

A RESEARCH STUDY ON EXAM-RELATED ANXIETY AMONG STUDENTS SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The quantitative study examines test anxiety among co-ed school pupils in school in grades 10–12. 50 boys and 50 girls were picked. This research employed Westside Test Anxiety Scale. Girls and boys had test anxiety, but there was a considerable difference. Boys are more exam-anxious than girls. Students need stress-free schools.

Keywords: Anxiety, School Students.

Introduction

Exams make practically everyone nervous. Anxious indicates feeling tired, sweaty, bewildered, concerned, unfocused, and worried about tests. This is natural as individuals are pushed to work more, revise the course, and focus on the content. However, stress, pressure, and worry may worsen problems. This may indicate exam anxiety that prevents focus. Everyone experiences anxiety. An irritated, tense, uncomfortable threat-causing yet unclear occurrence might cause dizziness, problems focusing, muscular tightness, and other symptoms. Ignoring it may cause anxiety neurosis. Chronic anxiety, or anxiety neurosis, is the most frequent neurosis, accounting for 30–40% of neurotic illnesses. Anxiety neurosis may cause phobias, obsessive behaviors, and other illnesses. Symptoms-

- Sleep disturbances
- Discouragement
- Sustained muscle tension
- Extreme sensitivity
- Inability to concentrate
- Difficulty in making decisions
- Excessive sweating

Researchers have divided anxiety into social, verbal, and specialized phobias. Exam anxiety is our focus.

Examination anxiety

Test anxiety occurs when there is pressure to do well on an exam or when individuals are very anxious before taking it. Performance anxiety may occur during a test or exam. Test anxiety causes headaches, stomachaches, and other psychosomatic problems. Some students sweat or have a racing heart before exams. Senior students need to get high grades, which creates worry. Because competition is growing, secondary school students in grades 10–12 feel worried, afraid, tense, and stressed.

Negative consequences of exam anxiety

High-anxiety pupils work more, according to some studies. Some test-anxious kids study well, while others don't. Test anxiety impacts social, emotional, and behavioral development and makes kids feel bad about themselves and their institutions. Nearly 20% of high-test-

anxiety pupils drop out before graduating owing to repeated failures. Exam stress has been linked to student suicide. Some pupils have serious test issues. They have a blank mind, shivers, numb hands, and other abrupt disabilities (Hall. A, 1975). This study was based on current exam patterns and past studies on exam anxiety.

Review of literature

A large-scale epidemiological investigation is needed to assess the number of pupils experiencing test anxiety.

Natasha K Segool et al. (2013) investigated primary school children's test anxiety on high- and low-stakes tests. Three hundred thirty-five 3rd–5th graders took NCLB and classroom tests. High-stakes testing caused much greater test anxiety than classroom testing.

Shireen Hashmat et al. (2008) performed a cross-sectional research utilizing a self-administered questionnaire to measure medical student test anxiety by VAS (Visual Analogue Scale). Moderate exam anxiety was found. Long tests, lack of exercise, and heavy course loads cause exam anxiety.

Rizwan Akram and Nasir Mahmood randomly picked 414 students from a public university in Lahore, Pakistan, to study the relationship between test anxiety and academic performance. Test anxiety ratings negatively correlated with student accomplishment.

Prima Vitasari et al. (2010) study anxiety and academic achievement in engineering students. University Malaysia Pahang had 205 2nd–4th-year boys and girls participate (UMP). High anxiety and poor academic performance in engineering students were correlated with State Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) and Grade Point Average (GPA).

G.W Ndiragu, J.M Muola, M.R Kithuka and D.K Nassiuma (2009) studied the association between test anxiety and academic achievement in Nyeri, Kenya. Student questionnaires, instructor interview schedules, and research were used. Pre- and post-test anxiety levels differed statistically.

Selami Aydin (2013) did a research on test anxiety among young EFL learners and characteristics including age, gender, grade, and economic background. Young learners had little test anxiety and several scale items were substantially associated.

Nurdan Sakin Ozen et al. (2009) investigated anxiety prevalence and determinants in Bursa, Turkey, university students. Spielberger's STAI and a questionnaire were completed by 4850 pupils to identify anxiety risk factors. 29.6% and 36.7% of pupils had state and trait anxiety above 45 points.

