



The effect of Anger and Anxiety on Study Skills: A correlational study among students

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Abstract

Study skill, i.e., the ability to know suitable strategies to study effectively, is important for Indian students to achieve their academic goals, however, factors such as anxiety, and anger, can create hinderance to achieve effective study skill. The current study focused on the effect of anger and anxiety on study skills among Indian youths. The study comprised of 42 randomly sampled participants between the age group of 18 to 25 years. Scales such as, GAD-7, Novaco Anger Inventory containing and, Study Skill Questionnaire, were used. The result found a significant positive correlation between anger and anxiety, significant negative correlation between anger and study skills, and significant negative correlation between anxiety and study skills. It is recommended that in order to achieve academic goals, institutions should offer anger and anxiety management education along with core courses.

Keywords: Anxiety, Anger, Study Skill, Indian Youth

Introduction

“Anxiety is a thin stream of fear trickling through the mind. If encouraged, it cuts a channel into which all other thoughts are drained.”

- Arthur Somers Roche

Study skill, the ability of an individual to study and learn effectively including the routine planner and a habit to perform study tasks constructively. An average person contributes about 30 % of their life span to the educational institutes and to sustain their institutional journey they must regulate an effective study skill regardless of the personal interest that a student may possess. However, during this overwhelming and long journey the study skills are negatively influenced by various means and manners which eventually hinders one's educational performance. These influences vary from the internal to the external dimensions such as the psychological wellbeing and the surrounding of one's respectively. Few such influences are anxiety and anger, both the variables effect one's mental wellbeing and creates a negative impact on the student's study skill and learning.

Anxiety, in simple terms is the fear of future which is generally a natural response of our body to fear. Anxiety can cause an individual to stop enjoying the events that they used to do. On the other hand, anger is an emotion which is characterized by a hostile behavior of an individual towards something or someone which may cause due to unsimilar set of beliefs and ideas. Gettinger and Seibert (2002) stated in their research that effective study skills help a student to achieve the fundamental academic competence and reduces the risk of failure, it does also enable a student to take advantage of the learning opportunities, to perform learning effectively one should have a wide set of strategies and should also know when and how to execute those strategies. The need of an effective study skill underscores the achievement of a quality academic competence so that a student can score good grade levels. It has been also examined that the students who does not perform effective study habits suffer from test anxiety which results into poor examination performance and thus, inducement of study skill training programs can improve one's cognitive processing and the ability to retrieve information more efficiently (Motevalli et al., 2013).

A study was conducted by Bander et al. (1982) to study the correlation of mathematics anxiety to the study skill and relaxation technique, in which the researchers assigned 36 undergraduate

students, where the students were said to choose 1 of 4 experimental conditions, which were (1) mathematics study skill program, (2) cue-controlled relaxation program, (c) a combined study skill and cue-controlled relaxation training and, (d) no training at all. Data were recorded from two domains i.e., self-reports and performance results over a 3 weeks' time period. The result showed that the study skill training program significantly increased the mathematics performance, and the cue-controlled relaxation and combined condition training programs reduced the mathematics anxiety.

Study Skill

According to Alci et al. (2015), "study skills are approaches applied to learning that assist students to be successful in schools in a way of passing an exam or even obtaining good grades." Another definition of study skill by Fazal et al. (2012) stated that study skill is, "the ability of a student to know suitable strategies and methods for study, while utilizing his time and resources efficiently."

Using of concept mapping as a study skill is said to be very effective while performing an effort to achieve any academic goal. This finding was supported by an experiment, performed over 120 out of 280 SSII students in which 100 students were used for analysis while 20 students were dropped out of the study, the design used in this study was quasi experimental Pretest Posttest control group design. The major instrument used in this experiment was biology achievement test and an interview schedule with the students to determine the usefulness of the concept mapping in their studies followed with the guidance of five research questions. The result showed a non-significance difference between the ones who used concept mapping in their studies and the ones who reviewed and summarized the study materials however a massive consistent and significant increase has been recorded in the students' test scores who used concept mapping in their studies, during the interview sessions maximum number of students responded that, concept mapping helped them to better understand the relationships between concepts, sharpened their understanding and built creative thinking (Patrick, 2017).

