



Development and Standardization of “Stage Anxiety” Questionnaire

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Abstract: The main aim of this study is to describe the method of construction and standardization of a tool to measure “Stage anxiety”. The researchers reviewed many research studies on Stage anxiety and explored the various concepts of the Stage anxiety. Based on the many reviews of literature, the first draft of the Stage anxiety scale was developed by the researchers consisting of 19 items, further it was given to eight experts in the research field based on their inputs some of the statements in the scale were revised. The modified scale was further processed, and a pilot study was conducted among 107 participants. After reviewing and analyzing the items, the number of items was then reduced to 14 because some of the items in the scale didn’t meet the requirement criteria of item analysis and item selection. The researchers of the study also established the reliability and validity, statistical norms for stage anxiety.

Key Words: Stage anxiety, Scale Development, Standardization, Validity, Reliability

I.INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Stage anxiety, according to the American Psychological Association, is a fear of speaking or performing in front of others. The person becomes nervous and uneasy and may stutter, forget phrases, or attempt to flee the scene. The anxiety could turn into panic attacks or even just signs of panic. Stage fright is another name for it. The dread of public speaking is really severe. Because it entails a fear of social situations, stage fright—also referred to as performance anxiety—is frequently seen as a variant of social anxiety. Those who experience stage fright, however, may not also struggle with other forms of social anxiety, such as meeting new people or eating in public. It develops when someone thinks they are unable to control their behaviour in front of others. They worry that they will make a catastrophic error.

Some people experience stage fright, an emotional and physical reaction, when they have to perform. Stage fright can occur in a variety of circumstances. It can happen when someone speaks in front of an audience, gives a presentation during a project or a job interview, plays a role in a play, or performs in a musical. Many people around the world suffer from performance anxiety, commonly referred to as "stage anxiety." Athletes, musicians, actors and speakers often experience stage fright with his 44% of the world's total age group population. Stage fright is the only problem for many talented people around the world. Stage fright affects students just beginning college life. Because of that fear, they are unable to communicate their abilities to fellow students and staff, and that fear creates an inferiority complex among students.

1.2 Theories and Concept:

There are many exceptions, but anxiety frequently hinders execution of "difficult" tasks (especially under test conditions). The complexity and seeming discrepancy of the data, as well as the conceptual definition of task difficulty, need to be addressed by theories of anxiety and performance. According to certain theorists (e.g. Humphreys & Revelle, 1984; Sarason, 1988), concern always reduces performance on activities requiring a lot of attention or short-term memory. The working memory system's storage and processing capacity for a concurrent task is reduced by worry, according to the processing efficiency theory. Worry also increases performance-enhancing activities and on-task effort (Klein, 1). The idea clearly distinguishes between processing efficiency (= performance effectiveness divided by effort) and performance effectiveness (= quality of performance). Efficiency suffers from anxiety more so than effectiveness does. Therapies for overcoming anxiety includes JPMR, mindfulness in breathing, candle gazing for focus and attention (Goh, et al., 2018).

1.3 Stage Anxiety in Adolescence:

Adolescence, a period of tremendous physical, emotional, and social changes, is sometimes a prime time for the formation of stage anxiety. The temptation to perform flawlessly in public contexts increases as young people struggle to build their identities and seek recognition from their friends and society (Fehm, et al., 2006). The dread of judgement and probable embarrassment can cause great anxiety when giving a class presentation or participating in extracurricular activities. Because this stage anxiety can have a big impact on their self-esteem, academic performance, and overall confidence, it is critical to recognise and address the underlying causes in order to assist adolescents manage these problems more effectively.

1.4 Stage Anxiety in Children:

Even at an early age, children can experience stage fright when placed in front of an audience. Unfamiliar faces and the limelight can set off a fight-or-flight response in many people, resulting in physical symptoms such as racing heart, shaking, sweating, and an overpowering desire to flee the situation (Laurent, et al., 1994). Children may avoid engaging in school events or activities they would normally love due to their fear of public attention. Recognising and supporting children through these experiences is critical to promoting their emotional development and encouraging a healthy attitude towards self-expression.

