

# Effect of Group Therapy on Anxiety among Adults with Generalized Anxiety Disorder

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**Abstract:** Objectives: The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of group therapy in reducing the level of anxiety in adult generalized anxiety disorder. Methods: Totally 30 subjects (15 in experimental group and 15 in control group) of the age group of 30 to 45 years participated in current study. Experimental group underwent Group Therapy. Independent and paired 't' test give us the processed results. Results: Statistical significance is present for experimental group than control group, with regard to effectiveness of group therapy. Conclusion: Group therapy has significant effect of reducing generalized anxiety disorder among the adult.

**Keywords:** Generalized anxiety disorder. Group Therapy, Occupational Therapy

## 1. Introduction

Generalized anxiety disorder is one of the most common of the anxiety disorders. It is much more than the normal anxiety people experience day to day. It's chronic and exaggerated worry and tension, even though nothing seems to provoke it.

Having this disorder means always anticipating disaster, often worrying excessively about health, money, family or work. Sometimes, though, the source of the worry is hard to pinpoint. Simply the thought of getting through the day provokes anxiety. People with GAD can't seem to shake their concerns, even though they usually realize that their anxiety is more intense than the situation warrants people with disorder also seem unable to relax easily. People suffering from GAD don't characteristically avoid certain situations as a result of their disorder.

However, if severe, GAD can be very debilitating, making it difficult to carry out even the most ordinary daily activities. Group Therapy are provided in weekly 2 hours group session over an 8 week period for the patients who have been diagnosed as generalized anxiety. The group therapy showed effectiveness in reducing level of anxiety. Hence group therapy was found to be more effective than individual therapy (Woodward & Jones [1980]).

There is growing evidence that group therapy for anxiety disorder produce statically significant results (Lebow and Gurman, 1995). Group therapy seems to be useful in dealing with several specific types of clinical problems (Szmuckler and Dare, 1996). Group therapy can be useful in treating the anxiety patients. It is a less time consuming procedure in which usually 8-10 people can be treated at one time.

Group therapy offers patients an opportunity to realize that the problems are not only suffered by them. It also provides opportunity of sharing the problems with their similar

persons in the group. Group therapy may utilize psychoanalytic supportive, transactional and behavioral approaches.

## Aim

The study aim at studying the effect of group therapy to reduce the level of anxiety in adult generalized anxiety disorder.

## Objectives

- To assess the level of anxiety in female and male adult generalized anxiety patient.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of group therapy among adult with generalized anxiety disorder.

## Alternate Hypothesis

- There is significant effect of group therapy for only male generalized anxiety patient
- There is significant effect of group therapy for only female generalized anxiety patient.
- The effect of group therapy is equal for both male and female generalized anxiety patients.

## Null Hypothesis

- There is no significant effect of group therapy for both male and female generalized anxiety patients.

## CRAWFORD JR , HENRY JD (2003 )

The DASS was administered to a Non – clinical sample, broadly representative of the general adult UK population for generalized anxiety disorder. The DASS is a reliable and valid measure of the construct it was intended to assess. Hence the result was reliable.

## BROWN TA . CHORPITA BF, ET AL, (1997)

DASS was evaluated in two studies using large clinical samples of anxiety disorder. Age group of 35 to 50 years. DASS was upholding by findings from confirmatory factor analysis. After assessing, the individuals adults are taken into group therapy and shown the reduction in anxiety level

**NLEUWENHUIJSEN K, DE BOES AG ET AL. (2003)**

The study aimed at finding the ability to detect the anxiety disorder among employees absent from work. Support for criterion validity was provided by a statistically significant difference in Dass scores between two diagnostic groups the Dass can be helpful in ruling out anxiety disorder with mental health problems. Probabilities of anxiety are 0.29.

**INOVEK 2006**

There is a good evidence for the effectiveness of group therapy for GAD. Using various types of techniques such as relaxation techniques, bio feed back, for period of one month. This results in better prognosis.

**TYRER P, BALDWIN D (2006)**

Conducted an experimental study of 38 pts of age group 30 – 50 years. They were divided into groups. The experimental was administered by group therapy. The control group was not treated. The experimental group showed significant difference in anxiety after group therapy.

**FLINT A J . (2005)**

41 Patients with GAD were involved in study to examine the reliability of validity of anxiety disorder. The trait – trait anxiety question were administered, pre, post test was done after group therapy the results proved that anxiety was a reliable and valid outcome in reducing the level of anxiety using behavior therapy.

**OVAYOLU N, UCAN, PEHLIYAR S. ET AL (2006)**

To determine whether listening to music decreases the requirement for dosage of sedative drugs, patients anxiety, pain and dissatisfaction. The anxiety cases are selected among 604 patients. They were divided into two groups. The first group received music therapy, the second received only drugs. After a one month period they were re – administered the questionnaire. The results are statistically analyzed. The experimental group showed the anxiety reduction level by listening to music.

