

STUDY OF ANXIETY DISORDERS: INVESTIGATING THE MULTIDIMENSIONAL IMPACT ON UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Abstract

This study explores the multifaceted nature of study anxiety among university students, focusing on its sources and impact on academic performance. Anxiety disorders in the academic context are a growing concern, with various factors like exam stress, presentation anxiety, mathematical and language anxiety, as well as social anxiety contributing to the overall anxiety experienced by students. The study involved a survey of 770 university students, analyzing their responses to identify the primary sources of study anxiety. Descriptive statistics were employed to gauge the prevalence and intensity of different types of anxieties. The findings highlight how these anxieties impede students' focus, memory, and overall academic success, revealing a significant correlation between high anxiety levels and reduced academic performance. This research contributes to understanding the complex dynamics of academic anxiety and underscores the need for targeted interventions to support student well-being and academic achievement.

Keywords: Study Anxiety, Academic Performance, University Students, Exam Anxiety, Presentation Anxiety, Mathematical Anxiety, Language Anxiety, Social Anxiety, Anxiety Disorders.

Introduction

Being a university student can be an incredibly anxiety-inducing experience, particularly when it comes to the study process. Subject difficulties, new housemates, identity conflicts, culture shock, and relationship issues are all things that might make you anxious. A growing number of pupils are suffering from anxiety problems (Leta, 2001). However, pupils' performance might be hindered if they continue to feel anxious. Symptoms of ageing begin to manifest in college life for those who suffer from severe anxiety. Anxieties about arithmetic, language, social situations, family, and libraries are just a few of the numerous hurdles that students face while trying to study. The negative effects of study anxiety have been shown in several research (McCraty, 2007; McCraty, Dana, Mike, Pam and Stephen, 2000). Academic performance is significantly impacted by this anxiety.

Students with high levels of anxiety tend to have poor academic performance, according to studies that examined the relationship between anxiety and students' grades (Luigi, Francesca, Maria, Eleonora, Valentina and Benedetto, 2007; McCraty, 2007) .

Anxiety impedes attention and memory, both of which are essential for academic success. Nevertheless, as a result of concerns related to exams, social interactions, mathematical concepts, and many other types of anxiety, a significant proportion of students would find it challenging to maintain focus on their academic pursuits. Students' apprehension and unease in the classroom hinder their ability to acquire knowledge. Students afflicted with anxiety may encounter distressing physical manifestations such as perspiring palms, rapid heart rate, or gastrointestinal distress. Additionally, they may experience psychological symptoms of anxiety, such as pre-study jitters, panic, mental block during exams, a sense of helplessness when completing assignments, or a lack of enthusiasm for challenging subjects.

According to Spielberger (1983), anxiety is a mental and physiological reaction to a self-concept that is defined by subjective, intentionally felt tension. Cognitive impairments, such as information misinterpretation or blocking of memory and recall, are common in anxious pupils. Anxiety, according to Spielberger, may take two forms: state anxiety, which is a reaction to external stimuli or situations, and trait anxiety, which is a personality attribute. There are basically two varieties of anxiety, each manifesting at a distinct psychological level, according to earlier studies (Spielberger, 1966). Hancock found that compared to students with lower levels of anxiety, those with higher levels of anxiety had much less motivation in classes that were seen as highly evaluative (Hancock, 2001).

Anxieties about failing a class may stem from a variety of sources, including a lack of interest in studying, inadequate study abilities, misunderstandings about the material, and bad experiences in the past. Compared to their high-ability peers, low-ability pupils are more strongly linked to decreased performance when they experience high levels of anxiety (Hembree, 1998). Because some individuals are born with a tendency to be anxious, the general public

tends to see anxiety as a chronic condition. While research on student anxiety disorders, such as test anxiety, has been conducted, there has been a dearth of research on the causes of study anxiety among college students. Typically, when people experience any kind of anxiety when studying, it's usually due of the challenging circumstances they're faced with. The purpose of the research was to determine what factors contribute to college students' study anxiety.

Everyone, from students to professors, is aware of how widespread the problem of study anxiety is. In this article, we provide the findings of a survey that we conducted with the intention of assisting college students in identifying the factors that contribute to their anxiety towards studying. Through their participation in this survey, 770 students were questioned about their thoughts, emotions, and experiences in relation to the anxiety that they face during studying. The discoveries include the discovery of seven different sources. There are five potential reasons of study anxiety: worry about exams, concern about giving presentations in class, anxiety about mathematics, anxiety about language, and anxiety about social situations. A descriptive statistical analysis was carried out in SPSS 16.0 for the purpose of data analysis.

