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## TEST ANXIETY AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG HIGHER SSECONDARY LEVEL STUDENTS



### ABSTRACT: -

**T**he present study was explored to find out the relationship between test anxiety and academic achievement of higher secondary level students. Normative survey method was used. A sample of 100 higher secondary level students was selected for the present study. Data was analyzed by t-test and coefficient of correlation. Major finding revealed that there is a negative relationship in between the test anxiety and achievement of the students.

**KEYWORDS:** Test Anxiety, Academic Achievement, Higher Secondary Level students.

### INTRODUCTION

Now-a-days education has become an investment. Pupils are forced to learn the novel curriculum. It has heavy syllabus; and the methods of teaching and examination system are also a burden to the students. When there is a desire to secure more marks in the examination to get admission into their desirable courses, there is an anxiety and frustration among the students which in-turn leads to mental exhaustion. Parents also force their children to score high marks. Due to these reasons, the students develop an anxiety, whenever there is a test in the class. At the same time, the young adolescents at the

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higher secondary level are developing his or her abilities to the full, exploring options and skill, and experiencing life as fully as possible. Hence, this investigation, attempts to assess the level of test anxiety and in relation to academic achievement.

Anxiety is an essential, physical response that communicates the needs to pay attention something in the environment. Anxiety is an emotional and behavioral disorder caused by the activation of sympathetic nervous system. Anxiety disorders are rising among students (Leta, 2001). But keep feeling anxiety could be interrupt student performance.

### TEXT ANXIETY

According to Kennedy T. Hill and Allan Wigfield (2014), test anxiety is one of the most important aspects of negative motivation and has direct debilitating effects on coolege performance. Dusek (1980, p.88) defines test anxiety as "an unpleasent feeling or emotional state that has physiological and behavioural concomitants, and that is experienced in formal testing or other evaluative situations." As a teacher, it can easily be observed that test anxiety is a relatively stable predisposition in evaluative situations (Hill, 1980). Yerkes and Dodson (1908) showed in their study that "moderate levels of anxiety can lead to optimal performance on certain tasks; nevertheless, performance can deteriorate when anxiety is too high or low." Test-anxious children tend to receive low grades, poorer scores, and perform more poorly on tests (Ergene, 2011). Test anxiety affects performance in tests, therefore it affects academic achievements of students because tests are seen as an indicator of academic achievement. Test anxiety is defined as "the

type of performance anxiety resulting from fear of failure in an academic evaluation setting” (Horwitz et.al, 1986). Christine Coombe and Nancy Hubley depict test anxiety in their study named Fundamentals of Language Assessment as “a feeling or nervousness or fear surrounding an assessment. It can occur before, during or after a test; has the potential to effect test performance” (Coombe & Hubley, 2011).

### ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Education is a process towards development. The task of educational research is to identify the determinants of development from various aspects of life -past and present, which seems to have guided the general life styles in the social, economic, political, religious and other spheres. Achievement is success in any field. Scholastic achievement is one in which the success of pupils performance in learning is brought out. This success is measured by means of scores awarded to test items in different subjects and varies from pupil to pupil and teacher to teacher.

The achievement test made by the teacher consisted of test items such as essay type, short answer and objective type questions from the lessons studied by the samples. The syllabus is the same for all the schools and examination pattern is also the same for all schools irrespective of the medium of instruction. Changes are taking place in organization, curriculum and teaching technique. It is pertinent to seek systematic and up to date information on the significant correlates of pupil achievement. It is appropriate to consider factors affecting the Academic Achievement such as pupil’s socio-economic background, intelligence, language and personality factors, while studying factors associated with Academic Achievement; it is pertinent to investigate the differential patterns if any, in respect of sex and different courses of studies of art and sciences.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the level of test anxiety of higher secondary students?
2. Does test anxiety among students differ with respect to certain variables?
3. What is the relationship between test anxiety and students’ achievement?

### METHODOLOGY

A descriptive correlation, cross sectional research design was utilized to conduct the current study on a convenience sample of 100 higher secondary level students. The academic scores obtained at different academic levels in the College of Intermediate were considered for the study. Participants were asked to complete a two part questionnaire survey including participant’s demographic background such as gender, age, locality, academic level, and Test Anxiety Inventory (Spielberger, 1980) which was used to measure the primary outcome variable of the study. It is a four point Likert scale with 20 statements to find out how often participants experience the feeling described in each statement. An explanation about the purpose and the nature of the study was offered for each participant. The participants were ensured about the confidentiality and anonymity of the collected data.

### DATA ANALYSIS

**Table 1: Level of Test Anxiety among Higher Secondary Level Students**

Level of Test Anxiety	Frequency	Percentage
No Anxiety	9	9%
Mild Anxiety	23	23%
Moderate Anxiety	49	49%
Severe Anxiety	19	19%

From Table-1, 9% participants experienced no anxiety, 23% participants experienced mild anxiety, and 49% participants are having moderate anxiety while 16% demonstrated severe anxiety.

**Table 2: Test Anxiety with regard to Gender**

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Remark	df
Boys	45	76.25	20.75	2.76**	Significant @0.01 level	98
Girls	55	65.19	18.80			

Table-2 shows that mean test anxiety scores of boys and girls students are 76.25 and 65.19. The respective standard deviations are 20.75 and 18.80. The obtained t value 2.76 is above the table value, which is significant at 0.01 level. This implies that there is a significant relationship between boys and girls with respect to test anxiety level. The results indicate that there is a significant difference in test anxiety based on gender, with boys at higher anxiety levels when compared to girls.

**Table 3: Test Anxiety with regard to Locality**

Locality	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Remark	df
Rural	40	68.36	20.98	0.96	Not Significant	98
Urban	60	72.16	18.66			

Table-3 reveals that the obtained mean test anxiety scores of students from rural and urban localities are 68.36 and 72.16 and the respective SDs are 20.98 and 18.66. The calculated t value i.e. 0.96 is less than the table value at 0.05 level for 2 and 98 df. This means that there is no significant difference between the rural and urban secondary level students on test anxiety.

**Table 3: Test Anxiety with regard to Type of Management**

Management	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Remark	df
Govt.	35	58.63	22.18	3.58**	Significant @0.01 level	98
Private	65	74.29	17.99			

Table-4 depicts that the mean test anxiety scores of government and private college students are 58.63 and 74.29 respectively. The respective SDs are 22.18 and 17.99. The calculated 't' value is 3.58, which is significant at 0.01 level. The result shows that the private college students have higher level of test anxiety. The reason may be that the private students feel more burdened in dealing with exams.

**Table 5: Relationship between Test Anxiety and Academic Achievement**

Variable	'r' value	Remark
Test Anxiety vs. Academic Achievement	-0.78*	Negative Correlation

From Table-5, it can be observed that a strong negative relationship exists between academic achievement and test anxiety. This negative relationship is subjected to further analysis to explore the possibility of test anxiety as a predictor for students' achievement.

## FINDINGS

- There is a significant difference in test anxiety based on gender, with boys at higher anxiety levels when compared to girls.
- There is a significant difference in test anxiety based on type of management, with students from private management at higher anxiety levels when compared to their counterparts.
- There is no significant difference in test anxiety based on locality.
- There is a negative relationship in between the test anxiety and achievement of the students.

### Educational Implications

- To reduce the anxiety level, classroom environment should be free and democratic.
- Over burden may cause high academic anxiety. Thus Students not be loaded with extra burden.
- The counseling should be given to control their anxiety levels.

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