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A study of Anxiety among+2 science students in relations to their Academic achievement

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Abstract

Achievement in different fields of life such as sports, academics, industry, business etc. has great importance for both the student, and those around him/her. There can be no doubt that it is affected by many factors that may reduce it, like anxiety or by others that may enhance it, like general mental ability, emotional and social maturity. The present age may be said to be an age of anxiety. Anxiety has been taken synonymous with apprehension, dread, and uneasiness. This emotion stems from fear, but it is more a fear of what will happen or what has happened than of a clearly apparent fear-provoking situation. Anxiety is a state of diffused apprehension. It is vague, non-specific, and objectless. Researchers generally agree that certain degree of anxiety may motivate the student and make inclined to better achievement. Hence, anxiety is considered a motive for high achievement. However, a high anxiety level may be one of the obstacles to achievement. That is, the relationship between the two variables may be either linear or curvilinear. The present articles focus on concept of Anxiety,

Key words;-Anxiety, sources of anxiety, academic achievement, managing anxieties, etc

Introduction

Concept of Anxiety

Anxiety is the tense, unsettling anticipation of a threatening but vague event; a feeling of uneasy suspense. It is a negative affect so closely related to fear that in many circumstances the two terms are used interchangeably; like anxiety, fear also is a combination of tension and unpleasant anticipation. However, distinctions can be made between the causes, duration, and maintenance of fear and of anxiety.

Strictly, the term "fear" is used to describe an emotional reaction to a specific, perceived danger, to a threat that is identifiable, such as a poisonous snake. Most fear reactions are intense and have the quality of an emergency. The person's level of arousal is elevated sharply. Fear has a specific focus. Typically, it is episodic and recedes or ceases when the danger is removed from the person, or the person from the danger. In this sense, fear is controlled or determined by perceivable events or stimuli. The perceived source of the danger might be accurately or inaccurately identified, or correctly identified but wrongly evaluated. The fear might be rational or irrational. Intense but irrational fears are termed phobias, as in claustrophobia (intense fear of enclosed spaces), snake-phobia, and so on.

Definition of Anxiety

According to encyclopedia of Britain: - Anxiety, a feeling of dread fear, or appreciation often with no clear justification. Anxiety is distinguished from fear because the latter arises in response to a clear and actual danger, such as one affecting a person's physical safety. Anxiety, by contrast, arises in response to apparently innocuous situations or is the product of subjective, internal emotional conflicts the causes of which may not be apparent to the person himself. Some anxiety inevitably arises in the course of daily life and is considered normal. But persistent, intense, chronic, or recurring anxiety not justified in response to real-life stresses is usually regarded as a sign of an emotional disorder. When such an anxiety is unreasonably evoked by a specific situation or object, it is known as a phobia. A diffuse or persistent anxiety associated with no particular cause or mental concern is called general, or free-floating, anxiety.

Key sources of Anxiety

Following are key sources for anxiety

- 1. Based on our thinking:-** When anxiety is out of control, people describe having thoughts such as: These thoughts flash automatically into their heads when they are anxious. Two things should be remembered about automatic thoughts. They are irrational and unrealistic – you will not die or go mad ii. They end up making you feel more anxious – if you think that you are not going to cope, you will worry even more. Learning to control such thoughts can help you to handle your anxiety
- 2. Based on our performance:-** People suffering from anxiety often avoid things, e.g. going out alone or chatting to people. They usually do this because they think that they will cope badly, e.g. they will panic or make a fool of themselves. By avoiding the situation, they feel better. However, in the long term avoidance always makes the problem worse. This is because more and more anxiety gets associated with the avoided thing and so it gets harder and harder to face up to it. Anxiety can also make people feel that they must do certain things e.g. they might start repeatedly checking to see if doors are locked or plugs pulled out, or they might clean the house much more than it needs. Anxiety can also lead to other behaviors such as talking too fast or mixing up words. Being aware of these behaviors can make you feel more anxious.
- 3. Based on our body reaction:-** There are many physical symptoms of anxiety. The symptoms are very unpleasant and sometimes seem to appear for no reason. People worry that they have a serious physical problem or that something terrible is going to happen. It is important to know that these symptoms are not dangerous and will not do any damage to you even if they are severe.

The responses to anxiety vary considerably from person to person and include

- Accelerated heartbeat
- A spike in blood pressure
- Dizziness
- Fatigue
- Gastrointestinal upset
- General aches and pains
- Muscle tension or spasms
- Sweating Dry mouth
- Blurred vision
- Feeling of choking, etc

These are simply the temporary effects that anxiety exerts on your body. Chronic anxiety left untreated poses serious risks to your health as well.

