

**TOPIC: AGE AND TEST ANXIETY AS CORRELATES OF ACADEMIC
PERFORMANCE AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS.**

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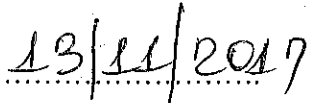
CERTIFICATION

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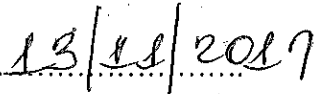


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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to God my heavenly Father. God the son and God the Holy Ghost for his strength and abundant grace over my life. Your name is praised.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I appreciate Almighty God, the ever loving God, the beginning and the end for the gift of life and his sufficient grace on the completion of this research, I praise your holy name.

I to appreciate my wonderful, able and encouraging supervisor, Dr Mrs. Olatunji A.O, I want to say a big thank you for those your words of encouragement and supervision of this project work, may my heavenly father reward you mightily, may the Lord bless you ma.

I also want to appreciate all the lecturers in the department of psychology for their relentless effort towards my academic life, I pray God in heaven reward you all miraculously in Jesus name Amen.

I want to also appreciate my ever loving mother for her continuous prayers and contributions towards my academics and my life in general from day one to this moment, I pray mummy you will reap the fruit of your labour in Jesus name Amen. I thank you, my wonderful classmates, particularly Olubode Henry for your support towards the achievement of this project. Not forgetting, Ayegbe Ann you have been a source of joy and inspiration to me. I say big thank you to you all and God bless you all.

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ABSTRACT

Academic performance among university students is an intricate issue, which requires immediate attention because it is declining continually at an alarming rate. Accordingly, the study examined Age and Test anxiety as correlate of Academic performance among University students using the expost facto design. Two hundred (200) undergraduates of Federal University Oye Ekiti (FUOYE) were sampled using convenience sampling method. Self-report instruments comprising of Test Anxiety Inventory (TAT) was used for data collection. Three hypotheses were tested using t-test. In contrast, Age did not correlate with Academic performance ($r = -.03$, $p > .05$), while Test anxiety gives a negative relationship with Academic performance ($r = -.144$, $p < .05$), that is, the higher the test anxiety the lower the academic performance. It is recommended that all helping professionals working in the secondary school and the university system such as counseling psychologists, clinical psychologists and social personnel should use appropriate instruments to identify students suffering from test anxiety and help them out of the problem.

Word count: 170

Keywords: Test anxiety, Age and Academic performance.

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In everyday life, we have goals and objectives of a particular undertaking. At the end of the activity, the goal which one set will be assessed in terms of success or failure and in terms of satisfactory performance or under achievement. The level of students' academic performance appears to be declining every day, without education, individual will find it difficult to move with technological development as many aspects of our daily life are being computerized. Quality education is essential for human as this predict the level of overall achievement in life (Staffolani and Bratti, 2002).

This is an intricate issue of special concern which requires immediate attention of the researcher and other stakeholders in the society. Excellent academic performance is very important for students if they are to secure better jobs in a competitive labor market (Staffolani and Bratti, 2002). In the major of our higher institution of learning, the level of academic performance of the students is not encouraging at the level of failure is increasing every day (Ali et.al, 2013). Academic success is important because it is strongly linked to the positive outcomes we value. The positive outcome we value are: job opportunity, increase pre-existing knowledge, increase self-esteem and better social economic status. Adults who are academically successful and with high levels of education are more likely to be employed, have stable employment, have more employment opportunity than those with less education and earn higher salaries.

Academic Performance

Academic performance according to the Cambridge University Reporter (2003) is frequently defined in terms of examination performance. According to Wikipedia (2013),

academic performance is the outcome of education; it is the extent to which a students, teacher or institution has achieved their educational goals. It is observed that academic performance is an issue to investigate because the rate at which students are failing nowadays is deteriorating and that has become an issue in which various researchers tried finding solutions to it.

Zeidner (1998) cited Carver and Scheier (1984) as arguing that test anxious persons are likely to have strong and chronic doubts about either producing adequate performance on examinations, being evaluated favorably by significant others, or being able to control their feelings so that they would not be overwhelmed by them. Speilberger and Vagg (1995) regarded test anxiety as a situation specific or state anxiety which is a temporary emotional state. This according to Speilberger, Gorsuch, and Lushene (1970) is different from trait anxiety which is a constant personality characteristic. According to Speilberger and Vagg (1995), test anxious individuals are more prone to react with excessive anxiety such as worry, negative thoughts, nervousness and physiological arousal across testing situations. This proneness predisposes them to experiencing more intense levels of state anxiety which is considered as the emotional component of test anxiety in evaluative situations. The high level of state anxiety among test anxious people activates worry conditions stored up in memory and these conditions interfere with test performance (Zeidner, 1998). A positive relationship between trait and test anxiety is therefore expected.

All school children and many adults are tested at various times in their lives. School teacher identify student with the characteristics needed for promotion or placement in various classes. Likewise, employer's personnel departments constantly confront the problem of identifying individuals with the characteristics needed for specific jobs within their organization. All these can only be achieved through tests. The term "test" therefore is used loosely to include everything from brief school examination to complex inventories of personality traits (Durost,

2000). Some of these tests yield numerical grades whereas others result in a report of the examinee's impressions (Barbara, 1999). Walter (2002), defined test as a deliberate tendency to find out the level of interest, knowledge, skill and achievement on a given task.

A test is a systematic procedure for comparing the behavior of two or more persons (Cronbach, 1980). According to him, intelligence cannot be visualized or measured as one can see and measure a sheet of paper. He stated that tests are constructed in such a manner that the evidence of an individual's behavior or performance as evoked by the test is compared to the behavior or performance of other individuals to whom the test has been administered. The test performance is evaluated and an interpretation derived is given. Many psychologists use the term measurement or evaluation rather than test as a way to suggest the scope of the field.

