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Guidelines for Authors

Balochistan Journal of Linguistics is a journal published annually by the Department of English Language and Linguistics, Lasbela University, Uthal, Balochistan. It accepts papers for consideration on any aspect of theoretical and applied linguistics. The authors are requested to send their papers according to the following guidelines.

I. **All manuscripts in English should follow the following format:**

The first page should contain title; author(s)'s name(s), affiliation, E-mail address; and abstract of 150-350 words, followed by three to five key words, main text, acknowledgment, endnotes, and references in subsequent pages. Key words should be given in italics.

II. **Manuscripts in English should use the following style for headings and subheadings:**

1.

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2

The main heading should be written bold in font size 14. All other headings should be written bold in font size 12. DONOT underline any headings at all.

III. Tables, figures, and maps should have headings and be numbered consecutively and should be clearly presented. Notes and sources should be placed under each table and figure. Photo will be treated as figures.

Format

Use Letter size paper with Times New Roman writing style font size 12 for the main text with line spacing 1.5 and 10 for the abstract with 1.15 line spacing. Left margin should be 3.5 but all other margins should be 2.5 mm. Tables and figures should not be split on two pages.

Other requirements

Give one paragraph introduction of all authors in five to seven sentences (for each author) describing their educational background and research achievements in a separate file. But do not use hyperlinks.

Plagiarism

Authors should submit similarity index along with the manuscripts of the papers. They are also required to submit an affidavit declaring that the material in the paper is their own and it has not already been published. Quotes should be properly acknowledged.

References

1) Use APA style of referencing.

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Contents

Effect of Test Anxiety on Students' Achievement in Language Learning between Male and Female in ESL Context

Aamir Saeed, Munir Khan, Amber Nasreen Anjum & Arshad Saleem

ABSTRACT: The study aimed to analyze the effect of test anxiety on the student's academic achievements in ESL context among genders. The phenomenon of test anxiety has already been widely studied to evaluate academic performance and progress. However, it is a psychological conception that needs to be understood in terms of supplementary indicators. The study employed descriptive correlation method as a research design. A questionnaire was designed to collect data from the participants. The population of the study was ESL leaners at undergraduate level. The stratified random sampling of the study was 70 ESL learners from different urban areauniversities including 35 male students and 35 female students. T-Test, Means, Standard deviations, Regression Analysis, and Spearman correlation were computed to analyze the data. Findings revealed an acute and dire correlation between test anxiety (TA) and student's academic rewards (CGPA) which was statistically significant (p<0.005) and TA has negative impact on CGPA. Further, the female respondents were found to be more anxious than the male as male had 24% *(r=0.24)* impact of TA on their CGPA whereas the female had 54% *(r=0.54)* effect of TA on their CGPA.

Keywords: *Test Anxiety, Students' Achievement, Language Learning, ESL*

1. Introduction

Tests and examinations are often considered as an essential act or process to test student's skills and measure their knowledge from preschool to higher education level. They are designed and/or conducted to evaluate the student's learning process and academic progress that can cause uneasiness, nervousness, and feeling of worry and fear among students which have an acute impact on their academic performance and achievements. The greatest number of students are afraid of tests and examinations since they measure one's knowledge and credibility of learning. Tests and Assessments always compel and motivate students to perform better and put a responsibility over them not only to learn or to get knowledge but also to pass it with fine score.

"The phenomenon of test anxiety has probably been in existence for as long as tests have been used to evaluate performance" (Tryon, 1980). It is always appeared to be linked with academic disciplines since it generates edginess, inquietude, stress, and concern in students before and after tests or examinations. Test Anxiety is regarded as one of the major factors that have affected the student's academic progress (Legesse, 2014). Myriad of different scholars and researchers have considered Test anxiety as a most disruptive factor or hindrance in academic progress and

attainments (Cassady, 2004; Ojediran &Oludipe, 2016). It represents simulative situations where students are highly anxious about their self-image, doubted their abilities and skills, and apprehended of failure. Fear of failure, lack of confidence, lack of preparation, lack of organization, and nervousness may also contribute to test anxiety (Du, 2015).

Test Anxiety has affected various disciplines of academic studies. It has not only affected the social sciences, natural sciences, mathematics, and business studies but also has negative influence on learning a second and/or foreign language. It impedes learner to learn any language other than native language or learn English as second language. Test anxiety acts as an obstacle in academic progress and attainments. According to Stephan Krashen (1982), anxiety is one of the affective variables which hinders or prevents the second language learning process. A learner with an ultimate anxiety and low motivation fails to learn the target language and is unable to perform better in tests and examinations (Krashen, 1982).Gender is appeared as an integral or fundamental factor of test anxiety (Eman, et al., 2012). Test anxiety affects both gender and their academic progress but the extent of its effect varies. Past studies have explored that female students have higher test anxiety level than the male students (Chapell, et al., 2005; Ali, et al., 2013).

There are several other factors like learning environment, attitude, motivation, teachers, parents, nature of learning, which have an acute impact on the student's academic progress and attainments while learning the second language. However, test Anxiety is considered as the major factor that has great effects on learner's achievements. Zollar and Ben-chain (1990) highlighted that the society and time in which the men live is a "test-conscious age" where people shape their lives with the great influence and determination of test performance. This interest in test performance and grading system causestest anxiety among the students. Both male and female are profoundly affected by test anxiety. Therefore, the present study intended to investigate the effects of test anxiety on ESL learner's academic progress and achievements and to explore the extent of test anxiety between male and female.

The research questions of this research study are:

- What is the effect of test anxiety on students' achievements and learning process at the undergraduate level?
- What are the factors that contribute test anxiety?
- How does test anxiety vary in academic performance of male and female students?

1.1 Framaework of study

The framework of the study is designed to measure the effect of test anxiety on learner's academic achievements and to explore the gender differences in terms of test anxiety level. Three variables are determined.Test anxiety is independent variable whereas effects of test anxiety on student's academic achievements and gender are dependent variables. The primary data was rondomly collected from 70 undergraduate students (35 male & 35 female) of different batches by using a questionnaire as a data collection tool.

