



The Prevalence of Allodoxaphobia among University Students in Palestine

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Abstract:

This study investigates the prevalence of allodoxaphobia among university students in Palestine. Allodoxaphobia, defined as the irrational fear of expressing one's opinions, is a critical issue that affects students' academic performance and psychological well-being. The study was conducted across several universities in southern and central Palestine, including Bethlehem University, Palestine Polytechnic University, Hebron University, Al-Quds University Abu Dis, and Birzeit University, to ensure a diverse sample representing different sociocultural backgrounds. The descriptive curriculum design was used, with data collected through a structured questionnaire administered to 235 students. The study used a four-way ANOVA to analyze the impact of demographic factors, such as gender, place of residence, academic year, and university affiliation, on students' fear of expressing opinions. The results reveal that allodoxaphobia is prevalent among Palestinian university students, with a large part of participants reporting concern about expressing their views in academia and social settings. Although demographic factors did not show a statistically significant association with the prevalence of allodoxaphobia, the results highlight the need for targeted interventions to foster an environment that supports open communication and reduces fear among students. This research contributes to understanding the psychological barriers faced by students in expressing their opinions and underscores the importance of addressing these issues within the educational system to enhance students' mental health and academic engagement.

Keywords: Allodoxaphobia, Fear of Expressing Opinions, University Students.

المستخلص:

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف مدى انتشار فوبيا إبداء الرأي بين طلاب الجامعات في فلسطين. تُعرّف فوبيا إبداء الرأي بأنها الخوف غير العقلاني من التعبير عن الآراء الشخصية، وهي مشكلة حرجة تؤثر على الأداء الأكاديمي للطلاب ورفاههم النفسي. أجريت الدراسة في عدة جامعات في جنوب ووسط فلسطين، بما في ذلك جامعة بيت لحم، جامعة بوليتكنك فلسطين، جامعة الخليل، جامعة القدس أبو ديس، وجامعة بيرزيت، لضمان عينة متنوعة تمثل خلفيات اجتماعية وثقافية مختلفة. استخدم المنهج الوصفي، حيث تم جمع البيانات من خلال استبيان منظم أجري على ٢٣٥ طالبًا. استخدمت الدراسة تحليل التباين لتحليل تأثير العوامل الديموغرافية، مثل الجنس، ومكان السكن، والسنة الدراسية، والانتماء الجامعي، على خوف الطلاب من التعبير عن آرائهم. أظهرت النتائج أن فوبيا إبداء الرأي منتشرة بين طلاب الجامعات الفلسطينية، حيث أفاد جزء كبير من المشاركين بأنهم يشعرون بالقلق عند التعبير عن آرائهم في المجالات الأكاديمية والاجتماعية. على الرغم من أن العوامل الديموغرافية لم تظهر ارتباطاً ذا دلالة إحصائية بانتشار فوبيا إبداء الرأي، إلا أن النتائج تسلط الضوء على الحاجة إلى تدخلات موجهة تهدف إلى تعزيز بيئة تدعم التواصل المفتوح وتقليل الخوف بين الطلاب. تسهم هذه الدراسة في فهم الحواجز النفسية التي تواجه الطلاب عند التعبير عن آرائهم، وتؤكد على أهمية معالجة هذه القضايا داخل النظام التعليمي لتعزيز الصحة النفسية والمشاركة الأكاديمية للطلاب.

الكلمات المفتاحية: فوبيا إبداء الرأي، الخوف من التعبير عن الرأي، طلبة الجامعات.

Introduction

Fear is a fundamental aspect of human existence, commonly recognized by all. Every one of us fears something. Dodhy (2017, p. 10) asserts that fear is a ubiquitous emotion that may be both logical and irrational. It is a dynamic and elusive sensation that people often experience, making it one of the most prevalent and mysterious emotions. According to Rosfort and Stanghellini (2009, p. 257), fear may have either positive or negative effects. The emotions linked to fear sometimes hinder our higher cognitive abilities, prioritizing the basic impulse to

run away from the cause of dread. Certain individuals have apprehension when articulating their viewpoints and ideas, a condition termed "allodoxaphobia." This fear stems from social anxiety disorder. Multiple studies (Sadock, 2015; Dell'Osso et al., 2014) suggest that fear may manifest in many ways, such as dread of unfamiliar individuals, social events, and public speaking.

