Examination Anxiety and Shyness among Secondary School Students in Kwara State, Nigeria

O. A. Olakojo
M. O. Ojo

ABSTRACT

Shyness and examination anxiety are behavioural realities among students in this generation and because of its adverse effect in Nigeria educational system, it needs cogent and urgent intervention. This study investigates examination anxiety and shyness among students in secondary schools in Kwara State. Multistage sampling technique is used for selecting 600 secondary school students. At stage one, two hundred students were randomly selected from each of the three senatorial districts in Kwara State: Kwara south, Kwara central and Kwara North. At stage two, the researchers stratified the respondents into different state based on variable of gender and class. In stage three, the researchers employed simple random sampling technique to select 600 secondary school students consisting of 330 males and 270 females. The questionnaire used is entitled "Examination Anxiety and Shyness Questionnaire (EASQ). T-test statistics is used to test the hypotheses. Findings show that the hypotheses 1 and 3 were significant and hypotheses 2 and 4 were not significant. The level of significance is set at 0.05 and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for hypotheses 3,4,5 and 6. Generally, the results show that majority of the respondents are examination-anxious and are shy. Implication of the findings is that shyness and examination anxiety are behavioural realities among students. Hence, the school counsellors should pay special attention to these students behavioural realities (shyness and examination anxiety).

Keywords: *Academic Performance, Anxiety, Examination, Examination Anxiety, Features and Shyness*

INTRODUCTION

Education is an important feature of every society. Its importance to national development cannot be over-emphasized. Education is also a process by which

O. A. Olakojo is a Lecturer in the Department of Counselling and Psychology, The College of Education, Lanlate, Oyo State, while M. O. Ojo is a staff of Oyo Teaching Service Commision, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. E-mail: olakojoolayide@gmail.com, ojomikeng@gmail.com.

an individual gains knowledge or insight, or develops attitudes or skills. It is acquired through organized study or instruction, as in a school or college. Education can also be seen as discipline that is concerned with methods of teaching and learning in schools or school-like environments as opposed to various non-formal and informal means of socialization, for example, rural development projects and education through parent-child relationships *(https:// www.britannica.com/topic/education).* It helps in the search for better life, better values, expansion of human domains of knowledge, and it enriches the life of the recipients. The Federal Government of Nigeria has adopted education as "an instrument par excellence for effecting national development" (FGN, 2003). The objectives of education as stated in the National Policy on Education (2003) at all levels include:

(i)   Raising a generation of people who can think for themselves;
(ii)   Respecting the view and feelings of others;
(iii)   Respecting the dignity of labour and appreciating those values specified under the broad National aims and living as good citizens; and
(iv)   Inspiration of students with a desire for achievement and self-improvement both at school and in later life. (p.16).

For the aims and objectives of education to materialize, the school has remained the major outlet for imparting knowledge to students, and the teachers are the principal agents to do this as well as other activities which may be broadly categorized as curriculum planning, actual teaching and evaluation. The educational evaluation is an integral part of the teaching-learning process and it occupied a prominent place in the teacher-training curriculum as well as the students' validation (Obe, 1980). Achebe (1982) states that in evaluating, one ascertains the amount of, or finds numerical expression for scores as well as assess results of test or other varieties of observations. One important tool used for the purpose of evaluation is examination. Ipaye (1982), defines examinations as those ends-of-term or end-of-course assessment procedures. Okoye (1986) views examination as an organized assessment technique which presents the individual with a series of questions or tasks geared towards ascertaining the persons acquired skills, knowledge, content and ability to utilize this knowledge and skills effectively. Similarly, Obe (1980) and Olayinka (1983) as cited in Olayinka and Omoegun (2000) note that examinations are instruments used to measure what has been accomplished during the period of study, which weighs each candidate's sum of knowledge and appraises his/her ability.