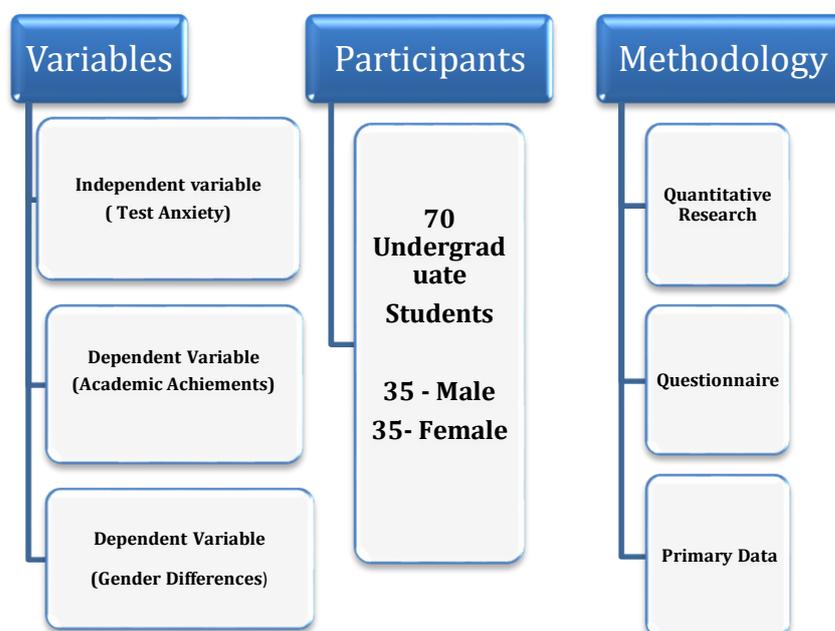| Variables	Participants	Methodology
Independent variable (Test Anxiety)	**70 Undergraduate Students**	**Quantitative Research**
Dependent Variable (Academic Achiements)	**35 - Male 35- Female**	**Questionnaire**
Dependent Variable (Gender Differences)		**Primary Data**

Figure 1: Framework of Study

2. Literature Review

A number of Research Scholars have been working since many years on exploring the factors and components which affect the learning process, academic progress,

and achievements. The Walberg's theory (1984) stated that "there are many factors which can contribute to the variance in students' cognitive and affective outcomes. Some of these factors are maturity, students' abilities, teaching methodologies, motivation, environment at homes and the peer groups inside and outside the classrooms." Besides these factors, test anxiety is considered as a major factor affecting learners' achievements (Chapell, et al., 2005; Ali, et al., 2013; Legsee 2014).

The feelings of worry, fear, uneasiness, and nervousness that a student feels before-during and after an examination are named as test anxiety or exam anxiety.The term 'Test Anxiety' has widely used in academic discipline and studied in linked with academic performance and progress (Newton, 2015). According to Tryon (1980), the existence of test anxiety has probably been as long as the tests and exams have been used to evaluate the academic progress. It has affected the psychological state of student before and after an important tests or exams. Hong (1999) stated that "students' perception of test difficulty before the exam was strongly related to emotionality aroused during the exam as indicated in the recall of their test anxiety after the exam". It is defined as 'a set of responses (phenomenological, psychological, and behavioral) that concern about feasible failure or negative consequence on a test or an examination in a similar evaluative situation' (Zeidner, 1998). Legsee (2014) illustrated that the ones who are being evaluated on 'performance anxiety' vary in levels. Such fear or nervousness can be experienced not just while before taking exam or test but also during the preparation for exams, for the days or even weeks earlier. In evaluative situations, students with test anxiety often feel nervousness, apprehension, and uneasiness (Spielberger&Vagg, 1995). Such students fail to perform ideally in tests and exams (Hancock, 2001). Test Anxiety leads students to self-doubts, 'engage in self-depreciating thoughts', and mistrust of their skills and ability to perform optimal in evaluative situations in association with desired goals and resulting in poor academic progress (Zeidner, 1998).

There are distinct elements of test anxiety as reported by various researchers and psychologists such as 'worry, emotionality, tension, thinking, cognitive interference and lack of self-confidence' (Liebert & Morris, 1969; Sarason, 1984; Unruh & Lowe, 2010). The elements like worry and emotionalism, Ideal paradigm of Academic

success, Fear of fear, Lack of Self-confidence fundamentally contribute in Test Anxiety (Liebert& Morris, 1967; Wine, 1971; Sarason&Sarason, 1990; Einat, 2000).

2.1 Worry and Emotionality

Speilberger (1979) regarded worry and emotionality as the prime factors of test anxiety. Sharma and Sud (1990) have analyzed in their study that worry is associated with cognizance which concerns about outcome of failure. Whereas as emotionalism is evoked due to response of 'autonomic nervous system'. Worry expresses subjective notion regarding poor academic performance, progress and its sequel i.e. failure while Emotionality expresses 'physiological components' including strain, apprehension, and increased pulse rate (Legsee, 2014). The integration of these two prime elements impedes the academic progress and test performance.

2.2 Self-standards

Moreover, Einat (2000) proposed another fundamental component of text anxiety i.e. 'Individual's high personal standard level'. The high standard level that is set by persons (students) who wish maximum academic success and achievements. But students feel fear to achieve that level of their high standard and that caused them anxiety and nervousness. Such Students are anxious about their self-image and self-standard that hinders their academic performance and progress. The self-worth model suggests multiple components that incite one's sense of self-worth. One of its prime asserts is "one's sense of worth depends heavily on one's accomplishments" (Covington, 1984, p. 8). In contrast the model signifies that the students with test anxiety are unable to sustain self-worth and keep their academic proficiency due to frequent failure (Covington, 1992).

2.3 Fear of Failure

It is the general indicator of test anxiety. The students, who are lacking self-confidence experience fear of negative evaluation, suspect their academic skills and preoccupies with cynical thoughts (Sarason & Sarason, 1990). Additionally, such students are more likely to stress over negative evaluation and find them unable to perform optimal in test (Zeidner, 1998). Test Anxious students consider testing situation as menacing and threating to their self-image and future and often respond

by concerning, Scaring, and pondering negative thoughts that leads to academic failure (Liebert & Morris, 1967; Wine, 1982).

2.4 Test Anxiety Models

A myriad of views and models are proposed concerning the concept of test anxiety. As it is perceived as 'multidimensional construct' which implies elements like apprehension, worry, emotionality, and stress that are comprised of cognitive components (Blankstein, 1992). Many researchers analyzed various indicators and factors to contribute in test anxiety doctrine. Infinite works on that discipline proposed models or theories to report and highlight the causes of test anxiety (Legsee, 2014).

