

“Test Anxiety of Adolescents In Relation To Academic Streams”

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ABSTRACT: In the present study, the adolescent students studying in class XII in various higher secondary schools in the arts and science streams were compared on Test Anxiety scores in the general group, in boys groups and in the girls groups. Moreover the sex differences were also found out among the students of arts and science streams on Test Anxiety scores. The study was conducted on the 200 students selected from the arts and science streams of different higher secondary schools of district Kathua of J&K. In the study, latest Anxiety Scale for children originally developed by **Sorenson and latter adopted in Hindi by Nijhawan (1972)** was used on the sample students to collect data. The statistical techniques viz. Mean S.D. and C.R were used to analyze the data and compare the scores of adolescent students on Test Anxiety Scores

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I. INTRODUCTION:

The present age is the age of anxiety. As a result of rapid rate of social changes taking place, the life of man is becoming more complex day by day. Charles Drawin’s theory “Struggle for Existence” holds true in every walk of life. The tempo of life is so fast that the individual is bound to face a number of problems in his life. It is the stage, which induces an individual to indulge in struggle and competitions which is a constant source or cause of anxiety. It is considered as a block to an activity. An individual suffering from anxiety may not be able to devote his full energy to his performance on a task. It is, therefore, considered that anxiety interferes in activity and so learning is impeded.

The word “Anxiety” is derived from latin word “Anxieta” meaning distress state of throttle chock causing pain. It was Freud who studied and emphasized the concept of anxiety and since then this concept has been widely used by the researchers engaged in the personality studies. Every act of man creative or destructive involves some elements of anxiety. This concept stresses the importance of anxiety in everybody’s life. Anxiety is an echo of the ego to the supposed danger. It is an emotional attitude or sentiment to further mingle with fear and hope. It is considered that anxiety has a great impact on the mental preparation of the individual.

Test Anxiety, on the other hand is a state of mind where a student has either a sense of insecurity, loss of confidence or incompetence or when the individual is overstressed worried or tense in the moment when he/she is to be evaluated.

Youths are generally dominated by aspirations. The want to seek truth and justice in the society but unfortunately the society presents a different picture and this situation leads the students to confusion and chaos. Due to this, the students enter into the stage of anxiety. Students are usually pressurized and forced to study and pass the examination. Today schools are giving more stress on passing the examination. Very less care has been taken to develop their self concept to get rid of the anxiety of examination. The schools take very less care of their interest, sentiments, attitude and self concept of the students.

The present study is useful for teachers because teachers play an important role in shaping the behaviour of students. It is the duty of teachers not to have bias attitude on the basis of sex and level of anxiety. The atmosphere at the schools should be supportive and teacher should be well aware of the level of anxiety and other important traits of personality of students. Therefore the investigator wants to study that how students fall ill, get anxious, frustrated and phobic during examinations. The adolescence stage is the stage of stress and strain. The students in this stage experience anxiety of different kind.

In view of this, the present investigation was undertaken to study the test anxiety of adolescents in relation to academic streams. The adolescent students studying in the arts and science streams were compared on test anxiety in the general view, in the boys group and in the girls group. Moreover the sex differences among the adolescents on test anxiety were also found.

DEFINITIONS OF THE TERMS USED:

1. **Test Anxiety:-** This term means that the anxiety experienced by a subject in the achievement test situation or in performance test. In the present study test anxiety is that which is measured by Sorenson’s Test Anxiety scale(TASC)
2. **XII Class students:-** In the present study, the students studying in class XII of various higher secondary schools were considered for the study.
3. **Academic Streams:-** In the present study, the academic streams viz. arts and science were considered for the study.
4. **Gender:-** Boys & Girls

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To study the significance of mean differences on **“Test Anxiety”** between the students of arts and science streams.
2. To study the significance of mean differences on **“Test Anxiety”** between the students of arts and science streams in the boys as well as girls groups respectively.
3. To study the significance sex differences in **“Test Anxiety”** among the students of arts and science streams.

