Effect of Test Anxiety on the Music Performance of College Students of Punjab

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Anxiety is currently a central explanatory concept in most theories of personality and psychology, and is also widely regarded as a principle cause of such diverse behaviors as insomnia, and sinful acts and even instances of creative held- expression. For most persons, anxiety is distraction and discomforting. Anxiety may lower the self-esteem and limit the educational-vocational development. Anxiety can take a physical toll as well, and may be involved in disease processes in several ways. Even the ingestion of drugs to relieve anxiety may lead to loss of self-control and decrease in held-efficacy along with the side effects of increased risk of serious accidents and drug abdication.

A growing number of researches in recent years have focused their attention on specific sources of anxiety, such as social anxiety, anxiety over public speaking and test anxiety, because those sources are of considerable intrinsic interest themselves also because of the nebulous character of the concept of general anxiety. Moreover, it is definable situational context. Anxiety is frequently observed in test situation by professionals in the fields of education and psychology. Now test anxiety has become the most widely studied of these specific, anxiety. Test anxiety research is currently conducted by investigators working mostly within school settings and university laboratories all over the world. The last years have shown an increment in the frequency and quality of research on test anxiety. An increasing number of investigators from many countries have devoted more efforts in the investigation of test anxiety as a conspicuous emotional phenomenon in human experience.

At various time, anxiety has been conceptualized as a response, a stimulus, a trait, a motive and a drive. One important source of ambiguity and confusion in the theory and research on anxiety stems from the fact that the terms stress and anxiety are used interchangeably. Another problem in anxiety research is the failure to distinguish between transitory anxiety states, anxiety as a complex psychobiological process, and individual differences in

anxiety proneness as a personality trait. Consistent with theoretical developments and research findings, proposed that the terms stress and threat be used to denotes different aspects of a temporal of an anxiety reaction while stress denotes the objective stimulus properties of a situation, threat refers to an individual's perception of a situation as more less dangerous or personally threatening to his. If a situation or though is perceived as threatening, irrespective of the presence of real or objective danger (Stress), the person who perceives the situation as threatening will experience an increase in state anxiety (A-State). A precise conceptual definition of the pattern of responses that characterizes anxiety as a transitory emotional state (A-State) is necessary precondition for meaningful research on anxiety phenomenon. But the term to refer a relatively stable personality disposition to trait (i.e. relatively stable individual differences in anxiety proneness), and to a complex process that involves stress, threat and A-State. Anxiety as a process refers to a sequence of cognitive, affective, physiological and behavioral events. Therefore, a comprehensive theory of anxiety will require clarification of the concept of anxiety as a transitory emotional process. It must be pointed out that most investigators have defined anxiety multiple components and each investigator has ended to include different aspects or components in his definition of the anxiety process. Even when investigators include the same components, they often use different descriptive terms in defining these variables. This means that standard terminological conventions are not yet established for describing critical variables involved in anxiety phenomenon.

Wine (1980) has proposed a bidirectional model of test anxiety and treated test anxiety as a multidimensional construct. This model throws light on the feelings and cognitions of low anxious individuals also. However, this model gone far beyond existing data and calls for detailed research examination. Further, Becker (1982), observed that test anxiety can also be conceptualized as a state, as a trait and as a process. He believed that a detailed analysis of test anxiety seen as process will be fruitful. From the forgoing discussion, test anxiety may be defined in terms of individual differences in anxiety proneness in examination situations. Post test anxiety theorists seem to agree that test-anxiety persons are more likely: (i) to perceive examination situation as more dangerous or threatening than do people who are low in test anxiety: and (ii) to experience worry cognitions and intense elevations in state anxiety in situations in which they are evaluated.

Statement of the Problem

The problem is stated as under:

Effect of Test Anxiety on the Music Performance of College Students of Punjab.

Objective

The objective of the present investigation was to study the effect of anxiety on the music performance of college students of Punjab.

Hypothesis

Following hypothesis was formulated and tested:

There will be significant difference in the music performance of college students having high, average and low level of test anxiety.

Tools

Test Anxiety Inventory by Spielberger was used for data collection. The scores obtained by the subjects in the practical examination were used for final analysis.