The following is the outline for the remainder of the paper. The definition and origins of study anxiety are discussed in Section 2. Section 3 details the methodology of the survey. Section 4 delves into the results and analysis. Section 5 lays forth the findings of this study.

Preliminaries

Concept of study anxiety

Research has shown that pupils' academic performance might be impacted by anxiety. To increase the likelihood of anxiety among students as they study, the idea was taken from the broader notion of anxiety and attempted to adapt to the field of education. Sarason states in Harris and Coy (2003) that anxiety is a common human feeling that manifests as apprehension and unease whenever a person views an impending danger to their sense of self-worth as a danger to their ego. Spielberger distinguished between "state anxiety" and "trait anxiety" in his theory of anxiety, which he described as an emotional condition characterised by feelings of tension, fear, uneasiness, and concern accompanied by an increase in the activity of the autonomic nervous system (Spielberger, 1966). According to the theory, anxious people tend to have high levels of trait anxiety, but their state anxiety kicks up a notch when judged.

At the university, academic success is the most important thing. According to research, students' academic performance may be impacted by psychophysiological

issues (McCraty, 2007). Additionally, kids with a learning handicap or different fields on academic topics may also have low academic performance. No matter how nervous I was in class, I still didn't learn anything new. The majority of students were unaware that there were problems related to study anxiety. Figure 1 illustrates the notion of study anxiety. It is a combination of students' sentiments, thoughts, and experiences that causes them to feel anxious when studying and impacts their academic performance. If students experience anxiety when studying, it might be because they are struggling to grasp the material or because they have encountered obstacles that have hindered their progress. What follows is an explanation of the origins of study anxiety.

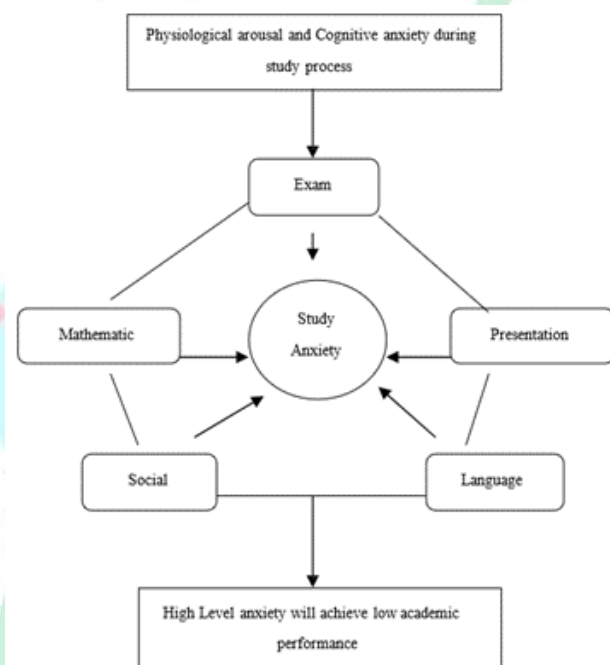


Figure 1. Concept of Study Anxiety

The Study Anxiety Sources and Anxiety Disorders

When people experience significant levels of worry when studying, it may lead to poor academic performance. This condition is referred to as study anxiety. Additionally, the sources might make students anxious throughout the learning process; if students have a negative experience, they are more likely to carry that fear with them into future endeavours. Exam performance may be negatively impacted by students' anxiousness (Harris and Coy, 2003; McCraty, 2003). Test anxiety is defined as "anxiety states and worry conditions experienced during examinations," according to Spielberger in Sansgiry and Kaviat (2006). Anxiety before exams may have a detrimental impact on students' ability to learn and do well in school, according to studies (Sansgiry and Kavita, 2006). When test anxiety levels are high, it may obstruct rational thinking, put one in a bad frame of mind, and even cause one to do poorly on

the test. According to research, students who don't study enough for exams may have more task interference anxiety than their more prepared counterparts (Pecarora, 2006).

