

The effects of self-esteem and anxiety on indecisiveness.

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ABSTRACT

The experiments conducted were to understand the causes of indecisiveness with the outcome of better and easier decision making. This was done by comparing self-esteem and anxiety with indecisiveness. The variable of indecisiveness was measured on a scale of one (bad) to five (great), anxiety was measured by heart rate of low, normal and high, and self-esteem was measured on the same one to five scale as indecisiveness. This was completed with self reporting and self measurements. The hypotheses depicted that increased anxiousness would result in decreased levels of indecisiveness whereas increased levels of confidence resulted in high levels of indecisiveness. As a result, the hypotheses were correct. The concluding experiment compared self-esteem to indecisiveness with the same measurement methods by increasing self-esteem levels by wearing makeup which was compared to a controlled variable of not wearing makeup. The results showed no statistical significance between both variables but they were headed in the correct direction predicted.

1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is because indecisiveness is a common issue that only seems to affect certain people and I wanted to understand why this happens. Anxiety and self-esteem are issues that a majority of people face on a day-to-day basis and I wanted to understand their relation to indecisiveness. Cascio, Guzzo, Pace, and Pace (2013) concluded by self reports that indecisiveness is negatively related to anxiety and that self esteem is positively related to indecisiveness. This study used 201 boys and 149 girls who willingly self reported their moods and feelings from public schools in south Italy to collect data for the study. Based on this study, it was hypothesized that if anxiety increases then

indecisiveness will decrease and that if self esteem decreases then indecisiveness will decrease. However, based on casual observation and personal experience, I predict that the outcomes will be opposite and that if anxiety increases, indecisiveness will increase and if self esteem decreases, indecisiveness will decrease as well.

2. Methods

2.1 Participants

The participant for this study was a Camosun College Psychology student who was an 18 year old female. She had trait anxiety and mild self-esteem and indecisiveness issues.

2.2 Materials and Procedure

Anxiety was measured by heart rate per minute and those results were put on a scale to see if they meant low, high or a normal heart rate. A low heart rate was 75 and less, a high heart rate was 100 and over. All heart rates in-between 76 to 99 were considered normal pulses. Overall, low heart rates meant that anxiety was low, normal heart rates meant anxiety levels were normal, and high heart rates meant anxiety levels were high. These variables were measured once in the morning, once around noon and once in the evening, every day for 12 days. Each morning, noon and night heart rates were checked three times and an average heart rate was calculated so that there were no outlying numbers. Further, all three heart rates from one day were calculated into an average to achieve a daily heart rate.

Self reports were used to rate self-esteem on a scale of one to five being (one) I don't feel good about myself, (two) I feel alright about myself, (three) I feel neutral about myself, (four) I feel good about myself and (five) I feel great about myself. This variable was measured once in the morning, once around noon and once in the evening every day for 12 days. All three measures were averaged out to get a daily self-esteem value.

Indecisiveness was measured by counting how many times indecisiveness was felt throughout the day. One or less times was considered low indecisiveness levels, two to four times was considered normal indecisiveness levels and four or more was considered high indecisiveness levels. Indecisiveness levels were measured every single night, recalling possible dilemmas from the day for a period of 12 days. Based on the results of the baseline study, it was decided to further experiment on the hypothesis if self-esteem decreases then

indecisiveness will decrease because the results of the baseline study using anxiety did not show a correlation whereas self-esteem did. This was done to see if there is a causal relation between self-esteem and indecisiveness. The manipulation for the experimental study to increase self-esteem was wearing makeup for six days. Wearing makeup increases confidence and by wearing it all day, for each experimental day, this would have increased self-esteem levels. As a control day, no makeup was worn and this was carried out for six days. For these experiments, there was no risk of harm and there was no possibility of a placebo effect or a blind procedure. To decide which days would be experimental or controlled would depend on the flip of a coin: tails was experimental condition and heads was the control condition.

Indecisiveness was measured in an objective manner by a family member rating how confident the participant looked on a scale from one to five being (one) doesn't feel good about themselves, (two) feels alright about themselves, (three) feels neutral about themselves, (four) feels good about themselves and (five) feels great about themselves. This was done at a time when the participant did not wear makeup so that the person judging the behavior was not aware if makeup was or was not worn throughout the day. This variable was measured once a day, at the end of each day, for 12 days.

3. Results

The correlation of the baseline study for the hypothesis if self-esteem decreases then indecisiveness will decrease was $r = 0.48$ (Figure 1) and the hypothesis if anxiety increases then indecisiveness will decrease was $r = -0.05$ (Figure 2). The data gathered was summarized and organized in a table to

Figure 1. Scatterplot of self-esteem and indecisiveness.