1.5 Stage Anxiety in various setting:

Stage anxiety is not restricted to school performances or academic environments; it can be observed at all stages of life and in a variety of scenarios. Professional life frequently necessitates public speaking skills, and the strain of addressing co-workers, clients, or superiors can be paralyzing for individuals. Performers in artistic fields such as theatre, music, or dance may have stage anxiety before to auditions, rehearsals, or live concerts, impairing their creative expression and undermining their artistic endeavours (Sarbescu, et al., 2014).

Furthermore, anxiety about performing goes beyond traditional stages into the virtual world, where the widespread availability of social media and online video platforms exposes people to a large and potentially critical audience. Fear of being scrutinised and the pressure to be flawless in a curated digital arena might provoke similar anxiety reactions while creating material on social networks or participating in virtual conferences. Stage anxiety is a common occurrence that affects people of all ages and backgrounds. Its impacts are most noticeable throughout adolescence and childhood, altering how young minds evaluate their skills and self-worth (Wilson, et al., 2002). However, stage anxiety is not restricted to specific life stages, but also to a variety of circumstances, both traditional and digital, in which individuals are required to perform or exhibit themselves in public. By recognising the prevalence and implications of stage anxiety, we can work to create supportive environments, implement effective coping strategies, and foster self-assurance in order to help individuals overcome their fears and confidently embrace their unique talents on any stage they encounter (Kenny, 2011). Symptoms vary from person to person including racing pulse and fast breathing, throat is dry and tight, hands, knees, lips, and voice are tremble, sweaty and cold hands, nausea and stomach discomfort, vision changes.

1.6 Causes of Stage Anxiety:

Fear of judgment- One of the most common reasons of anxiety while performing is the fear of being assessed negatively by others. Individuals are concerned about making mistakes, being viewed as incompetent, or receiving scorn from the audience. The pressure to satisfy perceived expectations can be overpowering, leading to increased anxiety (Bippus, et al., 1999). **Low self-confidence -** Individuals who lack self-confidence and self-belief may doubt their abilities and feel inadequate in front of an audience. They may engage in negative self-talk, focusing on their defects and perceived deficiencies, aggravating their anxiety.

Past negative experience - Previous unpleasant experiences while performing in public can have a long-term psychological influence. Embarrassing situations, criticism, or failure in front of an audience can leave emotional scars and heighten the dread of reliving such events (Paivio, et al., 1959).

Perfectionism - While aiming for excellence, a perfectionistic perspective can sometimes contribute to stage fright. The continuous quest of perfection, as well as the dread of failing to fulfil impossible standards, can contribute to increased anxiety before and during performances.

Social comparison - Comparing oneself to others, particularly those believed to be more brilliant or successful, can lead to feelings of inadequacy and exacerbate stage anxiety. Individuals may assume they do not measure up to the abilities of others as a result of this comparison. **Lack of preparation -** Anxiety might be worsened by little preparation or feeling unprepared for the performance. Individuals who are unsure of their level of readiness may be afraid of being exposed as unprepared during the performance.

Performance pressure - External pressure from parents, teachers, friends, or supervisors to do very well can cause enormous stress. Stage anxiety can be exacerbated by the dread of failing others or facing penalties for perceived failure.

Lack of experience - Inexperienced performers may feel less at ease on stage or in public, leading to increased anxiety owing to the novelty of the circumstance. **Fear of forgetting -** For artists, the fear of forgetting lines, lyrics, or essential points during a performance can be a significant source of anxiety. This fear of memory lapses might cause anxiety both before and during the performance. **Physical causes -** The sympathetic nervous system, which is in charge of the "fight-or-flight" reaction, is activated during stage fright. In this situation, the body releases adrenaline to get ready for swift action. In order to prepare the body for flight or fight, adrenaline speeds up the rate at which muscle fibres contract. This can cause uncontrollable muscle twitches, such as trembling hands and shaky knees (Marrs, 2006). Adrenaline also slows down the digestive system, including the salivary glands, resulting in a dry mouth, and activates the sweat glands (for those sweaty hands).