Examination has become and remain one of the most powerful instruments of the school system for evaluating students' performance and being successful at it remains paramount in every candidate's mind. Examinations come and go each year, but students are not immune from the anxiety which it brings periodically. Unfortunately, there is no short cut to taking examinations. Regardless of the indispensable place of examination in the educational setting, students are never comfortable with examinations. Students feel anxious about examination for a number of reasons which include parental expectations, lack of preparation, and societal pressures. Thus, most students are faced with the problem of examination anxiety, which upsets them and make them feel tensed and confused.

Aderoju (1995) sees it as a critical issue that continues to generate a lot of concern among those who are engaged in academic pursuits. Since examination is the key to success and progress at all levels of academic pursuits. Without examination and academic achievement, there is no promotion. The experience many times caused the students to be disorganized and may even fail the examination. Anxiety is a state of worry, panic, tension, confusion or lack of confidence in one's self. Anxiety reactions have physiological effects, with increased heartbeat, irregular breathing, excessive perspiration, headaches, tremors, dizziness, restlessness, and inability to sleep. Anxiety attacks may become extreme and severe, and medication is sometimes necessary to relieve physical symptoms. An anxious person may experience depression in situations where a well-adjusted person experiences little or no anxiety.

A deviant behaviour, such as 'shyness' that comes from failure of social controls to produce behaviour in conformity with the norms of the social system can be closely linked with examination anxiety (Omotosho, 1990). Technically, shyness is anxiety in social situations. Shyness is a feeling of fear of embarrasment. It is one's inability to face reality. The vast majority of shy people are neither regarded as sick nor bearers of anxiety disorder by medical criteria. Shyness is a common occurrence linked to specific situations for instance, examination, speaking in public among others. BAsed on the foregoing, it is imperative to study examination anxiety and shyness among secondary school students in Kwara State, the main purpose of this study. Hence, the following research hypotheses, were formulated to guide the study:

1.   There is no significant difference in the features of examination anxiety among secondary school students in Kwara State on the basis of gender.
2.   There is no significant difference in features of shyness among secondary school students in Kwara State on the basis of gender.

3. There is no significant difference in the features of examination anxiety among secondary school students in Kwara State on the basis of class.
4. There is no significant difference in features of shyness among secondary school students in Kwara State on the basis of their class.
5. There is no significant difference in the features of examination anxiety among secondary school students in Kwara State on the basis of religious affiliation.
6. There is no significant difference in features of shyness among secondary school students in Kwara State on the basis of religious affiliation.

METHOD

The research design adopted for this study was the descriptive survey method. The various independent variables that were considered are gender, class, and religious affiliation of the respondents. The target population for the study consists of all secondary school students in Kwara State. It is from this group that a sample of six hundred (600) students was selected for the study.

Multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted. At stage one; the researcher randomly selected six secondary schools from the three senatorial districts of the State. At stage two, stratified random sampling was used to classify and select the respondents on the basis of their gender, class and religious affiliation. The sample for the study therefore, comprises 600 students of which 330 were male respondents and 270 were female respondents.

The instrument used for data collection is a questionnaire entitled: "Examination Anxiety and Shyness Questionnaire" (EASQ) developed by the researchers. The instrument has three sections: Section A, B and C. Section A is designed to elicit information on personal data of the respondents which include gender, class and religious affiliation. Section B consists of 20 items on Examination anxiety while Section C also consists of 20 items on shyness. A 3-point response format was adopted for use in Sections B and C, for easy elicit of information needed, thus:

ATM – Always True of Me (3 points)

TM - True of Me (2 points)

NTM – Never True of Me (1 point)

In section B, the highest possible score any respondent can obtain is 60 (i.e 20 x 3) while the lowest possible score is 20 (i.e 20 x1). Therefore, the range is 40

(that is, 60 – 20). The midpoint of range is 20 (that is to say, 40/2). The cut-off point is therefore 60 - 20 (which is the maximum score minus the midpoint of the range) or 20 + 20 (which is the minimum score plus (+) the midpoint of the range), in which either case is 40. Thus, respondents who obtained scores from 40 - 60 were considered as having higher examination anxiety level, while those who scored below 40 were considered as having lower examination anxiety level. For section C, the highest expected score for section C is 60, followed by 40, and 20 respectively. It is assumed that students' choice would alternate between the options, so the researcher set a cut-off range of between 40 and 60 to identify students who are shy and between 20 and 40 was used to identify students who are not shy.