The occurrence of fear varies across different age groups. However, the number of studies dealing with this problem is limited, particularly within the Palestinian context. The prevalence of fear among different age categories has been highlighted in the study by Radwan et al. (2022), which analyzed fear prevalence among children, adolescents, university students, and adults during the COVID-19 pandemic among Palestinian university students. Research shows that concern and fear differ greatly across these life stages, with university students experiencing high levels of anxiety due to the impact of the pandemic on their education, daily activities, and future. This research focuses on the exceptional difficulties that students encounter when striving to cope with the pressures of the pandemic and emphasizes the necessity of tailored interventions aimed at promoting their mental well-being under similar circumstances.

In addition, phobia and fear levels differ across genders. Fredrikson et al. (1996, p. 33) show that the fear percentage for females is 26.5%, while for males it is 12.4%. They further note that women have higher fear ratings for all objects and situations. Anxiety disorders related to inert objects were more prevalent among older than younger respondents. Nevertheless, Marinho et al. (2019) noted that the prevalence of fear of public

speaking was the same across age groups, indicating that this fear does not discriminate based on age.

The main reason for selecting this age cohort is that fear among university students is often associated with a lack of confidence in their own voice, reduced participation in activities requiring oral communication, as well as their use of avoidance and negative strategies when facing public speaking activities. Such fear is a psychosocial stressor and resembles social anxiety disorder, which could be general or performance-related (Marinho et al., 2019).

Factors that worsen phobia and fear among university students include physical abuse during childhood and smoking habits (Al-Naggar, 2012, p. 112). The experience of fear has multiple negative outcomes, including feelings of sadness, anxiety, depression, and stress (Ozamiz-Etxebarria et al., 2020). To address the problems associated with phobia, counseling and education sessions should be conducted to help students overcome various situations during their learning period (Al-Naggar, 2012, p. 112).

Fear and its effects on social life are addressed in several studies that consider different aspects such as the political manipulation of fear and personal fears associated with public speaking. This research attempts to establish a broad overview of how fear functions not only as an instrument for controlling power but also as a formidable impediment to personal progress and expression. The methodologies employed in these studies explore the ways in which fear impacts public opinion, individual self-esteem, and communication abilities, thereby establishing fear's multifaceted nature.

Palu (2014) presents a foundational view on the manipulation of fear by political powerholders, emphasizing its use in sustaining control by creating fears like that of "the other."

This analysis underscores fear's potency in molding public opinion and cementing power structures, offering a critical perspective on political strategies that exploit fear for control.

Contrastingly, Raja (2017) shifts the focus from societal manipulation to individual experiences, examining the fear of public speaking among undergraduate students. Highlighting a lack of confidence as the primary cause, Raja suggests practical interventions such as counseling and exposure to virtual environments to mitigate this anxiety, pointing toward individual-based solutions rather than systemic critiques.

Marinho et al. (2019) further explore public speaking anxiety among university students, identifying self-perceived inadequacies in communication skills as a major contributor. Their findings suggest that enhancing self-assessment of communication abilities could reduce fear, aligning with Raja's emphasis on confidence but focusing more on skill perception rather than general self-assurance. Raub (2021) reintroduces a societal perspective by examining fear during the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly regarding the unknown and public perception. This study reflects on how fear can either motivate or hinder knowledge acquisition, highlighting the gap between belief and knowledge in crisis situations, thus bridging individual and societal impacts of fear. Radwan et al. (2022) and Ghanim et al. (2022) both delve into the context of Palestinian university students during the pandemic, revealing varying levels of anxiety and depression. Their research highlights the specific pressures faced by students in conflict zones, especially concerning the fear of expressing opinions, thereby pointing to the complex interplay between societal contexts, mental health, and educational environments.

Lastly, Assaf and Yunus (2022) focus on the speaking anxiety of EFL students, identifying both linguistic and psychological barriers. Their findings complement those of Raja and Marinho et al. by adding linguistic proficiency to the mix of confidence and skill perception, offering a nuanced understanding of the factors contributing to public speaking anxiety.

