

# IMPACT OF SIMPLIFIED PHYSICAL EXERCISE ON TEST ANXIETY AMONG UNDERGRADUATE COLLEGE MEN

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of the random group experimental study was to find out the impact of Simplified Physical Exercise on Test Anxiety among undergraduate college men. It was hypothesized that there would be significant differences due to Simplified Physical Exercise on Test Anxiety among undergraduate college men than the control group. For the purpose of the study, 30 undergraduate college men were selected randomly from Chennai, between the age group of 18 to 25 years and they were divided into two groups A and B having 15 subjects in each. Pretest was conducted for the two Groups (A and B) on the selected dependent variable before the training program. Group A was given Simplified Physical Exercise; Group B (Control Group) didn't receive any specific treatment, but in normal and routine work. After the experimental period of eight weeks, the two Groups (A and B) were retested again on the same selected dependent variable as posttest. Test Anxiety was measured using standard questionnaire. Analysis of co-variance (ANCOVA) was used to find out the significant differences between experimental group and the control group. The test of significance was fixed at 0.05 level of confidence. It was concluded that Simplified Physical Exercise decreased Test Anxiety among undergraduate college men. Hence, the hypothesis was accepted at 0.05 level of confidence.

**KEY WORDS: Simplified Physical Exercise, Test Anxiety**

## INTRODUCTION

Test anxiety is a psychological condition in which people experience extreme distress and anxiety in testing situations. While many people experience some degree of stress and anxiety before and during exams, test anxiety can actually impair learning and hurt test performance. Test anxiety is a type of performance anxiety. In situations where the pressure is on and a good performance counts, people can become so anxious that they are actually unable to do their best. While people have the skills and knowledge to do very well in these situations, their excessive anxiety impairs their performance.

The severity of test anxiety can vary considerably from one person to another. Some people might feel like they have "butterflies" in their stomach and while others might find it difficult to concentrate on the exam. A little bit of nervousness can actually be helpful, making students to feel mentally alert and ready to tackle the challenges presented in an exam. The Yerkes-Dodson law suggests that there is a link between arousal levels and performance. Essentially, increased arousal levels helps to do better on exams, but only up to a certain point. If these stress levels cross that line, the excessive anxiety that might be experiencing can actually interfere with test performance. Excessive fear can make the students to concentrate and to recall things that they have studied. This inability to concentrate and recall information then contributes to even more anxiety and stress, which only makes it that much harder to focus on attention during the test.

According to the Anxiety and Depression Association of America, symptoms of test anxiety can be physical, behavioral, cognitive, and emotional. Physical symptoms of test anxiety include headaches, diarrhea, sweating, shaking, rapid heartbeat, dry mouth, fainting, and nausea. Milder cases of test anxiety can cause a sense of "butterflies" in the stomach, while in the most severe cases, people can feel nauseous and short of breath or might even experience a full-blown panic attack.

Test anxiety can also result in behavioral and cognitive symptoms such as negative self-talk, trouble concentrating on the test and racing thoughts. People experiencing test anxiety might compare themselves to other students and mistakenly believe that they are the only person suffering from such terrible anxiety. Other symptoms of test anxiety can involve emotions such as a sense of helplessness, fear, anger, and disappointment. Emotional symptoms of test anxiety can include depression, low self-esteem, anger, and a feeling of hopelessness. Students often feel helpless to change their situation or belittle and berate themselves for their symptoms and poor test performance.

The causes of test anxiety are poor study habits, poor past test performance, and an underlying anxiety problem can all contribute to test anxiety. The biological cause of test anxiety is, in stressful situations, such as before and during an exam, the body releases a hormone called adrenaline. This helps prepare the body to deal with what is about to happen and is commonly referred to as the "fight-or-flight" response. Essentially, this response prepares to either stay and deal with the stress or escape the situation entirely. In a lot of cases, this adrenaline rush is actually a good thing. It helps to deal effectively with stressful situations, ensuring to alert and ready. For some people, however, the symptoms of anxiety they feel can become so excessive that it makes it difficult or even impossible to focus on the test. Test anxiety can also become a vicious cycle. After experiencing anxiety during one exam, students may become so fearful about it happening again that they actually become even more anxious during the next exam. After repeatedly enduring test anxiety, students may begin to feel that they have no power to change the situation.

