

The Development and Validation of New Anxiety Test for Adults

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ABSTRACT

There is a need for a contemporary and reliable scale to assess the impact of test anxiety in adults since adult testing has grown in India. The domain of adult test anxiety is considered to consist of eight dimensions: Physical Manifestation, Psychological Manifestation, Family Anxiety, Social Approval and Relations, Concerns About Success and Failure, Concerns About the Future, Guilt and Shame, and Emotional Anxieties. The evolution of the Anxiety Test (Adults) encompasses four stages: planning, building, quantitative evaluation, and validation. A 125-item scale was presented to a developmental sample (N=400) of adults aged 22 to 55 years to acquire item analysis and reliability estimations, resulting in a refined 80-item measure. The diminished scale was applied to a validation sample (N=200) to acquire evidence of construct validity. An eight-factor structure adequately aligned with the data. Future research recommendations utilizing the scale are delineated.

Keywords: *Anxiety Test for Adults; Reliability; Scale Development; Construct Validity*

Anxiety is an emotion characterized by fear, apprehension, and discomfort. It may induce perspiration, restlessness, tension, and an accelerated heartbeat. It may be a typical response to stress. For instance, one may have anxiety when confronted with a challenging issue at work, prior to an examination, or before making a significant decision. It can assist you in managing. Anxiety may provide an increase in energy or enhance concentration. However, for individuals with anxiety disorders, the worry is persistent and can be debilitating.

Anxiety is a diffuse and unfocused sensation of discomfort and apprehension that arises as an exaggerated response to a perceived threatening situation. It is frequently associated with muscular tension, restlessness, weariness, dyspnea, abdominal tightness, nausea, and attention difficulties. Fear, a reaction to an actual or perceived imminent threat (the fight-or-flight response), intricately links to anxiety; anxiety encompasses the anticipation of a future threat, including apprehension. Individuals experiencing anxiety may retreat from circumstances that have previously elicited anxiety.

Anxiety may endure beyond the developmentally appropriate timeframes in reaction to particular situations, potentially evolving into various anxiety disorders (e.g., generalized

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anxiety disorder, panic disorder). The distinction between anxiety disorder (as a mental condition) and anxiety (as a normal feeling) lies in the fact that individuals with an anxiety disorder suffer excessive or persistent anxiety for typically six months or for shorter durations in children. Anxiety disorders are among the most enduring mental health issues, frequently persisting for decades. Anxiety may also manifest in other mental diseases, such as obsessive-compulsive disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder.

A detailed discussion of anxiety among adults, focusing on its important factors supported by the latest relevant studies. The genetics play a significant role in the predisposition to anxiety disorders, with heritability estimates suggesting that genetic factor account for 30-50 percent of the risk **Otowa et al. (2022)** explored the genetic basis of anxiety disorders, identifying several genetic loci associated with an increased risk of developing anxiety. Neurobiological factors, including brain structure and function, neurotransmitter systems and hormonal imbalance are crucial in the pathophysiology of anxiety. **Shin and Liberzon (2021)** examined the neural circuits involved in anxiety, highlighting the role of the amygdala, prefrontal cortex and hippocampus in anxiety regulation.

Psychological factors, including cognitive patterns, personality traits and coping mechanisms are significant contributors to anxiety. **Back et.al. (2022)** examined cognitive distortions and their role in anxiety, finding that individuals with higher levels of cognitive distortions are more prone to anxiety disorders. Environmental factors, including trauma, stress and adverse life events, significantly contribute to the development and exacerbation of anxiety disorders. **Kessler et.al. (2023)** investigated the impact of adverse childhood experiences on the development of anxiety disorders in adulthood, finding a strong correlation between high adverse childhood experiences and increased risk of anxiety.

Social factors, such as social support, relationships and socio-economic status play a crucial role in the development and maintenance of anxiety disorders. **Cohen, et al. (2023)** investigated the impact of social support on anxiety levels, finding that individuals with strong social support networks experience lower levels of anxiety. Life style factors including physical activity, diet and sleep also significantly influence anxiety levels. **Zschncke, et.al. (2021)** examined the relationship between physical activity and anxiety concluding that regular physical activity is associated with reduced anxiety symptoms. **Jacka, et.al. (2022)** focused on the impact of diet on anxiety, finding that a diet rich in fruits, vegetables and whole grains is associated with lower anxiety levels.

