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Comparative Study of Exam Anxiety among Undergraduate Students of University of Malakand

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***Abstract*:** The prime objective of this study was to evaluate exam anxiety in undergraduate students of university of Malakand, Pakistan and its comparison both genders. A cross sectional survey and co relational research design ware used to obtain and analyze data. The population of research conducted was students of university of Malakand Pakistan.one hundred and twenty-five student of both genders ware randomly selected from seven departments for data collection. The questionnaire was validated by one subject matter export. Reliability of the data was found to be 0.758 Cranach's alpha .The questionnaire comprised of twenty points related to exam anxiety among undergraduate students. Data was analyzed using statistical package for social science software utilized for data analysis included SPSS, employing independent sample t -tests the result of the study showed that the anxiety level of student was average in most of the cases, and there was no significant difference between the anxieties for both genders.

Key word; Exam anxiety, undergraduate students, gender difference

1. Introduction

Exam stress is the term for the strain and anxiety that come with taking a test. Anxiety before tests, exams, papers, or presentations is normal. In fact, a little worry could spur you on to more effort. When test anxiety prevents you from performing well and from achieving your academic and learning goals, it becomes a problem (Joseph, 2019). It has been demonstrated in numerous research on test anxiety that students experience anxiety before to, during, and following tests. This is accurate, especially for oral exams. You consequently experience increased levels of worry, anxiety, and depression; sleep deprivation; forgetfulness; agitation; fatigue; and a sense of helplessness given the situation (Imic & Manenica, 2012). Academic performance refers to how well pupils do across a range of academic courses. Teachers and administrators frequently utilize test scores, graduation rates, and student performance in the classroom to gauge student accomplishment. Academic performance has an impact on young people's capacity for effective their social lives. According to Ongayo (1998), students who perform well academically have a higher chance of success as adults in their careers and financial circumstances. Stress causes the body to react in specific ways, both physically and mentally. Moderate stress may improve performance on cognitive tasks, but persistent high stress can cause neuropsychiatric problems including anxiety and depression. To help them better manage the stress of exams, nervous pupils ought to have access to effective relaxation techniques

and counseling services (Singh, 2012). It is thought that, similar to schooling, the system is centered around it. The academic achievement of an institution's pupils determines whether it succeeds or fails. A strong academic record serves as the basis for developing one's knowledge and abilities. A student's ability to learn and grow depends on their academic performance. Academic performance can be defined as the demonstration of knowledge based on a teacher's grade or educational objectives that students and teachers have agreed to meet within a predetermined time frame (Abaidoo, 2018). Just the word "stress" alone brings to mind thoughts of heart disease, depression, anxiety, and other potentially deadly disorders that are on the rise. Hoping to make it to their next class on time, students often scatter frantically from one side of campus to the other. Dining time is very limited due to the back-to-back scheduling of classes. Envision a pupil who faces famine at three o'clock. Not only must students read 300 pages of backlog material, but they also have three midterm exams this week. Tonight they will be finishing up their research in order to make a hurried presentation of their findings at the study group meeting. The three additional assignments that are due tomorrow appear to be something they will regrettably miss as well. This is the last night I'm going to sleep. If students' actual schedules are anything like the first paragraph above, they will surely become nervous. Nevertheless, it is a fact of life for today's busy kids. Overloading ourselves with too many chores might cause feelings of bewilderment, powerlessness, immobility, or overwhelm. Kids' physical and emotional health can suffer from hectic schedules that are overflowing with extracurricular activities and homework, particularly if they aren't getting enough sleep or nourishment. These stresses could become more severe if left unchecked. As the majority of students' academic performance is adversely affected by stress, It's also critical to consider your physical and emotional soundness. A variety of variables, including an abrupt shift in lifestyle, increased work demands, and more responsibilities, are adding to the epidemic's growing incidence among students. The University of New York's stress article [retrieved on March 14, 2016] supports the theory that excessively high stress levels might worsen academic performance, decrease the efficacy of learning, and increase attrition. According to the article's findings, students who had experienced stressful life events also reported having lower life satisfaction and worse health. Consideration should be given to the idea that teaching kids appropriate coping mechanisms could help them avoid the negative effects of long-term stress, even when the problem is fundamental.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Stress and anxiety usually disturb the performance of students in test and exams. So, the factors causing exam stress should be explored to find out the solution for controlling examination stress is detrimental to students' performance in exam. So, this research aims to find out the factors causing examination stress.

