



TEST ANXIETY AND MENTAL HEALTH OF SECONDARY STUDENTS – A CORRELATION STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The main objectives of the study were to find out the level of test anxiety and mental health of secondary students and to find out the relationship between test anxiety and mental health of secondary students. The sample consists of 300 secondary students randomly selected from 10 high and higher secondary schools of Sankarankoil Taluk, Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu. Test Anxiety Scale and Mental Health Scale was used as tools to collect data. The research reveals that the level of test anxiety and mental health of secondary students was moderate and there is significant relationship found between test anxiety and mental health of secondary students.

KEYWORDS : Test Anxiety, Mental Health, Secondary students.

INTRODUCTION

Test anxiety is a situation-specific trait that refers to the anxiety states and worry conditions that are experienced during examinations (Spielberger and Sarason, 1998). Test anxiety can also be experienced at varying levels. Slight exam stress can help by providing alertness, readiness and helping one to concentrate. However, excessive exam anxiety can result in stress and can negatively affect performance. Test anxiety is more common than the most students realize, and the symptoms are generally the same for almost all students who experience it. Mental health includes emotional, psychological, and social well-being (Leslie Beale, 2017). It affects how a person thinks, feel, and act. It also helps determine how a person handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood. Mental health is an important indicator of an individual's over all personality and stable behavior with others on basis of the extent of his adjustments according to his own self, according to others' expectations and also according to his environment where he has to adapt with ease.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Test anxiety is a psychological condition in which people experience extreme distress and anxiety in testing situations (Kendra Cherry, 2016). While many people experience some degree of stress and anxiety before and during exams, test anxiety can actually impair learning and hurt test performance. The academic achievement of school students may be influenced by excessive anxiety. An understanding of the relationship between anxiety and academic achievement would be of help in providing appropriate guidance for students to perform better in examined other competitive areas. Mental health of the individual varies at very stage from infancy to adulthood. Emotionally adjustment individual tends to have sound mental health that is emotional adjustment is pivot of the mental health. A mentally healthy person shows a homogeneous organization of desirable attitudes, healthy values and righteous self-concept and scientific perception of the world as a whole. Thus the presents study is likely to make a reasonable contribution as it aims at studying the relationship between test anxiety and mental health of secondary students.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find out the level of test anxiety and mental health of secondary students with regard to Gender.
2. To find out the significant relationship, if any, between test anxiety and mental health of secondary students.

METHOD ADOPTED

Survey method was adopted for the present study.

POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The population for the study consists of all the secondary students studying in high and higher secondary schools of Sankarankoil Taluk, Tirunelveli district, Tamil Nadu.

The sample consists of 300 secondary students from 10 high and

higher secondary schools of Sankarankoil Taluk, Tirunelveli district, Tamil Nadu.

TOOLS USED

Two tools namely *Test Anxiety Scale* consists of 20 statements and *Mental Health Scale* consists of 31 statements were developed and validated by Mrs. J. Athvani (Investigator) and Dr. T. Ranjith Kumar (Research Supervisor) in 2016.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The statistics employed in the study were percentage analysis and 'r' test. The analyses were presented in the following tables.

Table 1 Level of Test anxiety of secondary students with regard to Gender

Variables	Gender	N	Low		Moderate		High	
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Test anxiety	Boys	164	34	20.7	105	64.0	25	15.2
	Girls	136	22	16.2	92	67.6	22	16.2

It is inferred from the above table that 20.7% of the secondary students who are boys have low, 64.0% of them have moderate and 15.2% of them have high level of test anxiety. It is also inferred that 16.2% of the secondary students who are girls have low, 67.6% of them have moderate and 16.2% of them have high level of test anxiety.

Table 2 Level of Mental Health secondary students with regard to Gender

Variables	Gender	N	Low		Moderate		High	
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Mental health	Boys	164	30	18.3	112	68.3	22	13.4
	Girls	136	23	16.9	88	64.7	25	18.4

It is inferred from the above table that 18.3% of the secondary students who are boys have low, 68.3% of them have moderate and 13.4% of them have high level of Mental Health. It is also inferred that 16.9% of the secondary students who are girls have low, 64.7% of them have moderate and 18.4% of them have high level of Mental Health.

H₀1: There is no significant relationship between Test anxiety and Mental health of secondary students.

Table 3 Relationship between Test anxiety and Mental Health of secondary students

Test Anxiety	Mental Health	$\sum XY$	Calculate d 'r' value	Remarks		
$\sum X$	$\sum X^2$				$\sum Y$	$\sum Y^2$
22106	1656790	32180	3501656	2391653	0.549	Significant

Table value of 'r' is 0.113 (Biswal & Dash, 2006).

It is inferred from the above table that the calculated 'r' value (0.549) is greater than the table value (0.113) at 0.05 level of significance. This shows that there is significant relationship between test anxiety and mental health of secondary students.

FINDINGS

1. 20.7% of the secondary students who are boys have low, 64.0% of them have moderate and 15.2% of them have high level of test anxiety.
2. 16.2% of the secondary students who are girls have low, 67.6% of them have moderate and 16.2% of them have high level of test anxiety.
3. 18.3% of the secondary students who are boys have low, 68.3% of them have moderate and 13.4% of them have high level of mental health.
4. 16.9% of the secondary students who are girls have low, 64.7% of them have moderate and 18.4% of them have high level of mental health.
5. There is significant relationship between test anxiety and mental health of secondary students.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The results reveal that the secondary students have moderate level of test anxiety. So, the students should be given proper counseling to overcome test anxiety. Teachers should identify the reasons for test anxiety and the remedial measures should be given to the students with special care. The confidence to face examinations should be developed among students through confidence building practices. The secondary students have moderate level of mental health. So, teachers should give mental exercises to maintain the mental health of their students. Frequent mental health checkup should be conducted to the students at regular intervals through psychological tests. Mathematics puzzles, reasoning tests, quiz, and problem solving games may improve the mental health of the students. So, teachers should allot time to conduct these activities in classrooms. Significant relationship found between test anxiety and mental health of secondary students. Therefore the teachers should employ technology based teaching which may improve the students learning and understanding and reduces the test anxiety. Frequent class tests and unit tests may reduce the test anxiety among students. By reducing test anxiety the mental health of the students may be improved.

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