

## Doctoral Students' Self-Perceived Abilities To Handle Stress and Anxiety

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### Abstract

Studies have shown that doctoral students experience a variety of stress and anxiety while trying to fulfill their doctoral tasks in a contract period. A survey using a 6-point Likert scale was conducted in Hungary in the fall of 2022. 255 (125 females; 127 males; 3 not stated) doctoral students studying in Hungary voluntarily participated in our study. According to the analysis of their demographic statistics, the participants represented 14 different universities in Hungary and they came from 49 different countries. The current study is part of a larger study and in this study, we investigated how doctoral students self-assessed their ability to handle stress and anxiety. We found that students agreed with the statement that *they could handle my stress and anxiety successfully* (M= 4.49, SD= 1.29); strongly disagree (3.1%), disagree (7.1%), slightly disagree (7.8%), slightly agree (25.1%), agree (33.7%) and strongly agree (23.1%). Descriptive statistics tended to show that male students' self-assessed scores were higher than their female peers. Therefore, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the self-assessed scores of female and male students. We found that there was a significant difference in the scores for females (M= 4.06, SD= 1.45) and males (M= 4.90, SD= 0.97) conditions;  $t(250) = -5.359$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ; indicating that male students were more confident with their abilities in handling stress and anxiety than their female peers. We concluded that students in this study were confident with their ability to handle stress and anxiety and men were more confident when compared to women.

**Key words:** doctoral student, stress, anxiety, self-assessments