One of the many popular beliefs about acquiring study skill is that "study skills depend on the technical skills of studying such as, note-making, essay writing, reading strategies, and so on." However, it has been seen that, more fundamentally students frequently lack the underlying

competence necessary for a successful study which shares the dimensions such as, self-confidence, awareness, the ability to think creatively, independence of mind and much more. Researchers believe that study competence is the real foundation for acquiring a successful study skill as it enables the students to solve the problems independently (Waters, 1992). A varying number of beliefs also lay the light on the relationship between study skill and gender, however research by Shahidi et al. (2014) on the newly admitted FASA University's medical students, founded that there was no significant difference between the subjects' "sex" and "study skills." After a study was done on 92 newly admitted FASA University's medical students, the data was collected thorough the help of questionnaire consisting of two parts, in which the first part was composed of the demographic data, such as sex, field of study, number of hours dedicated towards studying etc., the second part consist 19 special items on the domains such as, time management, concentration, class notes-taking, studying and taking exams with 4, 5, 4, 3, 3, items respectively.

Anxiety

Stated by Chand and Marwaha (2023) "anxiety is linked to fear and manifests as a future-oriented mood state that consists of a complex cognitive, affective, physiological, and behavioral response system associated with preparation for the anticipated events or circumstances perceived as threatening." Another definition by Hartley and Phelps (2012), defined it as, "anxiety may be experienced in the absence of a direct physical threat and typically persists over a longer period of time. However, anxiety is commonly conceptualized as a state of sustained fear."

Anxiety is termed for the fear that is induced due to the prediction of unfavorable future and the threats it holds. A much greater anxiety can be measured in the one is who have not been told about their test performance and given any report on it than to the ones who have been provided with their failure report, this hypothesis was empirically proven after the conduction of a research where the module was constructed to investigate the influence of anxiety evoked by tests. The test was divided among two groups and only one of the groups was informed about their failure in the test, whereas the other group was kept unknown of their result (Mandler & Sarason, 1952). A study done by Bakhla et al. (2013), attempted to identify the association between gender, parenting style and anxiety among the school going students, the study was an effort to signify the role of sociocultural environment on anxiety in Indian context. The study included 146, class VIII students

(55% male and 45% female) of having an average age of 12.71 years, the subjects were assessed with the help of Spence anxiety scale (children version). The result showed that, 11% of the sample population was high on anxiety cutoff, where the female students found to be more prone to anxiety, also the effect of authoritarian parenting style had been identified as a catalyst to the inducement of anxiety among the sample.

Anger

Rothenberg (1971) mentioned that “anger is generally considered to be a manifestation of the broader phenomenon of aggression. Theories of aggression, therefore, are considered to be theories of anger as well. “To be angry” is considered to be an aggressive act, and “to feel angry” is considered the subjective awareness of aggressive impulses. Aggression also includes violence, hatred, hostility, and all manifestations of destructiveness.” Another author, Schieman (2006), defined it as, “anger can be personally and socially destructive, but it can also inspire, mobilize, and propel individuals to alter the undesirable circumstances of their lives. In addition, anger provides us with explanations for other people’s behavior especially intensely shocking acts.”

A study was conducted focusing on the human emotions, especially considerate with anger which prior to this have subjected to least interest among the mainstream psychology and educational psychology. The study was aimed to determine the association between anger and learning, which initiated by measuring and conceptualizing anger in the first part of the study. The researchers distinguished 4 dimensions of anger construct, that are; “trait anger” to make a judgement on the frequency of experiencing anger, “anger-in” and “anger-out” for experiencing anger and “anger control” to adjust and control the flow of anger. Following to that, trials are made in specific ways experiencing and controlling anger that are found to may affect one’s academic result (GPA) for native language learning. Later, in the study the predictive powers of the established dimensions of anger including anxiety and coping profile have been discussed (Boekaerts, 1994). Another study administered by Lopez and Thurman (1986) to investigate the cognitive behaviors of anger among the college students. The study was based on Novaco (1978) model of anger. A total number of 204 participants took part in this study, the participants were examined on the tendency of having high anger issues and low anger issues, due to experiencing the aversive college events. The results found out that the high anger rated students were more prone to aversive college events

as they were the frequent triggers of anger, the college events also endorsed irrational beliefs to a greater degree and, the students were more likely to express or suppress anger.