HYPOTHESES:

1. There will be no significant mean differences on **“Test Anxiety”** between the students of arts and science streams.
2. There will be no significant mean differences on **“Test Anxiety”** between the students of arts and science streams in the boys as well as girls groups respectively.
3. There will be no significant sex differences in **“Test Anxiety”** among the students of arts and science streams.

DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

1. The present study was confined to tehsil Hiranagar of district Kathua only.
2. The present study was confined to XII class students only.
3. The study was confined to Higher Secondary schools only.
4. The study was confined to Co-educational schools only.
5. The study was confined to students of arts and science streams only.
6. The study was confined to English knowing students.
7. The study was confined to schools recognized by J&K Govt. and affiliated to JK BOSE.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH LITERATURE

Cox F.O (1960) reported negative correlation between test anxiety scale for children and achievement in arithmetic. They administered test anxiety of 5th grade boys and divided them into three groups, ‘representing high, middle and low anxiety. The academic performance of middle anxiety groups was significantly better than that of the other two groups. The poorest was that of high anxiety group. In another study **Endler and Grooma (1960)** found that anxiety was significantly negatively correlated with academic achievement. **Robinson (1960)** found that students having lower academic ability give more evidence of anxiety and other neurotic traits than such students having higher academic ability. It has been found that students achieving academic honours give more evidence of anxiety and other neurotic traits than the general student’s population.

Nijhawan (1972) found that rural children were more anxious than urban children. Lower class children had higher anxiety than upper class children Last of all girls were found more anxious than boys. **Ansari (1972)** reported that there is no significant relation of anxiety with age. **Shanker (1973)** indicated that a negative relationship exists between anxiety and academic achievement i.e. with the increase of anxiety achievement decreases and vice-versa. It has also been found that girls are more anxious than boys.

Sharma (1998) found that high school girls are more test anxious than high school boys. Low achievement motivated students are more test anxious than high achievement motivated students. **Batt (2000)** found that there are significant differences between boys and girls in test anxiety where as there are no significant differences between high and low intelligent students in test anxiety. In another study **Kour (2002)** found that there are no significant gender differences in test anxiety among first generation learners of high school students. **Tasleem (2010)** found that there is significant difference in test anxiety among secondary school student with high and low self concept where as the students with low self- concept have more test anxiety than the students with high self concept She also found that girls are more test anxious than boys.

Sharma, Meenu (2013) conducted a study on the topic: “Academic anxiety of adolescent students in various Government and private schools” and found the significant differences between the students of Government and private schools on academic anxiety in the general view, in the boys groups and girls groups.

The students of Government schools in the general view, in the boys group and in the girls group depicted higher academic anxiety than the Private school counterparts.

Kour, Puneet (2014) conducted a study on the topic: Test anxiety of adolescents belonging to different localities. She found that the adolescents of rural locality in general, in boys and girls groups depicted greater level of test anxiety than their urban counterparts. **Devi, Pinki (2014)** conducted a study on the topic: A study of academic anxiety of students belonging to different localities” and she found the significant difference between boys as well as girls of urban and rural localities on academic anxiety. The boys as well as girls of rural locality depicted higher academic anxiety than the urban counterparts.

Romi (2015) found the significant difference between the students of arts and science streams on test anxiety. The students of arts stream depicted a greater level of Test Anxiety than science stream counterparts. The boys of arts stream depicted a greater level of test anxiety than science stream counterparts. The girls of Arts stream depicted a greater level of test Anxiety than science stream counterparts. **Aruna (2015)** found that the students of arts stream in general, in boys group and in girls group depicted more test anxiety than science stream. **Bharti, Nisha (2015):** “A study of test anxiety of adolescents in relation to gender and academic streams and found the significant difference between boys and girls on test anxiety. The girls depicted more test anxiety than boys. Moreover significant difference is also found between students of arts and science streams on test anxiety. The students of arts streams depicted more test anxiety than the science stream counterparts.