In order to ascertain the reliability of the instrument, the first draft of that questionnaire was administered to thirty representative sample of the students in some selected secondary schools in Oyo State. This was to serve as a pre-test to ensure that the items are not ambiguous, and the words are well understood and appropriate for the study. The validity and reliability of the instrument were established as follows: The content validity procedure was used to validate the instrument. The researcher gave out the instrument to 5 experts in the Department of Counsellor Education to vet. Corrections were carried out based on their observations and suggestions; on these assessments, the instrument was adjudged by all the experts as having content validity. The reliability of the instrument was determined using a test-retest reliability procedure. The instrument was administered twice to 30 secondary school students, within an interval of four weeks. The two results were correlated using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient. The result was an 'r' of 0.68 which was considered high enough for an instrument of this nature. The questionnaire forms were administered by the researcher with the help of some research assistants. This is to ensure that the students filled the questions correctly, and also to ensure easy collection after completion.

The researcher employed both descriptive and inferential statistics for data analysis. The descriptive statistics used include: mean scores and simple percentage. T-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were employed to test the research hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level. According to Adana (1996) and Hassan (1998), the t-test statistical tool is a parametric test often used to compare the means of two groups. This statistical tool was used to test hypotheses one and two. Hassan (1998) states that ANOVA statistics is appropriate for use when the researcher is dealing with more than two independent groups. Therefore, the

choice of ANOVA statistics was considered appropriate for testing hypotheses three, four, five and six in this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result in Table 1 indicates that a calculated t-value of -2.32 which is less than a critical t-value of 1.96 at 0.05 alpha level. On this basis, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the features of examination anxiety among male and female secondary school students in Kwara State is therefore rejected. The result in Table 2 indicates that the calculated t-value of -1.17 is less than the critical t-value of 1.96 on this basis; the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the features of shyness between male and female secondary school students in Kwara State is therefore accepted. The result in Table 3 indicates a calculated F-ratio of 11.94 which is greater than critical F-ratio of 3.00 at 0.5 alpha level of significance. This shows a significant difference and the hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the features of examination anxiety among secondary school students in Kwara State on the basis of class was rejected. Since there is a significant difference among the respondents, Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) was used as a post-hoc test to determine the class group that was responsible for the significant difference.

In Table 4, the Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) statistics was used to determine which of the class group means. The DMRT result shows that group 3 (with a mean score of 51.41) is similar to group 1 (with a mean score of 51.12) but differed significantly from group 2 (with a mean score of 48. 22). Group 1 (with a mean score of 51.12) is similar to group 3 (with a mean score of 51.41) and differed significantly from group 2 (with a mean score of 48.22). Group 2 (with a mean score of 48.22) differed significantly from groups 3 and 1 (with mean scores of 51.41 and 51.12) respectively. However, it is important to note that groups 3 and 1 differed significantly from group 2.

The result in Table 5 indicates a calculated F-ratio of 9.97 which is greater than a critical F-ratio of 3.00 at 0.05 alpha level of significance. This suggests that there is no significant difference in features of shyness among secondary school students in Kwara State on the basis of their class. Since there is a significant difference among the respondents, Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) was used as a post-hoc test to determine the class group that was responsible for the significant difference.

In Table 6, the Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) statistics was used to determine which of the class group. The DMRT results indicated that group 3 (with a mean score of 51.06) differed from groups 1 and 2 with mean scores of 50.27 and 48.01 respectively. Group 1 (with a mean score of 50.27) differed from groups 3 and 2 with mean scores of 51.06 and 48.01 respectively. Group 2 (with a mean score of 48.01) differed from groups 3 and 1 with mean scores of 51.06 and 50.27 respectively. However, it is important to note that group 1, 2 and 3 differed from one another. Thus, hypothesis five was rejected. Since there is a significant difference among the respondents, Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) was used as a post-hoc test to determine the class that was responsible for the significant difference.