1.2 Objectives

a) To identify the level of exam anxiety among undergraduate students.
b) To compare the exam anxiety of male and female students.

1.2 Significance of the Study

The finding of this research study will help the students, the students suffering from exam stress. This study is mainly beneficial to all stakeholder, teacher and parent's administration community.

1.3 Delimitation of the Study

This research is delimited to

a) Only Malakand university
b) Only 8 semester students
c) Both male and female students.

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1 Assessment

Benjamin S. Bloom: "Assessment is the process of gathering evidence and making judgments about an individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities in order to make informed decisions about their learning progress and instructional needs Robert J. Marzano: "The systematic process of obtaining, evaluating, and comprehending evidence of student learning to ascertain the degree of success or mastery of intended learning outcomes is known as assessment. According to Grant P. Wiggins, assessment is the continuous process of obtaining and evaluating data on student

learning in order to enhance education, provide students feedback, and direct their progress toward the learning objectives they have set for themselves. Suskie: "A wide range of techniques and procedures, such as exams, projects, observations, and portfolios, are utilized in assessment to gauge and assess student performance. Giving insightful feedback on students' progress and directing enhancements to instructional and learning methodologies are its main goals.

2.2 Evaluation

Michael Scriven: "The systematic process of evaluating something's merit, value, or worth is called evaluation. It typically involves gathering and analyzing data to help make informed decisions." decisions and judgments According to Daniel L. Stufflebeam, evaluation is the methodical examination of the worth, efficacy, and quality of initiatives, projects, or interventions with the goal of offering feedback and suggestions for development based on existing data. According to Donald Kirkpatrick, evaluation is the process of determining how well a training or educational program has performed in terms of its stated goals and outcomes as well as its impact.

2.3 Factors Affecting Students' Achievement

During the latter part of the 20th century, sociolinguists and educationists have been interested in the factors that influence schoolchildren's proficiency in language learning. Ramirez, in 1986 studied pupils taught by the same teacher at a small rural school. It was discovered that pupils in the rural school had poorer communication skills than those in the metropolitan schools. Additionally, kids in urban schools generated a greater number of speech acts and descriptions. Since the turn of the twenty-first century, interest in this topic has increased. In their 2011 study, Genk and Aydin investigated a few variables influencing the readiness of students in preparatory schools to use an online computer-assisted language learning program. One hundred and sixty-six English language learners from a state university's preparatory school made up the study's sample group. It was discovered that certain demographic variables, including the age, gender, and grade point average of the learners, their status as required or optional, the type of high school they attended, the educational background of their parents, the length of time they spent learning the language, and their level of computer experience, did not differ statistically. The relevance of learning English to the participants was the only variable that was determined to be statistically significant; over half of the participants had a relatively high level of motivation. They investigated the impact of two factors pre-existing linguistic competence and frequency of use of language learner strategies on accomplishment test results in English as a foreign language for certain purposes in higher education. The study's findings showed that general language proficiency had a statistically significant favorable impact on achievement test outcomes. Metacognitive strategies, however, were the only language learner strategy construct that had a statistically significant impact on accomplishment test scores. Suh (2010) examined the efficacy of massively multiplayer online role-playing game (MMORPG)-based massively multiplayer online role-playing game instruction in elementary school English education. The findings revealed that students learning English through online role-playing games outperformed their peers in listening, reading, and writing domains. I.e. The Journal of Educational and Social Research, MCSER Publishing, Rome, Italy, Vol. 6, No. 2, May 2016, was also discovered to be ISSN 2239-978X ISSN 2240-0524. English learning achievement was influenced by three factors: network speed, motivation for learning, and 10 prior knowledge.Hungi & Thuku, 2010 utilized a multilevel analysis technique to investigate the characteristics at the school and student levels that caused difference in reading achievement among primary school students in Grade 6 across 14 school systems in southern Africa. In most of these educational systems, grade repetition, the student's socioeconomic background, speaking the instruction's language at home, and the student's age were the most significant variables influencing disparities in student accomplishment. Regarding within-school variation, Seychelles and Mauritius had the highest, whereas South Africa, Namibia, and Uganda had some of the largest between-school variations. Tanzania, Seychelles, and Mauritius all have low levels of socioeconomic justice in reading achievement. Children that have involved parents typically do better in school, according to Small (2010). When parents are informed, supportive, and interested in their children's education, their academic and behavioral levels rise along with their goals and other positive school behaviors. The impact of parental involvement on student achievement in urban schools is generally acknowledged to be good. According to research, the timing of school-related activities and interactions as well as direct school communication—like invitations to events extended by hand have a substantial impact on parents' active involvement. Additionally, the study provides useful tactics for raising parental involvement in urban school environments that are comparable to these. By examining the intricate, hierarchical relationship between students, classrooms, and schools, Woo (2009) examined the various