**KOLBASOY SKYA , REICH L, FUTTERMAN R ET AL (2007)**

To demonstrate the economic effects of an intervention for members discharged from the emergency dept with anxiety diagnoses. The anxiety diagnoses patients are taken into group therapy daily for one hour. After the therapy session post test was done to find the result. The patient with ED with anxiety shown significant difference.

**GILCHRIST M (1965)**

The study was conducted for patients with GAD using a questionnaire of DASS 42. The selected samples received a group therapy as occupational therapy intervention for one month. Pre, post follow up was done after therapy. The result was a reliable and valid scale used to be assessed. It also shows significant difference among patients.

**NINAN PT (2001)**

The aim of the study to reduce the anxiety level among the patient with GAD. It was done with 115 patients using a questionnaire. The sample are selected. The selected samples received a group therapy with behavior therapy techniques

for a period of time. Result obtained a better effective than other therapy.

## 2. Methodology

### Research Approach

Evaluation approach was adopted for this study, since the researcher aimed to assess the effect of group therapy to reduce the level of anxiety in the adult generalized anxiety disorder.

### Research Design

The present study was two group pre test and post test Quasi experimental design.

### Variables

In this study the independent variable is Group therapy. The dependent variable is generalized anxiety disorder.

### Setting and Duration of Study

The study was conducted at JKK Munirajah Medical Research foundation , B. Komarapalayam , Namakkal (Dt).

### Population of the Study

Population of the study consists of the male and female, who has been diagnosed as generalized anxiety disorder.

### Criteria for Sample Selection

The samples consists of men and women who are in state of being able to respond to interviews and schedules, Age 30-45 , and having anxiety disorder, diagnosed by Psychiatrist at JKK Munirajah Medical Research Foundation, Namakkal.

### Sampling

The sample size was 30 subjects. 15 subjects in control group and 15 subjects - Experimental group. Convenient sampling procedure was adopted

### Norms for Interpretation: Level Of Anxiety

0-7	- Normal
8-9	- Mild
10-14	- Moderate
15-19	- Severe
20+	- Extremely severe

## 3. Methods of Administration

The Dass 42 anxiety scale was developed and standardized by Lovibond. H and Lovibond P. F (1995) has been used in the study. Reliability value of the item was 0.86 test reliability was 0.79. The current study got permission from the chief psychiatrist at JKKMMRF , Komarapalayam, Namakkal District. Initially the questionnaire was administered to the selected samples. When the samples had any doubt, the evaluator gave the basic interpretation without indicating any direction of desirability. From these, the individuals who have moderate anxiety level were selected from the patient, using convenient sampling 14 males and 16 females were selected as samples. Out of 14 males, 7 members have been grouped as control group and 7 members into experimental group. Out of 16 females, 8 members have been grouped as control group and 8 members into experimental group. The mean age of the

experimental group = 37.13. The mean age of the control group = 38.06

The group therapy was administered to the experimental group. The experimental group members underwent group therapy for 9 sessions in alternate days. After the training program, the questionnaire was re-administered to the same samples and the scoring was evaluated. The evaluated scoring was statistically analyzed and tabulated.

The anxiety management program consists of nine sessions. The focus of the program is to reduce the level of anxiety. The group took place in the hospital campus. 15 samples are selected for experimental group and 15 for control group. The selected samples have both male and female patients, the members are well motivated to work on their difficulties and all have had experienced a better feed back among the group. All the selected samples had pre and post test which is statistically analyzed and tabulated.

#### Session – I

Introduction to group members, sharing common problems. Group members are little nervous and initially reluctant to speak. So they are asked first to introduce themselves among the group members. Warm – up exercises help to break the ice as members discover their concerns and difficulties are similar at the end of the session.

#### Session – II

In this session, the group members were explained about anxiety, causes and provoking factors of anxiety, risk of anxiety. Suggestions are given to overcome anxiety and asked the group members to avoid anxiety provoking situations. And the group members are asked to share their common problems.

#### Session – III

In this session self awareness exercises is used to help members analyze their own habitual responses to difficult situations. The group members are asked to write 5 social situations in which they feel anxious. The common features in the list are taken and discussed and used in the group role plays.

#### Session – IV

In the session, the group activity requires the rehearsal and practice of newly learned behaviors through group role playing and trying out new behavior in real situations. Hypothetical situations is presented to acted out by the group members. Group discussion is done giving and receiving feed back and finally home work is given.

#### Session– V

Discussion is done regarding home works. Comments are made in the group. Encouraging the group members to share the common features in their life situation.

#### Session – VI

In this session discussion is made regarding each situation with regard to what would they typically do? what are the situations in which they become anxious. The evaluator describes how to overcome anxiety and make them to practice individually.

#### Session– VII

Hypothetical and real situations are rehearsed and practiced through role playing. Most members have difficulty to overcome anxiety. Group members are encouraged to provide one another emotional support. Reinforcement for the positive behaviors initially given to the group members to bring the expected results.

#### Session – VIII

This session is provided with feed back obtained from the role playing. The group members share each other by giving and receiving feed back. By the end of the session each members are identified with same specific positive behaviors. The members in the group know the difference between reality and fake. The various contexts in which anxiety is reduced also described.

