

A Comparative Study of Test Anxiety among Male and Female College Students of Pachhunga University College, Mizoram

Laldingsangi Renthlei¹, K. Lalnunsiami², R. Lalhmingangi³, Angie V. L Nunhlimi⁴, Lalmuanzuali⁵

¹Research Scholar, Mizoram University, Tanhril, Mizoram
laldingsangirenthlei92[at]gmail.com

²Research Scholar, Mizoram University, Tanhril, Mizoram
lalnunsiamikhawlhring[at]gmail.com

³Research Scholar, Mizoram University, Tanhril, Mizoram
hmingsangi13ralte[at]gmail.com

⁴Research Scholar, Mizoram University, Tanhril, Mizoram
angiehmar[at]gmail.com

⁵Assistant Professor, Mizoram University, Tanhril, Mizoram
lalnui_fl[at]rediffmail.com

Abstract: *For better academic achievement and a successful future, good and balance mental and emotional health is necessary for a student. However, many students suffer from various mental problems and among them, anxiety is one of the most common mental problems faced by college students. Both hereditary and environmental factors are responsible for causing anxiety among college students. The present study aims to find out the anxiety level among male and female college students of Pachhunga University College. It was found that there was a significant difference between male and female college students with reference to their anxiety levels. Women College students have higher anxiety levels compared to male college students. Suggestions for improvement have also been proposed.*

Keywords: Anxiety, Test - Anxiety, College Students

1. Introduction

According to the American Psychological Association, "Anxiety is an emotion characterized by feeling of tension, worried thoughts and physical changes like increased blood pressure". There are many causes and explanations for anxiety. Among these, Behavioural psychologist views anxiety as a learned response to frightening events in real life.

People with mental illness especially anxiety tend to avoid various situations that make them anxious. This may include schools, colleges, peers, hospitals various objects and situations which may greatly affect their adjustment, and not just personal growth and development but the growth and development of the whole country.

Education has been perceived as a great instrument for the upliftment and empowerment of women. So, several efforts have been made by the Government of India for the upliftment and empowerment of women. And since independence higher education, in general, has spread rapidly throughout India and women's education in general greatly improved in terms of participation. There is no doubt that education is a medium for socioeconomic development. Educating women means educating the whole family which leads to national development. For better academic achievement, a successful future and for National development good and balanced mental and emotional

health is necessary. If women are anxious to attend educational institutions for education, then National development is still very far.

2. Literature Survey

Anxiety functions as an undercurrent in the cognitive - affective process actualizing the individuals, consciously or unconsciously, towards the goal attainment process. Various concepts of Anxiety: Namely, task completion anxiety, Death anxiety manifest obsessive health (hypochondria) anxiety, etc. operate on this psychological process. Test Anxiety is no exception to this process.

1) Development of Anxiety Scales

For a long period, psychologists included the concept of Anxiety as a trait in various personality tests. No separate scale was constructed to measure the concept of anxiety. However the publication of three important books in 1950 in psychology; namely, the meaning of Anxiety (May, R.1950), Learning Theory and Personality Dynamics (Mower, O. H.1950), and Personality and Psych - Therapy (Dollar and Miller, N. E.1956). Stimulated greatly the theory and research in Anxiety. On the basis of M. M. P. I., Taylor (1953) constructed and standardised Manifest Anxiety Scale, which was followed by the development of IPAT Anxiety Scale by R. B. Cattell (1957) which was adopted in India in Hindi by S. D. Kapoor under Indian culture and climate. Durganand Sinha Anxiety Scale to measure "General

Anxiety” by B. N. Singh and R. C Thakur (1967) made an adaptation in Hindi under Indian condition of manifest Anxiety Scale of Taylor (1953). The comprehensive Anxiety Test developed by A. K. P. Sinha and L. N. K Sinha (1969) is now widely used in various behavioural science researches.