2.5 Cognitive Appraisal Model

Lazarus (1985) designed the model that posits that the situations and circumstances are directly linked to person's responses and reaction towards it. The individual's interpretations and expectations of circumstances, affecting the perception and interpretation of given encounter as peril, menace or challenge. Interpreting an event or incident as harm or threat causes maim performance if the same event is perceived as challenge makes individual confident and optimistic while encountering threat and risk. Newton (2015) reported that academic progress and attainments leads to much signifies in making personal and professional decision, generally students are confined to premise test as peril, threat and/or a challenge in its consequence they undermine their academic performance in tests or examinations and/or prospering with confidence in conquering the fear posed by Test anxiety, respectively.

2.6 Interference Model

The Model is originated from the primordial conceptions of 'Attention Theory' by Wine (1971), which averred that an anxious individual allots its attention within "task relevant actions and preoccupations with worry, self-criticism and somatic concern," thus affecting its performance. Furthermore, the model asserts that agitated individual is preoccupied because of anxiety and 'task-irrelevant cognitions as well (Sarason, 1986). Cognitive interference might be the prime indicator of highly test-anxious individual in lowering its performance and process (Sarason, 1984).

2.7 Information Processing Model

People possess a certain competence of 'processing information' thus under an evaluative situation test anxiety might hinders one's attention to pay full concentration or energy on learning (Benjamin et.al, 1981). Nevertheless, the model concerns two phases i.e. ordered and retrieved when required. Each of these steps reports for "the input processing and output of information processing", thus the model asserts that both of these phases might be highly influenced by test anxiety. Benjamin (1991) further asserts that there is a variation between two kinds of examination anxious students. First type is those with substandard way of study who face difficulty in "encoding, organizing and retrieving information", and second is those with optimal way of study who only face difficulty in "retrieving the information during the examination".

2.8 Skill-Deficit Model

The Model offers an idea that inadequate preparation for the test or examination causes an anxiety and fear in students. Test anxiety and poor academic progress are made due to lack of preparation, lack of knowledge, and lack of learning skills (Gambles, 1994). The skill-deficit model supports the notion that it is meager learning and insufficient preparation for test generates anxiety and apprehension that crucially affects academic performance, progress, and attainments. Thus the model asserts that a learner with optimal learning and ample preparation for the examination might lessen the anxiety factor and increasing the academic progress.

2.9 Test Anxiety and ESL Learning

Skehan (1989) explored the multiple factors that influenced the second language learning or ESL learning such as language competence, cognitive aptitude, attitude, gender, age, anxiety, motivation, and others. Anxiety is considered as a prime indicator or among the other factors (Burgucu, et al., 2011). It affected many academic disciplines and academic learning similarly it is crucially associated with English as Second Language Learning (ESL). Hence, it is termed as Language Anxiety (Tanveer, 2007). However, when the language learning is being tested or evaluated, it is called Test Anxiety. Horwitz*et al*. (1986) viewed anxiety as "a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behaviors related to

classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of language learning process".

Several past studies found notable link between anxiety and discourse communication whether the language is native one (L1) or the targeted one (L2). But what the situation demands is the reason that causes anxiety. Tanveer (2007) claimed that "anxiety is experienced when speaking in a second/English language seems to be more debilitating than the anxiety experienced when speaking in the first language". It is because of 'linguistic variation' that the speaker or the learner find difficult to adopt in communication while using English or targeted language and that variation and difficulties generates anxiety in ESL learners. Here anxiety not only acts as barrier for ESL learners to learn it or communicate in but it also hinders their academic progress and attainments.

2.10 Factors of Test/Language Anxiety

Previous research studies explain that anxiety is influentially linked with language performance and academic evaluation with in social context, and identifies three principal factors related to performance anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986, p.127; Brown, 2000, p.151).

2.11 Test Anxiety and Academic Achievements

In evaluative conditions, academic progress or attainments deals with the formation of 'skills, motives, intrigue and manners that needs to be achieved by performance (Legsee, 2014). In academic settings, achievements and attainments greatly focus on student's learning and performance that set their aims, hopes, and plans for academic and professional future. Academic achievements certainly a process to get individuals closer to its aims and goals.

Numerous studies have been administrated to scrutinize the influence of test anxiety with students 'achievement in distinct domains on the basis of "gender, race, locality, language, ethnicity, parent's social status etc" (Hong, 1999; Mcdonald, 2001; Kaya, 2004, Chapell, et al., 2005, Nicholson, 2010; Ali, 2012). Likewise, Woolfolk (2004) has asserted that "test anxiety has interference on three points: focusing attention, learning, and testing. Highly anxious students divert their attention between this new

material and tension. As a result, the achievement of anxious students becomes lower" (p. 366).

The bulk of research studies have premised that exam anxiety is negatively associated with academic performance and progress of students (Chapell, et al., 2005; Ali, et al., 2013; Legsee, 2014; Newton, 2015). Moreover, they have claimed that higher the test anxiety in students lower the academic progress or achievements and lower the test anxiety greater or optimal the academic performance and progress.

Figure 2: (Test Anxiety & Academic Achievements)

To testify the effect of the test anxiety on student's progress in sciences especially in physics subject, a research study was being conducted by Oludipe (2009) and he has found in his study that the students with low anxiety perform well rather than the students with high anxiety level. Anxiety plays a negative part in academic discipline as it impedes learners to learn, to perform optimal, and score well in tests and examinations. Hancock (2001) has reported in his study that high anxious students are less motivated to learning results poor academic performance and low academic attainments.

The student's academic progress and achievements are negatively affected whether they have high anxiety level or low anxiety level; only students are good at academic learning and performance that have moderate level of test anxiety (Vogel & Collins, 2004).

2.12 Test Anxiety and Gender Differences

Gender (Male & Female) is considered as an essential element that contributes in test anxiety or exam anxiety (Eman, et al., 2012). Most of the research studies have been conducted to explore the gender differences in terms of test anxiety and to measure

the level of what extent test anxiety varies among genders i.e. male and female (Hong, 1999; Cassady & Johnson, 2002; Kaya, 2004, Chapell, et al., 2005, Nicholson, 2010; Rana, & Mahmood, 2010; Ali, 2012; Legsee, 2014; Newton, 2015).

Zeidner (1990) found that certainly there is distinction in test anxiety account of male and female is because of gender difference in cognitive skills and academic learning aptitude. Cassady and Johnson, (2002) premised that "one explanation for differences in test anxiety on the basis of students' gender is that males and females feel same levels of test worry, but females have higher levels of emotionality". Further, Rana and Mahmood (2010) have also concluded in their study that gender along with other mutable like test anxiety, 'motivation to learn' and adequate formal order skills have an ultimate effect on the academic achievements. Eman,et al. (2012) reported that meditative styles have an effect on one's interpretation and reactions towards other people and situations which might be deviated in gender.