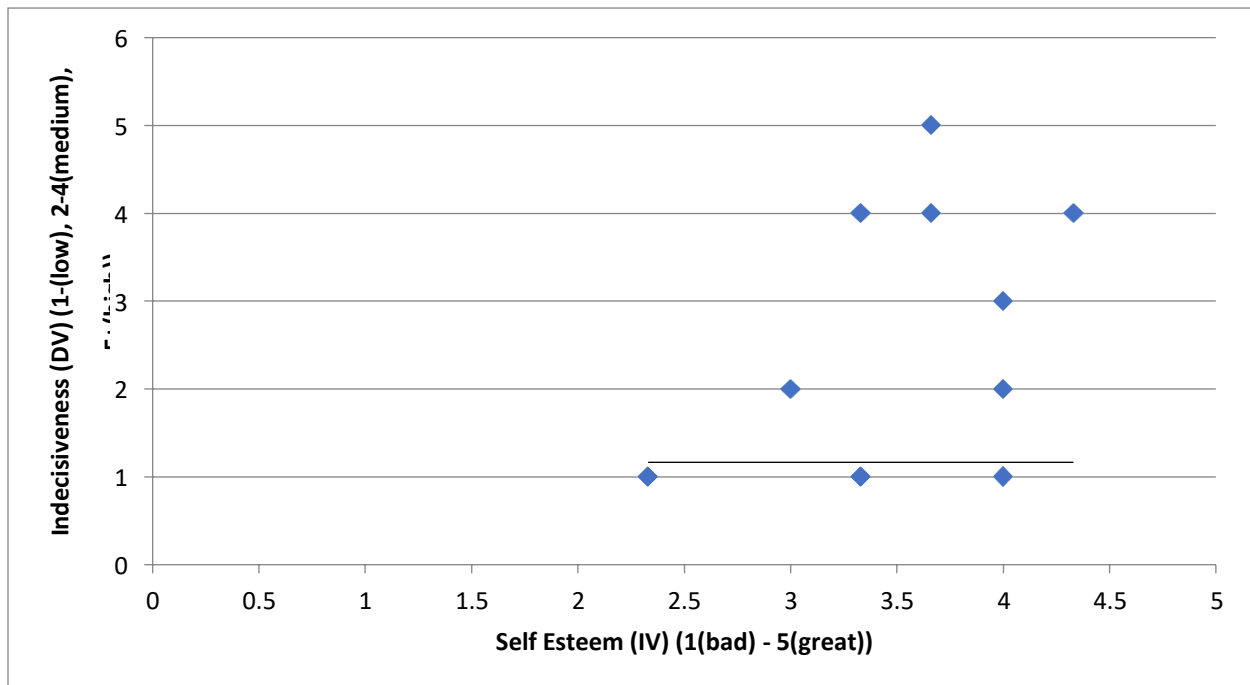


Figure 2. Scatterplot of anxiety and indecisiveness.

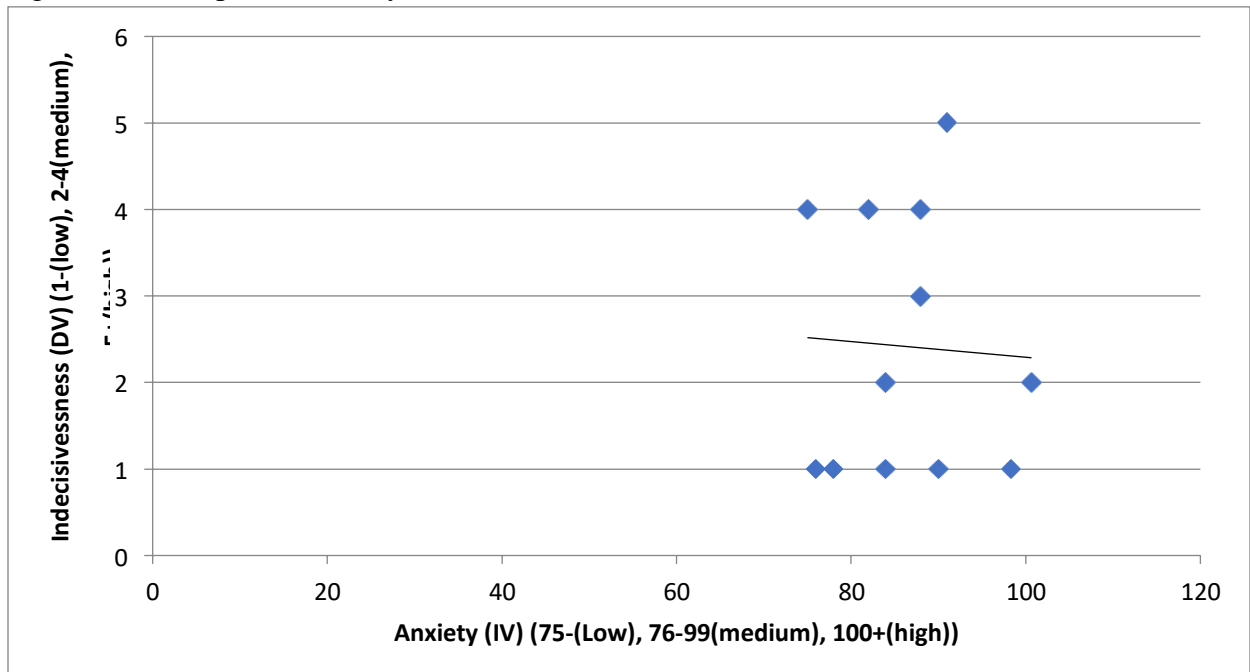


Figure 3. Bar graph comparing average indecisiveness across makeup and no makeup conditions.

