



RELATION BETWEEN FEARS AND PHOBIAS AND HEALTH- A CASE STUDY ON HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Sankara Pitchaiah Podila¹ and V. Sastry CH²

¹Psychologist and Professor of Geology, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Andhra Pradesh, India

²Academic Consultant, Department of Statistics, Dr. Mrar PG Center, Nuzvid

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ABSTRACT

Phobias and health problems are common in high school students. The present study was observed the phobias and health problems in the students. A total of 2743 students (male: 1589 and female:1154) were selected from 10 high schools and response was taken. Bivariate (Pearson) correlation analysis was found between the phobias and the health problems in relation to gender. Significant correlation was found between the phobias and the health problems in relation to gender.

Key words:

Specific Phobia, therapy, health problems, high school students, correlation

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INTRODUCTION

Fears and phobias are common in students. They have a serious impact on student academic achievement and well being. The present study was concentrated on seven specific phobias noticed in High school students namely, Exam phobia (Fear of exams), Acrophobia (Fear of heights), Hemophobia (Fear of blood), Achluophobia (Fear of dark), Hodophobia (Fear of journey), Zoophobia (Fear of animal) and Oneirophobia (Fear of dreams). Relation between the phobias and health problems were discussed

METHODOLOGY

A total of 2743 students were selected, out of which 1589 are male and 1154 are female, distributed in and around Guntur (Table 1). Students (8th to 10th) from 10 High schools were assembled in a classroom of the respective institutions and asked them to give their response to a question-“Do you have any specific fear/phobia?” The purpose of the study and the details regarding the phobia were explained in their mother tongue. The response was analyzed using statistical analysis. Percent variation was observed and presented under results and discussion. A Comparison was made between male and female students with reference to phobias and health problems.

*Corresponding author: Sankara Pitchaiah Podila

Psychologist and Professor of Geology, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Andhra Pradesh, India

Table 1 School Wise and Gender Wise Student's Strength

Schools	Male	Female	Total
Ponnekallu	137	122	259
Takkellapadu	76	82	158
Venigalla	112	144	256
Koppuravuru	109	87	196
SK	328	199	527
SJRR	206	145	351
SKS	168	144	312
P	194	58	252
KSR	118	69	187
SCMP	141	104	245
Total	1589	1154	2743

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The statistical analysis related to phobias and health is presented in this section. High percentage of males (62.11) marked acrophobia, followed by night mares (60.5), whereas the highest percent of female students (63.9) pointed Hemophobia, followed by Zoophobia (53.5) (Table 2 and Figure 1).

Table 2 Specific Phobias and Gender

Phobia	Students with Phobia	Male (%)	Female (%)
Exam	1009	538 (53.3)	471 (46.7)
Acrophobia	572	355(62.1)	217 (37.9)
Hemophobia	249	90 (36.1)	159 (63.9)
Achluophobia	636	324 (50.9)	312 (49.1)
Hodophobia	273	162 (59.3)	111 (40.7)
Zoophobia	576	268 (46.5)	308 (53.5)

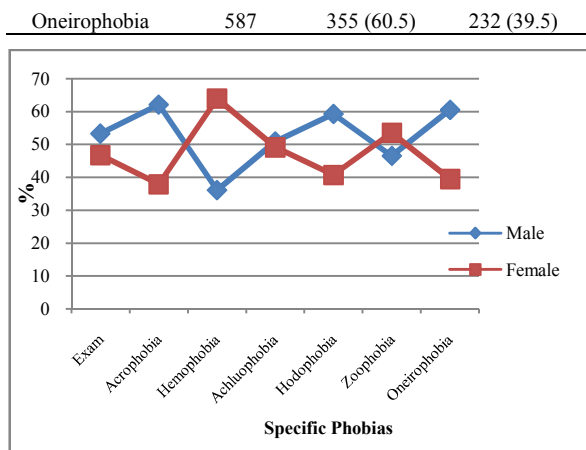


Figure 1 Phobias and Gender

72.3% of male expressed allergy problems, followed by digestion (65.5) (Table 3). Comparatively, it is observed that the health problems are low in female students.

Table 3 Health problems and Gender

Health Problems	Students	Male (%)	Female (%)
Seasonal	1528	876 (57.3)	652 (42.7)
Digestion	368	241 (65.5)	127 (34.5)
Allergy	238	172 (72.3)	66 (27.7)

Correlation Study

General

Significant (Pearson) correlation was found between Exam Phobia: Seasonal and allergy; Height: digestion, blood, seasonal and allergy; Journey: allergy; Animal: seasonal, digestion and allergy and Dreams: allergy (Table 4).

