



## Teachers as Facilitator towards Reducing Anxiety of Secondary School Students

Dr. Muhammad Idris\*, Dr. Maksal Minaz\*\*, Dr. Shaista Irshad Khan\*\*\*

\*Associate Professor Department of Education [midrees@awkum.edu.pk](mailto:midrees@awkum.edu.pk)

\*\*Lecturer Department of Education [Maksalminaz@awkum.edu.pk](mailto:Maksalminaz@awkum.edu.pk)

\*\*\*Assistant Professor Department of Education [shaistakhan@awkum.edu.pk](mailto:shaistakhan@awkum.edu.pk)

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### ABSTRACT

*The quantitative study was intended to compare the responses of female secondary school teachers with the responses of girl's secondary school students regarding teacher as a facilitator towards reducing anxiety of secondary school students. The deductive research study was focused on research question; is there a significant difference among the responses of secondary teachers and students regarding the role of teachers in reducing anxiety. Aimed at this purpose all Secondary schoolgirls and female Secondary School Teachers (SSTs) of grade 9<sup>th</sup> and grade 10<sup>th</sup> in District Swabi were designated as the population of the study. The sample size of (164) female Secondary school teachers and girls students of class 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> were selected through convenient sampling technique by using Yamane Formula. Two Distinct questionnaires for the purpose of collecting data from female secondary teachers and Secondary schoolgirl's were developed for the purpose of data collection. Research data were collected and analyzed by the help of SPSS 21. The data were analyzed by Mean, Standard Deviation as well as t-test was applied for the comparison. Results showed significant of difference between the responses of female secondary school teachers with the responses of girl's students. Female teachers were more agreed with the statements that they help out the students in reducing anxiety as compare to the responses of girl's secondary school student. It was recommended that professional development courses should be enriched related to reducing students' anxiety.*



### Introduction

According to Duan (2020) providing a favorable environment for instruction along with all facilities to learners is clearly interrelated with the development of, social and economic values. It gives long term prosperity to a nation. Therefore, it is the utmost responsibility of a teacher to utilize all his/her efforts to facilitate the learners' and reduces pressure level of the students. According to Hussain, Zaman & Idris (2014) professionally trained teacher can help the learners to reduce anxiety through activities like social work and active learning (Inada, 2021). Due to active learning teacher can reinforce the positive energies and positive thinking. Though the task is very difficult but reducing anxiety during the classroom activities it a challenge for the teachers to motivate the students towards active learning.

According to McLeod (2018) the key element of the theories of Vygotsky (1978) was the role of social collaboration in the development of understanding. As Vygotsky supposed strongly that social development of the learner stands the essential part of his life therefore, socially equipped individual can

easily won the game of life and go through all of the anxiety technically. Vygotsky get much importance to social connection between a teacher and student. There is no Single learning activity or task which is difficult for students to conduct but student need a little connection with the teacher. Strong connection with the teacher and peer group can help the student to understand the difficult tasks and build their own knowledge (Usman Husaini, 2009). As cited by Hussain, Zaman & Idris (2014) an individual inner fear or response regarding a situation is Anxiety. According to Kapur (2018) several approaches and places were recommended by the researcher in which social production of information happens and due to these approaches the anxiety level of the learners decrease. According to Minaz, Tabassum & Idris (2017) constructivist approach allows teachers to provide active classroom learning environment and social cohesion of the students make the learning environment free of stress and anxiety.

According to Ajzen & Fishbein (1980) educationalists have a duty to use classroom strategies that are providing new opportunity towards social development of a student and he became more confident to face all the problems of his life. For this determination student give honors and inspirations. Elasticity additional vantages to their thoughts, questions, descriptions, and renovations are comfortable. Social assignments of a student as means of fostering social learning and growth throwers a life in which he/she can grip anxiety related disorders Cheung & Lee, (2009).

According to (Muller *et al.*, 2017) due to high level of stress and anxiety more students vacillate to take admission in educational institutions and they do not participate in the learning activities. Consequently, it the extreme duty of a professional teacher to provide Collaborative learning setting in which students involve in active learning and feel comfort for learning (Minaz, Tabassum & idris 2017). According to Mahmoud *et al.*,(2012) due to many factors young students feel more stress and anxiety. Therefore, Varity of teaching facilities are available which can provide to mentally stressed students to help ease stress and anxiety stopping from academic burdens. These teaching felicities may provide them either in-door or out-door of a school premises (Muller *et al.*, 2017). Research studies showed that continue counselling and care of students can reduce the level of anxiety to some extent, those students who are well-adjusted and talented to accept variety, change, and energy to find out new ways of learning are more likely able to control over anxiety (Dewaele & Al-Saraj 2015).