Kumari Reena (2015): “A study of test anxiety of government and private schools of district Udhampur: A comparative study and found the significant difference between the students of government and private schools on test anxiety in the general view, in the boys and in the girls groups. The students of government schools in general view, in the boys group and in the girls groups depicted more test anxiety than private school counterparts.

Devi, Neena (2016) conducted a study on the topic :A study of academic anxiety of adolescents belonging to different localities and found the significant difference between the students of urban rural localities on academic anxiety in general view, in the boys group and in the girls group **Sharma, Jyoti (2016)** conducted a study on the topic: A study of test anxiety of viii class students studying in government and private schools of district Kathua and put she found the significant difference between students of government and private schools on test anxiety in the general view, in the boys group and girls group .The students of government schools depicted higher test anxiety than the private school counterparts.

Sharma Preeti (2017) conducted a study on the topic: A study of test anxiety of adolescents in relation to gender and academic streams and she found that there are significant differences between the students of arts and science streams. **Sharma Usha (2017)** conducted a study on the topic : A study of academic anxiety of students studying in different academic streams and found the significant difference between the students of arts and science streams on academic anxiety in the general view, in the boys as well as girls groups. The students of arts stream depicted higher academic anxiety than the science stream counterparts.

Sharma, Manoj (2018) conducted a study on the topic: “A study of test anxiety of adolescents belonging to nuclear and joint families” and found the significant difference between the students of nuclear and joint families in the general view, in the boys group and in the girls group. The students of nuclear and joint families in the general view, in the boys group and in the girls group depicted more test anxiety than the joint family counterparts

PLAN AND PROCEDURE

Population:

The entire population of the present study comprised of students studying in class XII in arts and science streams in various co-educational Higher Secondary schools of tehsil Hiranagar of district Kathua.

The Sample:

The sample of the present study comprised of 200 XII class students studying in arts and science streams having equal number of boys and girls. These students were picked up randomly from various schools.

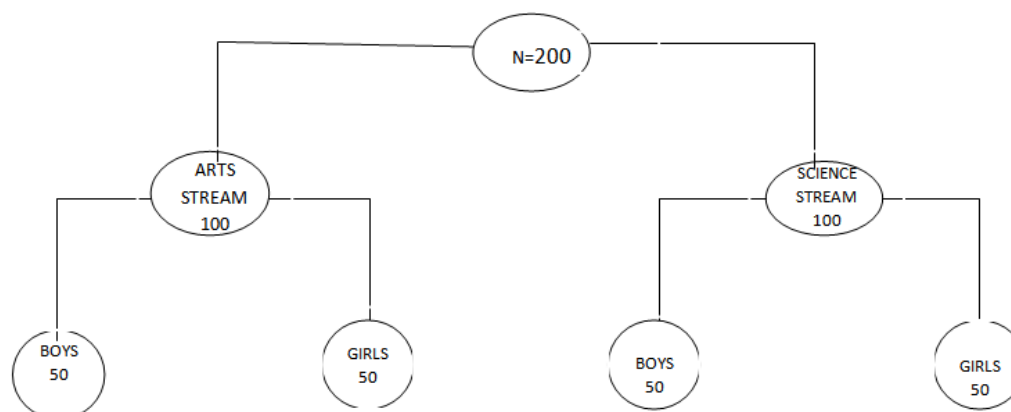


Table 1. Detail of Sample of students selected from arts and science streams

S.NO.	NAME OF INSTITUTION	ARTS		SCIENCE	
		B	G	B	G
01	Government Higher Secondary School Kootah	4	3	3	4
02	Government Higher Secondary School Hiranagar	4	5	4	3
03	Government Higher Secondary School Chakra	6	4	5	6
04	Government Higher Secondary School Marheen	5	6	6	8
05	Government Higher Secondary School Chadwan	7	4	8	5
06	Babloo Vidhya Peeth Senior School Kootah	8	3	4	6
07	Modern Public Higher Secondary School Hiranagar	6	7	6	4
08	Amar National Higher Secondary School Marheen	3	6	4	7
09	Unique Modal Higher Secondary Chadwal	4	4	7	3
10	St.Convent Higher Secondary School Haripur	3	8	3	4
Total		50	50	50	50