There are varieties of tests which include the following:

1. Achievement tests
2. Mental ability tests
3. Aptitude tests
4. Tests of developed abilities
5. School readiness tests
6. Interest inventories
7. Personality measures

Tests are used by school teachers to judge their students' progress, by college admission's officer as an indicator for selecting or rejecting applicants, by personnel experts as a basis for hiring employees or promoting executives and by psychologists as a help in diagnosing personality

problems and mental illness. According to Barbara, Davis and Gross, 1999 tests are powerful educational tools that serve at least four functions thus:

1. Tests help teachers evaluate students and assess whether they are learning what he or she is expecting them to learn.
2. Well-designed tests serve to motivate and help students structure their academic efforts. Studies report that students study in ways that reflect how they think they will be tested. If they expect an examination focused on facts, they will memorize details, if they expect a test that will require problem solving or integrating knowledge, they will work towards understanding and applying information.
3. Tests can help one understand how successfully he or she is presenting the material. Finally, tests can reinforce learning by providing students with indicators of what topics or skills they have not yet mastered and should concentrate on.

Also, tests are the measurement that evaluates student's academic performance which in turn may decide their future success in pursuit for their life goals. Despite these benefits, testing is also emotionally charged and anxiety producing (Barbara, 1999). This may be as a result of the uses of tests. Most often, tests are used to evaluate individuals in certain abilities.

Anxiety has been defined as feelings of apprehension and nervousness accompanied by the activation of the sympathetic nervous system which gives rise to physiological changes to the body such as heart rate increases, blood pressure increases, perspiration increases, sweating and trembling crooks and Stein (1988). The Diagnostic & Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder, 1994, defined anxiety as a discrete period in which there is sudden outset of intense fearfulness or terror, sweating, trembling or shaking, feeling of choking.

Anxiety describes the subjective experience of unpleasant tension, uneasiness and distress that accompanies psychic trait or conflict (Spielbege, 1995). According to him, anxiety is a construct commonly associated with deterioration in the performance of most human activities but it is such a general emotion that most people either have a problem in recognizing in themselves or others or they mistake it for other ailment like fear or general body weakness. A lot of physical, social and psychological problems in school aggravate anxiety among students. For instance, financial hardship at school, inability to buy basic needs, heavy academic loads, and fear of embarrassment from parents, teachers and friends in examination further aggravate anxiety. Lewis,(1980) stated that anxiety can be normal or pathological, mild or severe, advantageous or disadvantageous to thinking, action, episodic or persistent due to physical disease, or psychogenic accompanying other features of mental disorder and may for the duration of the attack affect perception and memory. All anxiety is a reaction to anticipating something stressful (Anderson, 2002).

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 examinations, test anxiety can actually impair learning and hurt test performance. Test anxiety is an overwhelming feeling of disturbance and distress among students globally and can be a devastating problem for them because it may impair their performance and their well-being later in life in the long run (Farooqi, Ghani, & Spielberger, 2012; Rafiq, Ghazai, & Farooqi, 2007). According to (Cohen, 2004), test anxiety can adversely affect people in every field of life whenever and wherever people of all ages and strata have to be evaluated, assessed and graded in terms of their abilities, achievements or interests.

Test anxiety is defined by Morris and Davis (1981), as the evaluative apprehension aroused in the test taker as a result of his concerns about the outcome of an impending test. The impending test increases the level of apprehension as the importance of the outcome of the evaluative increases. For example, in Nigerian setting, academic achievement is looked upon as a basic condition for the improvement of one's socio-economic status. To secure a good job, to be recognized and respected depends on one's academic achievement, level. Due to this high regard given to students with high academic achievements, fear of failure constantly put anxiety on students during examinations and testing. The negative thoughts about the outcome of the examination (pass or fail) and what the parents and friends will comment if they fail such tests and examinations are a times results to fear, trembling during the examinations, illegible writing, heat on the parts of the body and all sorts of somatic experiences are noticed during testing and examination periods. Hancock, (2001) considered test anxiety as a trait characterized by debilitating psychological, physical and behavioral responses exhibited by someone prior to sitting for an examination or in anticipation of an examination. Such debilitating responses include -panic, worries and sweating all which constitute threatening situations that are not in the good health interest of the test anxious individuals.

According to Lewis (1980), test anxiety is normal and some anxiety is normal because some anxiety can be helpful, prompting one to be better prepared for the demands of one's course. It simply varies from person to person. At low level of arousal, one may put little or no effort into preparing for examinations. At medium levels of arousal, one can work and prepare well and give his or her best performance. Too much arousal can disrupt and harm performance. Spielberger and Sarason (1989) were of the opinion that students with high test anxiety will have lower academic achievement while those students with moderate levels of test anxiety will perform the best. In line

with Spielberger and Sarason, Hembree (1988) and Seip (1991) states that high anxious students tend to commit more errors than less test anxious ones. Similarly, test anxiety has been associated with lower academic achievement and self-defeating behavior patterns Swanson Howell, (1996). Terry (1998), and D'Arcylyness (2004), identified several signs which indicate that a student is experiencing test anxiety which include the following: sweaty palms, rapid heartbeat and tense muscles, frequent urination, headache, stomach upset.

Zeidner (1998) outlined three components of test anxiety to be cognitive, affective, and behavioral. The cognitive component involves worry or negative thoughts that occur during assessments and performance in between test anxiety and academic achievement. They found a negative relationship between test anxiety and achievement. They also found that a cognitive factor (worry) contributes more in test anxiety than affective (emotional) factor. In another study, Marzieh Gholami tooranposhti (2011) examined the effect of self-regulation education on test anxiety, academic achievement and meta-cognition and found that self-regulation education reduces test anxiety. Farooqi, Ghanl, and Spielberg (2012) in their own study examined gender differences in test anxiety and academic performance and found that female medical students reported higher test anxiety levels than male medical students. They also found a negative relationship between test anxiety and academic performance. Having defined test anxiety, it is pertinent to identify and describe a number of important variables that are closely related to students test anxiety levels and their academic achievement. The variables include:

1. Test anxiety in relation to gender (sex). That is who more test anxious is (males or females).
2. Test anxiety in relation to the academic performance of the university students. That is, the relationship between test anxiety and academic performance in relation to university students.