The risk factors of Trait anxiety include-

- Anxiety about future
- Preparation for work life
- Class of study
- Private relationships
- Attitude of the family towards their child.

Elpida Bagana, Andreea Raicu , Luminita Lupu (2011) Exam anxiety and optimism affected 200 high school students' self-esteem. Counsellors might utilize this study's findings to create self-esteem-boosting programs.

Revina Ann Mary et al. (2014) studied state anxiety in Tamil Nadu, India, board exam-taking kids. Westside Test Anxiety Scale was administered to 100 10th-12th graders. Boys

and 12th-graders had more exam anxiety.

Muwada Bashir Awad Bashir et al. (2019) examined Sudan National Boarding Examination pupils' anxiety and despair. Westside Test Anxiety Scale and PHQ9 were utilized on a cross-cultural sample. Depression and test anxiety were strongly associated. Gender, maternal education, test experience, and academic success predict exam anxiety.

John Love Joy (2013) performed a research on 80 male and 53 female students in Tamil Nadu, India to assess pre- and post-test anxiety and test performance. Exams make pupils apprehensive and prevent them from doing well. Post-test anxiety is unaffected.

Sibnath Deb, Esben Strodi, Jiandong Sun (2014) academic stress and test anxiety among private school kids. Socioeconomic and academic aspects were examined. Kolkata 400-student study. 35% and 37% of pupils indicated severe and extremely high academic stress and test anxiety. Extracurricular activities increased test anxiety in students.

Jolyn D. Whitaker Sena , Patrica A. Lowe , Steven W. Lee (2007) studied learning difficulties and test anxiety in pupils. 195 LD and 579 non-LD kids completed the test anxiety inventory for children and adolescents (TAICA). Learning disabled pupils had greater cognitive blockages and lesser performance enhancement anxiety.

G.Grases et.al (2006) examined stress and anxiety in 35 science students (12 men and 23 females). State Trait Anxiety Inventory and perceived stress were employed. Anxiety is linked to partial magnesium decrease and increased urine magnesium excretion. Stress raises urine calcium.

Hakan Karatas, Bulent Alci, Hasan Aydin (2013) investigated high school students' test anxiety, GPA, and university admission exam scores in Turkey. Spielberg et al. administered the "test anxiety inventory" to 194 high schoolers. The findings indicated a substantial positive link between GPA and university admission exam scores and a significant negative correlation between test anxiety and those points.

Ms. Mousavi et. Al (2008) test anxiety and school achievement among 536 teenagers. Test anxiety ratings correlated negatively with GPA. Private and public schools influenced exam anxiety. Female students had more test anxiety than male pupils.

Dave Putwain, Anthony L. Daly (2014) Studied English secondary school high-test anxiety and gender. 2435 pupils self-reported. 16.4% had test anxiety. Female test anxiety was 22.5% greater than male (10.3%). These kids may struggle academically.

Jaee Bodas, Thomas H Ollendick, Anuradha V Sovani (2008) test anxiety among Indian youngsters. 231 schoolchildren were studied. Spielberger's Test Anxiety Inventory and FRIEDBEN Scale obtained data. Results did not support high-stakes exam anxiety.

Taruna Malholtra (2015) Rising test anxiety among Bhiwani, Haryana senior secondary pupils. Exam anxiety was examined by gender and location. 180 students from 4 urban and rural senior high schools participated. Most pupils experience considerable test anxiety. Student test anxiety depends on gender and location.

Onder Kavakci et al (2014) examined student anxiety and test performance. 436 students took the Test Anxiety Inventory, Beck's Depression Inventory, State Trait Anxiety Inventory, and others. 48% had test anxiety. BDI scores, STAI, ASRS, and WURS correlated. Girls were more test-anxious than guys.

Mostafa Amiri, Behzad Ghonsooly (2015) studied English language anxiety and test performance. Test anxiety affected 258 students' performance. English language anxiety was

greater.