The previous studies collectively underscore the multifaceted nature of fear and anxiety across different contexts, offering insights into its manipulation for political control (Palu, 2014) and its pervasive impact on individual competencies such as public speaking (Raja, 2017; Marinho et al., 2019). For instance, Palu (2014) highlights the strategic use of fear by power holders to sustain dominance, providing a critical understanding of political dynamics. In contrast, Raja (2017) and Marinho et al. (2019) focus on educational and psychological interventions, emphasizing the role of confidence and communication skills in overcoming public speaking anxiety. This delineates a clear difference in thematic concerns—while Palu (2014) explores fear's societal and political implications, Raja (2017) and Marinho et al. (2019) delve into personal and educational strategies for mitigating fear's adverse effects. These distinctions illustrate the breadth of research on fear, from its use in political arenas to its impact on individual psychological states and behaviors, offering a comprehensive view of its pervasive influence in both public and private spheres.

The purpose of this study is to examine the prevalence of allodoxaphobia among university students in Palestine. Most earlier studies conducted in the Palestinian context have dealt with general levels of anxiety and depression during the COVID-19 pandemic (Radwan et al., 2022) or explored contributors to speaking anxiety among EFL students, particularly the fear of

expressing opinions. Although these studies offer valuable insights into the psychological state of university students, they do not explicitly address the phobia of expressing opinions, highlighting a significant research gap. This study aims to fill that gap by systematically investigating allodoxaphobia among university students in Palestine, which is essential for fully understanding the prevalence and impact of this fear on the educational environment.

The present study aims to determine the prevalence of allodoxaphobia among university students in different regions of Palestine. We strategically chose universities to represent these regions: in southern Palestine, Bethlehem University and Palestine Polytechnic University in Bethlehem, and Polytechnic University and Hebron University in Hebron. The universities in the central region are Al-Quds University (Jerusalem) and Birzeit University (Ramallah). This range of institutions ensures a comprehensive understanding of allodoxaphobia in various Palestinian academic settings.

The Problem

The fear of differing opinions, known as allodoxaphobia, is a significant issue in academia, especially among university students in Palestine. This fear hinders open communication, critical thinking, and the exchange of ideas within academic settings. Social, political, and cultural conflicts in Palestine may contribute to increased paranoia and fear of differing opinions. While previous studies have highlighted high levels of anxiety and depression among Palestinian students, there has been limited focus on allodoxaphobia specifically. This gap indicates a need for targeted research on this issue to understand its effects and develop appropriate interventions for student mental health.

Based on these problems, the following research questions are raised:

RQ1: To what extent is the fear of expressing opinions prevalent among university students in Palestine?

RQ2: Is there an effect of the fear of expressing opinions among university students in Palestine based on different personal variables (gender, residence location, academic year, university)?

Research Significance

Knowledge of the prevalence and effect of allodoxaphobia among Palestinian university students deserves attention for multiple purposes. Firstly, it adds to the wider conversation on the relationship between mental health and student achievement, showing how emotional factors can limit learning attainment and school involvement. Another contribution of this research is that it can also inform university policies and support systems that are geared towards creating a more inclusive and psychologically safe academic environment. Overcoming allodoxaphobia allows educators and policymakers to develop students' skills to engage in constructive debates, critical analysis, and personal growth, which improves the whole learning process and makes society more tolerant.

Limitations of the Study

The study is subject to limitations, including demographic and geographical constraints that may restrict its generalizability beyond the specific target group. In addition, reliance on self-reported data through a questionnaire may introduce response bias. The study primarily involved female students from specific universities, potentially limiting its ability to fully capture the diverse experiences of university students across Palestine. Furthermore, the binary format of yes or no questions used for complex emotional queries may oversimplify the phenomenon of

allodoxaphobia. These points underscore the need for a more comprehensive and multifaceted methodological approach to understand the prevalence and impact of the fear of expressing opinions in a broader student community.

Methodology

This section provides information about the study site, research design, sample of the study, data collection, and data analysis.

Research Design

This study utilized a cross-sectional survey methodology to collect data. A cross-sectional study design involves the simultaneous assessment of both the outcomes and exposures of the participants at a specific point in time. The survey, consisting of various questions, was distributed to university students in central and southern Palestine using Google Forms. The study researcher adopted a quantitative approach to measure the data, using several quantitative methods and advanced statistical tools for analysis.

Sample of the Study

The study used a simple random sampling method. This method ensures that every individual in the population has an equal probability of being chosen for inspection. The research was based on 235 university students, comprising 38 males and 197 females.