Teachers must have a potential to adopted modern teaching methodologies and talent to exercise the modern teaching strategies in the classroom, playgrounds, laboratory and all learning activities, well manner can play very significant role in reducing anxiety as well as social and emotional development of students (Armbruster, Patel, Johnson & Weiss, 2009). Therefore, the current research was to explore the teacher's role as facilitator towards reducing anxiety leading to social development.

### **Objectives**

The following objective was developed for the purpose of the research study:

To compare the responses of female secondary school teachers with the responses of girl's secondary school students regarding teacher as a facilitator towards reducing anxiety of secondary school students at District Sawabi

### **Null hypothesis**

Following null hypothesis were tested

H<sub>0</sub>1: there is no significant role of teacher in reducing anxiety of students at secondary level.

H<sub>0</sub>2 there is no significant difference between the responses of instructors and schoolgirls concerning teacher's role of in reducing at secondary level.

### **Statement of the problem**

In today's world everyone has their own problems and issues. Somewhere there are financial problem in the world and some where there are issues related to health. COVID-19 is an example of the issue related to the health. It affected all of the social settings of human beings. Human beings are frustrated and faced problems like anxiety and stress. Schoolgirls were the most suffered group who have faced many problems during the pandemic. Reducing anxiety level of the student is the major responsibility of the teachers for the healthy learning environment Therefore a comparative study was conducted to compare the responses of female secondary school teachers with the responses of girl's secondary school students regarding teacher as a facilitator towards reducing anxiety of secondary school students in District Sawabi.

### **Theoretical Background**

#### **Observational Theory**

According to Bandura (1997) he stimulated the awareness that an individual seeks from his environment and individuals around him, the role of a student as a mediator and he actually act in a certain way. In the process of learning the behavior of student modified accordingly. The behavior towards learning needs strong reinforcement and it provide support to adjust him/his in the learning environment. Either the

reinforcement is positive or negative it makes the sense of motivation and social development (McLeod, 2018).

### **Literature review**

According to Jennings, & DiPrete (2010) the role of the instructor to transfer the Knowledge and modify the behavior in a clear and organized way is the need of the day. Professionally equipped have skill to solve the emotional and mental problem of the learners with clear directions that lead the students towards his destination. Adopting active classroom learning activities and student centered approaches can help the teacher to reduce the stress and burden and make them an active individual for the society and its betterment. Mahmoud et al., (2012) conducted a research study on number of (508) five hundred and eight undergraduate students to study the significance of coping style, life satisfaction and demographic in reducing depression anxiety and stress. For this purpose multiple regression analysis were used to measure the variables. They found that the main predictor of depression anxiety and stress was maladaptive coping. In contrast Adaptive coping was not a significant predictor of any of the three outcome variables. The results of the study showed that falling maladaptive coping performances may have the greatest positive influence on reducing depression, anxiety, and stress

According to (Rivers, 2011) an expert teacher make it possible to prepare ways to reduce the student's anxiety and convert this energy in positive rehabilitations of the society.

Inada (2021) conducted a study in which they say that sometime students feel anxiety due to one problem or the other. Like if a student exposed to study in a foreign language which is not the native language of the student produce anxiety. In their research they take six teachers for the purpose of interview. These teachers have to teach in English and avoid teaching in Japanese. After the experiment they were interviewed for the purpose to give suggestion to reduce student's anxiety. In their findings they suggest that for the reduction of student's anxiety level its necessary to give them freedom of speaking. They must be providing a risk free environment in which they groom freely. They further suggest reducing size of the lecture. They also suggest encouraging them. They must be advised not to feel any type of shame while doing for learning. Further they suggest that repeated the same exercise will also help to reduce anxiety of the student. They also give suggestion that if students make mistake they must be guide in a proper way. Students have to do work without the fear of making mistakes. In other suggestion which they give in their findings that group work will also help them to overcome difficulties and reduce the level of anxiety in the students.

