/Collectivism orientation and the Long-term Orientation/Short-Term orientation (LTO) that can perhaps help shed some light in the differences in our results of the Top-10 high self-esteem Asian students also had a high levels of anxiety, whereas their European counterparts did not. Hofstede and De Mooij

(2010) define individualism/collectivism as ‘people looking after themselves and their immediate families only, versus people belonging to in-groups that look after them in exchange for loyalty’. In collective cultures such as in Asia, people are “we” conscious.

Hofstede et al. (2010), regarded long-term orientation as ‘the fostering of virtues oriented towards future rewards, in particular, perseverance and thrift’. This notion may also help define the virtues that Asian students take into account when they feel the importance to share their lives’ academic achievements with their loved ones, particularly to their parents, thus their academic accomplishment would not be perceived as total reward until they return back home with that success and share it. Whereas the Europeans study for themselves and mainly for their own and personal benefit. They do not need to account for their achievements to their parents as Asians do.

The current study also looked into the pattern of the expectancy of success of Asians and Europeans, however, it was difficult to analyze based on the existed data, since the overall proportion from the two cultural groups didn’t show any external value, which would draw special attention. However, as a supplementary analysis, this study suggests that the Top-10 self-esteem Asian students showed significant differences in the score of anxiety compared with the Top-10 European Students. Since over expectation may cause ones anxiety due to the “fear of failure” (Shimkunas, 1970), and this study assumes that higher self-esteem tend to acquire positive attribution style which may tend to expect more positive outcome, therefore, the data shown above has also been structured to compare the pattern of expectation between the Top-10 score in self-esteem of European and Asian students, in order to see whether there were any evidence regarding the significant difference in anxiety and expectancy of success.

Nevertheless the calculated percentage of contradiction for expectancy for success is somewhat significant in regard to the grading of VG (pass w/distinction), which the date has shown that Europeans topped 43.3%, whereas in Asians students their expectancy reached 31%. However so, due to this descriptive data, it still shows concern for which the grading system used here at the university seems not suitable to see that relationship. Hence, there are also limitations of the expectation measurement due to the grading system that it worth to draw attention.

In summary, the present research demonstrated that the significant difference in anxiety showed only in high self-esteem students but not overall students in two culture groups. As a result, the inverse relationship of self-esteem and anxiety failed to conclude in this study, which possibly were due to the culture differences that the present research took an essential meaning. Furthermore, the result of expectancy of success in its descriptive form cannot precisely tell the pattern of expectation from the two culture groups.

In the current study, it was met with several limitations. First of all, no certainty could be drawn in regard to the expectancy of success between the two cultural groups, and one reason is that data based mainly of nominal differences is difficult to draw scientific conclusions. The descriptive, three-scale grading system at Umeå University may not be considered as a good grading tool for measuring the students’ expectation as well as the performance outcome, since pass with distinction is marked as “VG”, of which it can represent a range point of 80 to 100, whereas ‘Pass’ will be represented as “G”, meaning a range point of 60 to 79, thus grading someone with an “U” represents a fail in the course, for which is considered as a grade point under 60. This grading system cannot precisely show the numerical distance between the gap of expectancies and performance outcome.

The slightly different in numerical points may conduct a huge difference in the three-scale system; for instance, a student scored 79 points but he aimed to have 80 point, and the student who scored 51 point but he aimed for full marks (100 points), both of their expectation may mark as “VG” but the outcome will mark as “G”. The descriptive grading system cannot tell the hidden expectation and motivation but the numerical grading may possibly demonstrate more critical result.

Secondly, this research was processed based on a convenience data collection, as the interviewers picked up the students randomly in the library and gym center. Furthermore, the result may not be representable which apply to all Asian and European ethnic groups due to the small sample number.

Thirdly, the existing research sample size was relatively small, which may not have provided enough statistical power; as a larger sample size would be recommended since it can provide better ability to detect the significant differences of self-esteem and anxiety in these two cultural groups. And the distribution number of students who were amongst the highest and lowest self-esteem can be enlarged if the sample size would be bigger, and as of this, it would result in more accuracy in significance, thus giving a better confirmation on the relevant hypothesis.

Lastly, the adapted scale in this study which measures the anxiety didn't differentiate whether the student were in the state of anxiety or the trait of anxiety. The ongoing life activities especially during examinations may affect the current emotion and the feeling of anxiousness of the participants. And it may possibly affect the difference of the anxiety level between groups in this survey.

In conclusion, the current study supported that there is difference of global self-esteem between European and Asian students. But the result didn't agree with the lower self-esteem in the sense that they may have encountered more anxiety since the two ethnicity group show no significantly difference in the rate of anxiety. The additional analysis, which revealed that inverse relation of self-esteem and anxiety, may possibly exist only in European ethnicity group, but further research will be needed to explore the reason why this inverse relation was not applicable to the Asian group. Finally, due to the limitation of the measurement, the pattern of the European and Asian students expectation cannot be confirmed based on the result of the expectancy of success and performance outcome.

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