Grover and Dutt (2023) investigated the prevalence of anxiety disorders in an urban population of India and identified key risk factors such as chronic medical conditions, stressful life events and lack of social support. **Kumar and Nayar (2022)** studied the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on anxiety levels among Indian adults and found a significant increase in anxiety symptoms due to factors such as health concerns, financial instability and social isolation.

Sharma and Tripathi (2021) explored gender differences in anxiety among Indian adults and found that women reported higher levels of anxiety compared to men, potentially due to societal pressures and gender roles. **Rao and Mishra (2022)** evaluated the effectiveness of cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) in treating anxiety disorders among Indian adults, showing significant reductions in anxiety symptoms post-intervention.

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Desai and Parikh (2021) examined the role of yoga and meditation in managing anxiety among Indian adults and found that regular practice significantly reduces anxiety levels and enhances overall well-being. **Nair and Menon (2023)** explored the relationship between work-related stress and anxiety among Indian professionals and found the need for workplace interventions to mitigate anxiety.

The recent studies continue to shed light on the multifaceted nature of anxiety and highlight the importance of a comprehensive approach to managing this pervasive mental health condition. Measuring anxiety among adults is essential for identifying and managing anxiety disorders.

Development of the Anxiety Test

Anxiety test has been used for measuring the different areas of anxiety. The present test measure following eight areas of anxiety of an individual,

- a) **Physical Manifestation:** The domain measures the physical anxiety signs of an individual. Generally physical anxiety reflects autonomic arousal such as ventilation lack, tightness of the chest, rushing pulse, stomach upheaval, dizziness, trepidation and engorgement.
- b) **Psychological Manifestation:** This domain measures mental signs of anxiety which vary from anxious and emotive emotions to fear and panic.
- c) **Family Anxiety:** This domain measures interpersonal relationship and adjustment with/between the family members of an individual.
- d) **Social Approval & Relations:** This domain measures individual's interpersonal and intrapersonal relationship and adjustment between/in the friends and the society.
- e) **Worries Regarding Success & Failure:** This domain measures the presence and absence of fear of failure as well as its facilitation or debilitating influence on the work done by an individual.
- f) **Worries Regarding Future:** This domain measures individual's worrying about the his/her future.
- g) **Guilt and Shame:** This domain measures shame and guilt are two feelings the everyone will experience in their lives on many occasions. They are typically harmful feelings that may have detrimental effects, and because people feel worse for themselves.
- h) **Emotional Anxieties:** This domain measures the feeling of anxiety in various emotional situations.

Item Analysis

An initial pool of 125 items were ready for the entire test (14 to 18 items under each of the eight areas). The test was administered to the subjects of the sample of 400 persons (male & female) for the purpose of item-analysis. The age range of the subjects was 22 to 55 years. The subject was asked to respond in terms of 'Yes' or 'No' form. Employing 75 percent upper and 25 percent lower criterion groups item analysis was done. The researchers selected the first 80 items with the largest discriminative power for the final test out of which each area has ten items.

- **Reliability:** The reliability coefficient was determined to be 0.83 using Test-retest technique.
- **Validity:** The validity of the test was established in correlation with the external criterion named 'The Comprehensive Anxiety Test' by Dr. Harish Sharma, Dr. Rajeev Lochan Bhardwaj, and Dr. Mahesh Bhargava. Both the test was administered

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to a sample of 200 subjects, and correlation was found to be 0.81, which indicate high validity.

- **Scoring Procedure:** The scoring procedure for the test is effortless. The test's scoring has been objectified by assigning one or zero scores for two options of the item rated: "Yes" or "No", any response indicated 'Yes' the testee should be awarded the score of one otherwise zero. A high score indicates high anxiety. The following table shows items distribution in the various areas-

Anxiety Areas	Total Items	Items
a) Physical Manifestation	10	1,9,17,25,33,41,49,57,65,73
b) Psychological Manifestation	10	2,10,18,26,34,42,50,58,66,74
c) Family Anxiety	10	3,11,19,27,35,43,51,59,67,75
d) Social Approval and Relations	10	4,12,20,28,36,44,52,60,68,76
e) Worries Regarding Success & Failure	10	5,13,21,29,37,45,53,61,69,77
f) Worries Regarding Future	10	6,14,22,30,38,46,54,62,70,78
g) Guilt and Shame	10	7,15,23,31,39,47,55,63,71,79
h) Emotional Anxieties	10	8,16,24,32,40,48,56,64,72,80
Total	80	

The sum of scores obtained in different areas of concern is calculated. Based on the profile given in the test a comparative of the anxiety level of different areas of concern can be done.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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