Students' academic performance is impacted by language as it is a source of study anxiety. Half of the students surveyed by Worde showed very crippling levels of anxiety when it came to speaking public (Ying, 2008). Language has an essential role as a medium of communication since its function is to allow individuals to speak with one another. Language anxiety, as pointed out by MacIntyre in Ying (2008), is a kind of situational anxiety that pertains specifically to situations involving a foreign language (Ying, 2008). Anxieties about learning a foreign language in a classroom setting is also seen as a complex of thoughts, emotions, and actions. Ying (2008) lists the following factors as potential sources of language anxiety: learner beliefs, instructor beliefs, classroom procedures, language testing, relationships between teachers and students, and learner-teacher interactions. Prior research indicated that pupils with lower levels of anxiety outperformed those with higher levels of anxiety in a foreign language class. Grammar mistakes, difficult speeches, and personal contact in foreign languages were more common among students with high anxiety levels compared to those with low levels of anxiety.

Students often have anxiety when it comes to mathematics. Many worry that if they have a high anxiety level, they may avoid math activities, which might lead to study anxiety (Anderson, 2007). Anxiety in mathematics occurs when even a bright individual struggles to deal with quantification when faced with a maths challenge. Previous research found a strong correlation between poor math performance and high levels of anxiety in the future, but very little between high levels of math anxiety in the past and low math achievement (Ma and Qu, 2004). One of the effects that reduced success was maths anxiety, according to previous research. Dislike, anxiety, and dread are the primary characteristics of mathematics, and they emerge behaviorally as stress, dissatisfaction, misery, helplessness, and mental disarray (Ma and Qu, 2004). Results show that pupils have significant levels of maths anxiety, which affects the majority of students. Students who have a solid foundation in mathematics should feel more comfortable with the subject than those who have a weaker foundation, as math anxiety is the most common cause of poor mathematical performance.

According to Cooley (2007), children with social anxiety might exhibit a range of symptoms. Anxieties about schoolwork might stem from problems in one's social life, such as a strained relationship with a housemate, conflicts with classmates, or an unpleasant experience at a hostel. Anxiety in social situations may have a detrimental effect on a person's emotional and mental responses. There are four ways that social anxiety might be understood,

according to Kimberley (2007). An individual's inability to effectively manage potentially dangerous social circumstances is the root cause of social anxiety, according to the first paradigm (the skill deficiency model). Second, the cognitive-self model posits that, rather than a lack of competence, the root cause of social anxiety is an inflated sense of one's own inadequateness. As for the third paradigm, classical conditioning, it states that unpleasant social experiences might train a neutral stimuli to cause social anxiety. Finally, according to the personality trait paradigm, opposed to a response, social anxiety is a characteristic. People who suffer from social anxiety tend to be reserved, quiet, and reticent; university students have detailed the experiences that triggered their shyness (Mark and Robin, 1997). Anxiety may be better managed by students who use relaxation techniques. A method that takes into account the specifics of each classroom setting and helps students overcome their social anxiety (Cooley, 2007).

Students' anxiety problems may have several causes; for example, there is an increased risk of anxiety disorders in children whose parents suffer from anxiety disorders (Susan and Margareth, 2006). Those who suffer from separation anxiety often see a similar reaction in their families if they are abruptly required to spend time away from home. Examples of such situations include parental divorce, family strife, adverse formative experiences, and a failure to recognise and reward academic success.

The fear of public speaking is known as presentation anxiety, and studies have shown that it greatly hinders a person's ability to express themselves. Problems with public speaking are common in academic settings, and university students are no exception. Speaking in front of an audience may be nerve-wracking for some students, and performing in front of a group can be an intimidating aspect of college life. Students place a high value on presentations, however research by Horwitz and Murugesan (2005) found that students who suffer from anxiety sometimes don't study or sometimes don't show up to class. The dread of public speaking is the most common phobia, according to Krannich in Brenda and Tillson (2007). This includes students. According to Bishop in Elliot and Joyce (2005), 35 percent of the students who were polled acknowledged suffering from anxiety related to public speaking. Students' performance is affected by their high degree of presentation anxiety. According to the results of the survey, students were expected to complete a class presentation as an assessment component of their course. In order to overcome nervousness before giving a presentation, Murugesan (2005) recommended doing things like practicing beforehand.

Finally, library anxiety is a real thing; it's something that every student has to deal with since they have to study. According to Goliath (2007), Mellon first introduced the phrase "library anxiety" in 1986 to characterise students'

dread and worry. According to a prior research, 75% to 85% of undergraduates suffer with unsettling levels of library anxiety, which is a bad experience for university students (Qun and Anthony, 2002). According to the theory of library anxiety, many students can't think clearly and efficiently when they're faced with the necessity to obtain knowledge from the library. Additionally, students with high anxiety tend to have a worse opinion of their own library-using skills as compared to students with low anxiety.