Previous research studies elucidated the gender differences in terms of test anxiety and found an extent variation in exam anxiety level within classroom learning and performance. A myriad of research concluded that female students have higher test anxiety level than male students. Moreover, Eman, et al., (2012) stated that "female students attributed their test anxiety to stress provoking exam environment, parents, teachers, self-expectations and poor study habits whereas male students seemed to be aroused more by self-expectations, poor study habits and peers' expectations. However, male students seemed to be undisturbed by the teachers' pressure. This shows that women have a greater tendency to seek social approval than men". Ali, et al., (2013) explored that "there were significant differences between test anxiety of male and female students. It was concluded that females had higher test anxiety than males".

Research on test anxiety generally concentrated abundantly on appropriate methods of measuring the construct, the effect of test anxiety on academic and standardized test performance, and the underlying locus of the impact of test anxiety. However, there exist some inconsistencies regarding the relationship between anxiety and test scores in the results of research literature. While some researchers state that there is almost no relationship between test anxiety and the learners' performance, (e.g. Ma,

1999), others have found a significant relationship between these two constructs (e.g. Dordi Nejad et al., 2011). Zahrakar (2008) associated high levels of anxiety with individuals' mental and physical malfunctions which negatively affect their personal, social, familial, occupational, and educational performance. Not only the results vary between test anxiety and test score there are some conflicting evidence on how male and female participants would report their level of test anxiety. Females have repeatedly been found to express higher levels of overall test anxiety than males (Bandalos, et al., 1995; Hembree, 1988; Volkmer & Feather, 1991; Zeidner, 1990). Those research findings which indicate that females express higher levels of test anxiety, however, have different explanations as to why this result is achieved. Some believe that the levels of test worry between genders are the same, however, due to higher levels of emotion in females they generally report higher levels of anxiety (Deffenbacher, 1980; Mueller, 1980). Arch (1987) suggested that gender dissimilarities in self-reported efficacy, esteem, discomfort, and task avoidance were due to the level of performance evaluation. When performance evaluation was noticeable, females were more likely to rate themselves as less capable and self-assured in their abilities, more uncomfortable with the experimental setting, and less eager to do the task again. However, when the experimental condition did not have a salient evaluative component, females had more positive feelings on all perceptions of the event and their abilities. Goodman and Kantor (1983) found that sex role is associated with social anxiety for women but not for men. Some believe that anxiety does not automatically impair academic and social competence, but may have in some instances positive, 'self-actualizing' effects (Dodez, et al., 1982). Dabrowski's (1972) theory of positive disintegration argues that anxiety appears to be the dynamic of self-actualization. A study to assess this hypothesis (Wilkins, et al., 1977) reported that self-actualization was incompatible with chronic, debilitating or neurotic anxiety.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research Hypothesis

The study has been designed to test the following research hypotheses that are initially based on empirical literature.

H_{a1}. Test Anxiety seems to have a negative influence on Student's Achievements.

H$_{a2}$.High Test Anxiety is associated with lower Academic Progress.

H$_{o3.}$ There is a gender difference in terms of test anxiety and academic learning within classroom performance.

H$_{o4}$. Female Students are more test anxious than male students.

The Research study is the profound diligence and an effort to analyze the ESL learner's relationship of test anxiety and with their academic performance and progress and to look into the variance and alteration in test anxiety level among genders (Male & Female). In order to measure the relationship between variables the descriptive-correlational research design has been employed.

The main variables of the study are the examination anxiety, student's academic rewards and gender differences with in classroom performance. Thus the study deals with test anxiety as an independent variable (a free variable which has scientific effect on dependent variable regardless of being affected itself), student's academic learning, performance, and progress as dependent variable (a bound variable that is controlled or changed by the independent one), and gender differences are treated as a categorical variable.

The population of the study is consisted of the students of English Department in Karachi University. The reason to make students of department of English only as study's population is that the current study deals with only the students who are studying English as their prime subject. Moreover, the target population of the study is only the ESL Learners and Undergraduate students

The sample of the study consisted of 78 ESL learners. The research instrument for data collection that is Questionnaire has been administered to these 78 ESL learners and distributed to these respondents. Out of these 78 respondents, 70 respondents have returned the Questionnaire to the researcher. Owing to this, the final sampling size is 70 ESL Learners as the participants of the research study. As the study aims to analyze the gender differences in terms of test anxiety with in classroom performance or to measure the extent of variation in test anxiety among genders, so the data has been collected from both genders i.e. male and female equally. The sample of study comprised 35 male and 35 female ESL learners studying in divergent batches.

Stratified random sampling is performed that is based on the levels of learners' linguistic knowledge and test anxiety that varies batch to batch. The study has followed the simple random sampling (SRS) in some instance, particularly while selecting the students from within the batches as there are four batches of the department as the strata. On the part of students, purposive sampling is used to select male and female ESL learner equally from the batches sampled, followed by stratified random sampling based on gender differences, and conclusively simple random sampling (SRS) is conducted in each stratum.

The Questionnaire was structured as the research instrument of the study to measure the impact level of test anxiety on student's academic rewards or achievements. The designed questionnaire is consisted of two parts. The first part was designed to collect respondent's personal information like their department, batch, gender, and CGPA whereas the second part was quantitative inventory i.e. the 20 questions/items to analyze test anxiety's effect on student's academic progress and attainments. The questionnaire is a '5-point Likert type scale' and the respondents responded out of these five options: (1) Strongly Agree, (2) Agree, (3) Undecided, (4) Disagree, and (5) Strongly Disagree. The research tool was designed in English as it had to be administered on ESL learners.

'Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficient was used to analyze the internal consistency of the research instrument. According to Tavakol and Dennick (2011) the alpha value from 0.70 to 0.95 is satisfactory and adequate to consider the instrument as reliable. Thus the determined value of 20 items questionnaire was 0.77 or $\alpha = 0.77$.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics: Cronbach Alpha of Research Instrument.

<u>**Reliability Statistics**</u>

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.777	20

The questionnaire dealt with three major factors or the indicators that contributes to examination anxiety. The factors are 'Fear of Failure', 'Anxious about Self Image'

and 'Nervousness due to Future Insecurity'. The questionnaire was concerned within these indicators of test anxiety and consisted of 8 questions to explore Fear of Failure, 6 questions to analyze the Anxiety about Self-image and 6 questions to examine the last factor of test anxiety i.e. Nervousness due to Future Insecurity among the respondents of the study.