Review of related literature: The following are few review of related literature based on anxiety and academic achievement

1. **Diaz et al, (2001):-** Generally, it could be concluded that there is a positive relationship between high degrees of achievement and low anxiety. There is specific degree of anxiety that increases achievement, but if anxiety increases beyond a certain level, the reverse happens. Based on the Yerkes-Dodson law both the task difficulty and the level of anxiety must be taken into consideration. That is, "on difficult tasks low levels of arousal improve performance relative to high levels, but on easy tasks, the reverse is true"
2. **Reber (1995):-**Most of the young students in these days are influenced by the western culture and science & technology. They are more worried about their achievement in various fields of life. Due to the influence of anxiety, students fall short of the expected level of achievement.
3. **Fiore, (2012)** studied gender differences in test anxiety. The findings indicated that there was no overall significant difference between the genders; however, when a multivariate regression was conducted to account for variability contributed by age and class there was a Statistically significant difference. This finding can be perceived as an indication that it is not gender alone that causes significant differences in general test anxiety. Chandler, (2006) studied Gender Difference and Test Anxiety among male and female students in the 4th, 6th, and 10th grades in Southeastern Ohio. 85 students filled out the Revised Children's Manifest Anxiety Scale. The results showed there was a significant difference between the 6th grade males and females during the pretest administration, with the males showing more anxiety.
4. **According to Basavanna, (2000)**, anxiety is a highly unpleasant affective state similar to intense fear, which can include feelings of threat, vague objectless fear, a state of uneasiness and tension, and a generalized feeling of apprehension. Borrowing from Freud, Basavanna identifies three types of anxiety; Reality anxiety (an emotional reaction to perception of danger in the external world); Neurotic anxiety (an affective reaction to threat from the internal world; and Moral anxiety (an emotional reaction to perception of danger from the superego. Anxiety thus occurs to the body system after one has experienced a threatening situation. An automatic physiological response is triggered to prepare to protect him/her self, or escape from the source of threat. If the activity is carried out, then the changes are reversed, however, if no activity is done, the body continues to remain in the "charged state" for longer than normal, and the resulting changes become a disturbing source of anxiety.
5. **Hembree, (1988)** carried out a meta-analysis of 562 studies in which the relationship between test anxiety and student performance were addressed. This study found a significant relationship between anxiety levels and academic achievement at 0.01 was found, that is, test anxiety was a key factor in undermining student performance. In addition, Students with high levels of test anxiety score significantly lower on standardized tests (in math & reading), compared with students with lower levels of anxiety, High levels of test anxiety among high school students were manifested by reduced levels of academic performance and that it was not academic performance that affected test anxiety – but the reverse; test anxiety affected academic performance.

The review of related literatures on anxiety and academic achievement support the investigator there is great significance relation between anxiety and academic achievement of college going students.

Significance of the anxiety and academic achievement of pre-university students

Anxiety has become an important subject in academic contain as well as in our culture. Many researchers in the field of behavioral science have carried out extensive research on Anxiety and its consequences and concluded that the subject needed more concentrations. Anxiety in academic institutions can have both positive and negative consequences if not well managed. However, it is important to the society that students should learn and obtain the essential knowledge and skills in order to make them contribute positively to the development of the nation form different aspects.

Nonetheless, pre-University students suffer from different kind of academic Anxiety during their education experiences. The idea of this research came by observing the researcher and its interaction with the students during the teaching learning process; also by the record unit in the college counseling; and the number of students who are looking for help; to draw the attention of officials to the university and help them control of the Anxiety factors for students, Which also helps in developing the preferable methods to enable students to cope with this Anxiety during the period of their studies. Pre- University students are at a high risk for increased Anxiety. Demanding academic pressure and limited social and personal time can add to the normal Anxiety of life and begin to have a negative effect on a person Moreover, pre-universities did not take clear steps to learn and face serious psychological Anxiety for students during the period they spend of their studies.

Managing Anxiety

- If there are events or situations that constantly trigger your Anxiety, you should try your best to avoid them, if possible. If you can't do that, decrease the amount of time that you involve yourself in that situation in order to decrease the Anxiety.
- Focus your energy on positive things in your life. Or try to ignore it altogether if it's something insignificant. The more focus you put on it, the more Anxiety you will become.
- When you feel Anxiety coming on, learn to control your emotions on how you deal with it. Not everyone needs to know what is going on. Besides, it is highly unlikely that they could or are willing to help you anyway.
- Learn to control your physical reactions when you are dealing with Anxiety. When some people are under pressure, they look to physically striking out at others or at objects in order to release their Anxiety. You may have to take medicine to keep your anger and actions under control and help to reduce your Anxiety levels.
- Learn to organize your time by having a plan of action. Get a planner or a calendar where you can write down your activities for the week. These activities should be in order by rank of importance. With that, estimate how much time you think it would take you to do each one.
- Once you get your activities for the week intact, you can start planning your activities for future weeks. Of course, there is the chance that you may not get to do everything that you set out to do. Interruptions will happen from time to time and you have to adjust accordingly.
- Make it a necessity that you prioritize your activities and whatever else you need to do. This can help you to stay focused on what you need to be doing
- Once time has elapsed, you cannot get it back. Nowadays, time has become precious commodity and once it has gone that is it. You will need to set aside time to do things for yourself

Conclusion

Dealing with anxiety is not easy for anyone. However, you cannot allow it to control your life. Otherwise, you will end up with health issues and bruised feelings. Each person deals with anxiety differently. Some know how to get relief; others do not care to work it out. They would rather be anxiety for the rest of their lives.

Anxiety can be used as a motivator to get rid of your problems as well as stress itself. Using some of these techniques listed in this guide can help you to a better and peaceful life. If you look at it from a positive standpoint, you will be able to tackle it with grace and keep moving. If not, you will continue to allow the anxiety demons invade your life.

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