#### Session – IX

Wind down or end game sessions. In this session the members are allowed to do an activity as the remembrance. At the end of this session the questionnaire was re – administered to the members and collected. After the training program the DASS 42 inventory was re-administered to the selected members and the scoring are statistically analyzed. From that shows there is significant reduction in anxiety level.

## 4. Statistical Analysis and Results

**Table 1:** Comparison of Level of Anxiety between Experimental & Control Group in Pre Test

S.No.	Test	Group	Mean	SD	t	L.O.S.
1.	Pre Test	Control	13.06	1.73	0.95	--
		Experimental	12.46	1.54		

Table 1 shows that there is no significant difference between experimental and control group in pretest.

**Table 2:** Comparison of Level of Anxiety between Experimental & Control Group in Post Test

S.No.	Test	Group	Mean	SD	t	L.O.S.
1.	Post Test	Control	13.26	1.12	71.56**	0.005
		Experimental	2.46	1.02		

\*\* Significant at 0.005 level

Table II shows that there is significant difference between experimental and control group in pre test.

**Table 3:** Comparison of Level of Anxiety between Female and Male in Pre Test Experimental Group

Test	Group	Sex	Mean	SD	t	L.O.S.
Pre test	Experimental	Female	12.5	1.65	0.096	--
		Male	12.42	1.39		

Table III shows that there is no significant difference in anxiety level between male and female in pretest experimental group.

**Table 4:** Comparison of Level of Anxiety between Female and Male in Post Test Experimental Group

Test	Group	Sex	Mean	SD	t	L.O.S.
Post test	Experimental	Female	2.12	0.77	1.38	0.10
		Male	2.85	1.12		

Table IV shows that there is significant difference in anxiety level (0.10) between male and female in post test experimental group.

**Table 5:** Comparison of Level of Anxiety between Female and Male in Pre Test Control Group

Test	Group	Sex	Mean	SD	t	L.O.S.
Pre test	Control	Female	13.12	1.61	0.15	--
		Male	13.00	1.19		

Table V shows there is no significant in anxiety level between male & female in pretest control group.

**Table 6:** Comparison of Level of Anxiety Between Female and Male in Post Test Control Group

Test	Group	Sex	Mean	SD	t	L.O.S.
Post test	Control	Female	13.51	1.10	0.60	--
		Male	13.14	1.12		

Table VI shows that there is no significant difference in anxiety level between male and female in post test control group.

## 5. Discussion

This study aims at finding the effect of group therapy in reducing the anxiety level in adult generalized anxiety disorder. The increased conceptual clarity has resulted in the growing recognition of the clinical importance of the generalized anxiety disorders, which has many related facets. The level of anxiety among the patients were measured by DASS 42 inventory with a reliable, a valid scale to measure the level of anxiety among patients. The measures have been calculated and tabulated.

Group therapy was administered to reduce the level of anxiety among the selected samples. Anxiety management group was conducted in alternate days for 1 month with the duration of (45 – 01hour) for each session.

This intervention was supported by **wood ward** and **Jones [1980]**. In this study he suggested that group therapy was more effective in reducing the level of anxiety compared to individual therapy. 't' test and paired 't' test have been calculated for the obtained results. 't' test indicates the unanimity of both experimental and control group characteristic in the pretest value and significant difference between experimental and control in the post test values.

There was significant difference between pre and post test values of controlled and experimental group. Control group 't' values is 0.95. Experimental group 't' value is 71.56. ( $P > 0.005$ ), this value indicates that there is significant improvement in experimental group after providing group therapy. Unidentified factors could have influenced positive groups. Because of that in the post test assessment the experimental group has shown the reduction of anxiety level. The group therapy was given only to the experimental group not to the control group. The experimental group has shown significant reduction of anxiety level when compared to control group. There fore the result are justified. Hence, Alternate hypothesis (3) is proved.

The score in pretest for gender based group as well as control versus experimental category. The difference is not very significant. That is, the difference between control group and experimental group before therapy has no significant. The pretest value of male and female also had no significant difference. There fore, before group therapy in both experimental and control group the level of anxiety was same. The score in post test for gender base as well as control (Vs) experimental category shows significant difference. It also signifies that there is reduction in anxiety level after providing group therapy among the selected patients.

In post test, the value between male and female has the same significant difference. The mean value of male is 2.85, S.D=1.72. And mean value of female is 2.12, S.D=0.77 indicates that male and female has a significant reduction in anxiety level. Hence it shows that the group therapy will have significant effect in reducing the anxiety level in the adult generalized anxiety patients.

## 6. Conclusion

The result of this study indicates that the group therapy will have significant effect in reducing the level of anxiety in adults with moderate generalized anxiety disorder.

## 7. Limitation of the study

- The present study was done to a limited number of patients.
- The present study includes subjects pertaining to a specific area.

## 8. Recommendations

- The present study can be repeated on a larger size of subjects.
- Group therapy can be prescribed to all anxiety disorders.
- In this study only group was used as occupational therapy intervention, the other methods of occupational therapy can be used to reduce the level of anxiety among adult generalized anxiety disorder.

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