Purpose

The purpose of the study is to determine the underlining influence of anxiety and anger issues on the study skills of and college students of India.

Hypothesis

- There will be a significantly positive correlation between anxiety and anger.
- There will be a negative correlation between anxiety and study skills.
- There will be a negative correlation between anger and study skills.

Method

Sample

A total number of 42 individuals were randomly selected from across different parts of India, majorly covering the age group of 18 years to 25 years.

Measures

- **GAD-7:** Generalized Anxiety Disorder-7 (GAD-7) was developed by Spitzer et al. (2006). The scale includes 7 items in which each item is rated on a 4-point Likert scale containing the dimensions of “Not at all,” “Several days,” “More than half the days,” and “Nearly every day.” This scale is used to determine and evaluate the possession of generalized anxiety disorder and to assess the severity of the symptoms in an individual.
- **Novaco Anger Inventory:** The Novaco Anger Inventory was proposed by Huss et al. (1993), the scale consist of a total number of 25 items which are being rated on a 5-point Likert scale. The scale includes the response dimensions such as, “Very little,” “Little,”

“Moderate Amount,” “Much,” and “Very Much.” Novaco Anger Inventory measures an individual’s anger regulation by assessing the responses of the several described anger arousal situations.

- **Study Skill Questionnaire:** The Study Skill Questionnaire (McCombs et al., 1980) is composed of 30 items which are further categorized into 6 different subscales i.e., “reading a text book” from question number 1 to question number 5, “taking notes” from question number 6 to 10, “studying” from question number 11 to 15, “memorizing” from question number 16 to 20, “preparing for tests” from item number 21 to 25, and at last “managing your time” from question number 26 to question number 30. All the items are rated on a 3-point Likert scale ranging from “rarely,” “sometimes” to “often.” This scale is used to understand oneself about their learnings and study skills.

Procedure

Standardized questionnaires were administered to the participants. The data were recorded through the help of google form circulation among the school and college students. The form was designed into three sections, first section was intended to record the demographic details of the participants, the second section enquired about the anger level in the participants, and the third and last section acquired the anxiety and study skill information from the participants. All the participants were assured about the privacy and confidently of their responses so that the honest information can be received without any fear.

Analysis of the result

Result

Table 1*N, mean and standard deviation*

	Anger	Anxiety	Reading texts	Making Notes	Studying	Memorizing	Preparing for test	Managing time
N	42	42	42	42	42	42	42	42
Mean	52.5	9.88	31.7	25.7	30.2	30.1	31.9	21.7
Median	52.0	9.00	32.5	30.0	30.0	30.0	30.0	22.5
Standard deviation	20.4	7.08	11.2	10.6	11.7	10.1	8.62	13.4

Table 2*Correlation between anger, anxiety, reading texts, making notes, studying, memorizing, preparing for test, and managing time*

	Anger	Anxiety	Reading texts	Making Notes	Studying	Memorizing	Preparing for test	Managing time
Anger	—							
Anxiety	0.395 *	—						
Reading texts	-0.055	0.137	—					
Making Notes	0.038	0.079	0.098	—				
Studying	0.130	0.040	0.429 *	0.408 *	—			
Memorizing	-0.101	0.092	0.417 *	0.285	0.460 **	—		
Preparing for test	-0.394 *	-0.316 *	0.287	0.299	0.401 **	0.236	—	
Managing time	-0.286	0.171	0.405 *	0.228	0.305 *	0.350 *	0.409 **	—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Discussion of the result

