

## Examination anxiety in junior college youth of Mumbai who participated in LSE training workshops

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### Abstract

AACCI (Association of Adolescent and child care in India) is a recently formed NGO from Mumbai. It works for children and youth through parents and teachers in schools and colleges. One of its main aims is Life skill education (LSE) for teens. Through life skill approach it aims at prevention of life style disorders and promotion of mental health. In the period July 08 to January 09, AACCI held LSE Workshops in 3 colleges from South Mumbai, a fairly socially advantaged area of a large cosmopolitan metropolis. Each workshop had around 31 students each. This was the first time that the students and teachers had heard of life skill education program and participated in one.

**Aims** These workshops were mainly done to orient junior's colleges in Mumbai to LSE programs and to pick up students interested and capable of being Peer Educators. It was decided to also use this opportunity to analyze various other parameters. A lot of pre and post questionnaires were given to the participants. These results are presented in other papers. One of them was the Freidman's anxiety scale.

**Methodology** The Freidman's anxiety scale consists of 23 items concerning 3 major factors: social, cognitive blocking and nervous tension requiring a simple yes/no response. This one page profroma was given to the students to fill to see exam related fears and anxiety. The students were asked not to put their names but only age, gender and the subject they were studying so that they would feel more inclined to answer honestly

**Sample** Workshops were held in three colleges which catered to different Socio-economic status. There were a total of 93 students (36 males and 57 females), age ranging from (16-17 years). College A and B were the typical parent dependant youngsters in standard 11 class studying for getting into professional courses, admission which is based on the 12<sup>th</sup> standard marks and the age ranged from 16-18 yrs .College C was a vocational college which had older students who were already doing part time jobs and earning and were more mature in their thoughts and the age ranged from 17-21 yrs

**i. Socio-economic status:** the group from EC involves the typical middle class and both parenst working nuclear families. the pressure on the kids therefore is tremendous to achieve goals and targets that will help them ascertain their professional degrees and future career prospects. This is an important finding because it throws light on the examination system in India. Herein, the emphasis has always been on good performance in the board examination, i.e. the public examination to be given in standard X. This increase is reflected in the scores for

standard IX. This is a finding seen in earlier studies (Sovani et al, 2000). This in comparison the KC and SC shows the children to belong to business class families with no specific need for a vocational aspiration.

- ii.** **Age:** again it was evident that the young aspirants were found to be the most stressed as compared to the early adult group. This may perhaps be attributed to a relatively high scholastic demand from them at this stage, when the novelty of college is enticing, and public examinations are still by far the only way to grab a seat in the professional degree of their choice. What is a little alarming, however, is that even the young independent adults with apparently the least symptom levels, are nevertheless mildly symptomatic!
- iii.** **Factors on the Friedman Scale:** Across all the three factors it was noticed that **social derogation** was found to be the highest at all three groups. This has a very high implication on the Indian scenario where examinations and the marks scored in them are placed at a pedestal. This then serves as a yardstick for evaluating the “worth” of a child. Thereby placing a tremendous pressure and forcing them to drive the lane of performance outcome rather than effort orientation.

**Cognitive blocking and tension** were also seen to be present but the overall distribution of the score on these factors was found to be more uniform in the independent group as compared to dependents. This explains that they have learnt the strategies and coping mechanism to deal effectively and efficiently with the exam related stress and anxiety.