Result in Table 7 reveals that the calculated F-ratio of 0.29 is less than a critical F-ratio of 3.00 at 0.05 alpha level of significance; hence, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the features of examination anxiety among secondary school students in Kwara State on the basis of religious affiliation is accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in examination anxiety level of students on the basis of religious affiliation. The result in Table 8 indicates a calculated F-ratio of 0.74 which is less than a critical F-ratio of 3.00 at 0.05 alpha level of significance. This suggests that there is no significant difference in features of shyness among secondary school students in Kwara State on the basis of religious affiliation.

Table 1: Means, Standard Deviation and t-value on features of examination anxiety among male and female secondary school students in Kwara State.

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	Calculated t-value	Critical t-value
Male	330	49.55	7.51	598	-2.32*	1.96
Female	270	50.93	7.04			

* Not Significant at 0.05 alpha level.   *Source:* Survey, 2015

Table 2: Means, Standard Deviations and t-value of Male and Female Secondary School Student in their Shyness Level

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	Calculated t-value	Critical t-value
Male	330	49.36	6.72	598	-1.17	1.96
Female	270	50.93	7.04			

Significant at 0.05   *Source:* Survey, 2015

Table 3: Analysis of Variance on features of Examination Anxiety among Respondents on the Basis of Class level

Sources of variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	Calculated F-ratio	Critical F-ratio
Between Groups	1237.065	2	618.532	11.94*	3.00
Within Groups	30929.595	597	51.808		
Corrected Total	32166.660	599			

* Not Significant at 0.05 alpha level. *Source:* Survey, 2015

Table 4: Duncan's Multiple Range Test (DMRT) Showing Differences in Examination Anxiety Level of Secondary School Students On The Basis Of Class

Duncan's grouping	Means	N	Group	Class Group
A	51.41	134	3	Commercial
A	51.12	256	1	Science
C	48.22	210	2	Arts

Source: Survey, 2015

Table 5: Analysis of Variance on features of Shyness among Respondents on the basis of class level.

Sources of variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	Calculated F-ratio	Critical F-ratio
Between Groups	927.619	2	463.810	9.97*	3.00
Within Groups	27785.339	597	46.542		
Total	28712.958	599			

* Not Significant at 0.05 alpha level. *Source:* Survey, 2015

Table 6: Duncan's Multiple Range Test (DMRT) Showing Differences in Shyness Level of Secondary School Students on the Basis of Class

Duncan's grouping	Means	N	Group	Class Group
A	51.06	134	3	Commercial
B	50.27	256	1	Science
C	48.01	210	2	Arts

Source: Survey, 2015

Table 7: Analysis of Variance on features of Examination Anxiety among Respondents on the Basis of Religious Affiliation

Sources of variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	Cal. F-ratio	Critical F-ratio
Between Groups	24.448	2	12.224	0.23	3.00
Within Groups	23142.212	597	53.840		
Total	23166.660	599			

Source: Survey, 2015

Table 8: Summary of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on features of Shyness among Respondents on the Basis of Religious Affiliation

Sources of variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	Cal. F-ratio	Critical F-ratio
Between Groups	70.840	2	35.420	.74	3.00
Within Groups	28642.118	597	47.977		
Total	28712.958	599			

Source: Survey, 2015

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The general analysis of the findings using t-test and Analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistics has brought out the major differences in the features of examination anxiety and shyness among secondary school students in Kwara State. The results were found and thus summarized as follows: There is statistically significant difference between male and female secondary school students in Kwara State in their features of examination anxiety. There is no significant difference in features of shyness between male and female secondary school students in Kwara State. There is statistically significant difference among secondary school students in Kwara State in their features of examination anxiety on the basis of class. Significant difference was observed in the features of shyness among secondary school student in Kwara State on the basis of class. There is no significant difference in features of examination anxiety of secondary school students in Kwara State on the basis of religious affiliation. Hence, the school counsellors should pay special attention to these students behavioural realities (shyness and examination anxiety).

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