II. NEED FOR THE STUDY:

Though many people in young adulthood have the ability, they are unable to exhibit their talent on the stage. The anxiety made them stammer and word block in the speech and flight hormone (shivering) took place in person's behaviour which made the person too restricted to show their ability. If the anxiety is screened in this stage it helps the person to overcome it before their study period gets over and it may be helpful for them to show excellence in the field in which they are more efficient.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Andrew Steptoe (1987) et al studied Stage fright in orchestral musicians. A questionnaire was carried out with three groups of musicians: professional orchestral players, music students, and members of an amateur orchestra. Performance anxiety was lowest in the professional group and highest among students. Catastrophizing was positively linked with performance anxiety in all groups.

D Riley Nicholson (2014) et al studied about anxiety in musicians: On and off stage. Examining unique and overlapping components of Music performance anxiety (MPA) and social anxiety, 130 professional musicians were assessed with self-reported MPA in three different musical performance settings using the performance anxiety. Results showed that the expression of MPA varies by performance setting, during solo performances. Regression models demonstrated that general measures of social anxiety increasingly predicted MPA from practice, to group, to solo settings, with fear of negative evaluation predicting anxiety in three contexts. These results highlight fear of negative evaluation.

ShangalMirawdali (2018) et al studied about academic anxiety and its effects on academic performance and social and family sources of anxiety have effects on academic performance. Positive relationships were observed between social and family sources of anxiety and academic performance and stressors. This study revealed the high level of academic anxiety among the undergraduates.

John Hunsley (1985) studied the impact of test anxiety on test performance and the cognitive appraisals of test-anxious students to overcome limitations of previous research. Results indicate that test anxiety was related to poor test performance both early and late in the term. The pattern of Ss' anxiety and appraisals suggests that test-anxious Ss experienced most doubt and concern early in the term.

O Kondaš(1967) studied about the reduction of examination anxiety and 'stage-fright' by group desensitization and relaxation. The results of the experiment in group desensitization, relaxation and imagination of exam situations in groups of children and students show that systematic desensitization is an efficient method for reducing stage-fright. Some transient positive effects were also achieved with a modification of the Schultz method of relaxation.

Sibnath Deb(2010) et al studied about Anxiety among high school students in India. Results showed that anxiety was more for boys than girls. Results also show that adolescents perceived that they did not receive quality time from fathers and mothers. Adolescents with working mothers were found to be more anxious. Adolescents from Bengali medium schools were more anxious than adolescents from English medium schools.

Sat Bir S Khalsa (2009/2012) et al studied about Yoga ameliorates performance anxiety and mood disturbance in young professional musicians. Professional musicians experience high levels of stress, performance anxiety, and others. This study was to evaluate the benefits of yoga and meditation for musicians. Young adult professional musicians where participated in a 2-month program of yoga and meditation were randomized to a yoga lifestyle intervention group (n = 15) or to a group practicing yoga and meditation only (n = 15). Additional musicians were recruited to a no-practice control group (n = 15). Both yoga groups attended 3 Yoga or meditation classes each week. Many participants later completed a 1-year followup assessment using the same questionnaires. Both yoga groups showed towards less music performance anxiety and significantly less general anxiety/tension, depression, and anger at end-program relative to controls, but showed no changes in PRMDs, stress, or sleep.

Christine Purdon (2001) et al studied about social anxiety among college students done by Christine Purdon et al and the purpose of this study was to examine perception of anxiety in others influence participants and to investigate relationship between social anxiety and perception regarding others who appear to be anxious. Results show that the majority of individuals experience symptoms of anxiety in social situations. Individuals who reported elevated social anxiety were influenced when another individual was perceived to be anxious.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aim and objectives:

The aim of the current study is to develop and standardize an instrument for the assessment of stage anxiety among undergraduate students. To achieve this purpose, objectives like to develop a tool on 'Stage Anxiety' that could be tested on undergraduate students to know about the existing ideology about the specific anxiety.

3.2 Samples:

The target population comprises of undergraduate students. So, the sample selected amongst the target population is college students using 'Purposive Sampling' techniques. Based on these requirements, a sample size of 106 i.e., 19 male and 87 female population were assessed. Inclusion criteria include both male and female between the ages of 18 to 21 years, preferably English-speaking population.