After performing statistical measures on the received data, the study showed the results of having significant positive correlation between anger and anxiety ($r=0.395$, $p<.01$), significant negative correlation between anger and preparing for tests ($r=0.394$, $p<.01$), a significant negative correlation between anxiety and preparing for tests ($r=0.316$, $p<.05$), significant positive correlation between reading texts and studying ($r=0.429$, $p<.01$), a significant positive correlation between reading texts and memorizing ($r=0.417$, $p<.01$), and a significant positive correlation between reading texts and managing time ($r=0.405$, $p<.01$). Similarly, the result also showed a significant positive correlation between making notes and studying ($r=0.408$, $p<.01$), significant positive correlation between studying and memorizing ($r=0.460$, $p<.01$), significant positive correlation between studying and preparing for tests ($r=0.401$, $p<.01$), significant positive correlation between studying and managing time ($r=0.305$, $p<.05$), significant positive correlation between memorizing and managing time ($r=0.350$, $p<.05$) and at last the result also found a significant positive correlation between preparing for tests and managing time ($r=0.409$, $p<.01$). Besides the significant results the data also reflected the negative correlation of anger and reading texts, and anxiety and managing time.

Similar to the current study, an experiment was conducted to determine the effects of anger management education on anger management skills of adolescents. The study comprised and total number of 28 students, divided into 2 groups of 14, i.e., one experimental group and one controlled group. To access the anger of students, “State Trait Anger Scale” was used, anger management education was given to the experimental group, once a week for 10 weeks. Statistical measures such as t-test and two-way ANOVA was used to determine the relationship between the groups and variables. The result of the study was found out to be a significantly decrease in continuous anger, anger-inside, anger-outside and the anger control level increased to the group who received education (Serin & Genc, 2011).

Another study by Culler and Holahan (1980) found that high-test anxiety resulted into poorer study skills, while investigating the relationship between test anxiety and academic performance of college students. Another study was conducted to access the level of anger, anxiety, stress and depression among Turkish students. The study was based on self-reporting, in which Turkish students from the grade of 9-12 took part. Depression Anxiety and Stress Scale-42 and Multi-

Dimensional Anger scale were used to administer the samples. The results found that females students were high on anger symptoms and depression, anxiety and stress level whereas male students were high on aggressive behaviors. The study concluded with recommendations of anger management education for both male and female students, together with education of managing anxiety, stress, and depression (Bilgel & Bayram, 2014).

Conclusion

The current study revolved around the idea of assessing the influence of anger and anxiety on the study skills of Indian adults and to do so, the respective variables that are, study skills, anger and anxiety have been evaluated. The data was administered among the youths of India, aged on the range between 18 years to 30 years, with the help of standardize questionnaires, i.e., Generalized Anxiety Disorder-7 containing 7 items to assess anxiety, Novaco Anger Inventory containing 25 items to assess anger and, Study Skill Questionnaire containing 30 items to assess the study skills. The questionnaires were circulated with the help of google forms around different states of India. A total number of 42 participants voluntarily took part in the study, all the participants were well known about the usage of their data. The correlational statistical method was run over the received data to determine the relation between the variables. And following, the findings showed that anger and anxiety were significantly positively correlated, anger and preparing for test were significantly negatively correlated, anxiety and preparing for test were significantly negatively correlated, reading texts and studying were significantly positively correlated, reading texts and memorizing were significantly positively correlated, reading texts and managing time were significantly positively correlated, making notes and studying were significantly positively correlated, studying and memorizing were significantly positively correlated, studying and preparing for test were significantly positively correlated, studying and managing time were significantly positively correlated, memorizing and managing time were significantly positively correlated and at last the result also found that preparing for test and managing time were significantly positively correlated.

Study skills plays a significant role in a student's academic life thus, it is very crucial that one should possess effective study skills along with the skills and trainings to manage the factors that creates an hinderance to study skills, i.e., anger and anxiety. Anger management and anxiety

management education should be given to students along with other core education in schools and colleges of India. The current study is only focused to the youths of India, further research can be carried out by focusing onto another sample groups.

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