1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Education is the backbone of any nation aiming to have speedy economic growth and development. Hoyle (1986) argue that schools are established with the aim of imparting knowledge and skills to those who go through them and behind all this is the idea of enhancing good academic performance. The level of students' academic performance is very important in determining their level of overall success in life. The attitude of the students towards learning and their overall academic performance is declining every day as students are no longer interested in studying but looking for shortcut in making it in life.

Additionally, various institution in Nigeria have made several attempts in the past to resolve the problem of low or poor academic performance and lack of enthusiasm among students. These unfavorable condition most times lead to low self-esteem, low morale and poor performance. It can be readily observed that research on the concept of Age, Test anxiety and also Academic performance among university students in Oye-Ekiti is very scarce. The current research aims to see how age correlate with test anxiety to determine ones academic performance.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following are the questions the study seeks to answer:

- Is there an association between age and academic performance of university students?
- Is there a relationship between test anxiety and academic performance among university students?
- Is there a relationship between male and female on academic performance?

1.4 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this study is to examine the influence of test anxiety on academic performance on adolescents. Specific objective are as follows:

1. To examine the correlation between age and academic performance of university students.
2. To examine the relationship between test anxiety and academic performance among university students.
3. To examine whether male university students will perform academically than the female university students.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

One of the most important aspects of education is the assessment of learning outcomes among students. Assessment is expected to provide accurate and reliable evidence of what the students have learned or that have not learned. In the school environment, it is the case that each time an assessment test is scheduled for students, majority of them exhibit anxiety reaction to school proposed test. In the context of such an environment therefore, it is important to build up

information on the nature and scope of assessment induced anxiety so as to build up a body of knowledge on adolescent students' anxiety towards assessment and the impact it has on their academic performance. This therefore, is considered theoretically significant because its findings will add to existing already body of knowledge on the whole issue of Age and Test Anxiety as correlates of Academic performance among University students. This study is considered to be of practical significance in the sense that its findings will provide bases for solving problems of test anxiety among university students. For instance, the findings of this study will yield useful data which can be used to draw the attention of the negative consequences of uncontrolled test anxiety among university students. This study is considered to be of practical significance with regard to the lecturers in the sense that the findings will create awareness and preparedness for the lecturers to help their test anxious students overcome test anxiety behaviors. It is expected that by being aware of these test anxiety behaviors among their students, they should be in a position to help those students who exhibit such behaviors. For instance, teacher can adopt alternative method of assessing university students on their test or exam. Such method as the use of continuous assessment in evaluating the students learning out comes. Hence, the problem among students with high and low test anxiety will be eliminated by using this method.

Also, it is expected that the data from this study will create awareness among the curriculum planners on different categories of test anxiety among university students and the negative consequence of low and high test anxiety.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 THEORITICAL FRAME WORK

This chapter reviews various theories relating to variables in the study as well as some related empirical studies and also theoretical conceptualization. The chapter also includes statements of hypotheses and operational definition of terms used in this study.

2.1.1 ANXIETY THEORIES

As anxiety seems an important concept to psychologists and other clinical workers, many theories have been advanced in an attempt to explain this phenomenon. Some of the theories of anxiety to be reviewed in this study include the following:

- 1 Freud's Theory of Anxiety.
- 1 Erickson's Theory of Anxiety
- 3 Maslow's Theory of Anxiety

2.1.1 Freud's Theory of Anxiety

Sigmund Freud, the father of psychoanalysis proposed several theories that could be used to explain anxiety. He was among the first who attempted to explain the meaning of fear or anxiety within the concept of psychological theory (1931, 1936). He explained systematically the development of phobia or anxiety behavior because of his concern with people suffering from psychopathology. Many psychological test experts on anxiety based certain assumptions that guided their constructed instrument or scale from his theory. He therefore, defined anxiety as something felt-an unpleasant affective emotional state or condition that was characterized by

subjective feelings of irritability, chronic apprehension and all that is covered by the word of nervousness and by essentially the psychological and behavioral manifestation that Darwin attributed to fear. In his early theoretical formulation, Freud initially viewed anxiety as resulting from the discharge of repressed sexual energy called libido. To him, when libidinal energy is blocked and normal expression, it accumulates and is automatically transformed into anxiety. That is, he viewed anxiety as a consequence and direct manifestation of unemployed libido. In other words, when the sexual instincts are not allowed to express themselves directly, their energy is diverted and converted into anxiety. He later modified this view to formulate the Danger Signal Theory of Anxiety. This is in favor of a more general conception of anxiety as a signal indicating the presence of danger which serves to warn the individual that some form of adjustment is needed. That is, in his danger signal theory, Freud saw anxiety as having some form of adaptive utility in motivating behavior that enables the individual to avoid danger.

In a nutshell, Freud warns that the self is relatively fragile and must be protected from excessive danger. Still in the context of his danger signal theory, he differentiated between objective and neurotic anxiety. He states two sources of danger as follows:

1. The external world and
2. One's own internal impulses.

He states that when the source of danger was in the external world, it gives rise to objective anxiety reaction but when the source is from the individuals own repressed impulse or instincts, it generates neurotic anxiety. To him, objective anxiety is an internal emotional reaction to anticipated real external danger or threat or harm. Thus, whenever a real danger in the external environment is perceived as threatening, this results in objective anxiety reactions. Freud's conception of objective

anxiety is that the intensity of the emotional reaction is proportional to the magnitude of the perceived external danger or threat. He states that objective anxiety reactions are experienced by the individual as unpleasant and the emotional reactions initiate mental activities in the form of the thoughts and coping behaviors that attempt to reduce the unpleasantness, by banishing from the awareness of the individual all the thoughts or memories associated with the unpleasant emotional reactions - this is his theoretical account of the development of neurotic anxiety. This reduction or coping behavior according to him is an act of repression of internal impulses. Consequently, the repression system may break down and this leads to the perception of threat or danger from one's own repressed impulses - thus a neurotic anxiety which is objectless because the source of the danger is not recognized now results. Neurotic anxiety is characterized by high intensity of emotional state that would be unwarranted from the real or objective danger that evokes the reaction. He further proposed that anxiety may be produced by conflicts between the Id, ego and Superego. According to him, a child in store for example, whose parents said that they will not buy a much desired toy may suffer anxiety in the struggle between the desire to steal the toy and awareness that is wrong to take things without paying for them. Finally, Freud asserted that any form of a anxiety has two basic components which include physiological and emotional. Physiological symptoms of any anxiety include changes in heart-rate beat, sweating, trembling, restlessness and accelerated breathing. Emotional symptoms include - cognitions and expectations about self and others, apprehension, tense and troubled emotional feelings.