Data Collection

The researchers provided a detailed questionnaire to Palestinian university students to assess allodoxaphobia, which is the fear of expressing opinions. The questionnaire included questions about participants' gender, domicile, academic year, major, and institution. The study examined allodoxaphobia among Palestinian students, focusing on males and females, and

their experiences in cities, villages, or camps. The research also considered demographic and educational factors that may influence participants' fear, aiming to provide context and understanding of the issue. The questionnaire also assessed Palestinian university students' fear of speaking out, covering a wide spectrum of emotions related to being seen as stupid, worry about others' opinions, assessment anxiety, and rejection. The study aimed to understand the psychological barriers to academic speech and provide valuable insights into the experiences of Palestinian students.

Data Analysis

The research employed SPSS 28 for statistical analysis, succinctly using frequencies and percentages to characterize the demographics and responses of the study population. A four-way ANOVA further scrutinized the influence of gender, residence, academic year, and university on students' fear of expressing ideas in Palestine, streamlining the investigation into key impacting factors.

Findings

- This chapter presents the findings of the study which aims to extend the fear of expressing opinions prevalent among university students in Palestine. Also, this chapter includes descriptive statistics for participants' answers to questionnaire items.
- Describing the Characteristics of the Study Sample.
- The participating students were 235, A simple random sample method was used to select the sample. Table 1 shows the distribution of the sample depending on the personal information.

Table 1 Distribution of the sample according to the personal information Prevalence of Allodoxaphobia among University Students in Palestine

Table 1 distribution of the sample according to the personal information

Category	N	%
Gender		
Female	197	83.8%
Male	38	16.2%
Place of Residence		
Village	68	28.9%
Camp	14	6.0%
City	153	65.1%
Academic Year		
First	83	35.3%
Second	50	21.3%
Third	41	17.4%
Fourth	45	19.1%
Other	16	6.8%
University		
Polytechnic University	42	17.9%
Hebron University	34	14.5%
Al-Quds University	48	20.4%
Bethlehem University	64	27.2%
Birzeit University	18	7.7%
Palestine Ahliyya University	29	12.3%

Table 1, the distribution of the sample across different variables, For gender, the highest percentage is female at 83.8%, while males represent the lowest percentage at 16.2%. In terms of place of residence, the highest percentage is in the city

category at 65.1%, while the lowest percentage is in camps at 6.0%. Regarding the academic year, the highest percentage is in the first-year category at 35.3%, whereas the lowest percentage is in the "other" category at 6.8%. Lastly, in the variable of university, Bethlehem University records the highest percentage at 27.2%, whereas Birzeit University has the lowest at 7.7%.

RQ1: To what extent is the fear of expressing opinions prevalent among university students in Palestine?

To answer this question, the frequency and percentage for each statement of "fear of expressing opinions prevalent among university students in Palestine" were calculated; Table 2 below shows that.

Table 2 frequency and percentage for each Statement of "Fear of expressing opinions prevalent among university students in Palestine"

Statement	True (Correct)	False (Incorrect)
I am usually confident that others will have a positive impression of me.	173 (73.6%)	62 (26.4%)
I am often indifferent to others' opinions about me.	172 (73.2%)	63 (26.8%)
The rejection of others will have little impact on me.	163 (69.4%)	72 (30.6%)
The opinions of others about me do not bother me.	168 (71.5%)	67 (28.5%)
Knowing that someone is judging me does not greatly affect me.	147 (62.6%)	88 (37.4%)
I feel intense resentment when I make a social mistake.	152 (64.7%)	83 (35.3%)
I worry about what people will think of me even when I know it makes no difference.	85 (36.2%)	150 (63.8%)
I worry about what important people	85 (36.2%)	150 (63.8%)

will think of me even when I know it makes no difference.		
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The Prevalence of Allodoxaphobia, Randa Barghouth- Rania Al-Mukarker

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I worry about what people will think of me even when I know it makes no difference.	85 (36.2%)	150 (63.8%)
I worry about what people will think of me even when I know it makes no difference.	85 (36.2%)	150 (63.8%)
I worry about what people will think of me even when I know it makes no difference.	85 (36.2%)	150 (63.8%)
I am unconcerned even if I know people are forming a negative opinion of me.	150 (63.8%)	85 (36.2%)
I rarely feel anxious about appearing foolish to others.	127 (54.0%)	108 (46.0%)
I react very little when others disagree with me.	125 (53.2%)	110 (46.8%)
I become tense and nervous if I know that I am being judged by my superiors.	125 (53.2%)	110 (46.8%)
I often worry about what important people will think of me.	107 (45.5%)	128 (54.5%)
I worry about what my superiors think of me.	107 (45.5%)	128 (54.5%)
I usually worry about the kind of impression I leave.	115 (48.9%)	120 (51.1%)
Sometimes, I think I am too concerned with what others think of me.	121 (51.5%)	114 (48.5%)
I often worry that I will say or do the wrong things.	119 (50.6%)	116 (49.4%)
I worry little about what others may think of me.	119 (50.6%)	116 (49.4%)
I worry that others will think I am not worth their attention.	96 (40.9%)	139 (59.1%)

