

Assessment of Level of General Anxiety among the Higher Secondary School Students

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Abstract

This research has been undertaken to determine the level of general anxiety among the higher secondary school students at Kanchipuram District, Tamil Nadu. The objectives of the study were to determine the level of general anxiety and to find out the association between the level of general anxiety and selected demographic variables of higher secondary school students. The sampling technique was convenience sampling technique with samples of 100 higher secondary school students. Demographic variable proforma and Self - structured rating Scale were used to collect data on anxiety among higher secondary school students. The mean value is 52.97 and 61% of students had mild anxiety, 20% of students had moderate anxiety, 8% of them severe anxiety and 11% of students had very severe anxiety. There was significant association between the levels of general anxiety and medium of instruction, High school mark percentage and availing Tuition facilities. Adolescents need to be assessed periodically to identify the symptoms of general anxiety, for earlier management and also to provide health education related to coping strategies which will be beneficial to adolescent students to manage general anxiety.

Keywords: Level of general anxiety, higher secondary school students.

Introduction

¹General anxiety disorders are the most common group of psychiatric illnesses in children. General anxiety is a blanket term covering several different forms of abnormal and pathological fear. Anxiety disorders are often debilitating chronic conditions, which can be present from an early age or begin suddenly after a triggering event.

²Anxiety is a normal human emotion and involves

behavioural, affective and cognitive responses to the perception of danger. It is considered to be excessive or pathological when it is out of proportion to the challenge or stress or when it results in significant distress and impairment.

It is viewed as a normal part of school student. Students experience fear, nervousness, shyness and avoidance of places and activities that persist at times despite the helpful efforts of parents, caretakers and teachers. General anxiety disorders are one of the most common disorders seen among children and adolescents. The prevalence of general anxiety disorders ranges from 4% to 20%.

Common anxiety disorders among children are specific phobia, social phobia, generalized anxiety disorder and separation anxiety disorder having mean prevalence rates between 2.2% and 3.6%. Agoraphobia (1.5%) and post-traumatic stress disorder (1.5%) are less prevalent, whereas panic and obsessive-compulsive disorders are relatively rare (i.e., below 1%).

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⁴The disorder is frequently accompanied by physiological symptoms such as headache, excessive sweating, muscle spasms, palpitations and hypertension, which in some cases lead to fatigue and exhaustion. Those affected can also flare up at times of high stress.

⁵Although in casual discourse the words anxiety and fear are often used interchangeably, in clinical practice, they have distinct meanings. General anxiety is defined as an unpleasant emotional state for which the cause is either not readily identified or perceived to be uncontrollable and unavoidable; whereas, fear is an emotional and physiological response to a recognized external threat. The term anxiety disorder, however, includes fears (phobias) as well as anxieties.

⁶Anxiety disorders are often co morbid with other mental illnesses, particularly clinical depression, which may occur in as many as 60% of people with anxiety disorder. There is considerable overlap between symptoms of anxiety and depression and the same environmental triggers can provoke symptoms in either condition, this may help to explain this high rate of co morbidity.

It is also known that anxiety disorder is more likely to occur among those with a positive family history of the disorder. Children and adolescents with anxiety disorder typically experience intense fear, worry, or uneasiness that can last for a long period of time and significantly affect their everyday activity.

If not treated early, anxiety disorder can lead to repeated school absenteeism and inability to complete ones education, this is usually due to poor concentration and maladjustment. Some affected children have impaired relationship with their peers, others have low self-esteem. Failure to identify and manage the disorder could also result in alcoholism and use of other hard drugs by affected persons. In some individuals the disorder continues into adult life.

⁷General anxiety is a large heading where disorders such as general anxiety; social anxiety are part of it. It is manifested as nervousness, apprehension and fear and worrying. Besides, it may cause physical symptoms and disturbance. A mild form of anxiety is hazy and disturbed, while severe anxiety can impair the normal function of life.