While collecting data both logistical (provisional) and ethical considerations were followed. The logistical considerations implied the Formal Approval Letter that was stated to the Head of the English Department to enlighten him about the research study and implored to permit the researcher to collect data from each batch of the department.

The researcher made the ESL teachers familiar with the purpose and procedure of the research study and requested them to assist in directing and monitoring the respondents in filling the questionnaire. Although the 30 minutes' time plan was reported, 45 minutes were allotted for completion and data collection. The data was collected within four days, one day for one class and usually taken in morning time before their break as there is no attendance issue in morning and the students make careful and honest response to the research questionnaire.

The data was analyzed statistically by using software 'Statistical Packages for Social Sciences' SPSS version 20. Descriptive Analysis method was used to describe the fundamental features of the data in study. Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficient was performed to analyze the reliability of the research instrument. K-S Test was used to analyze the Normality of research data.

Regression Analysis, a statistical method was employed to measure the strength of the relationship between dependent variable and independent variable. Means, Standard deviations, data frequencies and percentages were used to analyze the effect of test anxiety on student's academic achievements. Spearman correlation was used to examine the correlation between the test anxiety and academic attainments of the research respondents. Nevertheless, T-test was also used to determine the gender difference in terms of test anxiety.

4 Research Findings & Discussion

The study reports the detailed description of the research results and discussion of the hypotheses that were tested in study. The results were analyzed on the basis of collected data that concerned test anxiety and academic achievements.

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

The participants of the research were the ESL learners selected from each batch of the department of English University of Karachi. The 70 respondents were taken 30 from first year (42.9%), 15 from second year (21.4%), 15 from third year (21.4%), and 10 from final year (14.3%) for the study.

Table 2: Frequency & Percentage of study's Respondents

Batch

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	First Year	30	42.9	42.9	42.9
	Second Year	15	21.4	21.4	64.3
Valid	Third Year	15	21.4	21.4	85.7
	Final Year	10	14.3	14.3	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	
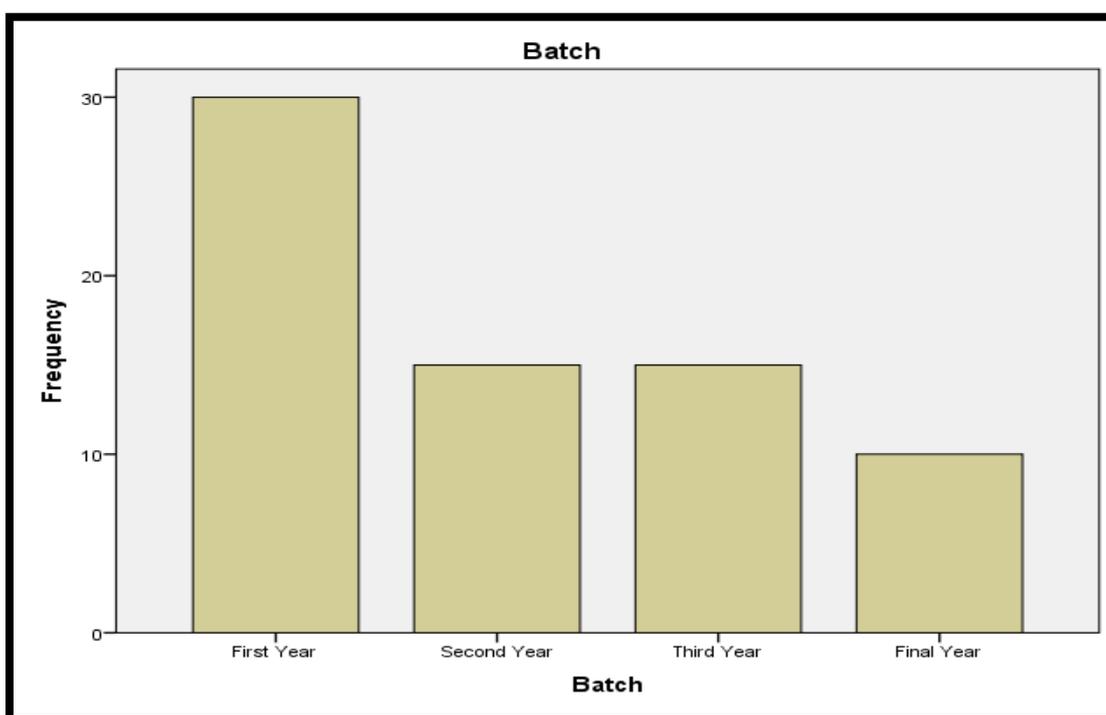
Figure 3: Frequency of the Respondents of the study

While conducting research, 50 of the participants (71.4%) reported their CGPA i.e. above 2 and 20 of the participants (28.6) reported their CGPA i.e. above 3.

