

A Study on Examination Anxiety of Higher Secondary School Students in Relation to their Gender

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Abstract - The purpose of the study was to compare examination anxiety level of secondary level school students in relation to their academic achievement. The present study was carried out with a sample of 200 students (100 male students and 100 female students) studying in various higher secondary schools in Murshidabad district of West Bengal state. The sample was selected by Disproportionate Stratified Random Sampling technique. A Bengali version standardized tool of "Students' Examination Anxiety Test" (SEAT) developed by Dr. Madhu Agrawal and Miss Varsha Kaushal were used for collection of primary data. The data were analyzed with the help of Mean, SD and Critical Ratio to study the anxiety level of higher secondary students. The result revealed that there was significant difference in educational anxiety of higher secondary school students in relation to gender. **Keywords:** gender, anxiety, SEAT

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I. INTRODUCTION (HEADING 1)

Anxiety:

The root meaning of the word anxiety is to fix or travel in either presence or absence of psychological stress. It is a psychological state characterised by emotional, cognitive and behavioural components. It is the displacing feeling of fear, worry, uneasiness and concern. It is a failure to meet a standard or fear of not holding the appropriate standard. Psychologist believe that some anxiety is essential because it facilitates change and help an individual to deal with demanding situation by prompting them to cope with it. But it has also been observed that high levels of anxiety me block recall ability and expression of individual's potentials.

Effects of anxiety

- i) Physical effects: hurt palpitations, muscles weakness and tension, fatigue, nausea, chest pain stomach a case or headaches, sweating, trembling, dizziness.
- ii) Emotional effects: feelings up apprehension or dread, travel concentrating, anticipating the worst, irritability, restlessness, watching (and waiting) for sign(and occurrence) of danger, feeling like mind's gone blank etc.
- iii) Cognitive effects: thoughts about suspected danger such as fear of dying.
- iv) Behavioral efforts: withdrawal from situation which have provoked anxiety in the past, sleeplessness, nervous habits such as fingernails beating, food trapping and drumping on the desk.

Varieties of anxiety:-

Test anxiety:-In students great deal of anxiety is related to academic performance. Research has proved an optimal level of arousal is necessary to best complete a task such as an exam, performance, or competitive event. However, when the anxiety or level of arousal exceeds that optimum level, the result is a decline in performance.

A special from of anxiety known as examination anxiety or test anxiety refers specifically to students; many workers share the same experience with regard to their career or profession. The fear to failing at a task and being negatively evaluated leads to reduced performance.

Test anxiety is the uneasiness, apprehension, or nervousness felt by students who had a fear of failing an exam. It may be experienced as the association of grades with persona l worth; fear of embarrassment by a teacher; fear of alienation from parents or friends; time pressure; or feeling a loss of control. According to S Lali, examination anxiety is a factor that is far more harmful than general anxiety. Hence, when classroom tests are conducted, there must be provision/attempt for minimizing this form of anxiety.

Stranger and Social anxiety:-

Anxiety when meeting or interacting with unknown people is a common stage of development in young people. For others, it may persists into adulthood and become social anxiety or social phobia. Stranger anxiety in small children is not considered a phobia, in adults, an excessive fear of other people is not a developmentally common stage; it is called social anxiety.

Social anxiety varies in degree and severity. Whilst for some people it is characterized by experiencing discomfort or difficulty during physical social contact (e.g. embracing, Shaking hands etc.), while in other cases it can lead to a fear of interacting with unfamiliar people altogether.

Generalized anxiety:-

Overwhelming anxiety, if not treated early, can consequently become a generalized anxiety disorder (GAD), which can be identified by symptoms of exaggerated and excessive worry and constant irrational thoughts. The anxious thoughts and feelings, felt while suffering from GAD are difficult to control, can cause serious mental anguish that interferes with normal, daily functioning.

Trait anxiety:-

Anxiety can be either a short term or a long term "Trait". Trait anxiety reflects a stable tendency to respond with state anxiety in the anticipation of threatening situation. It is closely related to the personality trait of neuroticism. Such anxiety may be conscious or unconscious.

