

INVESTIGATING THE DEGREE OF ANXIETY OF INCOMING AND OUTGOING MEN AND WOMEN STUDENTS OF DHAKA UNIVERSITY[#]

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The purpose of the present study was to investigate the degree of anxiety of incoming and outgoing (status), and men and women (Sex) students of Dhaka University. The sample consisted of 40 outgoing (20 men, 20 women) and 40 incoming (20 men, 20 women) university students. They were administered the Bengali version of Dutt Personality Inventory (1966). Data were analyzed by a 2x2 analysis of variance. Sex was found to be a significant variable in level of anxiety. In comparison to men, women scored higher in this regard. But non significant difference was found between incoming and outgoing students in level of anxiety.

The term "anxiety" varies in meaning, as it appears in the writing and research of psychologists. According to Hilgard, Atkinson, and Atkinson (1975), by anxiety we mean the unpleasant emotion characterized by the terms "worry", "apprehension", "dread", "and "fear" that we all experience at times in varying degrees. Freud (1959) defined anxiety as a drive like hunger or sex but instead of arising from internal tissue conditions it is produced originally by external causes. On the other hand, Spiegelberger (1972) considered anxiety both as a trait as well as a state. Psychologists use the term in its trait sense when they refer to "high-anxiety" or "low anxiety" individuals. A high anxiety individual is one who is consistently keyed up, who tends to be in a relatively high state of tension and arousal. A low anxiety individual conversely, is one who is characteristically slow to react, is very relaxed, and is not easily aroused.

Lindgren (1978) stated that anxiety has an elusive, bothersome quality and is hard to identify. It commonly develops within the contact of face to face relations with others. It is also associated with feelings of inferiority and inadequacy, especially in the presence of more powerful others. It is an empirically proved fact that competition

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and complexities of the modern world create constant anxiety and mental stress in the person (Carson, Butcher, & Coleman, 1988). Self concept is another factor of anxiety. In a study on children, it was found that children with high anxiety had poor self-concept (Coopersmith, 1959). Complexity of task also plays an important role in anxiety. O'Neil, Spiegelberger, and Hansen (1969) found that highest level of anxiety in subjects reached during the complex task period and the lowest level was attained during the easy task period. Anderson (1950) found that anxiety is directly or indirectly involved in everyday behaviour. Ahmed and Mahbuba (1995) stated that parent-child relationship is an important factor in creating anxiety.

In the present study, two variables undertaken were sex (men-women) and status of education (incoming and outgoing). The rationale behind sex issue is the social context of Bangladesh where women have to perform all household duties even when they are employed or work outside. In carrying out dual responsibilities their level of anxiety may be affected. So, it was thought that it will be worthwhile to observe the level of anxiety of women in comparison with men. Research findings also show that sex is an important variable which in interaction with social norms, values, and practices; affects the development of certain psychological characteristics. Society also expects differential sex-role behaviour from men and women. Due to this expectation and differential pressure of socialization, we observe significant sex differences in various aspects of life. Khanam (1994) observed that men students took higher risks in their decisions than the women students. Afrose and Chowdhury (1990) found significant sex differences in interpersonal values. Wadud (1995-96) showed that women workers consider their job more stressful as compared to men workers. Now a days, women are taking active parts in daily life activities along with the men. Such participation may increase their level of anxiety.

Status of education was another variable in this study. This study also compares the degree of anxiety between incoming and outgoing students of Dhaka University.

The rationale behind exploring the anxiety level of incoming and outgoing students is the several observation that new comers perceive themselves to be in a more stable position. Their main aim is to study. They may face some kind of adjustment problems, such as adjustment of new environment of campus, classmates, teachers, hall life etc., but these types of adjustment may not create higher degree of anxiety. On the otherhand, out going students, who have completed their education have to face many difficulties and new problems; different

from the problems experienced in the earlier years of life. Among them getting job, getting married and adjustment with new family or office etc. are very important. By the early or mid thirties, they should have solved these problems well enough as they could be emotionally stable and calm. Because emotional tension is often expressed in worries or anxieties.