Table 3: Frequency & Percentage of CGPA of study's Respondents

CGPA

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Above 2	50	71.4	71.4	71.4
Valid	Above 3	20	28.6	28.6	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	
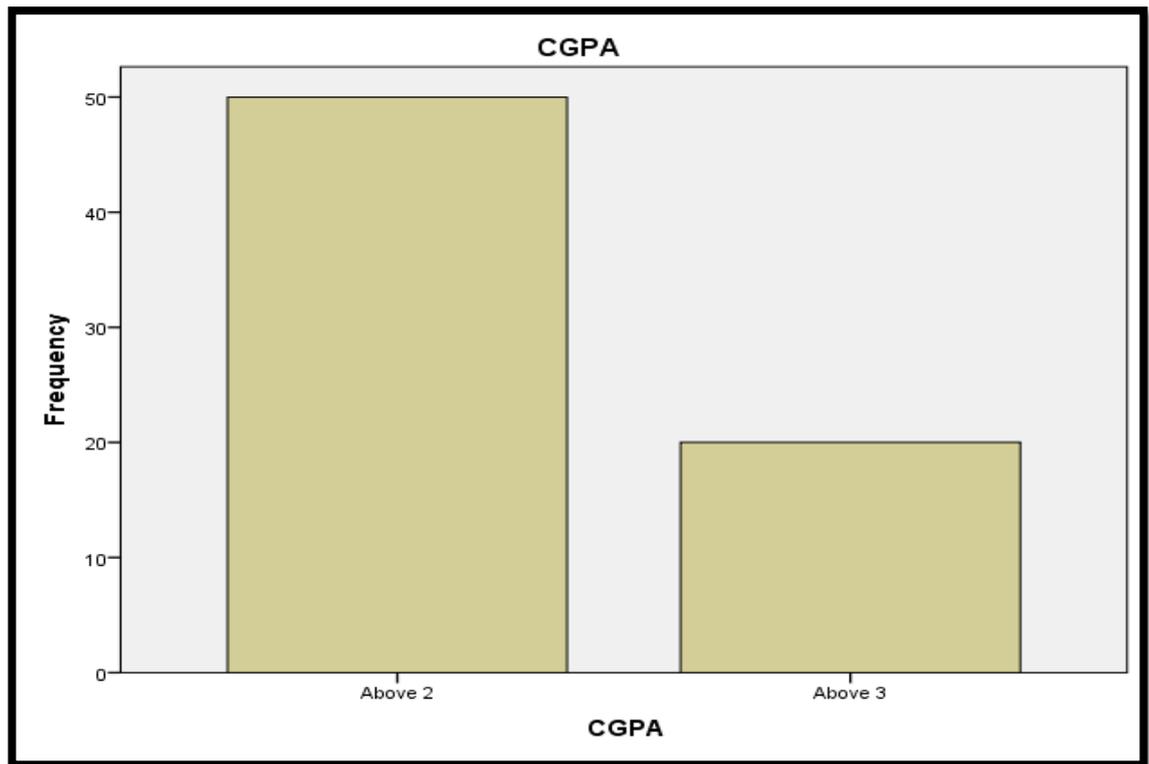
Figure 4: Frequency of CGPA of Respondents of the study

The study dealt with equal number of male and female participants as it aimed to scrutinize the gender difference in terms of test anxiety and its effect on academic rewards. Owing to this there were 35 (50%) male participants and 35 (50%) female participants were taken for the research study.

Table 4: Frequency & Percentage of Gender of study's Respondents

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Male	35	50.0	50.0	50.0
Valid	Female	35	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	100.0	

Figure 5: Frequency of Gender of Respondents of the study

T-Test Analysis

To analyze the impact of test anxiety (TA) on male and female student's academic attainments i.e. their CGPA, T-Test was employed. It compares two group's means (average) and shows that if they are similar or different from each other. The results of Group statistics and Independent samples test are interpreted below in *table 7 and 8.*

Table 5: Group Statistics

T-Test
Group Statistics

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
TA	Male	35	2.6800	.54748	.09254
	Female	35	2.5286	.54669	.09241

Table 6: Independent Samples Test

T-Test

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
TA	Equal variances assumed	.027	.871	1.158	68	.251	.15143	.13078	-.10953	.41239
	Equal variances not assumed			1.158	68.000	.251	.15143	.13078	-.10953	.41239

Table 6 shows that the Female students recorded as more test anxious as compared to Male students since the TA mean of Male is 2.680 and std. Deviation is 0.5478 *(n=35, m= 2.680, std. D= 0.5478)* andTA mean Female 3 is 2.528 and std. Deviation is 0.5466 *(n=35, m= 2.528, std. D= 0.5466).* And from the next table, the results highlighted that there is a trivial gender differences in terms of test anxiety *(t=1.158, df= 68, p=0.251).* As if the p-value is less than the alpha level: p <0.05. the result shows that that there is no difference between means (groups) but in *table 8*the value of p >0.05 *(p=0.251)* hence the means are different from each other. The female ESL learners and male ESL learners have more or less likeness in test anxiety while academic performance.

4.2 Regression Analysis

Linear Regression was employed to analyze the extent of the relationship between dependent variable which is student's attainments or their CGPA and independent variable which is test anxiety.

Table 7: Regression Model Summary

Model Summary

Gender	Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Male	1	.246[a]	.061	.032	.45093
Female	1	.542[a]	.293	.272	.39109

a. Predictors: (Constant), TA

The above table reported that the effect of examination anxiety on male student's academic achievements is 24% *(R=0.246)* and on female student's academic attainments is 54% *(R=0.54)*. Hence the female students were found to be more anxious than male students.

Table 8: Regression Coefficients

Coefficients[a]

Gender	Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
			B	Std. Error	Beta		
Male	1	(Constant)	1.733	.386		4.489	.000
		TA	.206	.141	.246	1.459	.154
Female	1	(Constant)	1.137	.317		3.586	.001
		TA	.454	.123	.542	3.701	.001

a. Dependent Variable: CGPA

In case of male, regression coefficient (β) is 1.73 for (constant) TA and its significant value is 0.000, which shows that TA has significant impact on dependent variable which is student's CGPA. In case of female regression coefficient (β) is 1.137 for (constant) TA and its significant value is 0.001, which shows that TA has significant impact on dependent variable which is student's CGPA. Table signifies that the value of *t* is *4.489* in case of male and *3.586* in case of female and the level of significance is less than 0.005 in both cases which is significantly acceptable.

4.3 Normality Analysis

K-S Test was employed on collected data to check or verify if the data is normal for spearman correlation. The results of analysis are shown in table given below.

Table 9: Normality Analysis (K-S Test)

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
CGPA	.449	70	.000	.566	70	.000
TA	.070	70	.200[*]	.989	70	.797