Freud's theory has several educational implications

Since Freud (1936), defined objective anxiety as an internal emotional reaction to anticipated real external danger or threat in the environment, test anxiety could this be viewed as an internal

emotional response or reaction to the threat of test stimulus. Since tests or examinations are real perceivable objects in the external environment, test anxiety is thus an objective anxiety and not neurotic anxiety.

2.1.2 Erickson's Theory of Anxiety

Erick Erickson is one of the neo-Freudians who though had background in psychoanalysis but deviated to a large extent from Freud's explanation of psychopathology. Unlike Freud's psychosexual stages of development, Erickson proposed psychosocial stages of development. Erickson's theory of anxiety originates from two of his proposed stages of psychosocial development which bordered on autonomy versus doubt, initiative versus guilt. In relating Erickson's theory with reference to autonomy versus doubt, Biehler (1976), pointed out that two year olds are in process of establishing themselves as autonomous individuals and those they assume responsibility for their own behavior but there are bound to be experiences that cause these budding individuals to doubt their ability to handle everything on their own. At this points of doubt, the individual begins to experience anxiety. However, despite occasional setbacks and moments of doubts, most children remain undaunted, and are eager to initiate activities and explore new experiences.

Biehler (1976), referring to the stage of initiative versus guilt, explained that if pre-schools are allowed to try out their powers and if parents & patient in answering questions, Erickson suggests the children will develop a sense of initiative and self-confidence but if children are made to feel that their questions and activities are a disturbance to their parents, they feel guilt about trying to do things on their own and thus experience anxiety.

Erickson's theory of anxiety has implications in education

It could therefore be inferred from the above theory that some individuals develop anxiety as they doubt their abilities to certain endeavors. Secondly, when individuals are discouraged from initiating activities which are seen as worthless, some individuals may at this juncture become guilty of what they have initiated and feel anxious. The aspect of Erickson's theory that has closer application to test anxiety is that which deals with anxiety arising from doubt about individual's ability. Certainly, one's doubts of one's ability in test situation characterize the cognitive component of test anxiety.

2.1.3 Maslow's Theory of Anxiety

Abraham Maslow proposed a need hierarchy theory to explain human satisfaction in life. Maslow's proposal of a hierarchy of needs provided the basis for his theory of anxiety. According to Maslow (1970) while at the lower level of the hierarchy are deficiency needs which include physiological, safety, belongingness and love as well as esteem, the higher level of the hierarchy is made up of growth needs which include: self-actualization, knowing and understanding as well as aesthetic. In differentiating between the deficiency and growth needs, he asserted that deficiency needs can be satisfied only by other people and therefore make individuals other-directed and dependent when in difficulty. Conversely, growth needs can be self-satisfied which means that individuals are self-directed and independent, and are able to find their own solutions to difficulties. Maslow therefore asserted that any time children have doubts about safety, being loved or accepted by peers of their abilities compared to others, they may experience feelings of anxiety.

The educational implications of Maslow's theory

Some students may develop test anxiety in the cause of fear that they could lose the love or affection of their parents, teachers, peers, friends and others if they do not perform well academically. Secondly, there is the implications that some students could experience test anxiety as they consistently doubt their abilities compared to others during test situations.

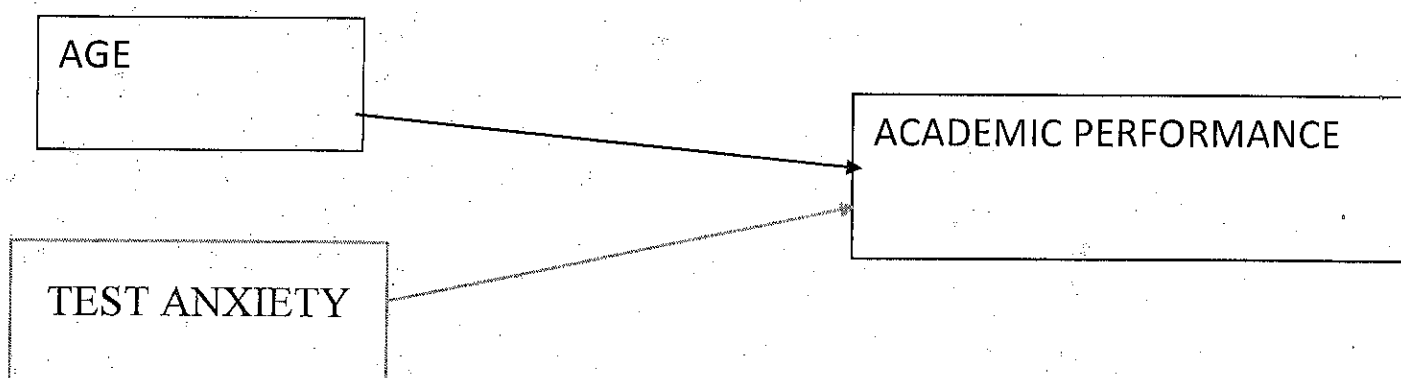
2.1.4 PIAGET THEORY OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Piaget Theory of cognitive Development Piaget's theory of cognitive development is a comprehensive theory about the nature and development of human intelligence. Piaget believed that one's childhood plays a vital and active role in a person's development. Piaget's idea is primarily known as a developmental stage theory. The theory deals with the nature of knowledge itself and how humans gradually come to acquire, construct, and use it. To Piaget, cognitive development was a progressive reorganization of mental processes resulting from biological maturation and environmental experience. He believed that children construct an understanding of the world around them, experience discrepancies between what they already know and what they discover in their environment, and then adjust their ideas accordingly.

