

# Assess the Effectiveness of Bibliotherapy on Exam Anxiety Reduction among B.Sc. Nursing Students

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## Abstract

**Background:** Bibliotherapy is the best and effective way of managing exam anxiety because it allows the reader to assess with a character and realize that he or she is not the only person with a particular problem. As the character works through a problem, the reader is emotionally involved in the issue and primarily achieves insight of his or her own situation. It allows interaction among the participants who share common needs or interests. **Objectives:** To assess the pre test level of exam anxiety among first year Nursing students. To assess the effectiveness of bibliotherapy on exam anxiety among first year nursing students. To associate the pre-test level of exam anxiety with selected demographic variables among first year Nursing students. **Methodology:** A pre-experimental study with one group pre test- post test design was used in this study. The population of the study, 30 first year nursing students with exam anxiety was selected by purposive sampling. To assess the level of exam with Sarason's exam Anxiety Scale. After assessing the level of exam anxiety administered bibliotherapy for 15 days followed that post-test after 7 days. **Results:** The mean pre-test level of exam anxiety was  $18.37 \pm 3$  and the post-test level of test anxiety was  $8.33 \pm 3$ . The effectiveness of bibliotherapy was tested in terms of reduction in exam anxiety in post-test at 0.05 level of significance. The mean pre-test and post-test level of test anxiety was analysed and the findings were significant at 0.05 level. The associations of pre-test level of test anxiety were found to be significant with age, family income and residential area at 0.05 level of significance. **Conclusion:** This study has shown that bibliotherapy plays a major role in reducing the level of exam anxiety among the first year nursing students. It would help the students to acquire better coping solutions in order to face a future carrier examinations. **Keywords:** Effectiveness; Bibliotherapy; exam anxiety; Nursing students

## Introduction

Stress isn't always bad. In small doses, it can help the individual to perform under pressure and motivate him to do the best. But when the individual constantly running in emergency mode, the mind and body pay the price.<sup>1</sup> In stressful situations, such as before and during an exam, the body releases a hormone called adrenaline. This helps to 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 the person 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 prepare the person to deal effectively with stressful situations, ensuring those people are alert and read.<sup>2</sup>

Nursing colleges are highly stressful. Two stressors related to nursing institutes may be stress of examinations and high threshold of standards that they implement in

their programs; many programs require that students achieve certain percentages on every examination in order to progress. Thus, testing has high consequences and this may exacerbate any anxiety associated with testing. Exam anxiety is the result of many interrelated beliefs and experiences. Ineffective study methods can lead to anxiety and a lowered self-image.<sup>3</sup>

Bibliotherapy is effective because it allows the reader to identify with a character and realize that he or she is not the only person with a particular problem. As the character works through a problem, the reader is emotionally involved in the struggle and ultimately achieves insight of his or her own situation. Bibliotherapy allows interaction among the participants who share common needs or interests, provides security to students who feel uncomfortable if singled out for attention, allows for sharing of experiences which serves to lessen anxieties, promote feelings of belonging, and

improve self-concept, lead students to appreciate others who are in some way different, thus aiding in social development.<sup>4</sup>

According to the results of a descriptive study conducted in India among 159 high school students, 39.7% of boys and 40.4% of girls who belongs to 10th grade experienced high level of test anxiety. The study concluded that high level of test anxiety were evident in high school students who are preparing for the examination.<sup>5</sup>

A study was conducted in Kolkata, India to understand better anxiety among adolescents. Data was collected from 460 adolescents of 13-17years of age by using State-Trait Anxiety Inventory. Study results shown that 20.1% of boys and 17.9% of girls found to be suffering from high anxiety. Adolescents from Bengali medium schools were more anxious than adolescents from English medium schools. Adolescents belonging to middle socio-economic group suffered more of anxiety than those from both high and low socio-economic groups. Adolescents with working mothers were found to be more anxious.<sup>6</sup>

**Problem Statement**

A study to assess the effectiveness of bibliotherapy on exam anxiety reduction among first year nursing students in selected nursing colleges at Coimbatore.

**Objectives of the study**

- To assess the pre test level of exam anxiety among first year nursing students.
- To assess the effectiveness of bibliotherapy on exam anxiety among first year nursing students.
- To associate the pre-test level of exam anxiety with selected demographic variables among first year Nursing students

**Hypotheses:** H<sub>1</sub>: There will be a significant difference between the mean pre-test level of exam anxiety and mean post-test level of exam anxiety among first year nursing students. H<sub>2</sub>: There will be significant association between pre-test level of exam anxiety with selected demographic variables among first year nursing students

**Methodology**

Evaluative approach was used in the present study.

A pre-experimental design that is, one group pre-test - post-test design because the study was intended to assess the 30 nursing students at Sree Abirami College Of Nursing. Purposivesampling usedfor selecting samples Data were collected from the subjects by using Sarason’s exam Anxiety Scale and demographic proforma.