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

As the table signifies that the significant value of independent variable is more than 0.005 and value of dependent variable is less than 0.005 which shows that the data is normal so the spearman correlation can be employed on study for further analysis.
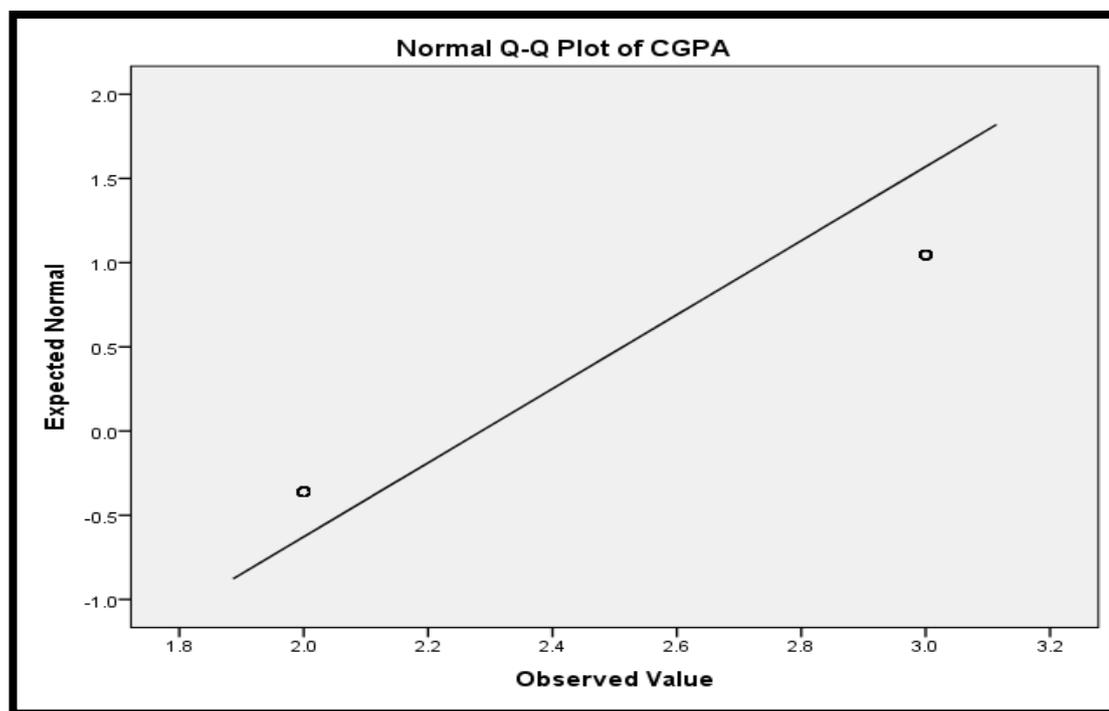

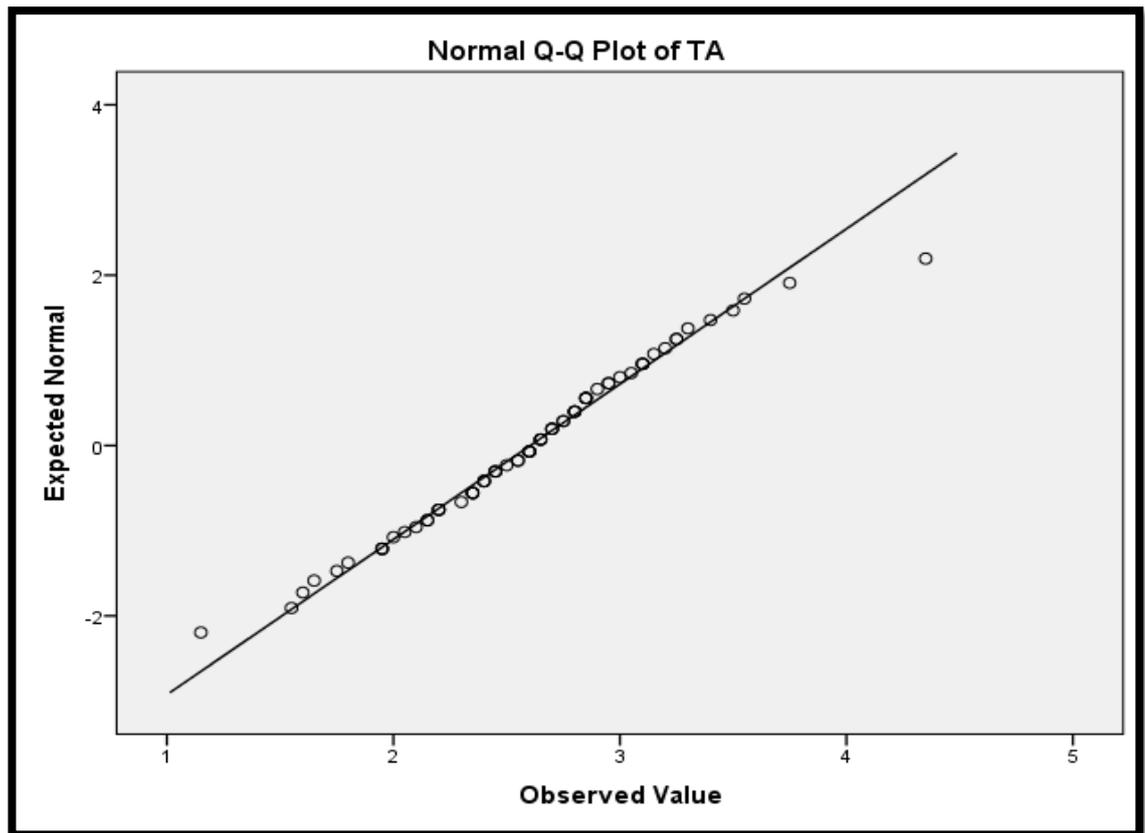*Figure 6: Expected Normality of Data*

Figure 7: Observed Normality of Data

The graphs given above also shows the normality of data as it is in linear form or the diagonal line is straightly dotted.

4.4 Spearman Correlation

To determine the strength of relation between the dependent variable i.e. student's CGPA and independent variable i.e. TA among the genders, the spearman correlation was run on the collected data. The findings of analysis are shown in table given below.

4.5 Nonparametric Correlations

Table 10: Spearman Correlation

Correlations

	Gender			CGPA	TA
Spearman's rho	Male	CGPA	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.169
			Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.331
			N	35	35
		TA	Correlation Coefficient	.169	1.000
			Sig. (2-tailed)	.331	.
			N	35	35
	Female	CGPA	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.580**
			Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
			N	35	35
		TA	Correlation Coefficient	.580**	1.000
			Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
			N	35	35

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The spearman correlation was run to analyze the relationship between test anxiety and CGPA of the ESL learners of department of English University of Karachi. It was analyzed that there is a strong and dire correlation of TA and CGPA in case of Male which was statistically significant *(r= 0.169, n= 35, p= .331).*And in case of female it was also analyzed that there is a strong and positive correlation of TA and CGPA which is statistically significant *(r= 0.580, n= 35, p= .000).*

5 Discussion

The main objective of the study was to determine the impact of test anxiety on student's academic attainments and to analyze the link between TA and CGPA among genders. Thus the results of the research findings with respect to research questions and hypotheses of the study are briefly discussed below.

The findings of study reported that there is a negative impact of exam anxiety on academic achievements (r=0.169 in male &r= 0.580 in female) which is statically significant. Moreover, the study also concluded that there is significantly a gender difference in terms of test anxiety that the effect of examination anxiety on male student's academic achievements is 24% (R=0.246) and on female student's

academic attainments is 54% (R=0.54). Hence the female students were found to be more anxious than the male students.