Sharon Mitchell, Susan Abbott (1987) examined signs of anxiety and sadness in 159 Kenyan secondary school pupils. It was discovered that female students reported higher signs of depression than male pupils. The outcomes were then compared to a previous research that included 116 people.

Maria Isabel Nunez Pena et al (2016) tested, trait, and math anxiety among 168 University of Barcelona students. Girls had more exam and math anxiety than guys. They performed similarly academically.

Miri Cohen, Hasida Ben-Zur, Michal J Rosenfeld (2008) evaluated coherence, test anxiety, and coping. Three classes had 216 students. SOC negatively affected test anxiety. Students with emotional-focused coping and avoidance had higher exam anxiety. The research reveals exam anxiety has no effect on performance grades.

Ruchi Singh et al (2012) 35 students participated in a DASS/ELISA study on test stress on mood and performance. Exams and pre-exams were assessed. Exam stress increased mood and salivary cortisol. Both genders saw comparable mood swings.

Objective

1. To gauge the degree of exam-related anxiety among pupils.
2. To compare the scores of boys and girls for text anxiety.

Hypothesis

Ho1 - Boys and females will experience similar levels of test anxiety.

METHODOLOGY

Reference Population- Students from Dehradun co-ed schools in the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades will be selected. There are 100 students overall, 50 of whom are female and 50 of whom are male.

Tools used - Richard Driscoll's Westside Test Anxiety Scale is used. It is a ten-item assessment tool designed to help kids with their anxiety. The instrument is a self-assessment questionnaire with a five-point scale: very much or always true, strongly or often true, moderately or sometimes true, barely or seldom true, and not at all or never true.

Procedure of Data Collection- The researcher chose 100 students, 50 males and 50 girls, and contacted each one of them one by one, asking them to complete the Westside Test Anxiety Scale. The investigator showed the pupils how to fill the instrument even though it was self-administering.