According to American Test Anxieties Association, 18% college students have moderately high test anxiety. According to 2017 Nationwide Study, 1,60,000 college students are with depression. Additionally, the [2017 National College Health Assessment](#) by the American College Health Association found that about 1 in 5 college students has been diagnosed with or treated for anxiety in the last year. Anxiety disorders are the most common mental illness in the U.S., affecting 40 million adults in the United States age 18 and older, or 18.1 percent of the population, according to the [Anxiety and Depression Association of America](#) (ADAA).

Simplified Physical Exercises are considered to be beneficial for the physical and mental health of college students. Further, many scientific investigations on yoga have already been done in past and yoga has been accepted as a successful technique not only to develop spirituality, but also as an effective means to maintain psycho-physiological and biochemical homeostasis leading to good health. Yoga can be a beneficial therapy for controlling and lowering anxiety naturally. The gentle, soothing practice of yoga settles both mind and body and reduces anxiety level. The results of many studies tend to indicate that there are benefits in the use of yogic practices in the alleviation of test anxiety, particularly physiological, biological, and cognitive symptoms.

## **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of the study was to find out the impact of Simplified Physical Exercise on Test Anxiety among undergraduate college men.

## **HYPOTHESIS**

It was hypothesized that there would be significant differences due to Simplified Physical Exercise on Test Anxiety among undergraduate college men than the control group.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

**Narendra Singh and Sanjay Singh (2016)**, studied on the effect of yoga practices on the level of anxiety among college students. The present study was intended to determine whether the intensity of yoga practice in minutes and the duration of yoga experience in months would relate with the level of anxiety and health among college students. Fifty participants with ages between 18 and 25 years (group mean age  $\pm$  S.D.,  $22 \pm 2.80$ ) who were studying in a college in north of India, were included in this study. Participants were assessed for level of anxiety using Spielberger's State Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI). Pearson correlation analyses were performed using PASW (SPSS version 18.0) to determine how would be correlated with the daily yoga practice and duration of the yoga experience of the participants. The result showed that yogic practices in

months was found negatively correlated with the level of anxiety ( $p < 0.05$ ). It was concluded that the duration of yoga practice in months decreases the level of anxiety.

**Azadeh Nemati (2012)**, studied to investigate the effect of practicing pranayama on test anxiety and test performance. This study is a random study. The participants consist of 107 MA students who were randomly assigned to control and experimental group. The students of the experimental group practiced pranayama for one full semester before starting teaching. Sarason's (1980) test anxiety scale was given to both control and experimental groups in the final session before taking the exam. The gathered data were analyzed statistically. It revealed that due to practicing pranayama, 33% of the participants of experimental group fall in the high test anxiety category while this percent is nearly twice for the control group (66.7%). Furthermore, the result of the t-test for test anxiety and test performance showed that there was a significant difference between the student of control and experimental groups and based on the mean the students of experimental group had lower test anxiety ( $M=16.00$ ) comparing the students of control group ( $M=19.31$ ). Similarly, males and females of the experimental group had lower test anxiety comparing their males and females in control group. Also, test performance of experimental group was higher. Finally, the result of correlation showed that there was a negative correlation between final test performance and test anxiety ( $r = -0.204$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). This means that the higher test anxiety, the lower test performance. The result can be helpful for teachers and students to lower test anxiety.

## **METHODOLOGY**

- For the purpose of the random group experimental study, 60 undergraduate college men came forward and 45 undergraduate college men were screened and found to have test anxiety by applying medical examination and 30 undergraduate college men were selected at random finally for the study. The subjects were selected from Chennai between the age group of 18 to 25 years and they were divided into two groups A and B having 15 subjects in each group.
- Pretest was taken for these two Groups (A and B) on the selected test anxiety questionnaire before the training program.
- Group A was undergone Simplified Physical Exercise for daily one hour for five days per week.
- Group B (Control Group) was permitted to undergo their normal and routine work during the course of experiment. They didn't receive any specific treatment.
- After the experimental period of eight weeks, the two Groups (A and B) were retested again on the same selected test anxiety questionnaire.
- Test anxiety was measured using Sarason Anxiety Scale questionnaire.
- Analysis of co-variance (ANCOVA) was used to find out the significant differences between the experimental group and the control group. The test of significance was fixed at 0.05 level of confidence.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The data pertaining to the variable collected from the two groups before and after the training period were statistically analyzed by using Analysis of co-variance (ANCOVA) to determine the significant difference and tested at 0.05 level of confidence.