The objectives of the study were, therefore, to investigate whether any difference exists between incoming and out going, men and women students of Dhaka University in terms of their degree of anxiety.

METHOD

Sample

The sample of the present study comprised of 80 respondents. Among them, 40 were incoming students and 40 were outgoing students of Dhaka University. Among incoming students, 20 were men and 20 were women students. The outgoing students were selected in the same way. The respondents for both groups were selected randomly from the available incoming and outgoing students of different departments like Psychology, Botany, History, English, Accounting, and Marketing. Their age ranged from 18 to 25 years.

Instrument

A modified Bengali version of Dutt Personality Inventory (DPI) developed by Dutt (1966) was used for measuring the degree of anxiety. There are 40 items in DPI. Each item of the test is a 3-point scale with the following response categories: "Often", "Sometimes", and "Never".

The original scale was in English and translated into Bengali and it was shown to judges who had competence in both Bengali and English. Some minor corrections had to be done. The reliability of the scale was estimated employing a sample of 20 university students who were efficient in English. The test-retest reliability over a period of two weeks was .82. Dutt (1966) have reported reliability coefficients of DPI ranging between .87 to .95.

Score of the respondent's responses was calculated as follows- Keyed response (often)=2, sometimes=1 and non-keyed(never)=0. Total scores were obtained by summing. The highest score of a

respondent could be 80 and the lowest score could be 0 (See Annexure for the items of DPI in English).

Procedure

The test was administered individually to the respondents. The bio-data form was supplied along with the questionnaire. Some data were collected by going to different departments of Dhaka University. The rest of the data were collected from different Halls of Dhaka University. After distributing questionnaires, each of the respondent was requested to fill-up bio-data and to read the instructions before going through each of the statements and indicating their personal preference by giving a tick mark for each of the alternatives. There was no time limit. Subjects took about 15-20 minutes. Once the answers were recorded, the respondents were thanked for their kind participation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to find out whether the degree of anxiety varies as a function of sex (men, women) and level of education (incoming, outgoing) of the respondents, the obtained scores were analyzed by 2x2 analysis of variance. The mean scores of degree of anxiety of men and women students of incoming and outgoing levels and the results of ANOVA are shown in Tables 1 and 2, respectively.

Table 1

Mean and Standard Deviations of Anxiety Scores of Men and Women Incoming and Outgoing Students

Gender	Incoming		Outgoing		Total
	<i>M</i>	<i>S.D</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>S.D</i>	<i>M</i>
Men	24.35	6.88	27.15	8.03	25.75
Women	31.10	10.62	31.10	7.51	-
Total	27.72	-	29.13	-	-

Table 2 shows that the main effect of sex is significant in case of degree of anxiety. The result indicates that women students ($M=31.10$) had higher degree of anxiety than men students ($M=25.75$). But according to the results the main effect of status of

education and the interaction between sex and status of education do not have any significant effect on the degree of anxiety.

Table 2

Analysis of Variance of Anxiety as a Function of Sex and Level of Education

Source of Variations	df	SS	MS	F
Status of Education (Incoming and outgoing)	1	39.20	39.20	0.53
Sex (Men/Women)	1	572.45	572.45	7.74*
Status of Edu. x Sex	1	39.20	39.20	0.53
Within Cells	76	5618.70	73.93	

* $p < .01$

One important finding of the study was the significant sex difference in the degree of anxiety. The degree of anxiety of women students was higher than their men counter parts. There are many possible reasons behind this finding. Firstly, our culture and social system is more responsible for this difference between the sex. Social learning theorists believe that the boy and girl children's behavioral pattern is different because from the very infancy they are treated differently. Girls are taught to conform, to be docile, and to be dependent. Whereas, the boys are taught to succeed, to achieve, and to be independent. The girl children's stereotype role is thus inferior to the boy children. Bee (1974) emphasized on biological point of view. He stated that due to the biological differences during adolescence boys are less anxious than the girls. Secondly, it has been found that self concept has an important influence on the level of anxiety. The better the self concept the less the anxiety (Coopersmith, 1959; Mitchell, 1959). It is highly possible that women students having inferior gender role may have poor self concept and as a result they are more anxious than men students. Moreover this findings is consistent with that of Afrose (1983). She also found that girls are more anxious than boys.