Method

Respondents

There are a total of 770 students who have taken the survey; 395 are men and 375 are women. Respondents are undergraduates in their first or second year of a degree programme from five different engineering schools. Respondents are often grouped into particular categories based on their degree of education, such as undergraduates and engineering students. The survey is really the first stage in determining the causes of study anxiety prior to carrying out the experiment. So, it's important that the survey and experiment use the same responder.

Material

Research on student anxiety, as described in subsection 2.2, informed the development of the study anxiety questionnaire. There are forty topics total, and each item has a five-point scale that asks responders to rate their own experiences, emotions, and thoughts about campus fear. When using the scale format, the possible responses are as follows: 1 for never, 2 for practically never, 3 for rare, 4 for pretty frequently, and 5 for very often. In order to analyse the data, we used a Likert-scale distribution for the study anxiety scores: 1 for mild, 2 for moderate, and 3 for strong. The sources with the highest mean scores are the most promising. In this survey, we checked the study anxiety questionnaire for content validity and reliability; the alpha value came out at 0.934. Independent of other subjects, such as sophomores, seniors, or high school pupils, the questionnaire is designed to detect causes of study anxiety.

Demographic

Among the many types of anxiety that students may experience, this survey inquires about test, linguistic, mathematical, social, familial, presentation, and library-related worries.

Students' gender and professors were also inquired about in the survey. Respondents' names, ages, and races should not be included in the survey since they were already covered in the section about social anxiety.

Procedure

Less than thirty minutes is needed to do the survey for every class, and it is administered before class begins with the inspector present in the classroom. Participation in the survey is entirely optional. The inspector will lead the class through the reading and answering of the questions. In their responses, students identify factors that may be contributing to their study anxiety and how it affects their grades. The results of the poll show that most students were unaware that they would experience study anxiety until after the fact.

Result and Discussion

Descriptive statistics were used to ascertain the Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) in order to identify the five potential sources of research concern. The results show that exam anxiety is a major factor, with a mean score of 1870.29 and a standard deviation of 99.52. The children had a history of anxiety and had a fall during the exam. "How often do you feel anxious on the examination due to the lack of preparation?" is the first question that asked by this source and it got the highest score. A lot of students say they were nervous throughout the examination because they didn't study enough or weren't ready for it.

Second, 108.99 standard deviations and a mean of 1715.20 points indicate presentation anxiety. Among the presentation questions, the one with the highest score is 32, which inquires, "How often did you feel that your heart was beating very fast while you were giving a presentation in class?" When you're anxious, your heart rate could increase. This symptom has also been reported by students when they were presenting in class.

As for the third reason, mathematical anxiousness, the average is 1694 and the standard deviation is 152.49. The mathematics-related question with the highest score is 16, which asks, "How often do you feel anxious when you could not understand the mathematical subject?" in question 16. Students often feel anxious when they struggle to understand mathematics since it is one of the most difficult disciplines.

With a mean score of 1672.20 and a standard deviation of 90.67, language anxiety ranks as the fourth reason. Using a foreign language might heighten this concern. "How often do you feel anxious because of lack of confidence while taking language class?" was the question with the highest score in the language section (12). Students may experience increased anxiety as a result of their lack of self-assurance in language lessons that prioritise their viewpoint.

The last cause is social anxiety, which has a mean of 1463.43 and a standard deviation of 97.34. Question 24, which asks, "How often do you face any difficulty of

studying when there are many members in a room?" is the one that receives the highest score for social competence. When a student has a large number of roommates, they may experience social anxiety and find it difficult to concentrate on their studies.

Table 1. Study Anxiety Sources

Study of Anxiety Source	Mean	Standard Deviation
Exam	1870.29	99.52
Presentation	1715.20	108.99
Mathematic	1694.00	152.49
Language	1672.20	90.67
Social	1463.43	97.34
Library	1437.80	77.83
Family	1406.40	149.62

Both of the sources have low ratings, which indicates that they are not likely to be the probable causes of study anxiety among students. This is because both of the sources are associated with family and library fears. A presentation of the findings may be found in Table 1 and Figure 1.

The results of the research may be seen in Table 2, which compares the perceptions of male and female students on the origins of study anxiety.