The first objective of the study was to measure the extent of relationship between test anxiety and student's academic score among genders and the findings shown that the TA mean of ESL learners of both genders ranged from 2.52 to 2.68 and their significant value ranged to 0.251 *(p>0.005)* as shown in *Table 5 and 6.* These results supported the study's null hypothesis that stated: 'There is a significant gender difference in terms of test anxiety and academic learningwith-in classroom performance. However, these findings certified the results of some earlier research studies as legsee (2014), explored the significant value which was 0.414 *(p=>0.005).*

Current study analyzed that test anxiety had a 24% *(r=0.24)* negative impact on male student's achievement score and 54% *(r=0.54)* negative impact on female student's academic score as shown in *Table 7.* This analysis of effect of exam anxiety on student's academic rewards among genders concluded that female students have relatively higher exam anxiety than the male students and this also corroborated the other null hypothesis that stated; 'Female Students are more test anxious than male students'. However, this result of study verified the several studies in which female respondents found to be more test anxious than the male respondents (Hong, 1999; Cassady& Johnson, 2002; Kaya, 2004;Chapell, et al., 2005; Nicholson, 2010; Rana, &Mahmood, 2010; Ali, et al., 2012; Legsee, 2014; Newton, 2015).

Moreover, the second hypotheses of the study probed to examine the extent of relationship between test anxiety and academic achievements of ESL learners. A five-point likert scale was employed to measure test anxiety. The score yielded were then correlated with test anxiety (TA) and respondent's academic score (CGPA) by using spearman correlation at 0.05 level of significance. It was analyzed that the test anxiety is negatively correlated with student's academic performance and their attainments as in case of male students *(r= 0.169, n= 35, p= 0.331)* and in case of female *(r= 0.580, n= 35, p=0 .000)* as shown in *Table 10.* These results implied that concerning the link between test anxiety and student's academic rewards, the more anxious they became while exams the poorer they performed in and vice versa.

Nevertheless, the study also explored that extremely exam anxious students had low academic score and low test anxious students had greater academic attainments as

the myriad of previous research studies on the same grounds favored the same statement and findings which were already cited before. As Hembree (1988) meta analyzed the different states of America's 562 studies, where he found the equivalent results that high test anxiety is associated with lower academic success.

In addition, further research is also recommended which may be done with divergent methods (Qualitative or Quantitative Research Methods), more or less numbers of population/participants, and in order to explore the effective treatments to deal with student's examination anxiety.

5.1 Conclusion

The study aimed to scrutinize the effect of test anxiety on academic rewards of ESL learners. It also intended to investigate the extent of test anxiety on student's achievements that varies among genders (male & female). The researcher structured the questionnaire that was consisted of 20 statements in ordered to measure the effect of test anxiety on student's academic attainments. The questionnaire was treated as the research tool for data collection. Hence, the questionnaire was administered on 70 ESL learners (35-Male, 35-Female) of Department of English atUniversity of Karachi. Descriptive-correlation was employed on study as a research design. SPSS version 20 was used to analyze the Descriptive Data of study. Means, Standard Deviations, Frequencies (T-Test), Regressions, K-S test for normality analysis, and spearman correlations were computed on collected data.

The present study found an acute and dire correlation between test anxiety (TA) and students' academic rewards (CGPA) which was statistically significant ($p<0.005$) and TA has negative impact on CGPA.

It also declared that there is a significant difference among genders in terms of test anxiety. The extent that test anxiety varies among genders is considerable as well. Findings of study presents that the female respondents were found to be more anxious than the male. The male had 24% *(r=0.24)* impact of TA on their CGPA whereas the female had 54% *(r=0.54)* effect of TA on their CGPA. Students often reported inadequate or inefficient test preparation, lack of self- confidence, fear of negative evaluation or fear of failure, teacher's partiality, inapt test techniques, and arduous content course as factors that hinder their academic progress and

attainments. However, the statistical analysis revealed that the test anxiety is the fundamental obstacle or barrier in their academic success and rewards. Since it is an exam anxiety that impedes students to perform optimal in tests or exams, so it is the liability of an institution and an instructor to provide composed and comfortable atmosphere to the students where each student is being motivated, appreciated and encouraged.

The study has been reached to its following conclusions based on the findings and discussions of the study.

- It is explored that there is negative effect of test anxiety on student's academic performance and progress. In addition, it is also reported that high anxiety is linked with low academic progress.
- It is concluded that test anxiety has dire impact on both genders and there is significant gender difference in terms of test anxiety. It is examined that the effect of test anxiety varies among both genders with great extent on their academic progress.
- It is accounted that female students reported as more exam anxious than the male students. Test anxiety has greater impact on female students as compared to male students.
- It is analyzed that test anxiety has an apparently effect on student's achievements and represents a substantial personality and individual difference variable.
- Fear of failure, concerned for self-image or self-standards, and nervousness due to future insecurity were reported as the indicators that contribute to test anxiety. Test anxiety impedes students to evince their acquired knowledge and skills in tests and to perform optimal while taking tests or examination.

5.2 Recommendations

The current study has contributed to the existence body of information or knowledge regarding the relationship between exam anxiety and academic achievements in university students. But still there are a number of questions that remained unanswered and things that needs to be adopted or explored with variation in research techniques. This study suggests the following recommendations for the future researchers;

- As the current study dealt with only undergraduate students, However the research may also be conducted from primary to university level and dealt with both undergraduate or graduate level of students for future research studies.

- Although the nature of current study was quantitative research method for that purpose the questionnaire was structured, for future research qualitative method may also be considerate in which the observations and interviews will be the measuring instruments of test anxiety rather than the questionnaire.

- The present study administered its research instrument (Questionnaire) on a small size of population/sample consisted of only 70 students (35 boys, 35 girls), whereas for further research on the same grounds the sample size may be more or less in number of population/sample.

- This research study concerned with both genders that were equally selected in numbers as its sample, but the further research may deal with any one of genders to examine the effect of test anxiety on their academic success with no comparison with other one.

- ESL learners were the main focus of the study to analyze their test anxiety level as they are dealing with English as their prime subject. But for future research studythe relationship between test anxiety and academic achievements may be analyzed from students dealing with different subjects like Business, Chemistry, Physics and etc.

- Current study only aimed to determine the effect of test anxiety on student's academic score. Hence the more research is required to explore the practical implications toward handling test anxiety and effective treatments to deal with student's anxiety while taking tests or examinations.

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