Data collection

Table- 1 Data collection of male students

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
1	GENDI	AGE	CLASS	RESUL	RESUL	RESUL	RESUL	RESUL	RESUL	RESUL	RESUL	RESUL	RESUL	TOTAL	TEST ANXIETY
2	1	male	16 10th	4	3	4	2	1	3	2	4	3	4	30	3
3	2	male	18 12h	3	2	4	3	4	3	2	3	2	4	30	3
4	3	male	17 12th	1	1	1	3	4	2	1	1	1	1	16	1.6
5	4	male	17 12th	3	4	2	5	4	2	1	3	5	4	33	3.3
6	5	male	15 11th	3	5	4	3	4	2	4	2	2	3	32	3.2
7	6	male	17 12th	1	5	4	5	1	3	1	2	2	5	29	2.9
8	7	male	17 12th	3	4	1	3	2	3	1	2	4	3	26	2.6
9	8	male	17 12th	3	1	1	4	4	2	3	4	5	4	31	3.1
10	9	male	16 12th	3	3	4	4	2	3	3	4	5	5	36	3.6
11	10	male	17 12th	1	2	1	1	1	3	1	1	2	3	16	1.6
12	11	male	16 12th	4	2	3	3	2	2	3	5	4	3	31	3.1
13	12	male	17 12th	2	3	3	2	3	4	2	4	5	3	31	3.1
14	13	male	15 11th	5	4	4	4	3	4	3	2	2	1	32	3.2
15	14	male	16 11th	2	2	3	3	2	2	3	2	2	1	22	2.2
16	15	male	16 11th	4	2	3	3	4	2	3	2	3	3	29	2.9
17	16	male	18 12th	3	2	4	4	5	2	3	2	5	3	33	3.3
18	17	male	17 12th	3	4	1	3	3	4	2	3	2	2	27	2.7
19	18	male	15 11th	5	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	3	1	35	3.5
20	19	male	15 11th	2	2	2	1	3	2	2	3	5	1	23	2.3
21	20	male	15 10th	4	3	5	3	2	4	1	3	4	3	32	3.2
22	21	male	16 10th	2	2	3	1	2	3	4	4	4	4	29	2.9
23	22	male	16 10th	4	5	1	5	4	2	1	4	3	3	32	3.2
24	23	male	15 10th	1	5	1	5	3	3	2	5	2	4	31	3.1
25	24	male	16 10th	3	1	3	1	4	2	3	4	4	5	30	3
26	25	male	16 10th	1	1	3	1	1	3	1	5	5	5	26	2.6
27	26	male	16 10th	2	1	2	2	3	2	1	2	2	2	19	1.9
28	27	male	15 10th	2	1	3	1	4	1	1	5	5	3	26	2.6
29	28	male	16 10th	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	3	2	5	45	4.5
30	29	male	15 10th	1	3	4	2	1	5	2	5	4	3	30	3
31	30	male	15 10th	5	1	2	3	4	2	1	3	5	2	28	2.8
32	31	male	16 11th	1	3	1	4	3	1	2	2	1	1	19	1.9
33	32	male	17 11th	4	4	3	4	5	4	4	5	2	2	37	3.7
34	33	male	15 11th	3	1	1	2	5	5	5	5	5	2	34	3.4
35	34	male	16 11th	3	2	4	4	2	2	2	2	4	4	29	2.9
36	35	male	15 10th	3	2	4	4	3	5	4	3	5	4	37	3.7
37	36	male	16 10th	5	1	3	4	4	4	5	4	4	3	37	3.7
38	37	male	16 10th	5	4	2	4	5	4	5	4	4	3	40	4
39	38	male	15 10th	3	4	5	5	3	3	4	4	5	3	39	3.9
40	39	male	16 12th	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	2	1	18	1.8
41	40	male	17 12th	3	2	4	2	1	4	3	1	5	5	30	3
42	41	male	18 12th	4	5	5	4	3	4	4	3	5	5	42	4.2
43	42	male	18 12th	1	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	1	20	2
44	43	male	17 12th	4	3	4	5	1	3	3	3	4	4	34	3.4
45	44	male	17 12th	5	5	4	5	2	5	3	2	5	5	41	4.1
46	45	male	17 12th	2	4	3	3	4	5	1	3	4	2	31	3.1
47	46	male	17 12th	2	3	1	1	2	4	1	2	2	1	19	1.9
48	47	male	15 11th	3	4	2	4	5	4	3	4	3	5	37	3.7
49	48	male	16 11th	3	3	2	2	3	2	1	4	4	3	27	2.7
50	49	male	16 11th	3	3	2	2	5	4	4	3	4	3	33	3.3
51	50	male	16 11th	3	2	1	3	2	4	3	2	3	5	28	2.8
52															150.2