Table 4 Phobias Vs Health-General

Phobia	Seasonal	Digestion	Allergy
Exam	-0.047 (0.013)	-0.029 (0.126)	0.016 (0.399)
Acrophobia	-0.002 (0.905)	-0.066 (0.001)	-0.023 (0.223)
Hemophobia	-0.040 (0.034)	-0.005 (0.805)	0.018 (0.356)
Achluophobia	-0.031 (0.098)	-0.022 (0.245)	-0.002 (0.898)
Hodophobia	-0.001 (0.941)	-0.018 (0.353)	-0.042 (0.028)
Zoophobia	+0.004 (0.851)	-0.070 (0.000)	0.024 (0.199)
Oneirophobia	-0.011 (0.550)	-0.014 (0.458)	-0.050 (0.009)

Male students

Strong (Pearson) correlation was noticed between exam phobia: allergy, height: seasonal and digestion; Blood: seasonal; Journey: seasonal and Animals: digestion and allergy (Table 5).

Table 5 Phobias Vs Health-Male students

Phobia	Seasonal	Digestion	Allergy
Exam	-0.05 (0.044)	-0.030 (0.184)	0.015 (0.545)
Acrophobia	0.008 (0.751)	-0.051 (0.042)	-0.036 (0.152)
Hemophobia	0.002 (0.940)	-0.031 (0.219)	0.025 (0.312)
Achluophobia	-0.035 (0.158)	-0.035 (0.167)	-0.029 (0.239)
Hodophobia	0.003 (0.892)	-0.012 (0.640)	-0.052 (0.037)
Zoophobia	-0.024 (0.345)	-0.086 (0.001)	0.019 (0.436)
Oneirophobia	-0.025 (0.315)	-0.014 (0.580)	-0.026 (0.2930)

Female students

In the case of female students seasonal problems are strongly related to height, blood and journey phobias. Digestion is (Pearson) correlated with animals and dreams. Third one allergy shows relation with blood and animal fears (Table 6).

Table 6 Phobias Vs Health –Female students

Phobia	Seasonal	Digestion	Allergy
Exam	-0.050 (0.044)	-0.030 (0.184)	0.015 (0.545)
Acrophobia	0.008 (0.751)	-0.051 (0.042)	-0.036 (0.152)
Hemophobia	0.002 (0.940)	-0.031 (0.219)	0.025 (0.312)
Achluophobia	-0.035 (0.158)	-0.035 (0.167)	-0.029 (0.239)
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Zoophobia	-0.024 (0.345)	-0.086 (0.001)	0.019 (0.436)
Oneirophobia	-0.025 (0.315)	-0.019 (0.436)	-0.026 (0.2930)

Mean ± SD

The values are low for phobias and health problems (Tables 7 and 8)

Table 7 Mean ± SD of Specific phobias

Phobia	Male	Female
Exam	0.34±0.472	0.41±0.492
Acrophobia	0.22±0.415	0.19±0.391
Hemophobia	0.06±0.230	0.14±0.344
Achluophobia	0.20±0.402	0.27±0.44
Hodophobia	0.10±0.30	0.10±0.295
Zoophobia	0.17±0.373	0.27±0.44
Oneirophobia	0.22±0.41	0.20±0.42

Table 8 Mean ± SD for Health and Gender

Health Problems	Male	Female
Seasonal	1.45±0.5	1.44±0.496
Digestion	1.85±0.366	0.89±0.313
Allergy	0.189±0.32	0.14±0.232

Treatment

Phobias are common, but treatable. All the phobias shall be treated using experts suggestions. The therapies may vary with student to student.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Exposure Therapy, Anxiety Management, Relaxation Techniques, and Medications are some of the useful therapies to recover from phobias. Hoffman and Weghorst (1997) stated that one or a combination of these may be recommended according to the situation and intensity.

Other Useful Methods

Progressive desensitization (Specific phobia. <http://www.med.upenn.edu>).

Relaxation- (Specific phobia. <http://www.med.upenn.edu>).
Hypnosis (hypnotherapy)- (Natural treatment for phobia and anxiety. <http://www.phobicssociety.org>)

Homeopathy- (<http://www.phobicssociety.org>).
Herbal remedies- (Natural treatment for phobia and anxiety. <http://www.phobicssociety.org>).
Pharmacotherapy-(Specific phobia. <http://www.med.upenn.edu>).

CONCLUSION

Phobias cause health problems. Seasonal, digestion and allergy problems were correlated with seven specific phobias and found significant correlation. The study observed the health problems are more in male compared to female. Regarding the phobias Hemophobia and Zoophobia are high in female and Exam Phobia, Acrophobia, Hodophobia and Oneirophobia are high in male. Significant correlation was found between Exam Phobia: Seasonal and allergy; Height: digestion, blood, seasonal and allergy;

Journey: allergy; Animal: seasonal, digestion and allergy
and Dreams: allergy.

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