3.3 Ethical Considerations:

1. Participants' responses are maintained with confidentiality and anonymity throughout the research.

2. The participants were provided with the option of right to withdraw (i.e) they can leave the study at any point of time, if they want to.

3. All the data collected will be used only for academic purposes.

3.4 Tool Used:

The assessment used here is the newly constructed/ developed questionnaire for “stage anxiety”. It comprises two sections.

Personal Data Sheet:

This section was designed to gather information about their Name, Age, and Gender (Male/Female), Year of study, Place of living(Urban/Semi-Urban/Rural)

3.5 Closed ended questionnaire:

The questionnaire prepared by the researcher focusing the affective, behavioral and cognitive aspects of stage anxiety. The total questions were 14. Each question carries 5 different responses (5 point likert scale) i.e. strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4), strongly agree (5). The higher the score indicated higher stage anxiety.

3.6 Procedure:

The present study was conducted in four phases. They are as follows.

3.6.1 Phase 1: Item Generation:

Stage anxiety is a common thing among people no one makes an effort to measure it.

We created a scale to measure stage anxiety

After item generation, the questionnaire was put forward to ‘Focus Group discussion’ which consisted of distinguished experts from psychology. Through 4-5 Focus Group discussions, the questionnaire was narrowed down to 14 questions.

3.6.2 Phase 2: Instrument Validation:

Step 1: Content Validation and Expert Rating:

In this phase, the constructed instrument was given for expert rating to 5 professionals, in order to arrive at a set of items to be included in the instrument. Expert Rating will be solicited for content appropriateness, its relatedness to the topic, reading difficulty level of items on a scale of 0-5, addition or deletion of items. This provides with the content validity of the measure.

Step 2: Item Inclusion:

After two continuous expert validations, the questionnaire was finalized with 14 items and was ready for data collection.

3.6.3 Phase 3: Pilot Study:

With the exclusion and inclusion criteria on mind, the framed questions were administered to 106 samples of 19 males and 87 females, meeting the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Here, the sampling method used was “convenience sampling” technique.

3.6.4 Phase 4: Data Analysis:

The obtained data was coded for IBM SPSS 26 analysis. Descriptive statistics like mean, standard deviation, frequencies and percentages were used to examine the Personal data sheet and the Section B items. After this, Cronbach’s Alpha was performed to check the internal consistency / reliability and correlation test is done to verify the relationship between the item and the concept.

IV.RESULT AND DISCUSSION:

4.1 Item Generation:

Stage anxiety is a common thing among people no one makes an effort to measure it. We created a scale to measure stage anxiety. After item generation, the questionnaire was put forward to ‘Focus Group discussion’ which consisted of distinguished experts from psychology. Through 4-5 Focus Group discussions, the questionnaire was narrowed down to 14 questions. Stage anxiety is a type of anxiety which affects a person physically and mentally it restricts the person from performing or exhibiting the person's skills or ability in front of a crowd. An Instrument (stage anxiety) is used to screen the stage anxiety of the

person in a valid and reliable manner which helps to screen the person's anxiety and if therapies and effective techniques are provided to the person then it will be easy for the person to overcome stage anxiety. The instrument was constructed for young adults who are starting college life in India. The screening helps the person to overcome the anxiety and exhibit their talent in front of many people.

4.2 Focus Group Discussion:

Stage anxiety is more common among people but no instruments were constructed to measure stage anxiety so to screen the stage anxiety among the young adulthood the instrument is constructed. At the initial stage the instrument comprises 19 questions after the peer review and expert review based on the focus group it was shortened down to 14. For the purpose of generating items for the questionnaire discussions were held with students of psychology and experts in the field of Psychology and research.

There are three different focus group discussions. The first focus group discussion was conducted with 10 members which includes 2nd Post graduate psychology students. In this we discussed Stage anxiety and the factors that affect every individual to form a concept. Through this we frame 19 questions. The second focus group discussion was conducted with 5 members including 2nd Post graduate psychology students, The American College, Madurai. The third focus group discussion was conducted with 8 Assistant professors, The American College, Madurai. The Fourth focus group discussion was conducted with the Head of Psychology department (PG), The American College, Madurai. The number of questions developed at the end of the FGD was 14 with negative statements.