Total males – 50

SUM - 150.2

Average mean -2.998

Standard deviation- 0.6665

Table- 1 Data collection of male students



Table- 2 data collection of female students

#	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
1	S M *	GENDI *	AG *	CLASS *	RESUL *	RESUL *	RESUL *	RESUL *	RESUL *	RESUL *	RESUL *	RESUL *	RESUL *	RESUL *	TOTAL *	TEST ANXIET *
2	1	female	16	12th	3	3	1	2	2	1	3	3	2	1	21	2.1
3	2	female	16	12th	2	1	5	5	3	4	3	4	4	1	32	3.2
4	3	female	17	12th	4	3	2	3	5	2	3	2	1	1	26	2.6
5	4	female	17	12th	2	3	1	2	1	2	1	1	3	3	19	1.9
6	5	female	16	12th	4	5	3	3	3	3	4	4	5	3	37	3.7
7	6	female	15	10th	4	2	1	2	1	4	1	5	1	5	25	2.5
8	7	female	15	10th	3	2	1	4	2	2	3	4	2	2	25	2.5
9	8	female	15	10th	3	1	1	2	2	1	1	5	2	4	22	2.2
10	9	female	15	10th	1	5	3	2	1	1	1	5	5	1	25	2.5
11	10	female	15	10th	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	14	1.4
12	11	female	15	10th	4	3	1	2	2	3	3	3	4	1	26	2.6
13	12	female	16	10th	3	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	4	5	45	4.5
14	13	female	16	10th	5	5	5	5	3	4	4	3	2	3	39	3.9
15	14	female	16	10th	3	3	5	4	3	5	1	3	4	2	33	3.3
16	15	female	15	10th	2	3	1	3	5	3	2	4	2	3	28	2.8
17	16	female	15	10th	5	3	5	5	4	2	3	5	2	3	37	3.7
18	17	female	17	12th	5	4	3	4	2	1	1	3	5	4	30	3
19	18	female	17	12th	3	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	3	2	24	2.4
20	19	female	17	12th	2	3	3	1	1	2	2	2	3	5	24	2.4
21	20	female	16	13th	1	3	1	1	3	4	2	1	3	1	20	2
22	21	female	16	13th	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	18	1.8
23	22	female	15	13th	2	4	2	2	4	3	1	1	3	3	25	2.5
24	23	female	16	13th	5	5	4	4	5	4	1	3	5	5	41	4.1
25	24	female	15	13th	4	4	3	3	4	2	2	5	4	1	32	3.2
26	25	female	15	13th	3	2	2	1	3	4	3	4	2	3	27	2.7
27	26	female	16	13th	3	5	4	1	3	3	3	4	2	4	32	3.2
28	27	female	15	13th	3	2	4	2	4	2	2	4	1	1	25	2.5
29	28	female	15	13th	3	4	2	2	3	2	4	5	1	3	29	2.9
30	29	female	16	13th	3	2	2	3	5	5	4	2	1	3	30	3
31	30	female	16	13th	3	4	1	4	2	5	1	2	2	1	25	2.5
32	31	female	16	13th	3	2	1	2	1	2	2	4	3	3	23	2.3
33	32	female	16	13th	3	3	4	2	4	1	2	1	3	1	24	2.4
34	33	female	16	13th	5	1	1	3	1	3	5	1	3	1	24	2.4
35	34	female	15	13th	3	3	4	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	27	2.7
36	35	female	16	12th	4	3	1	3	5	1	2	5	4	5	33	3.3
37	36	female	17	12th	1	2	3	4	4	5	3	2	1	2	27	2.7
38	37	female	17	12th	1	4	3	2	5	4	1	4	2	1	27	2.7
39	38	female	16	12th	1	3	5	1	5	1	5	1	2	4	28	2.8
40	39	female	18	12th	2	1	1	3	1	2	3	4	1	1	19	1.9
41	40	female	15	13th	2	3	1	3	3	4	1	3	5	3	28	2.8
42	41	female	15	13th	4	5	1	4	5	1	5	5	5	39	3.9	
43	42	female	17	12th	2	4	3	1	2	5	1	3	5	2	28	2.8
44	43	female	16	12th	5	2	2	2	1	4	3	2	1	5	27	2.7
45	44	female	15	10th	3	1	4	5	1	3	1	3	4	2	27	2.7
46	45	female	15	10th	5	1	2	4	3	5	3	4	5	3	35	3.5
47	46	female	15	10th	4	2	3	2	5	4	1	4	5	3	33	3.3
48	47	female	15	10th	4	4	5	2	3	4	5	2	1	4	34	3.4
49	48	female	15	10th	4	2	1	1	5	3	5	1	4	5	31	3.1
50	49	female	15	10th	2	1	3	3	2	4	1	3	2	4	25	2.5
51	50	female	16	10th	3	4	3	5	5	1	2	4	2	2	31	3.1
52																140.6

Total males – 50

SUM - 150.2

Average mean 2.801

Standard deviation -0.6157

Correlation-0.221

Data Analysis

This research analyzed quantitative data. Descriptive statistics examined student anxiety survey responses. Ten items graded one to five assessed anxiety. Male or female, grades were 10th, 11th, and 12th. Each questionnaire was statistically analyzed to determine the mean and standard deviation for sex (male and female). To determine whether male and female mean scores differed, correlation was performed. The data were evaluated to identify the prevalence of test anxiety, the most common form, and whether men or girls suffer greater anxiety.