Another objective of the study was to find out the difference of anxiety level among incoming and outgoing students. As incoming students are in a settled position but outgoing students will have to face many newly adjustment problems, we expected that there would be significant difference between these two groups in terms of anxiety

level. But the study has failed to show the difference between these two groups. Mandler (as cited in Skill, 1966) suggested that the feelings of not being in control is one of the central characteristic of anxiety. As the incoming students age is a "problem age" or a "time of value change," or a "period of emotional tension", they may have less control over their feelings and thus they feel anxious. Hilgard, et al., (1975) stated that conflict and frustration are the other sources of anxiety. When incoming student's failed to get their preferred subjects, they become frustrated and anxious. On the other hand, out going students also have to face many adjustment problem as they have to play new roles and to develop new attitudes, interests, and values. This adjustment may make them anxious. Erikson (1963) also depicted young adulthood as a time of tension between isolation and intimacy. As both of the groups are suffering from anxiety so no difference has been found.

The study had it limitations. The size of the sample was small. As the respondents filled up the questionnaire individually, the controlling techniques of the external variables were not sufficient. In conclusion, it may be said that the phenomenon of anxiety is too vast a problem to be dealt within such a short research project. However, it throws light into an area, which needs further exploration.

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DUTT PERSONALITY INVENTORY (DPI)

1. Do you want someone to look after you or advise you?
2. Do you feel uneasy if you have to sit long in a small room with the door shut?
3. Does your attention wander so badly that you lose the thread of what you are doing?
4. Do you find it difficult to go to sleep due to excitement?
5. Have you been afraid of going mad?
6. Do you find it difficult to concentrate your mind when you need doing so?
7. Do you think you are much more cautious, tense, and strung-up than need be?
8. Do you bother about pains in your heart or in chest?
9. Do you worry about your health?
10. Do you wish that you should be as happy as others seem to be?
11. Do you have periods of such great restlessness that you cannot sit long in a chair.
12. Do you definitely admit that you have been worried beyond reason over something that did not really matter?
13. Do you think you are careless about what happens to you?
14. Is life a strain for you?
15. Does your heart beat too quickly or thump in your ears so that you cannot sleep?
16. Have you feared that you are a victim to heart-trouble or to some disease like cancer or tuberculosis?
17. Do you try to avoid going to a strange shop or talking to a strange man?
18. Do you feel yourself a happier person than many others?
19. Do you get mentally tired easily?
20. Do you get a dragging sense or pressure on the top of your head or the back of your neck?

21. Do you find yourself getting irritated and aggressive without cause, bursting at people over trifles?
22. Do you have much trouble in making up your mind as to what you will do next?
23. Are you troubled by the sweating of the skin and palms?
24. Do you suffer from frequent urination?
25. Have you tremors of hands and feet?
26. Do you suffer from indigestion and impaired appetite?
27. Do you have feelings of fullness in the stomach?
28. Do you have feelings of dizziness and sickness without any apparent cause?
29. Do you have feelings of suffocation, of inability to get sufficient air and choking of breath?
30. Do you jump badly at sudden lights, sounds, or touches?
31. Are you bothered by cold feet and hands going blue even in moderate cold?
32. Does the power go out of your limbs so that you have to lean against something?
33. Do things swim before your eyes, go blurred or mistry?
34. Is your sleep fitful and disturbed?
35. Did you have period when you lost sleep over worry?
36. Do you feel that you are going to blush?
37. Do you have nightmares?
38. Do you worry as to what will happen to your family members after your death?
39. Do you find yourself much bored and irritated when waiting for something?
40. Do you feel you are a relaxing and happy-go-luck sort of person?

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