⁸**G. Natrajan (2015)** conducted a study regarding test an anxiety level assess school student undergoing

higher secondary examination. The sample size is 150 (75 males and 75 females). The study used anxiety rating scale. Academic level of anxiety data revealed that majority 53% (79) were having moderate level of anxiety and 34% (51) were having several level of anxiety where as 13% (20) were having mild level of anxiety.

³Although anxiety is among the most common psychiatric problem faced by children and adolescent, anxiety disorders have been a relatively neglected research topic in comparison to childhood disruptive behaviour and depressive disorder.

Methodology

Research Approach: Quantitative descriptive approach was used for the study. The present study was conducted to assess the level of general anxiety among the higher secondary school students in selected school, Kanchipuram District, Tamil Nadu, India.

Research Design: Non-experimental descriptive research design was used.

Research Setting: The study was conducted at St. Joseph Higher Secondary School, Vettuvankeni, Kanchipuram District, Tamil Nadu.

Population: Higher secondary school students who were studying in 11th Standard in the selected school, Kanchipuram District, Tamil Nadu.

Sample Size: The sample size used was 100 based on population proportion and the open-epi sample size determination.

Sampling Technique: Convenience sampling technique was used for the study.

Sampling Criteria:

Inclusion Criteria:

The study includes higher secondary school students who were

- available at the time of data collection
- able to read and write both English and Tamil.

Exclusion Criteria:

- The study excludes the elderly people who were
- absent on the day of data collection.
 - not willing to participate in the study.

Description of the Tool:

Section-A: It consist of demographic variables of the Higher Secondary School Students which include Age, Religion, Medium of Instruction, High school mark percentage, Area of Residence and availing private tuition facility.

Section-B: Self – structured rating scale was used to assess the level of general anxiety among the Higher Secondary School Students. It was in the form of rating scale and consists of 68 items. The items were rated as 0,1,2,3 and 4 regard to the aspects as none, mild, moderate, severe and very severe respectively. The total attainable score is 272 which were interpreted as follows:

Score	Percentage	Level of Anxiety
0	0	Normal
1-82	1-30%	Mild Anxiety
83-117	31-43%	Moderate Anxiety
118-144	44-53%	Severe Anxiety
145-272	54-100%	Very Severe Anxiety

Method of Data Collection: The data was collected after providing proper information and getting informed

consent from the parents of the higher secondary school students. The data was collected by using self- structured questionnaire.

Statistical Analysis: The data was analysed using descriptive statistics like frequency distribution, percentage, mean and inferential statistics was used to find out the association between the level of general anxiety and demographic variables of the Higher Secondary School Students.

Results and Discussion

The study result shows that majority (52%) of higher secondary school students were in age of 15 years. More than half of them (59%) were Hindus. Most of higher secondary school students (56%) studying in Tamil medium. Majority of higher secondary school students (33%) high school marks was below 60%. More than half of them (62%) were residing in urban area. Majority of higher secondary school students (66%) were not availing private tuition facilities. The study are revealed that 61% of higher secondary school students had mild anxiety, 20% of students had moderate anxiety, 8% of them had severe anxiety and 11% of students had very severe anxiety.