**Results**

**Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of students according to Demographic Variables**

n = 30

S.no	Sample Characteristics	Category	F	%
1	Age	17 Yrs	14	46.7
		18 Yrs	16	53.3
2	Residence	Rural	26	86.6
		Urban	4	13.3
3	Education Father	Secondary	20	67
		Graduate	10	33
4	Education Mother	Secondary	28	93
		Graduate	2	7
5	Occupation Mother	Service	3	10
		Non Service	27	90
6	Occupation Father	Self Employed	14	46.7
		Government	3	10
		Daily Wages	13	43
7	Family Income	Below 10,000	15	50
		10,000-20,000	15	50

Demographic Characteristics Category Students Frequency (f) Percentage (%) Age group 17 years 14 (46.7%) 18 years 16 (53.3%) Residential area Rural 26 (86.6%) Urban 4 (13.3%) Educational status of Father Secondary 20 (67%) Graduate 10 (33%) Educational status of Mother Secondary 28 (93.35) Graduate 2 (7%) Occupation of Father Government 3 (10%) daily wages 13 (43%) Self employed 14 (46.7%) Occupation of Mother Service 3 (10%) Housewife 27 (90%) Family income / month Below Rs.10, 000, 15 (50 %) Rs.10000-20,000, 15 (50%).

**Table 2: Pre-test level of exam anxiety among first year nursing students**

Level	Category	f	%
Low	1-10	0	0
Moderate	11-20	22	73
High	21-30	8	17

**Table 3: Mean, Standard Deviation and Mean percentage of pre-test level of test anxiety among first year nursing students n = 30**

Pre test	Mean	SD	Mean %
	18.37	3	61.2

The findings of the study revealed that majority (61.2%) of the nursing students experienced moderate to high range level of exam anxiety. Pre-test score of exam anxiety ranged from 14- 28. The mean pre- test score of the group was 18.37±3. This indicates that the subjects had anxiety related to exam.

**TABLE 4: Area wise pre test mean exam anxiety scores.**

S.no	Areas	scores	Mean	SD	Mean %
1	General exam taking anxiety	15	8.63	1.8	58
2	Expression of bodily symptoms	7	4.27	1.5	61
3	Thought distribution	8	5.47	1.4	68

It reveals that 57.6% of the students had experienced general test taking anxiety and 61.0% had experienced bodily symptoms related to a test whereas more people (68.3%) experienced thought disruption when taking a test.

The effectiveness of bibliotherapy on exam anxiety among first year nursing students

Low level anxiety f(22) 73.3% ,moderate f (8) 17%,high f (0) 0%.post-test level of test anxiety among the nursing students had reduced. The percentage of

students with moderate level of test anxiety was reduced to 16.7% and no students were in the category of high range of test anxiety

*Mean, Standard Deviation and Mean percentage of post –test level of test anxiety among students:*

The average level of test anxiety in posttest is 8.33±3, with mean percentage of 27.8%.

Figure 1 Pre-test and Post-test Mean scores of students on Test Anxiety Reduction among first year B.Sc. nursing students

Significant at 5% level( $t=13.96, p \leq 0.05, df=2.045$ )

Paired  $t$ -test ( $t = 13.96, p \leq 0.05$ ). The obtained result is greater than that of table value thus, the hypothesis  $H_1$  is accepted that is there is a significant difference in the mean pre-test level of test anxiety and the mean post-test level of test anxiety. It indicates that bibliotherapy was effective in reducing test anxiety among first year B.Sc. nursing students.

*Association of the pre-test level of exam anxiety with selected demographic variables of first year nursing students:*

The finding conveys that the association between pre-test level of test anxiety with age, residential area and family income of the students was statistically significant at 0.05 level. There was no association between test anxiety and variables such as occupational and educational status of parents. Hence, the hypothesis  $H_2$  was accepted in relation to the variables age, residential area and family income that is, there was significant association between the demographic variables and pre-test level of exam anxiety.

## Discussion

The study findings proved that even though the students have prior experience in writing exam they all were experiencing moderate to high range of anxiety when they have to face the exam. The mean post-test level of test anxiety was 18.37±3 and the post-test level of test anxiety was 8.33±3. The effectiveness of bibliotherapy was tested in terms of reduction in exam anxiety in post-test at 0.05 level of significance. The mean pre-test and post-test level of exam anxiety was analyzed and the findings were statistically significant at 0.05 level.

## Conclusion

There is an emergency need to deal with the issues of the students associated with writing an exam. Most of the students had moderate to high range of exam anxiety. It also helped a great deal to explore and improve the knowledge of the area as well as to minimize the level of exam anxiety of the students. The constant encouragement, timely corrections and guidance, cooperation and interest of students will reduce the exam anxiety.,

**Conflict of Interest:** There was no such issue

**Source of funding:** Funding was by self-finance

## Ethical Clearance

- Permission taken from Principal of Sree Abirami College Of Nursing.
- Written consent was taken from all the participants.

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