Table – 3 statistical calculations

	Variable 1	Variable 2
Mean	3.004	2.812
Variance	0.448555102	0.381485714

Observations	50	50
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	97	
t stat	1.490172369	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.06971176	
T Critical one-tail	1.660714611	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.13942352	
T Critical two-tail	1.984723136	

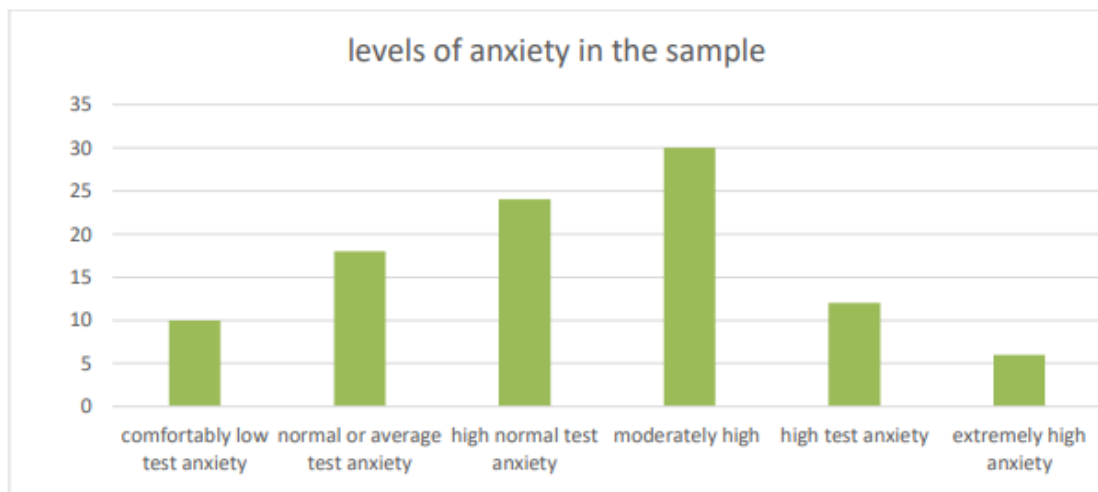
RESULTS

Exam anxiety prevalence was studied. Descriptive statistics determined the range, mean, and standard deviation for all 100 replies from 50 girls and 50 boys. Student categories were:

Table -4 categories of test anxiety

Comfortably low-test anxiety Normal or average test anxiety	4 females and 6 males = 10
High normal test anxiety	15 females and 3 males = 18
Moderately high-test anxiety High test anxiety	13 females and 11 males = 24
Extremely high anxiety	11 females and 19 males = 30
	5 females and 7 males = 12
	2 females and 4 males = 06

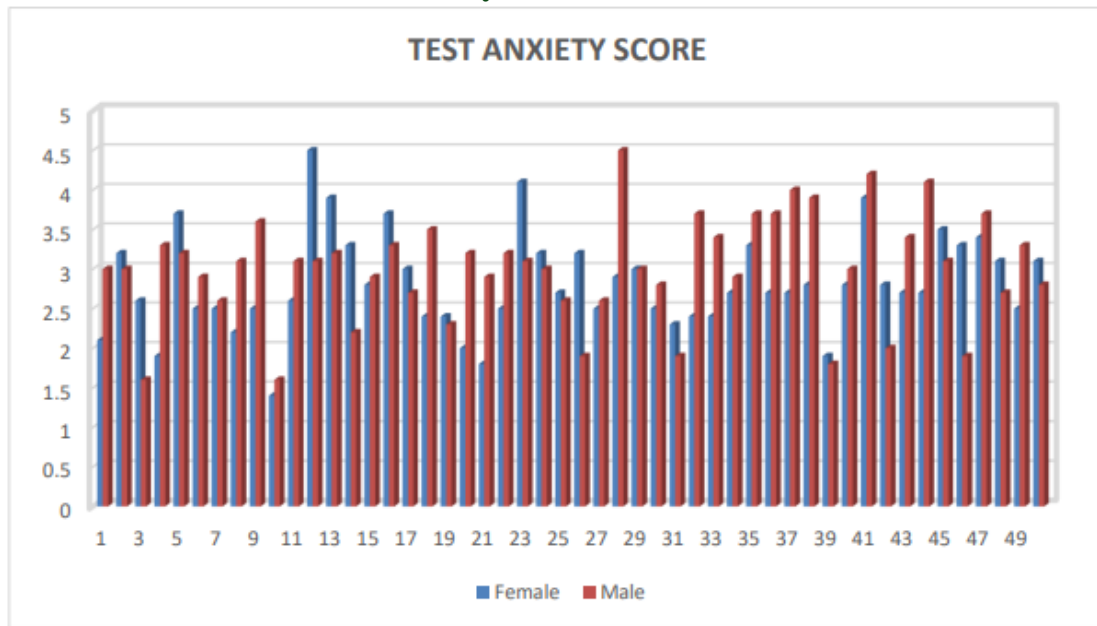
Table-4 shows 30% of pupils report moderate exam anxiety. 18 of 100 students have normal test anxiety, whereas 24 have high normal test anxiety. 18 pupils had acute test anxiety. Boys and girls' anxiety levels are graphed