2) “Test Anxiety” as Demand Characteristics of the New Millennium:

The emerging millennium with alarming scientific achievements, challenging technological advancements and revolutionised communicative excellence prescribe high order need for achievement in the world of competition. Both, Zeigarnic Effect” as well as “Test Anxiety” seem to be essential demand characteristics of the emerging 21st century. Anxiety for success-oriented achievements not only in educational deliberations, but also in other fields of life and work, has become the primary requirement of the individuals warding off “Fear and Failure” and promoting “Hopes of Success” have become the need of the day and a proven success depends upon the resultson any Test Anxiety Scale Examination for assessing educational attainments, no doubt, provide test situation in particular, but various critical conditions of life in different perspectives in general, post - test situations. Application of the “Test Anxiety Scale” function as a Predictive Measure highlighting the probability of success or failure of the individual. As such, the test situation is experienced by almost all members of our society; however, it is more so, and greatly affected by academicians who are frequently influenced by their performance. We live in a “Test Taking and Test Conscious” culture.

3) Objectives of Developing Test Anxiety Scale

In order to enhance the specificity of Test Anxiety and to evaluate test performance in a more comprehensive and valid way, Test Anxiety Questionnaire was developed for the first time by Srason and Mandler (1950). With a view to meeting the need of the Indian pupils in the particular and common man in general, Sharma, V. P. (1978) developed and standardised a Test Anxiety Scale, which has been revised adequately keeping in view the emerging changes and challenges in the next millennium, particularly in the examination system and cultural awakening.

4) Needs and Importance of the Study:

Anxiety is a very common mental illness. People with mental illness especially anxiety tend to avoid various situations that make them anxious. This may include schools, colleges, peers, hospitals various objects and situations which may greatly affect their adjustment, and not just personal growth and development but the growth and development of the whole country. We know that educating women means educating the whole family which leads to national development. If women are anxious to attend educational institutions for education, then National development is still very far. By conducting test anxiety among the students, one can find out the level of anxiety of the students and suggest preventive measures and treatments based on their anxiety level with the hope for national development. Keeping all this in mind, the invigilator felt it was significant and worthwhile to study test anxiety among the students.

3. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the present study cover the following points:

- To find out the level of test anxiety between boys and girls at University College.
- To find out the level of test anxiety of students among Pachhunga University College Arts and Science Students.
- To suggest measures for improvement and prevention.

4. Methods of the Study

The success of any research depends upon the methodology and procedure followed in the step - wise execution of the study. For the present study, Survey Method was used.

- Population of the Study:** The population of the study includes all students of Pachhunga University College, Aizawl, Mizoram.
- Sample of the Study:** The invigilator selected 100 students (50 boys i. e., 25 from the arts and 25 from the science stream and 50 girls i. e. 25 from the arts and 25 from the science stream) from all the students of Pachhunga University College.
- Tool Used:** The success of research depends primarily on the instrument or tools used and the methods followed in conducting the study. For conducting this project work, the invigilator used the ‘**Test Anxiety Scale**’ developed by Prof. V. P Sharma (Raipur). Once the tools were available the next step was the collection of data from the concerned person with the aid of this instrument.

5. Results and Discussion

The data have no meaning unless they are analysed logically. Analysis of the data means studying the tabulated materials in order to determine facts and meaning. It involves breaking down complex factors into simple parts and putting the parts together in new arrangements for the purpose of interpretation.

The tabulated scores were analysed using the norms provided in the manual and they are presented in the tables below:

Table 1: Tests Scores of the Students

Category	No. of Students	Percentage
High Anxiety	52	52%
Normal Anxiety	26	26%
Low Anxiety	22	22%

As depicted in Table No - 1, 52 students out of 100 students of Pachhunga University College have High Anxiety and 26 students out of 100 students have Normal Anxiety. 22 students out of 100 students of Pachhunga University College have Low Anxiety.

1) Comparison of Males and Females with reference to their Anxiety level:

The group of Arts and Science students were compared with reference to their Anxiety levels. For this, the **Mean** and **Standard Deviation** of the scores were taken separately.

The mean difference was applied using the **t - test** and the details are presented in Table No - 2

Table 1: Comparison of Arts and Science Students with Reference to their Anxiety Level

Groups	Number	Mean	SD	MD	Sem	t - value	Sig level
Science	50	69.48	10.934	.300	2.292	.131	NS
Arts	50	69.18	11.964				

The obtained **t - value=.131** is **Not Significant**. Hence the **Hypothesis is accepted**. This shows that there is no difference between Arts and Science Students with reference to their Anxiety. The mean of the Science students is found to be slightly more than Arts students. However, this difference may be due to **chance factors**.