Moreover, Piaget claimed that cognitive development is at the center of the human organism and language is contingent on knowledge and understanding acquired through cognitive development. Piaget's earlier work received the greatest attention. Many parent have been encouraged to provide a rich, supportive environment for their child's natural propensity to grow and learn. Child-centered classroom and "open education" are direct application of Piaget's view. This theory explains academic performance of students because ones childhood plays an important role in education and person's development. And it helps human to acquire construct new skills from

childhood and to make use of it in adulthood, this theory also helps to know if it is as a result of biological maturation and environmental experience that makes student to perform excellently or not.

2.2 THEORETICAL CONCEPTUALIZATION



The figure above indicate that when student experience high test anxiety and age different their academic performance is being affected likewise their academic achievement.

2.3 RELATED EMPIRICAL STUDIES

There are also some studies which were conducted in related to **“AGE AND TEST ANXIETY AS CORRELATES OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS.**

Studies such as **‘Impact of test Anxiety and Gender on Academic Performance of Nigerian Pre-Service Science Teachers’**

This study examined the impact of test anxiety and gender on Nigerian pre-service science teachers’ academic performance. The sample for the study was 450 pre-service science education students in intact classes of a College of Education in South-West Nigeria. Penultimate (200 level) and final year (300 level) students from the seven departments (Biology, Chemistry,

Computer Science, Integrated Science, Mathematics, Physical and Health Education and Physics) in the school of science education participated in the study. The instruments for data gathering were the Test Anxiety Inventory scale, and students' CGPA obtained from the aforementioned departments. Data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Major findings of this study are that at low test anxiety, pre-service science teachers performed better with higher CGPAs than their high test anxiety colleagues, female pre-service science students exhibited lower test anxiety than male pre-service science students. Based on the findings, useful recommendations were made.

Another related empirical study is "Effect of Study Habits on Test Anxiety and Academic Achievement of Undergraduate Students"

This study was conducted to investigate the effect of study habits on test anxiety and academic achievement of undergraduate students. A purposive sample comprised of 180 undergraduate students (84 boys and 96 girls) was drawn from a public university. Multivariate analysis of variance indicated that study habits have a significant effect on test anxiety and academic achievement. The findings revealed that students having effective study habits experience low level of test anxiety and perform better academically than students having ineffective study habits. It was also indicated that girls experience higher level of test anxiety as compared to boys. The findings also highlighted that girls exhibit better study habits and excel more academically than boys. Correlation analysis indicated significant positive relationship between study habits and academic achievement and test anxiety was negatively correlated with academic achievement and study habits. These findings highlighted the need to improve study habits of undergraduate students in order to overcome test anxiety and improve their academic achievement.

Another related study is “Examination anxiety and students’ academic performance: Social studies approach”

The study examined examination anxiety of students in Nigeria higher institutions and its consequences among the students. This study noted that examination anxiety contribute negatively to students' academic performance, hence, there is the urgent need to exploring for a salvaging means. The researcher raised two research questions and formulated two research hypotheses to guide the study. The significance of the study stems from the benefits of stake holders such as enhanced students' academic performance. The researcher concluded that examination anxiety is a common phenomenon among higher institutions students that result to poor academic performance and this paved way for the recommendation that acknowledged social studies due to its problem-solving content as an instrumental variable of solving examination anxiety of students in higher institutions.

2.4 STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses are used to guide this study:

Hypothesis 1: Age of university students will have a significant positive correlation with academic performance.

Hypothesis 2: Test anxiety will have a significant negative correlation with academic performance among university students.

Hypotheses 3: Male university students will report significantly higher academic performance than the female university students.

2.5 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

DEMOGRAPHICAL FACTORS: The demographical factors in the research is age.

Age was grouped into older (23-30yrs.) and younger (18-22yrs.).

AGE: was categorized into older (23-30yrs.) and younger (18-22yrs.).

Test anxiety: is defined as chronic emotional state generally characterized by fear, whenever a test is brought to the awareness of pupils, the fear during test is measured by the outcome of the test already done or the test the pupils have partaken in.

Academic Performance: is defined as the score derived from the test the pupil have taken. It is measured by the mean score of the pupil after the test have been taken. For the purpose of this study this is the mean score derived from the test giving to the students.

CHAPTER THREE

METHOD

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

This research is a correlational design to establish the relationship between students test anxiety levels and academic performance among university students.

3.2 SETTING

The study was conducted in Federal University Oye-Ekiti.

3.3 STUDY SAMPLING

The study consisted of 200 participants, the participants were selected using convenience sampling method from the population of the students.

3.4 INSTRUMENT

The researcher made sure that the self-report was use to gather relevant information from the participant of the study. The questionnaire will be divided into two different sections, each of the section will be measuring the variable of concern as well as socio-demographic information of the participant of the study.

The following validated and standardized instrument will be use to gather data form the participant:

Scale on test anxiety: Spielberg (1980) test anxiety inventory (TAI) was used for the purpose of collecting data for this study.

TEST ANXIETY INVENTORY (TAI)

Test Anxiety Inventory was developed by Spielberger (1980), to measure anxiety proneness in tests, examinations and evaluative situations. The test anxiety inventory (TAI) is a twenty-item inventory designed to assess three components of test anxiety. The components include:

1. W-Worry refers to excessive pre-occupation and concern about the outcome of a test, especially the consequences of failure.
2. E-Emotionality refers to an individual's behavioral reactions and feelings aroused by test situations.
3. T-Total anxiety score is the sum of W and E. It refers to the overall cognitive, affective and behavioral reactions to test or examination situations.