Table 2. The study anxiety sources based on gender

Study Anxiety Sources	Mean	
	Male	Female
Exam	1875.17	1841
Presentation	1707.50	1746
Mathematic	1677.75	1759
Language	1650.75	1758
Social	1469.50	1459
Library	1432.20	1387
Family	1396	1448

On the test, in social situations, and while utilising the library, males were more apprehensive than females. In the areas of language, mathematics, family, and presentation, females exhibited higher levels of anxiety.

Conclusion

Different levels of anxiety are experienced by students at the university when it comes to the subject of studying. According to the findings of the researchers, there are a variety of factors that can lead to anxiety in students. These factors include anxiety related to mathematics, anxiety related to language, anxiety related to family,

anxiety related to libraries, anxiety related to exams, anxiety related to presentations, and anxiety related to social situations. It is hard for a student to achieve academic success if they are battling with anxiety. This is a significant challenge for the student. Because the climate on campus is a component of social anxiety, it is conceivable for students to have heightened levels of study anxiety as a result of the campus environment. There is a large prevalence of study anxiety, as has been noted by both students and instructors. This is something that has been documented. On the other hand, there are no research that are presently being carried out to uncover the factors that lead to students in higher education experiencing anxiety when it comes to studying. The goal of this article is to report the findings of a survey that was carried out with the intention of determining the factors that contribute to the development of study anxiety among college students. Seven hundred and seventy students are taking part in the survey. During the course of the research procedure, the respondents have supplied their replies to the survey questionnaire. These responses pertain to the experiences, emotions, and thoughts that are related with worries. As a result of the research, we have determined the five most likely factors that contribute to the condition of study anxiety among students attending various colleges. Following that, there are the following: the examination, the presentation, the vocabulary, the mathematics, and the anxiety associated with social situations. On the basis of the results, we will develop an intervention and carry out a treatment in order to reduce the anxiety that the students are experiencing and to enhance their academic performance. For the goal of doing research in the future, this will be done.

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Appendix

Dear participants,

This survey means to identify study anxiety sources and anxiety disorders and ask you to fill the questionnaire base on your feelings, experiences, and thoughts regarding anxiety during your study process. For each question choose one of the following alternatives. Please answer the questions as truthfully as possible.

Gender :

Faculty :

Alternative question:

1= never 2 = almost never 3 = rare 4 = fairly often 5 = very often

No	Questions	1	2	3	4	5
1	I feel anxious during exam due to the lack of preparation					
2	I feel depressed after taking an exam					
3	I felt lost your concentration during exam					
4	I felt tense during study for exam					
5	I felt anxious that you could not understand of exam's question					
6	I felt your heart beating very fast during important exam					
7	I have feel experienced about anxiety when you take surprise test					
8	I felt anxiety during attending foreign language class					
9	I felt anxiety when speaking activities in a language class					
10	I felt nervousness when my lecturer interrupting to correct my speaking					
11	I feel ever thought that my language's lecturer are like native speaker in the classroom					
12	I feel anxious because of lack confidence during language class					
13	I feel anxiety because for me mathematic is difficult subject					
14	I feel study hard but not success yet in the mathematic subject					
15	I always writing down everything during mathematic class					
16	I feel anxious when I could not understand the mathematic subject					
17	I have lose of interest with mathematic					
18	I have face problems with my peers					
19	I feel that stay in hostel is uncomfortable to study					
20	I ever faced any difficulties of study due to the problem with my roommate					
21	I feel home sick during study in campus					
22	I find that campus environment uncomfortable to study					
23	I ever felt racial diversity during study					
24	I ever face any difficulties of					
	study when there are to many roommates					
25	I feel that insufficient family income will affect on my academic performance					
26	I find that my childhood experiences make me feel anxious					
27	I felt anxious that many members in your family will affect of my study					
28	I ever felt anxious when my parents disappointed with my academic performance					
29	I often felt anxiety about problems in my family					
30	I often feel anxious when giving class presentation					
31	I felt lack of confidence during my presentation					
32	I felt that my heart beating very fast during presentation					
33	I have experience being tongue tied in my presentation					
34	I find that class presentation has low contribution of my study					
35	I feel anxious when does not know to use the library					
36	I feel anxiety that the reference librarian are unhelpful					
37	I ever anxious when trying to find references in the library					
38	I feel uncomfortable when using the library for study					
39	I feel the library not an important part of my study					
40	I feel anxiety when the library staff are reluctant to help me					