below.

Graph- 1 (levels of anxiety among students)

Males scored 150.2 and averaged 3.004. Females scored 140.6 and averaged 2.812. Male standard deviation was 0.66974, female 0.61765. Males had greater anxiety levels.



Graph- 2 differences in the anxiety levels of male and female students

The notion has been disproved since guys are more anxious during examinations than girls are.

DISCUSSION

Teenagers with anxiety confront difficulties on the social, intellectual, and emotional levels (Costello, Copeland and Angold, 2011). If addressed, anxiety may linger throughout adulthood. It has been noted that today's kids experience significant levels of academic anxiety, which might have major, long-lasting impacts on kids' mental and physical health.

This quantitative study's primary objective was to determine how often students experience test anxiety. Additionally, the disparity in anxiety levels between male and female students was taken into account. The Westside Test Anxiety Inventory, a ten-item questionnaire developed by Richard Driscoll, was administered to 100 co-ed children in grades 10, 11, and 12 from Dehradun, Uttarakhand (50 girls and 50 boys) for this purpose.

It is determined that over 30% of the students had moderate to severe exam anxiety. High test anxiety and very high test anxiety were present in 12% and 6% of the entire population, respectively.

Previous research has shown that students are reluctant to acknowledge their anxiety and that their challenges go unreported, which may result in more serious consequences (Grills Taquechel et al., 2010).

It was thought that gender was an independent variable. It was predicted that there wouldn't be a noticeable difference between male and female students' anxiety levels. The conclusion that there would be no difference between males and girls was not substantiated by the data. The results showed that the mean scores for men were higher. Male students had a total score of and a mean of 3.004, while female students received a total score of 140.6 and a mean of 2.812. Males thus have more test anxiety than females.

Pramod (1996) found that Indian guys had greater future orientations than girls, therefore they have higher test and academic anxiety. **Deb (2001)** found that schoolchildren's



anxiousness is mostly caused by academic stress.

Students indicated several explanations for feeling worried before and during tests when asked by researchers. Lack of preparedness was cited. Stress and worry caused sleep disturbances in several students, affecting their test performance. Girls were scared about failing and disappointing their parents.

Anxious pupils may have trouble focusing in tests and finishing their work on time. They fear failing. They may skip school due to test anxiety. Senior courses are career bridges. Higher-anxiety students work harder and spend more time in fear of not obtaining jobs or into good schools.

Limitations

The current research contributes to our understanding of how common test anxiety is among schoolchildren. However, this research has certain shortcomings, which are listed below:

- Only 100 students participated in the research, which is much too few to draw any conclusions, and the study only included a sample of students.
- Only one variable, namely gender, is taken into account in this research.
- The students were in a situation that may have made them anxious, which might have affected how they answered the questionnaire.

It is challenging to extrapolate the results to a larger population because of the aforementioned restrictions.

Conclusion

Nearly 54 out of 100 students in this study—24 female students and 30 male students—have high levels of normal test anxiety or moderately high levels of test anxiety. In each grade (10th, 11th, and 12th), there were varying degrees of anxiety, with male pupils experiencing more severe levels of worry. Administrators, school counselors, and parents of the pupils should be adaptable enough to comprehend these teenagers and provide a welcoming and comfortable learning atmosphere for them. To lessen the strain on this age group, more study should be done on methods to lessen test anxiety and academic stress.

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