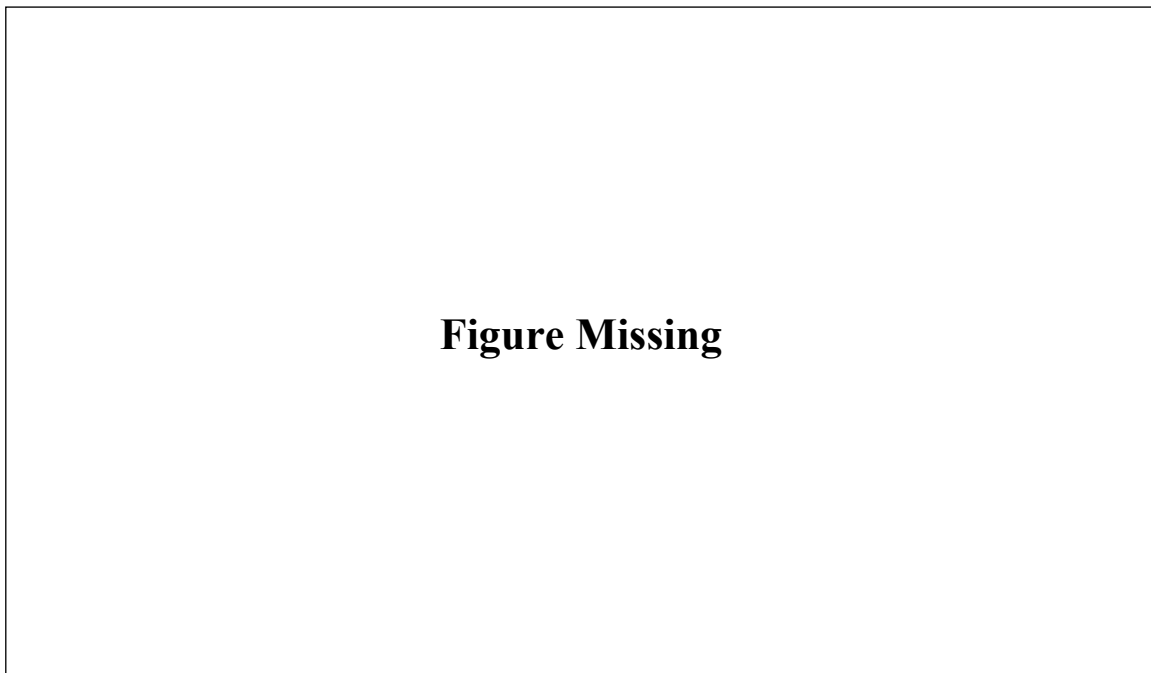


Figure 1: Percentage distribution of higher secondary school students based on availing private tuition facilities. N= 100

Table 1: Association of level of general anxiety with the selected demographic variables of higher secondary school students.

S.No.	Characteristics	Category	No of Samples	Level of Anxiety				Chi Square	P Value
				Mild	Moderate	Severe	Very Severe		
1	Age in years	15	52	34	7	6	5	9.594	12.59
		16	46	27	12	2	5		
		17	2	0	1	0	1		
2	Religion	Hindu	59	38	11	2	8	7.346	12.59
		Christian	28	17	6	4	1		
		Muslim	13	8	1	1	3		
3	Medium of instruction	Tamil	56	40	11	0	5	12.30	7.82*
		English	44	23	7	8	6		
4	High school percentage	<60%	33	22	7	2	2	41.48	16.92*
		61-70	30	21	5	1	3		
		71-80	28	13	5	4	6		
		>80%	9	5	4	0	0		
5	Area of residence	Urban	62	39	12	5	6	2.089	7.82
		Rural	38	25	6	1	6		
6	Private tuition facilities	Availing	34	21	7	3	3	13.01	7.82*
		Not availing	66	42	12	4	8		

There was significant association between the levels of general anxiety and medium of instruction, High school mark percentage and availing private tuition facilities at $p < 0.05$ level of significance but all other demographic variables such as age, religion and area of residence had no significant association with the level of anxiety.

Conclusion

It was concluded that (61%) of the students had mild anxiety, (20%) had moderate anxiety, (8%) had severe anxiety and (11%) had very severe anxiety. Health teaching was given about the symptoms of general anxiety and cognitive appraisal of anxiety to higher secondary students to overcome the anxious situation. Nurses who are working in hospitals play a vital role in giving health education to adolescents on coping strategies to manage general anxiety.

Conflict of Interest: Nil

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Ethical Clearance: Obtained clearance from Institutional Human Ethical Committee on 11.04.2018.

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