4.3 Expert Rating:

In this phase, the constructed instrument was given for expert rating to 5 professionals, in order to arrive at a set of items to be included in the instrument. Expert Rating will be solicited for content appropriateness, its relatedness to the topic, reading difficulty level of items on a scale of 0-5, addition or deletion of items. This provides the content validity of the measure.

4.4 Pilot Study:

With the exclusion and inclusion criteria in mind, the framed questions were administered to 106 samples of 19 males and 87 females, meeting the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Here, the sampling method used was the "Convenience Sampling" technique.

The instrument's validity and reliability is measured using SPSS 16. Cronbach's alpha test is conducted to verify the internal consistency/reliability of the items then the item correlation test is conducted to verify the relationship between the item and theme in SPSS 16. The reliability/consistency after the removal of items is 0.85. The stage anxiety scale is for screening the anxiety of the person based on stage performance. It comes under the subdivision of the anxiety. It will be based on the person's physical and cognition reaction to the incident which they experienced.

Table 4.1 Internal Consistency of the questionnaire:

N=106

S. No	Category	Reliability (Internal Consistency)
1.	Cronbach's Alpha	0.844
2.	Split Half (Part-I)	0.827
3.	Split Half (Part-II)	0.691

Table 4.2 Item-Total Statistics:

N=106

S.No	Questions	Correlated Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha If Item Deleted
1.	I am very much concerned about my stage performance.	.188	.848
2.	I fear something embarrassing may happen while I am on the stage.	.589	.829
3.	I feel nervous while getting ready for the stage performance.	.510	.833
4.	I feel uncomfortable while performing in front of others.	.656	.825
5.	I find it difficult to maintain eye contact with the audience while I am on the stage.	.497	.833
6.	I often worry that I may not perform well in front of the audience.	.558	.830

7.	I consistently feel that audience will think bad about me due to my performance	.491	.834
8.	I may convey something else than what I think.	.287	.844
9.	I pause in between and blank out during my public performance.	.452	.836
10.	I feel difficult in breathing while getting ready for the stage performance.	.504	.833
11.	My voice tone changes when I give public speeches.	.488	.834
12.	I feel stomach upset while I am going to perform.	.429	.837
13.	I get dizzy while I perform in front of a crowd.	.314	.843
14.	I don't get enough sleep before the day of my performance.	.386	.840
15.	I feel sweaty in my hands before taking the seminar.	.391	.840
16.	My heart beat increases when I think of taking class presentation.	.649	.825

Here, table 2 greatly helps in determining whether the generated items needed to be removed or not. The dimensions

- Corrected item-total correlation aids in assuming how much each items correlate with the overall questionnaire score. Thus questions with a value less than 0.30 indicate that the item do not belong to the appropriate criterion.
- Cronbach's Alpha it item deleted value gives a vivid idea as of to what will be the internal consistency score if certain items are removed. Hence, here the highest value-assuming questions are to be removed for more reliable formulation of a measurement scale.

Thus, based on these conditions, values were assessed in the table and two questions were identified (question number one and eight). Both two questions are bolded for easy identification. By removing these two items, the reliability of the scale can be increased.

Table 4.3 Overall Internal Consistency of the questionnaire after Item deletion: N=106

S.No	Category	Reliability (Internal Consistency)
1.	Cronbach's Alpha	0.85
2.	Split Half (Part-I)	0.825
3.	Split Half (Part-II)	0.746

PHASE 1: Item Generation and Focus Group Discussion:

A total of 19 items were generated. During the construction of this tool, 4 focus group discussions were held. After refinement of the questions, they were subjected to 'Expert Validation' and 8 professional rated this tool.

All the suggestions from the expert rating were incorporated and the questions were 14 items. Succeeding this, the questionnaire was given to a sample of 106 participants, among which 19 were male and 87 were female. The sample population ranged between the age group of 17-21.

PHASE 2: Content validation

The current tool was found to be reliable, based on the values of Cronbach's Alpha, Split Half, and Guttman Split- Half Coefficient.

The subsequent validity and norms of the tool will be established in the further study.

Higher score indicates higher levels of stage anxiety.

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