Tool used

In the present study, latest anxiety scale for children originally developed by **Sorenson and latter adopted in Hindi by Nijhawan (1972)** was used. There are 30 items in the scale and each item is being responded by students either in Yes or No. A score of 1 is awarded to each ‘Yes’ response, which is indicative of test anxiety and 0 to ‘No’. The higher score in the test indicates the greater level of test anxiety and low score reveals the low anxiety.

Variables studied:

Independent variables: Test anxiety

Dependent variables: Sex: boys & girls

Statistical techniques employed

Mean S.D. and Critical Ratio (C.R.)

ANALYSIS OF DATA AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

Mean comparison between students of arts and science streams with regard to test anxiety

The first objective of present study was to study and compare the significance of mean differences on test anxiety between the students of arts and science streams. The students of arts and science streams were compared on the test anxiety scores and the comparison is presented in the table 2.

Table 2. Comparison of mean scores between students of arts and science streams on test anxiety

S.No.	Academic stream	N	M	SD	SEM	SEDM	CR
1	Arts	100	18.30	7.88	0.78	1.11	5.58*
2	Science	100	12.10	8.03	0.80		

*Significant at .01 level

Mean comparison between boys of arts and science streams with regard to test anxiety

The first part of second objective of present study was to study and compare the significance of mean differences on test anxiety between the students of arts and science streams in the boys groups. The boys of arts and science streams were compared on the test anxiety scores and the comparison is presented in the table 3.

Table 3: Comparison of mean scores between boys of arts and science streams on test anxiety

S.No.	Sex	Academic stream	N	M	SD	SEM	SEDM	CR
1	Boys	Arts	50	18.00	7.81	1.10	1.57	3.69*
2		Science	50	12.20	8.13	1.13		

*Significant at .01 level

Mean comparison between girls of arts and science streams with regard to test anxiety

The second part of second objective of present study was to study and compare the significance of mean differences on test anxiety between the students of arts and science streams in the girls groups. The girls of arts and science streams were compared on the test anxiety scores and the comparison is presented in the table 4.

Table 4. Comparison of mean scores between girls of arts and science streams on test anxiety

S.No.	Sex	Academic stream	N	M	SD	SEM	SEDM	CR
1	Girls	Arts	50	18.6	7.93	1.12	1.85	3.56*
2		Science	50	12.00	8.06	1.14		

*Significant at .01 level

Sex differences among students arts and science streams with regard to test anxiety

The third objective of present study was to study whether there were significant sex differences in test anxiety among the students of arts and science streams. The boys and girls respectively of arts and science streams were compared on test anxiety scores and the comparisons are presented in the table 5

Table 5. Sex differences in the test anxiety among the students of arts and science streams

S.No.	Academic stream	Sex	N	M	SD	SEM	SEDM	CR
1	Arts	Boys	50	18.00	7.81	1.10	1.56	0.38
		Girls	50	18.60	7.93	1.12		
3	Stream	Boys	50	12.20	8.13	1.13	1.60	0.12
		Girls	50	12.00	8.06	1.14		

MAIN FINDINGS:

1. Inferences based on General view

Significant difference is found between the students of arts and science streams on test anxiety. The students of arts stream depict more test anxiety than science stream counterparts.

2. Inferences based on Boys group

Significant difference is found between the boys of the students of arts and science streams on test anxiety. The boys of arts stream depict more test anxiety than science stream counterparts.

3. Inferences based on Girls group

Significant difference is found between the girls the students of arts and science streams on test anxiety. The girls of arts stream depict more test anxiety than science stream counterparts.