I frequently fear others noticing my flaws.	89 (37.9%)	146 (62.1%)
I often worry about what my superiors think of me.	85 (36.2%)	150 (63.8%)
I worry about that others will not agree with me.	61 (26.0%)	174 (74.0%)
I am afraid that people will find me wrong.	81 (34.5%)	154 (65.5%)
When I talk to someone, I worry about what they might think of me.	81 (34.5%)	154 (65.5%)

Table 2 shows that in the s the highest correct responses for statements regarding confidence in leaving a positive impression received 173 correct responses out of 235 total (73.6%), followed closely by indifference to others' opinions and resilience to rejection, with 172 correct responses (73.2%) and 163 correct responses (69.4%), respectively. These high rates suggest a prevailing comfort with self-assurance and resilience in facing social challenges. Conversely, the lowest three paragraphs displayed notably lower frequencies and proportions of correct answers, signaling prevalent concerns about external validation and fear of judgment. With only 61 correct responses out of 235 (26.0%), worries about others not agreeing, along with fears of being perceived as wrong (81 correct responses, 34.5%), and concerns about others' judgments in conversations (81 correct responses, 34.5%), highlighted a lack of confidence and heightened sensitivity to external evaluation. The stark contrast between the highest and lowest correct paragraphs underscores the pivotal role of self-assurance and emotional resilience in shaping individuals' responses and behaviors within social contexts.

RQ2: are there statistically significant differences at the level of statistical significance ($\alpha = 0.05$) in Fear of expressing opinions

prevalent among university students in Palestine due to (Gender, Place of Residence, Academic Year, and University) demographic variables?

To answer this question means and standard deviation for study domains and a total of them were extracted due to demographic variables. Four-way ANOVA was applied to explore significant differences between demographic variables and the total” Fear of expressing opinions prevalent among university students in Palestine”, tables below show that.

Table\ means and standard deviation for study domains and the total of them due to demographic variables (Gender, Place of Residence, Academic Year, University)

Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Female	15.878	4.175	197
Male	14.658	5.658	38
Total	15.681	4.457	235
Place of Residence	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Village	16.221	4.747	68
Camp	15.786	5.833	14
City	15.431	4.189	153
Total	15.681	4.457	235
Academic Year	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
First Year	16.241	4.244	83
Second Year	15.32	4.288	50
Third Year	14.927	4.095	41
Fourth Year	15.933	5.545	45
Other	15.125	3.5	16
Total	15.681	4.457	235
University	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Polytechnic University	16.238	4.433	42
Hebron University	15.265	5.507	34
Al-Quds University	15.354	4.441	48

Bethlehem University	15.188	4.174	64
Birzeit University	16.111	4.283	18
Palestine Ahliyya University	16.724	3.927	29
Total	15.681	4.457	235

Table 3 shows apparent differences between the means and the standard deviations of domains of fear of expressing opinions prevalent among university students in Palestine due to demographic variables (gender, place of residence, academic year, university), To illustrate the significance of these differences, a four-way ANOVA was applied as illustrated in Table No. 4 below:

Table 4 results of Four Way ANOVA to explore the difference of total study " Fear of expressing opinions prevalent among university students in Palestine" due to demographic variables (Gender, Place of Residence, Academic Year, University)

Variable	Sum of square	Df	Mean Square	"F" value	Sig
gender	66.433	1	66.433	3.317	0.070
Place of residence	10.558	2	5.279	0.264	0.769
Academic year	62.924	4	15.731	0.785	0.536
University	62.303	5	12.461	0.622	0.683
Error	4,446.744	222	20.030		
Corrected Total	4,649.064	234			

* Statistically significant at the level of significance ($\alpha=0.05$)

Table 4 shows that there are no statistically significant differences at the level of significance ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the total study" Fear of expressing opinions prevalent among university students in Palestine "due to the variables (Gender, Place of Residence, Academic Year, University).