Test anxiety inventory (TAI) could be administered individually or in groups after establishing adequate rapport with participants. Participants are always encouraged to read and follow the instructions at the top of the test form. There is no time limit for completing Test Anxiety Inventory (TAI). There are both positively worded and negatively -worded items in the scale. The positively worded items have direct scoring of 1, 2, 3, and 4, while the negatively worded items has reverse scoring of 4, 3,2, 1. The Test Anxiety Inventory reliability and validity have been established in a variety of contexts. Conetta and Tryon 1983 and Devito (1984) states that the TAI is currently the best psychometric instrument to assess test anxiety because of the careful, stepwise manner in which the instrument was constructed, the validity and reliability evidence, and the available normative data. For example, test-retest reliabilities of .80 to .81 were reported for 2 - week to 1-month periods for groups of high school, college, & graduate students. Internal consistency was demonstrated by alpha coefficients ranging from .92 to .96 for five normative samples.

Correlations of .82 to .83 between TAI scores and scores attained from Sarason's (1978) Test Anxiety scale suggest that the two instruments measure essentially the same construct.

The researcher gave out a test to the students, the test scores served as measures the academic performance of the university students.

3.5 VALIDATION OF THE INSTRUMENT

Spielberger (1980) provided the original psychometric properties for American samples. To test for the concurrent validity of the inventory, Spielberger correlated TAI with State-Trait Anxiety inventory forms X-1 and X-2 by Spielberger, Gorsuch and Lushene (1970) and found a concurrent validity coefficient of .67 and .34 (STAI X - 1) for the male and female samples respectively. For the STAI X-2, a concurrent validity of .54 and .48 were obtained for the male and female samples respectively. Spielberger (1980), also found a split-half reliability of .94 and .95 for the male and female samples respectively.

The TAI has been adopted in Nigeria by Omulabi (1993). In validating the scale in Nigeria, Omulabi (1993), also correlate TAI with STAI, and obtained a concurrent validity of .19 for the STAI-X-1 and a concurrent validity of .62 for STAI-X-2 Mean scores of 34.77 was obtained by Nigerian male participants while their female counterparts had a mean score of 34.37. The Nigerian norms or mean scores are the basis for interpreting the scores of participants. Scores that are higher than the norms indicate typical manifestation of worrying, emotionality and general test anxiety. Scores lower than the norms indicates the absence of test anxiety. Based on the fact that Omulabi (1993) administered the TAI on university students, while the present study involved adolescent which age range fall between secondary school students and university students there was need to revalidate the instrument.

3.5 PROCEDURE

The researcher made sure that the self-report was administered to students of federal university Oye-Ekiti, some of the students were reluctant to fill the questionnaire or even accept the self-report instruments, but I had to plead to them by explaining the purpose of the research.

I distributed 200 questionnaire in the school premises and 5 got missing. The self-report instrument is divided into two parts, the first part include statement which concerns ones Test Anxiety behavior which include 20 items and the 4 likert format for student to respond to: 1. Almost never, 2. Sometimes, 3. Often and 4. Almost always. The second part deals with questions intended to collect information about participants like: age, gender, marital status, religion

3.6 STATISTICAL METHODS

The data will be collected from the study's participants. the socio demographic information of the participant will be analyzed using descriptive statistic such mean, frequency e,t,c. the hypotheses stated above will be tested using multiple regression in order to determine the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The mean scores on anxiety test were compared to the mean scores on other variables like-gender, age group.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

The data collected were scored and analyzed. The following are the results:

Table 4.1 Descriptive statistics showing the frequency and percentage of research respondents' socio-demographic characteristics

		N	%
Gender	Male	103	51.5
	Female	97	48.5
Age Group	Early Age group	100	50
	Middle Age group	51	25.5
	Late Age group	49	24.5
Religious Affiliation	Christian	161	80.5
	Muslim	38	19.5
	Traditional Religion	1	.5

Table 1.1 shows the frequency distribution of research participants. Male respondents and female respondents made up 51.5% and 48.5% respectively. 50% of the Research Participants were in the age category of early, 25.5% were in the age category of middle while 24.5% were in the age category of late adolescents. 80.5% of research participants are Christians, 19.5 % are Muslims and a single participant is a traditional worshipper.

Hypothesis One

Age of university students will have a significant positive relationship with academic performance.

Hypothesis one was tested with person correlation, the result was presented in Table 4.2

Table 4.2: Relationship between Age and Academic performance.

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	r	p
AGE	19.89	2.019	200	-.03	>.05
Academic Performance	57.04	19.087	200		

In Table 4.2, the result shows no significant relationship between Age and Academic performance $r = -.03$, $p > .05$. Therefore, hypothesis one is rejected

Hypothesis Two

Test anxiety will have a significant negative relationship with Academic performance among university students.

Table 4.3: Summary of Pearson Correlation Showing the relationship between Academic Performance and Test Anxiety.

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	r	p
Test Anxiety	38.44	9.613	200	-.144	<.05
Academic Performance	57.04	19.087	200		

In Table 4.3 shows that the correlation coefficient between Academic performance and Test Anxiety is Significant. This shows that there is significant relationship between Academic Performance and Test Anxiety ($r = -.114$, $p < .05$). Therefore hypothesis two is accepted.

Hypothesis Three

Male university students will report significantly higher in academic performance than Female university students.

Table 4.4 Relationship between Gender and Academic performance

Variables	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t	p
Academic Performance	male	103	56.37	20.504	198	-0.51	>.05
	female	97	57.75	17.535			

Table 4.4 shows no significant gender difference in academic performance among university students $t = -0.51$, $df = 198$, $p > .05$, therefore hypothesis three was not supported.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND SUMMARY

This chapter deals with the discussion and interpretation of the findings of the study as they relate to research questions and hypotheses. It also presents the conclusion, educational implications of the study, recommendations made from the study, limitations, suggestions for further studies and summary.

5.1 DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

This study attempt to investigate how age and test anxiety serve as correlates of Academic performance. Hypothesis one stated that Age of university students will have a significant positive relationship with academic performance. Contrary to the hypothesis, this study found out that Age does not have a significant effect on Academic performance. An explanation for this result may be that, students have come to view their performance as only significant to meet basic needs of their life in regardless of the age difference. Another reason is that no matter the age group someone belong to be it the young or old it does not really effect academic performance.