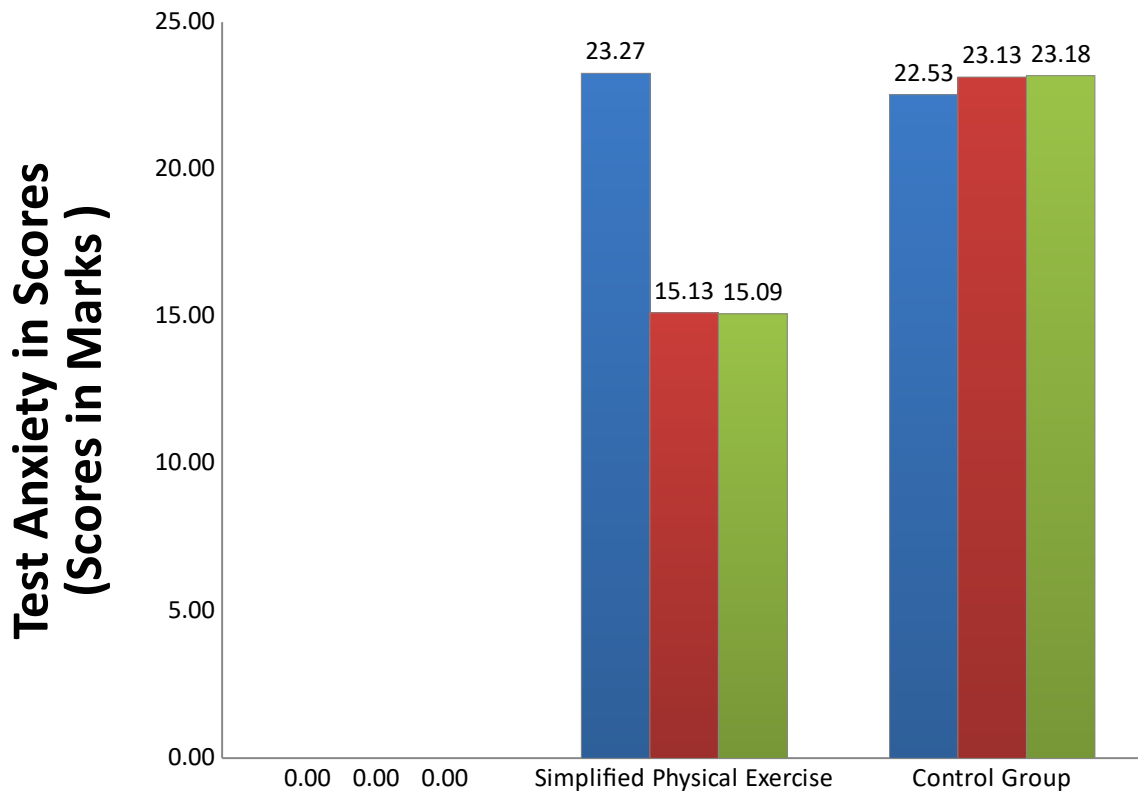
The obtained F - ratio value for Test anxiety was greater than the table value, it indicates that there was a significant reduction on test anxiety among the post-test and adjusted post-test means of the Simplified Physical Exercise than the Control Group.

### **ANALYSIS OF CO-VARIANCE (ANCOVA) OF THE MEANS OF EXPERIMENTAL GROUP AND THE CONTROL GROUP IN TEST ANXIETY (Scores in marks)**

Test	Group-A Experimental Group	Group-B Control Control	Source of Variation	Degrees of Freedom	Sum of Squares	Mean Sum of Squares	F-Ratio
Pre	23.27	22.53	Between	1	4.04	2.02	0.60
			With in	28	141.60	3.37	
Post	15.13	23.13	Between	1	600.18	300.09	<b>207.30*</b>
			With in	28	60.80	1.45	
Adjusted Post	15.09	23.18	Between	1	596.82	298.41	<b>208.28*</b>
			With in	27	58.74	1.43	

\*Significant at 0.05 level of confidence (Table F ratio at 0.05 level of confidence for df 1 and 28 = 4.20, 1 and 27 = 4.21).

**BAR DIAGRAM SHOWING ORDERED ADJUSTED MEAN POST TEST  
OF THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP AND CONTROL GROUP  
FOR TEST ANXIETY (Scores in Marks)**



The above results were substantiated by the observations made by **Narendra Singh and Sanjay Singh (2016)** and **Azadeh Nemati (2012)**.

## **CONCLUSION**

It was concluded that Simplified Physical Exercise reduced Test Anxiety among undergraduate college men.

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