4. Inferences based on Sex differences

No significant differences are found among the students of the students of arts and science streams on test anxiety. The boys and girls of arts as well as science stream depict alike test anxiety.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS:

In the present study, the students of arts stream in general, in the boys group as well as in the girls group depicted more test anxiety than the science stream counterparts. In the light of these findings, the following steps shall be taken:

- The schools should conduct a test series for the students of arts stream in order to reduce their test anxiety.

- A variety of curricular and co-curricular activities should be organized in the schools and the students of arts stream must be encouraged to participate in them in order to raise their level of confidence.
- It is necessary to develop positive mental set among students of arts stream which enable them to face test easily.
- The parents should create an atmosphere in the homes where the children have minimum tension and anxiety. They should give full assistance and continuous attention to the needs of their children.
- The schools should organize test anxiety reduction programmes and establishing guidance and counseling centers for all students of arts stream.
- The teachers should use methods of teaching like learning by doing, students’ participation, teaching through activities, play way techniques, individual and group presentations. Through these methods the learning and grasping level of students enhance which ultimately helps in reducing the anxiety of any kind.

Apart from these steps, the role of parents, teachers and practioners also help in the reduction of test anxiety and general anxiety to a great extent.

1. Role of parents

- Be consistent in how you handle problems and administer discipline.
- Be patient and be prepared to listen.
- Avoid being overly critical, disparaging, impatient or cynical
- Maintain realistic, attainable goals and expectations for your child.
- Do not communicate that perfection is expected or is the only acceptable outcome.
- Maintain a consistent but flexible routine for homework, chores, activities, and so forth.
- Accept mistakes as a normal part of growing up and let your child know that no one is expected to do everything equally well.
- Praise and reinforce effort, even if the outcome is less than expected. Practice and rehearse upcoming events, such as a speech or other performance.
- Teach your child simple strategies to help with his or her anxiety, such as organizing materials and time, developing small “scripts” of what to do and say when anxiety increases, and learning how to relax under stressful conditions.
- Do not treat feelings, questions, and statements about feeling anxious as silly or unimportant.
- Often, reasoning is not effective in reducing anxiety, so do not criticize your child for being unable to respond to rational approaches.
- Seek outside help if the problem persists and continues to interfere with daily activities.

2. Role of Practioners

Mental health specialists, such as school psychologists, social workers, and counselors, can work singly and collaboratively to develop and implement interventions for students and to consult with teachers about how to identify and work with students in the classroom. There are several interventions that can be used in the school setting to help students prevent and control test and performance anxiety.

These strategies include:

- Providing relaxation training.
- Using test-anxiety hierarchies for assessments and public performances using variations of systematic desensitization.
- Using pre task rehearsal.
- Using practice tests.
- Reviewing task content before examinations.
- Modifying tasks, such as breaking them into smaller units.
- Developing mnemonic devices to help recall.
- Using cognitive-behavioral techniques to reduce characteristics often associated with test anxiety, such as “cognitive scripts” for students to use when taking tests or performing, self-monitoring techniques, positive self-talk, and self relaxation.
- Relaxing grading standards or procedures if it is possible to do so without lowering performance criteria.
- Recognizing effort as well as performance.
- Avoiding criticism, sarcasm, or punishment for performance problems.
- Using alternative forms of assessment.
- Modifying time constraints and instructions.

- Emphasizing success, rather than failure
- Mental health specialists can also provide inservice training to school personnel and parents.

3. Role of Teachers

In addition to providing in-service training to school personnel and direct services to students, school psychologists and other mental health professionals can consult the teachers to help them identify and work with test-anxious students. Consultation can include:

- Providing education and information to the teacher about test anxiety.
 - Interviewing students, teachers, and parents
- Assessing individual students to determine cognitive, behavioural, and physiological symptoms
- Training teachers, students, and parents in how to use rehearsal, relaxation and other techniques at home and at school.

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