In assessing the relationship between test anxiety and Academic performance, independent t-test analysis showed that there is significant difference in the mean scores of participants with low and high test anxiety on academic performance. This study also shows that there is a significant relationship between test anxiety and Academic performance. Therefore hypothesis two is accepted. Although the result shows a negative relationship between test anxiety and academic performance which states that the higher the test anxiety, the lower the academic performance and also, the lower the test anxiety, the higher the academic performance. The present finding is

also in line with Sullivan (2001) who found that test anxiety had a negative relationship on academic achievement for high test-anxious over low test anxious Students. An explanation for this result may be that students who experience fear during a test or exam will perform less in the test while those students who does not experience fear, that is, that are less anxious will perform very well in their test or exam.

In assessing the relationship between Gender and Academic performance, hypothesis three stated that male university students will report significantly higher academic performance than the female university students. Contrary to the hypothesis, the influence of gender on academic performance was not significant, it does not show whether male students perform higher than the female students or otherwise. Therefore there was no significant influence of gender on academic performance.

5.2 CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this research project the result shows that Age does not have a significant relationship on Academic performance among University students. Therefore, it is concluded that age does not correlates with academic performance. On the second independent variable which is test anxiety only negatively account or correlate with Academic performance.

5.3. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

FINDINGS

It was observed in the introduction of this work that test anxiety especially high and low levels adversely affects academic achievement of students to a tremendous extent. Test anxiety

attacks manifest in serious psychological behaviors such as palpitations, shortness of breath, profuse sweating, gastric sensations and dizziness and so on. The Spielberger (1980) Test Anxiety Inventory (TAI) was used to collect the data for this study which indicates how generally students feel during tests. The instrument developed by Spielberger has implications for teachers to know how their students feel when taking test and can now master the techniques of reducing test anxiety from the students. The instrument discriminates students with varying levels of test anxiety and will now be easy for teachers to help student individually overcome test anxiety.

The instrument gives an opportunity to the user to find out how much a student feel by each item of the Test Anxiety Inventory which in turn creates an appropriate treatment techniques to get rid of test anxiety. For the fact that this instrument is reliable and consistency in measuring test anxiety, it has implications for anxiety clinicians because they can use it to monitor each students test anxiety level. In this study, a negative relationship was found to exist between test anxiety and academic achievement of students and that the higher the anxiety level, the lower the academic achievement. The implication is that the academic achievement of test anxious students can be improved by helping them to reduce their anxiety in the examination situation. However, that test anxiety has been found to have negative consequences on the student's academic performance does not imply that all the students who do not perform well intellectually are victims of debilitating test anxiety. Other factors such as low intelligence, poor study habit could be responsible for poor academic performance

Equally, this study has educational implication among the curriculum planners who may entrench in the curriculum other methods of testing that will be less anxiety provoking than the prevalent methods of testing observed in schools today. In a nutshell, there is a general

implication that proper psychological intervention and therapeutic strategies be used by experts to address such problems among students.

5.4. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that all helping professionals working in the secondary school and the university system such as counseling psychologists, clinical psychologists and social personnel should use appropriate instruments to identify students suffering from test anxiety and help them out of the problem. Further researchers should aim at identifying other characteristics of the two types of test anxious students including motivational, cognitive and demographic aspects. It should also explore other situational effects such as school climate and assessment ideology along with a larger variety of test formats or assessment techniques. In other words, the total school ecology should be taken into account in understanding test anxiety. The researcher advocates a school reform through a change from a "testing culture" to an "assessment culture". It seems that investigations aimed at the interactive effects characterizing the three triangle apexes, persons, situation and assessment have the potential of enhancing our understanding of the processes underlying academic performance.

Future researchers should aim towards accumulating more information on the different types of test anxious students such as their relative proportion in the population. They should also attempt to further our understanding of the relationship between these two levels of test anxiety (low and high) and to formulate a more specific diagnosis of the locus of the difficulties of high test anxious students so that training programs may be more specifically targeted. For example, Benjamin (1981) hypothesized that the academic achievement of high test anxious students with poor study skills might be affected directly by their lack of knowledge and indirectly by the

cognitive distraction created by thinking about this poor knowledge in the test situation itself. So, further research should reveal whether these different sources of disadvantage could be dealt with by different types of training.

5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Several limitation of the study should be mentioned and other finding of the study supports the idea that students who are hardworking, organized and disciplined will be less test anxious and are more likely to perform better academically. First, the most important factor for the results of this study was cause by a small number of participant used in the study area which is sample size and randomization. And because of that the results of this study is not representative. Secondly, data were collected using self-reporting questionnaire and participants were reluctant to fill the questionnaire because of the Age that was involved. Lastly, the extent to which the findings can be generalized beyond the scope of our sample remains unclear.

5.6 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

1. For the fact that the study focused on the relationship between test anxiety levels and academic achievement of students, further study should investigate other variables that could affect the academic performance of students.
2. The present instrument should be normed for primary school pupils to determine the relative incidence and magnitude of test anxiety at this level with a view to helping the test anxious pupils to overcome it before entering into secondary school and higher institution of learning.

3. This study should be repeated elsewhere to see whether the findings would be the same as the ones that emerged from this study.

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APPENDIX

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire is designed to obtaining information on questions raised. As part of this exercise, you have been chosen to participate in this study. Therefore, your honest and correct responses are essential for this exercise to be successful. The information you give is strictly for research purpose only, and therefore, whatever information you give will be given utmost confidentiality.

Thank you.