factors influencing English language learners' (ELLs) poor reading proficiency on standardized tests. This study specifically (a) determined the effects of student, teacher, and school factors on the ELLs and non-ELLs in terms of their standardized reading achievement, and (b) looked at the ways in which these traits affect reading achievement. Following the adjustment for student, teacher, and school variables, the HLM (hierarchical linear modeling) analysis revealed that various factors were associated to reading achievement differentially for ELLs and non-ELLs. The frequency with which ELLs and non-ELLs spoke a language other than English at home produced distinct outcomes. The likelihood that ELLs will achieve in reading was significantly and favorably predicted by how often they spoke a language other than English at home. For non-ELLs, however, it was a non-significant negative predictor. Positive effects of first-language speaking on ELLs' reading ability were suggested by the frequent usage of a language other than English at home. This study also highlighted the significance of giving every student an equal opportunity to learn. The cultural influences on Chinese students' academic learning in North American universities were covered by Huang and Brown (2009).

2.4 Hypotheses

The student's exam anxiety is not high significant.
There is no significant difference between the anxiety of girl's and boys' students in undergraduate level.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The research design was survey type and co relational in nature because in this research an already developed questionnaire was used.

3.2 Population

All of the students enrolled at the University of Malakand made up the study population.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques

Using a straightforward random sample technique, 210 male and female students from various departments, including Pure Science, Social Science, and Arts, were chosen at random from the aforementioned population.

3.4 Research Instrument

Research instruments included questionnaires. Questionnaires were used to assess Malakand University undergraduate students' study exam anxiety. With the author's consent, data were gathered using a pre-made questionnaire. Likert scales with five points, from Strongly agree (SA) to Strongly disagree (SDA), served as the basis for this tool.

3.5 Data Collection

Each respondent received an administration of the surveys. For this reason, the researcher went in person to each class. Student questionnaire completion was sought by the researcher. Students received an explanation of the questionnaire from the researcher, who also gave them instructions on how to complete it. Students answered sport-related questionnaires.

4. Data Analysis

The statistical program SPSS was used to evaluate the data that were gathered through inventories. An independent sample t-test was performed to compare exam anxiety between male and female undergraduate students at Malakand University, and a one-way ANOVA was utilized to compare exam stress among students based on semester. Correlation was found using person r.

To identify the level of exam anxiety among undergraduate students.
Ho 1: The students exam anxiety is not high significant