Choice or Decision anxiety:-

Anxiety induced by the need to choose between similar options is increasingly being recognized as a problem for individuals and for organizations. Today, we are all face with greater choice, more competition and less time to consider our options or seek out the right advice.

Rationale for the study:-

Psychologists, intellectuals and educationists emphasized the effect anxiety on the performance of an individual.

Research has proved an optimal level of anxiety is necessary to best complete a task such as an exam, performance and competitive event. However, when the anxiety or level of arousal exceeds that optimum level, there is a decline in performance.

High level of anxiety blocks recall ability and expression of individual potentialities.

Failure in exam or real life situation is one of the major causes of depression and suicide in young generation.

Ego centred instructions and circumstances are responsible for anxiety.

There is need of guidance and counselling for students as they face examination anxiety.

Objectives of the study:-

To compare examination anxiety level of male and female students.

Hypotheses of the study:-

Ho1: There is no significant difference in examination anxiety of male and female students.

Operational definition of the terms of study:-**Examination anxiety:-**

In this study, examination anxiety is defined as the scores obtained by the respondents on the "Students' examination anxiety test" (SEAT) developed by Dr. Madhu Agarwal and Miss Varsha Kaushal.

II. RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is the plan, structure, and strategy of investigation conceived so as to obtain answers to research questions and to control variance.

The Research Design of this study is "TWO GROUP SIMPLE DESIGN"

Method of research

Survey method was followed to carry on the present study with the help of standardized tools.

Sampling technique:-

Sampling is taking any portion of a population or universe. The process of sampling makes it possible to draw valid inferences or generalizations on the basis of careful observation of variables within a relatively small proportion of the population.

In this study, students were selected by Disproportionate Stratified Random Sampling technique.

Sample size:-

In the present study, sample consists of 200 students.

Variables of the study:-

Variables of this study are as follows:-

Independent Variables:- Gender

Dependent Variable:- Examination anxiety

Tools of the study:-

"STUDENTS' EXAMINATION ANXIETY TEST (SEAT) developed by Dr. Madhu Agrawal and Miss Varsha kaushal)" (Meerut).The Bengali versions of the tools were adopted for the present study

III. RESULTS:

Figure-2 shows the bar diagram of Examination Anxiety scores of male and female students of higher secondary school..

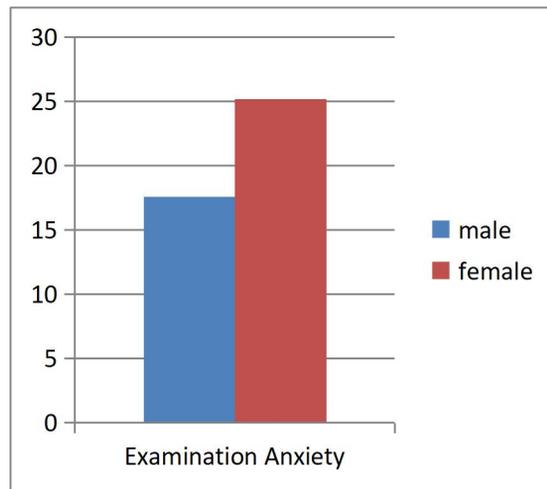


Figure-2: Bar Diagram of Means of Examination Anxiety scores of male and female students of higher secondary school.

Mean score of male students was 17.58 and the mean score of female students was 25.20

It is evident from the bar graph that means examination anxiety score of female students is greater than that of male students i.e., they differ in examination anxiety score.

Testing of the hypotheses:-

Testing of the hypothesis H_0

H_0 :

Table 2

Statistical description of Adjustment scores for high and low academic achievers

Group	N	Mean	S.D.	CR	Df	Remark
Male students	100	17.58	2.47	22.45	198	Significant at 0.01 level
Female students	100	25.20	2.32			

Since the calculated / obtained CR is greater than the table value (2.60) at 0.01 level of significant, therefore, it proves to be significant and the null hypothesis is rejected.

Conclusion::It is evident from the result that male and female students significantly differ in examination anxiety. This may be due to lack of understanding, practice, adjustment, conducive environment, methods of teaching, lack of interest in curricular and co-curricular school programmes and guidance and counseling.

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