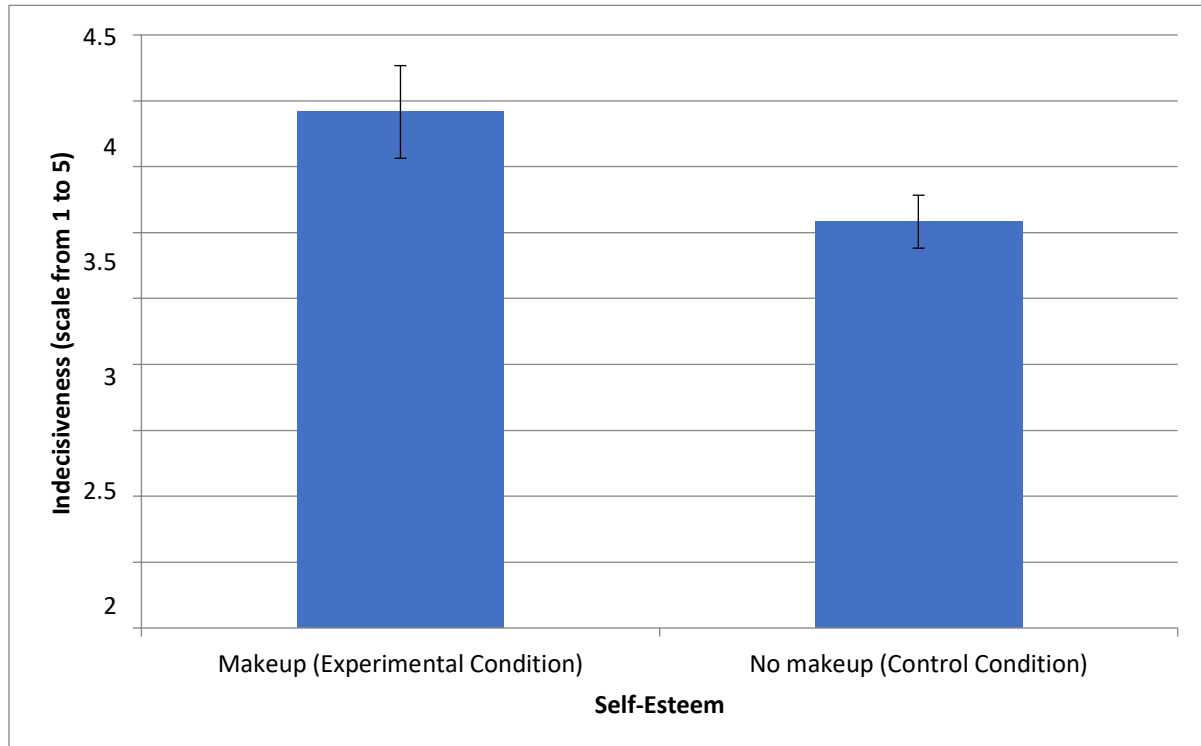


Table 1. Summary of the baseline study results using the hypotheses examined

Hypothesis examined:	Self-esteem & indecisiveness	Anxiety & indecisiveness
Correlation(r):	0.48	-0.05
Count:	12	12
p:	0.117	0.883

Table 2. Summary of the results of experimental study comparing makeup and no makeup conditions.

	Experimental condition	Control condition
Mean:	3.916666667	3.083333333
Standard Deviation:	0.861200712	0.49159604
Number of Observations:	6	6

display the results (see Table 1). Both of these findings went in the direction that was originally predicted. After data intake of the experimental study, it was found that there were no statistical significances between the experimental condition of wearing makeup and the control condition of not wearing makeup on indecisiveness ($t = 2.06$, $p = 0.066$; see Table 2, Figure 3).

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VG%202013_personal.pdf

4. Discussion

The findings of my experiments were comparable to those done by Cascio et al. (2013) because of the methods used such as self reporting as well as the similarity in the results. There were limitations within the study because the experiments were only done on one participant and not on a larger random sample to get more accurate data on a variety of differing people. The implications of my results are that anxiety, self-esteem and indecisiveness issues are quite personal and everyone has a different definition of them. Therefore, everyone is affected at a varying degree but the results have helped me understand my indecisiveness and how it can be better managed. But with this in mind and for future research on this topic, I can conclude that increasing anxiety will not causes changes in indecisiveness as well as anxiety is not related to indecisiveness.

References

Cascio, V. L., Guzzo, G., Pace, F., & Pace, U. (2013). Anxiety and self-esteem as mediators of the relation between family communication and indecisiveness in adolescence. *International Journal for Education and Vocational Guidance*, 13(2), 135-149. Retrieved from <https://iris.unipa.it/retrieve/handle/10447/>