



## Test anxiety among undergraduate nursing students: a quantitative approach

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### ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this research is to explore the level of test anxiety among undergraduate Nursing students. Objectives were to assess test anxiety among undergraduate nursing students and to determine the association between test anxiety score and socio-demographic variables. The research approach used in this study was quantitative and the design was descriptive. Sample of the study were undergraduate nursing students in SreeGokulam Nursing College, Venjaramoodu and sample size was 211. The sampling technique was total enumeration. A questionnaire on socio-demographic data and West Side Test Anxiety Scale for assessing the level of test anxiety among Undergraduate nursing students were used. Data collection technique was self-reporting. The study concluded that majority of undergraduate nursing students (27.5%) have moderately high test anxiety and 5.2% have extremely high test anxiety.*

**KEYWORDS :** Test anxiety, undergraduate nursing students

### INTRODUCTION

Nursing programs can be viewed as highly stressful events. Nursing students are under pressure for taking various tests throughout their college and professional lives. Various styles of examinations and various types of questions within the examinations are encountered. In addition to a variety of written test formats, nursing students are also required to perform supervised nursing procedures with patients.

According to Driscoll et al, 2010, test anxiety has been a problem for many individuals not only in the workforce, but also in many schools and colleges. When compared to high school students (17%) and the general public (17%), nursing students are shown to have over double (55-60%) the rate of moderately high to high test anxiety.

A study was conducted by Psychiatric Nursing students of university in the eastern United States in 2002 on stress and anxiety faced by Nursing students during test using Achievement Anxiety Test of Albert and Huber. Study revealed that majority of the Nursing students had significantly higher levels of anxiety that interfered with test taking performance.

### BACKGROUND AND NEED OF THE STUDY

Everyone has taken a test at some point in their life. Test taking has become common in everyday life, from school level content-specific tests to tests taken to move up in job status. In today's colleges, testing is used to determine whether students are mastering the information that are presented during instructional time. Student's grades depend on how well they perform on these tests. As a result of the attention focused on passing important tests throughout one's education and career, a great deal of pressure is added to achievements and grades. As a result of the increased pressure to do well, many children, adolescents and young adults become anxious when presented with tests (Collins, 1999; Huberty, 2010; Supon, 2004). This form of anxiety is known as test anxiety or examination anxiety.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A research was conducted by Brad Edward Moore (2013) on test anxiety among nursing students. This study was conducted among students undergoing Nursing program in a large regional university. The Cassidy Cognitive Test Anxiety Scale was used. Primary descriptive analysis of data was done using a cross-sectional survey. This study was able to show that nursing students exhibit moderate test anxiety.

### OBJECTIVES

- To assess test anxiety among undergraduate nursing students.
- To determine the association between test anxiety score and selected socio-demographic variables.

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Approach : Quantitative

Design : Descriptive design

Setting : SreeGokulam Nursing College

Population : Undergraduate Nursing students

Sample : Undergraduate Nursing students in SreeGokulam Nursing College, Venjaramoodu

Sample Size : 211

Sampling technique : Total enumeration

### CRITERIA FOR SAMPLE SELECTION

Inclusion criteria :

Undergraduate Nursing students who are willing to participate.

Exclusion criteria :

PBBSc(N) students are excluded.

Those students who are absent at the time of data collection

### TOOLS AND TECHNIQUE

Tools:

- Questionnaire on socio-demographic data
- West Side Test Anxiety Scale for measurement of test anxiety (WSTAS)

Technique:

Self-reporting

### VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY:

Content validity was done by 5 experts from the field of Nursing. There was 100% agreement among the experts regarding the item coverage.

Reliability of an instrument is the degree of consistency with which it measures the attribute. In this study reliability, calculated using split-half method was found to be 0.81.

### ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Ethical clearance was attained from the ethical committee of SreeGokulam Medical College and Research Foundation.

Informed consent was taken from the study participants

### DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

The investigator introduced herself and obtained consent from the subjects to participate in the study. An assurance was given regarding confidentiality while the actual data was collected. Investigator collected the data from samples who fulfilled the inclusion criteria. The subjects were selected by using total enumeration. The socio-demographic data and test anxiety level were assessed using self-reporting method.

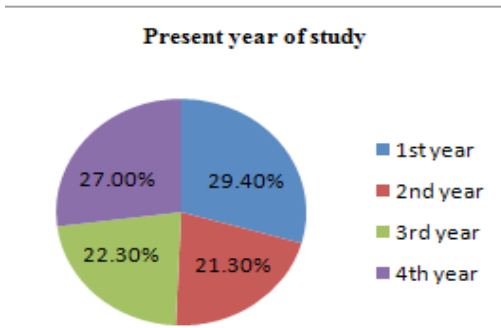
**ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION****Figure 1: Distribution of samples according to Present year of study**

Figure 1 shows that majority of the subjects (29.4%) were studying in first year, 21.3% were studying in second year, 22.30% were studying in third year and 27.0% were in final year.

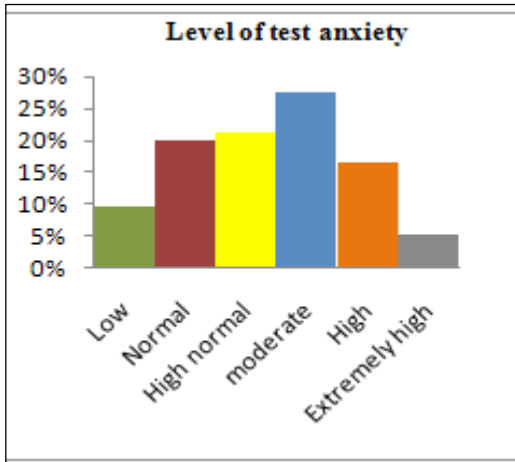
**Figure 2: Distribution of samples according to Level of Test Anxiety**

Figure 2 shows that majority of the subjects (27.5%) have moderately high test Anxiety, 21.3% of subjects have high normal test anxiety and 5.2% of subjects have extremely high test anxiety.

**Table 1: Association between level of Test Anxiety and socio demographic variables (gender, present year of study)**

Socio- personal Variable	Level of Test Anxiety				p value
	Low	Normal	High/ Mod.	High/ Extr.	
<b>Gender</b>					
Male	2	10	9	5	p>0.05
Female	18	32	94	41	
<b>Present Year of study</b>					
1 <sup>st</sup> year	5	6	38	13	p>0.05
2 <sup>nd</sup> year	3	7	22	13	
3 <sup>rd</sup> year	5	16	18	8	
4 <sup>th</sup> year	7	13	25	12	

Table 1 shows that there is no significant association between gender, present year of study and level of test anxiety.

**DISCUSSION**

The current study correlates with other studies of test anxiety in nursing students. These findings show that, more than half of nursing students who were surveyed show moderate to high cognitive test anxiety and that intervention is needed to reduce the numbers and to increase grade averages. Similar studies show that when test anxiety scales are given to high school students, general population as well as nursing students, nursing students have higher test anxiety levels (Driscoll et al.2010).

In this study there is no association between the socio-demographic variable and test anxiety. A study was conducted by Ginger Evans on 2013 and study findings show that there is no significant association between test anxiety and socio-demographic variables.

**CONCLUSION:**

This study was able to show that nursing students exhibit moderate test anxiety. Among the 211 participants, 100 fell into the low test anxiety group and 120 fell into the moderate-high cognitive test anxiety group.

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