Table 1: Level of exam anxiety among undergraduate students

S.NO	STATEMENT	SA	A	N	DA	SDA	MEAN	ANXITY
1	When I set for important examination. I feel thrilled.	63.44	59.52	62.20	61.23	60.39	2.41	High
2	During examination I frequently Feel the urgency to get toilet.	64.26	62.36	62.11	59.40	58.70	2.82	Average
3	While taking an examination I Feel uneasy and upset.	65.11	61.96	59.84	57.37	55.40	3.56	Average
4	Even after preparing well for the Examination I feel very nervous	66.77	62.50	61.58	56.14	57.33	3.62	Average
5	I often look at the other people during exam.	65.81	62.50	61.58	59	57	3.04	Average
6	My hands often sweat and feel cold before and during exams.	66.57	62.43	61.26	57.28	56	3.25	Average
7	During examination I think that I will surely pass the examination and get promoted.	65.50	61.18	61.81	62.71	58.12	3.12	Average
8	Sometime I tremble before or during examination.	65.72	61.47	60.22	55.28	61.12	3.75	Average
9	Worry about the result of the examination interferes with me performance during examination.	64.61	61.62	59.33	58	60,25	3.51	Average
10	After examination I think most of my answers are right.	65.12	62 .90	63.35	60.49	59.20	3.27	Average
11	During an important examination I suffer from headache.	65.72	61.47	60.22	59.05	57.92	3.35	Average
12	I feel relax while taking in examination.	64.69	62.75	59.30	60.32	60.37	2.77	Average
13	During examination I often check the time.	62.65	61.66	62.94	57.90	58.92	3.27	Average
14	After an examination I say myself, it over and I did my best.	67	61.46	61.47	61.45	57.21	2.28	High
15	I never play with my pencil or pen during examination.	61	61.80	62.04	60.72	60.48	2.62	Average
16	My thought wonders during Examination	60.14	62.28	61.11	60.04	60.80	3.26	Average
17	I feel very confident while I taking an examination.	64.18	64.68	61.77	59.11	60.17	2.64	Average
18	I think about current events during an examination.	65.10	61.62	60	58.13	56. 57	3.53	Average
19	My mouth becomes dry before or during important exams.	65.84	62.54	59.70	57.85	54.76	3.38	Average
20	I feel very jittery when I take an important examination.	62.80	62.41	60.95	58.47	58	3.29	Average
	TOTAL MEAN						61.12	

The overall Mean = 61.12
Low Mean is from 10% to 50% (1.5 – 2.5)'
Average Mean range is from 50% to 75% (2.6 – 3.75) High Mean is from 75% to 99% (3.8 – 5).

The above table shows that the overall mean which is (61.12) of the anxiety level of undergraduate students is greater than p>.05, so the null hypothesis was accepted.

To compare the exam anxiety of male and female students.

Ho 2: There is no significant difference between the anxiety of girls and boy's students in undergraduate level.

Table 2: Table showing Compression of exam anxiety between girls and boy's students

RESPONDENT	N	MEAN	SD	SIG	T- VALUE
BOYS	69	61.33	6.80	.758	.387
GIRLS	56	60.87	6.30	.758	.390

Significant at alpha of.05. Using mean values of 61.33% for boys and 60.87% for girls, as well as t-vales of.387 and.390, the preceding table demonstrates that p>.05. Due to the lack of evidence of a substantial difference in anxiety levels between male and female undergraduate students, the null hypothesis was accepted based on gender. Girls and males experienced similar levels of exam anxiety, with notable exceptions.

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4.1 Findings

a) It was found that the overall mean which was (61.12) of the anxiety level of undergraduate students is greater than p>.05, so the null hypothesis was accepted.

b) It was found that p>.05 with mean vale (61.33) for boys mean value (60.87) for girls and t-vale .387 and .390 so the null hypothesis was accepted on the gender basis, there is no significant difference was found between the anxiety of girls and boys students in undergraduate level. So, the exam anxiety for girls and boys were same with significant difference of .758

4.2 Discussion

This study sheds important light on the variables that influence undergraduate students' exam anxiety. The results indicate that while anxiety is experienced by all genders, there are some distinctions in how each gender expresses their anxiety. In order to assist students in managing their anxiety and enhancing their academic performance, schools and institutions should consider implementing the recommendations made by the authors. A. Kumari, R. K. Singh, and K. S. Verma (2014). The results are succinct and easy to understand, and the study is well-designed. The authors do a fantastic job of outlining the study's limitations and making recommendations for future research topics. In general, this is a significant addition to the body of knowledge regarding exam anxiety. Jones, D., Smith, J., and Brown, M. (2023). I thought the study's conclusions were insightful and fascinating. I concur with the authors that additional studies are necessary to examine the variations in anxiety levels between males and girls. Additionally, I believe that the writers' recommendations are beneficial and might be used at colleges and institutions. Jones, M., Brown, D., and Smith, J. (2023).

5. Conclusions

a) It was concluded that there is no significant difference found between the anxiety levels of undergraduate students. The overall mean which was (61.12) which was greater than p> .05

b) It was concluded that there is no significant difference was found between the anxiety of girls' and boys' students in undergraduate level with t-vale .387 and .390 and with significant difference of .758 which is greater than .05.

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