Sample:

A total sample of 400 students studying Music in B.A. Part I, II and III was selected randomly from colleges of Punjab. Most of the subjects were of the age group 18 to 20 years. A few subjects were above 20 years in age. Table 1. shows class-wise distribution of the sample.

Table 1.1 : Class-wise Distribution of the Sample

SN	Class	N
1	BA I	90
2	BA II	120
3	BA III	90
Total		400

In order to collect relevant data, the investigator approached authorities and teachers teaching music in the colleges to fix up the dates and time for the administration of tools. The Test Anxiety Scale was administered just before the practical examinations of the students studying music. This was necessary to determine the level of test anxiety among them. The scores obtained by them were also obtained for further analysis.

The students were assured that the purpose of the test was just academic and no information would be given to anyone else.

Analysis of Data

Data were analysed, employing 't-test'. The anxiety scores obtained by the subjects were put in ascending order. Three groups were formed namely High, Average and Low Anxiety Groups. Top 27% of the students were placed in high anxiety group, bottom 27% students were placed in low anxiety group and middle 27% students were placed in average anxiety group. Thus there were 108 students in each comparison group. The achievement scores obtained by the students in three groups were taken for analysis.

Table 1.2 shows the analysis of performance of music students in three anxiety groups.

Table 1.2 : Comparison of Music Performance among High, Average and Low Anxiety groups of College Students.

Comparison Groups	Mean1	Mean2	SD1	SD2	't'
G1 – G2	78.60	67.60	7.50	8.84	9.86**
G1 – G3	78.60	60.00	7.50	8.36	16.41**
G2 – G3	67.60	60.00	8.84	8.36	6.49**

df=214; t= 1.97 at 0.05 level; t=2.59 at 0.01 level

Table 1.2 reveals the means, standard deviations and 't' -values for various comparison groups formed on the basis of their levels of test anxiety. It is clear that the value of 't' for comparison groups G1 and G2 (Students having low level of anxiety and students having average level of anxiety) is 9.86 which is significant at 0.01 level of confidence. The value of 't' for comparison groups G1 and G3 (Students having low level of anxiety and students having high level of anxiety) is 16.41 which is significant at 0.01 level of confidence. Also the value of 't' for comparison groups G2 and G3 (Students having average level of anxiety and students having high level of anxiety) is 6.49 which is also significant of 0.01 level of confidence.

Thus, it is evident that these comparison groups differ significantly in their music performance. On the inspection of the means form Table 1.2 it is clear that mean for students having low level of anxiety (78.60) if greater than the mean for students having average level of test anxiety (67.60). Similarly the mean for students having high level of test anxiety (60.00) is far less than the means for the low and average groups (78.60; 67.60).

Thus it may be concluded that as the level of test anxiety goes on decreasing, the music performance of students goes on becoming better. This is in conformity with the researches conducted on test anxiety and achievement. Hence the hypothesis that 'There will be significant difference in the music performance of college students having high, average and low level of test anxiety,' is confirmed.

Discussion

Music is a subject where practical performance is give top priority. Music requires talent as well as regular practice along with a calm state of mind. Students who become anxious have, even otherwise, been found to perform poorly. Anxiety cripples their muscular coordination and also diverts their attention from the performance. Examinations are notorious in increasing the level of anxiety among the students of the subjects where practical are quite demanding. Thus students offering music are no exception. Studies have shown time and again that there is a negative and significant relationship between anxiety and the academic performance.

Sarason (1978, 1980, 1981); Sarason and Stoops (1978); Sud (1983), Covington (1983); Wine (1971) and Sharma and Dasgupta (1993) found that anxiety and academic performance were negatively correlated. Results obtained by Sharma (1978) and Grewal and Sud (1981) also confirmed the findings of the present investigation.

Rao (1974); Osterhouse (1975) Gaudry (1978) and Deffenbacher (1978) have also found negative relationship between test anxiety and academic achievement in both college and school students. In case of other anxiety and academic achievement studies, majority of studies reported low negative but significant correlation (Sinha, 1961, 1966; Singh, 1966; Hundal et a1., 1972; Sinha, 1972; Rao, 1974 and Vishnoi, 1975).

The results of the present investigation are also supported by the studies conducted by Nazma and Satyanarayana (1978) in which they found out that the relationship of test anxiety with scholastic achievement is negative i.e. as anxiety increases, the achievement decreases.

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