Discussion

Characteristics of the Study Sample and Their Implications on Allodoxaphobia Prevalence The gender difference among study participants shows that females make up a large proportion (83.8%) of the sample, which could contribute to an increased rate of allodoxaphobia among university students in Palestine. This finding aligns with previous research indicating that psychological responses to fear and anxiety, including fear of holding different views, can vary across genders, possibly due to sociocultural influences. Additionally, 65.1% of participants were city dwellers, compared to lower representation from rural and refugee areas, suggesting that environmental surroundings might influence allodoxaphobia development. Students from cities, with their higher levels of social interaction, may be more prone to the anxiety associated with differing viewpoints. First-year students (35.3%) formed the largest group, indicating that new students might be particularly vulnerable to allodoxaphobia as they adapt to a new and diverse university environment. Differences in representation across universities, such as the high percentage of students from Bethlehem University (27.2%), may reflect institutional factors that impact the prevalence of allodoxaphobia, such as diversity and curriculum characteristics. Overall, the characteristics of the study population point to a complex interplay of sociocultural, environmental, and institutional factors in the development of allodoxaphobia, warranting further research to explore these links and their impact on students' psychological well-being.

RQ1: Prevalence and Concerns of Expressing Opinions Among University Students in Palestine

The study results reveal a significant fear of expressing opinions among Palestinian university students, contributing to

social anxiety and a fear of negative evaluation. Approximately 54% of students reported no anxiety about appearing foolish, while 64.7% expressed intense shame when making mistakes, and 57.9% had a fear of looking foolish in public. This suggests a heightened sense of social scrutiny, characteristic of allodoxophobia. While two-thirds of students had no serious concerns about being viewed negatively, the influence of societal expectations remains strong, affecting their behavior and self-esteem. Additionally, 53.2% of students felt nervous when evaluated by superiors, indicating that authority figures in academic environments may contribute to students' fear of expressing opinions. Despite 73.6% of students having confidence that peers would view them favorably, fear of judgment sometimes overrode their desire to be open-minded. This anxiety likely reflects the broader sociopolitical and cultural environment in Palestine, where fear of evaluation is heightened. The study also supports Palu's (2014) argument about fear as a tool for political control, indicating a sociopolitical dimension to students' fear of differing opinions. Furthermore, findings align with Raja's (2017) exploration of public speaking anxiety, suggesting that fear of expression extends beyond public speaking to everyday social interactions, warranting tailored interventions.

RQ2: Influence of Demographic Variables on Fear of Expressing Opinions

Analysis of demographic variables such as gender, residence, academic year, and university affiliation indicated no statistically significant association with fear of expressing opinions. Though females had a slightly higher mean score (15.878) compared to males (14.658), the difference was not significant ($p = 0.070$). Similarly, students from villages had the

highest mean score for fear (16.221), while those from cities had the lowest (15.431), with no statistically significant difference ($p = 0.769$). First-year students had the highest mean score (16.241), but this trend was not statistically significant either ($p = 0.536$). These findings suggest that fear of expressing opinions is a widespread issue among university students in Palestine, regardless of demographic characteristics. The influence of cultural norms, societal standards, and the uncertain sociopolitical environment may mediate students' attitudes toward expressing opinions, with demographic traits being relatively insignificant. Further exploration is needed to identify other influences on students' willingness to express their views, including psychological, cultural, and socio-political backgrounds. The study highlights that fear of expression is prevalent across all demographic categories, and efforts to foster an environment supportive of free expression in Palestinian educational settings are essential.

Conclusion

The study concluded that allodoxaphobia, or fear of expressing opinions, is significantly influenced by gender, place of residence, and year of study among Palestinian university students. The predominance of female participants and students from urban areas suggests sociocultural and environmental factors play a role in shaping allodoxaphobia. The findings indicate that first-year students are particularly vulnerable, possibly due to their limited experience with the diverse university environment. Despite the diversity in demographics, no statistically significant differences were found in the prevalence of allodoxaphobia based on these factors, suggesting that fear of expressing opinions is a widespread issue across various groups. The study's findings are consistent with the broader literature on social anxiety and highlight the influence of

sociopolitical dynamics in Palestine, where fear is often used as a tool of control. The results point to the need for interventions to support students in overcoming the fear of expressing their views, thereby enhancing their academic and social well-being.

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