SECTION A

Demographic Information:

Sex: Male () Female ()

Age: (As at last birthday)

Marital status: Married () Single () Separated () Divorced () Others (Please Specify)

Religious Affiliation: Christian () Muslim () Traditional ()

TEST ANXIETY INVENTORY (TAI) SCALE:

The scale was developed by Charles Donald Spielberger (1980), it consists of 20 items. According to Chapell, Blanding, Silverstein, Takahashi, Newman, Gubi, and McCann (2005), the Test Anxiety Inventory is the most important and widely used instrument for the measurement of high school and college students test anxiety Spielberger's Test Anxiety Inventory (1980) is a self-report instrument consisting of 20 items. According to Spielberger, Gonzalez, Taylor, Algaze, and Anton (1978), the development of TAI was based on two goals. These goals were construction of a brief and self-report scale and the employment of factor analytic procedures for the measurement of Worry and Emotionality Subscales. According to Spielberger (1980), Test Anxiety Inventory

is especially designed to measure the test anxiety of high school and college students. It contains three subscales: Test Anxiety-Total (TAI-T), Test Anxiety-Worry (TAI-W), and Test Anxiety-Emotionality (TAI-E). Eight items of Test Anxiety Inventory measure the TAI-W, eight items measure TAI-E and the remaining four for measuring TAI-T. Test Anxiety Inventory is a 4-point Likert type scale and the students have to respond to the four options: (1) Almost Never, (2) Sometimes, (3) Often and (4) Almost Always. The reliability values of alpha coefficient for subscales of original version of Test Anxiety Inventory were: 0.96 for TAI-T, 0.91 for TAI-W and 0.91 for TAI-E. In this section, you are therefore required to provide answers indicating your view on statement provided below.

Please tick the answer most relevant to you inside the box.

S/N	ITEMS	Almost Never	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always
1.	I feel confident and relaxed while taking test.				
2.	While taking examination I have an uneasy, upset feeling.				
3.	Thinking about my grade in a subject interferes with my work on tests.				
4.	I freeze up on important examinations.				
5.	During examinations I find myself thinking about whether I will ever get through school.				
6.	The harder I work at taking a test, the more confused I get.				
7.	Thoughts of doing poorly interfere with my concentration on tests.				
8.	I feel very nervous when taking an important test.				
9.	Even when I'm well prepared for a test, I Almost feel very nervous about it.				

10.	I start feeling very uneasy just before getting a test paper back.				
11.	During tests I feel very tense.				
12.	I wish examinations did not bother me so much.				
13.	During important tests I am so tense that my stomach gets upset.				
14.	I seem to defeat myself while working on important test.				
15.	I feel very panicky when I take an important test.				
16.	I worry a lot before taking an important examination.				
17.	During tests I find myself thinking about the consequences of failing.				
18.	I feel my heart beating very fast during important tests.				
19.	After an examination is over I try to stop worrying about it, but I just can't.				
20.	During examinations I get so nervous that I forget facts I really know.				

Frequencies

Statistics

		Gender	Marital Status	Religious Affiliation	Adolescents' Age group
N	Valid	200	200	200	200
	Missing	0	0	0	0

Frequency Table

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	male	103	51.5	51.5	51.5
	female	97	48.5	48.5	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Marital Status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Married	8	4.0	4.0	4.0
	Single	192	96.0	96.0	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Religious Affiliation

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	christian	161	80.5	80.5	80.5
	muslim	38	19.0	19.0	99.5
	traditional	1	.5	.5	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Adolescents' Age group

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Early Adolescents	100	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Middle Adolescents	51	25.5	25.5	75.5
	Late Adolescents	49	24.5	24.5	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Descriptive

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
AGE	200	14	28	19.89	2.019
Valid N (listwise)	200				

Reliability for Test Anxiety Scale Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	200	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	200	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.855	20

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Test Anxiety1	2.42	.984	200
Test Anxiety2	1.76	.810	200
Test Anxiety3	2.12	1.028	200
Test Anxiety4	1.80	.908	200
Test Anxiety5	1.61	.884	200
Test Anxiety6	1.60	.857	200
Test Anxiety7	1.88	.929	200
Test Anxiety8	1.94	.895	200
Test Anxiety9	1.85	.861	200
Test Anxiety10	1.89	.968	200
Test Anxiety11	1.96	.881	200
Test Anxiety12	2.25	1.088	200
Test Anxiety13	1.75	.908	200
Test Anxiety14	1.77	.889	200
Test Anxiety15	1.89	.892	200
Test Anxiety16	2.00	1.010	200
Test Anxiety17	2.11	1.046	200
Test Anxiety18	2.02	.910	200
Test Anxiety19	2.06	.973	200
Test Anxiety20	1.81	.829	200

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Test Anxiety1	36.02	95.457	-.208	.875
Test Anxiety2	36.68	84.411	.494	.847
Test Anxiety3	36.32	84.802	.346	.853
Test Anxiety4	36.64	83.710	.475	.848
Test Anxiety5	36.83	84.346	.449	.849
Test Anxiety6	36.84	84.889	.430	.849
Test Anxiety7	36.56	83.383	.481	.847
Test Anxiety8	36.50	83.276	.511	.846
Test Anxiety9	36.59	83.571	.515	.846
Test Anxiety10	36.55	81.545	.569	.844
Test Anxiety11	36.48	82.904	.544	.845
Test Anxiety12	36.19	82.141	.461	.848
Test Anxiety13	36.69	82.255	.567	.844
Test Anxiety14	36.67	84.887	.411	.850
Test Anxiety15	36.55	81.606	.621	.842
Test Anxiety16	36.44	82.831	.466	.848
Test Anxiety17	36.33	83.567	.406	.851
Test Anxiety18	36.42	82.235	.566	.844
Test Anxiety19	36.38	83.754	.433	.849
Test Anxiety20	36.63	85.261	.423	.850

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
38.44	92.418	9.613	20

Correlations

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Adolescents' Age group	1.75	.827	200
AGE	19.89	2.019	200
Test Anxiety	38.44	9.613	200
Academic Performance	57.04	19.087	200

Correlations

		Adolescents' Age group	AGE	Test Anxiety	Academic Performance
		1	.037	-.017	.123
			.600	-.812	.083
AGE	Pearson Correlation	200	200	200	200
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.037	1	-.030	-.032
	N	.600	.674	.657	.657
Test Anxiety	Pearson Correlation	-.017	-.030	1	-.144*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.812	.674		.042
	N	200	200	200	200
Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	.123	-.032	-.144*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.083	.657	.042	
	N	200	200	200	200

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

T-Test

Group Statistics

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Academic Performance	Male	103	56.37	20.504	2.020
	female	97	57.75	17.535	1.780

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			
		F	Sig.	t	d
Academic Performance	Equal variances assumed	4.287	.040	-.511	19
	Equal variances not assumed			-.514	