2) Comparison of the Anxiety Levels of Males and Females:

The two groups of males and females were compared. For this, the **Mean** and **Standard Deviation** of the scores were taken separately. The mean difference was applied using the **t - test** and the details are presented in Table No - 3

Table 3: Comparison of the Anxiety Level of Males and Females

Groups	Number	Mean	SD	MD	Sem	t - value	Sig level
Male	50	66.96	11.176	4.740	2.242	2.114	.05
Female	50	71.70	11.242				

The obtained **t - value=2.114** is **Significant**. Hence the **Hypothesis is rejected**. This shows that there is a significant difference between Male and Female Students with reference to their Anxiety level. The mean of the Female students is found to be slightly more than Male students. It may infer that female students have higher anxiety levels than male students.

6. Major Findings

The major findings from the study are given as under: -

- Majority of the students have high anxiety.
- When a Gender comparison was made, it was found that women\ females having high anxiety are more in numbers as compared to males.

7. Suggestions

As the majority of students have High Anxiety, it may be necessary to give them counselling and psychotherapy.

- While framing the curriculum, problems of women should be taken into consideration these may reduce stress for them and increase the retention rate.
- Better transportation facilities should be made.
- Organising an awareness programme on Anxiety in an educational institution, at home and outside. This can be done by making use of various modern technologies and mass media like television, radio etc. Also social networking systems like Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram can become great tools for women's empowerment.
- Aside from the scholarship given by the government of India, financial schemes should be made which can assist women in their education.

- Rules should be made for the equal and compulsory participation of women in the decision - making and development of educational institutions. E. g., Students Union or Students Council.
- The Teachers must have a broad knowledge of Anxiety as this will help them in dealing with Anxious Students. A psychological help desk should be made in every institution where students can make confrontation with Psychologists or Psychiatrists.
- Laws for the protection of women are implemented but we often see delays in the legal procedures. So, better functioning of the judicial system is needed.

8. Conclusion

The present study reveals that the majority of students have High Anxiety, although the samples is limited to only 100 students. It was also found that Females \Women are more anxious than Males. These may be because of the following reasons:

- For better academic achievement good mental and emotional health is needed. When students enter college, they experience many first things in their life which can often be stressful for them. Stress is one of the major factors leading to anxiety. Female children or women in general in Mizo society have a very heavy responsibility in their homes. Even if they want to study, they need to do various chores at home which can be very stressful both mentally and physically which can lead to anxiety.
- In order to enjoy college life, one must have good academic achievements and if one does not have enough time to study how one will have good academic achievements? As women have so many responsibilities at home, they may not have much time to study. This may be one of the causes of female dropouts in college.
- Lack of consideration towards the problems of women while framing the curriculum.
- Lack of adequate transportation facilities may be another cause of anxiety among women, especially in India where crime rates are very high.
- Another reason can be due to the fact that male students have better - coping mechanisms than women. Male students are freer about domestic chores compared to women students. So, they can often engage in various physical activities and various sports which help in building up the body and mind positively.
- Poverty of the parents can be another factor that leads to anxiety among women.
- Lack of equal and compulsory participation of women in the development of educational institutions. e. g. Students Union or Students Council.
- News of crimes and violence against women like rape, violence and acid attacks and the delay in the legal procedures may be another cause of anxiety among women.
- Lack of awareness among parents, teachers and students regarding anxiety and other mental and emotional problem can be one of the major causes of anxiety among women.

9. Future Scope

The researchers are very much aware of the limitations of the present study. Yet, the findings are interesting, educative and useful. They hope that the suggestions given by them may be considered useful for treating highly anxious students. This research can also be carried out with larger samples in the future since women's participation in the growing society is growing significantly.

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Author Profile



Laldinsangi Renthlei, Research Scholar, Mizoram University, Tanhril, Mizoram



K. Lalnunsiami, Research Scholar, Mizoram University, Tanhril, Mizoram



R. Lalmingsangi, Research Scholar, Mizoram University, Tanhril, Mizoram



Angie V. L Nunhlimi, Research Scholar, Mizoram University, Tanhril, Mizoram



Lalmuanzuali, Assistant Professor, Mizoram University, Tanhril, Mizoram