Hsu & Goldsmith, (2021) make a research for the purpose to give suggestion for the reduction of anxiety among students. They studied that anxiety play a negative role in students' performance. Anxiety and stress effects very badly students' performance in class room. They suggest that the instructor should aware about the resources of the institute and when needed the students has to be advised and guided towards that. They say that this will help to reduce anxiety among students. Further they explain that such type of stress and anxiety produce pressure and mental health challenges for the students and sometime its lead to suicide. Teacher is unable to act like a professional in mental health but to know and aware about these challenges will help to decrease stress and anxiety in students. They also write in their findings that by arranging different type of seminars will help the instructor to train in the field and will be able to help the students at the time of need.

### **Professional Role of Teachers in reducing the anxiety level of students**

Teachers should categorize numerous teaching methodologies and strategies to create a comfortable classroom learning environment. They suggested student-centered approached should adopted in direction to nurture their learners self-sufficiency and motivation. The researchers also argued that teacher should encourage the students towards positive thinking and create ways to reduce anxiety (Jordan & Gray, 2019; Najeeb, 2013). Researchers (Liu & Jackson, 2008; Piniel & Csizer, 2013; Zhang, 2019) have focused on behaviors of students towards anxiety. The researchers sougheed out that students feel anxiety due to pressure of personation in the front of class, lack of motivation, fear of teacher, lack of self-confidence, and most of the time anxiety of language classes, teacher-student communications, instruction practices in class, and the incompatible teaching materials students. Therefore they suggested multiple classroom activities for teachers to reduce the anxiety of students.

The role of instructors has a critical impact in students' ability to learn. Teachers in the language classroom may perform a variety of roles, including initiator, facilitator, motivator, mentor, consultant, and mental supporter. Learner motivation and interest are considered to be influenced by these factors. Instructors' involvement in lowering student anxiety has been studied extensively in an effort to better understand how teachers impact students' motivation (Muelle et al., 2017).

## Methodology

Post-positivist research paradigm was used for the current research. According to (Panhwar, Ansari & Shah, 2017) post-positivist paradigm is suitable for quantitative research design because it used to develop objective knowledge in this study. For the purpose of data collection all female secondary schools teachers (SST) and all the girls' students of grade 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of district Sawabi were selected population of the study. Number of one hundred sixty four (164) female secondary school teachers (SST) and the number of three hundred and seventy three (373) girls' secondary school students of grade 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> were selected through convenient sample technique. Post-positivist philosophers belief on deductive approach (Morgan, 2017) therefore, deductive approach was adopted for the purpose of data collection. Primary Data was collected for the purpose of study through self-developed Likert Scale questionnaire. Two Distinct questionnaires for the purpose of collecting data from female secondary teachers and Secondary schoolgirl's were developed for the purpose of data collection.

### Data analysis

Research data were collected and analyzed by the help of spss 21. The data were analyzed by mean, standard deviation as well as *t*-test at 0.05 level of significant was applied for the comparison of female secondary school teacher (sst) and secondary schoolgirl's responses. Cohens' effect (1988) size was also calculated;

Cohens d effect size

Small effect size	Moderate effect size	Large effect size
.01	.06	.14

**Table 1: Responses of Female Teachers Regarding the role in reducing anxiety**

<i>Description of Items</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Teachers have important role in reducing students' anxiety.</i>	3.35	0.731
<i>Different school activities reduce students' anxiety and enhance student social skills.</i>	2.81	0.821
<i>Ideas and opinions of teachers for reducing students' anxiety improve social skills of the students.</i>	3.12	0.791
<i>Keeping the students calm and relax and engage can enhance their social development.</i>	3.91	0.691
<i>I encourage and support my students to reduce their anxiety level.</i>	3.21	0.781
<i>Overall results</i>	3.28	0.643

**Table 2: Responses of girls students regarding Teachers' role in reducing anxiety**

<i>Description of Items</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Teachers support the students to reduce their level of anxiety.</i>	1.244	0.731
<i>My teachers engage me in such activities which reduce my anxiety level and enhance my social skills.</i>	2.281	0.633
<i>Teachers have an important role in reducing students' anxiety level.</i>	2.321	0.723
<i>Teachers help the students whenever the students are worried.</i>	3.211	0.611
<i>Overall results</i>	2.264	0.669

The results of the above tables 1 and table 2 shows that the mean score of the statement keeping the students calm and relax and engrossment in classroom activities can enhance their social skills and reduce the level of anxiety, the mean score of the teachers responses agreed (M=3.92 and SD=0.691) shows that diversity of classroom activities can help the learners to reduce anxiety. In comparison the mean score of the statement that teachers help the students whenever the students are undecided with the mean scores of (M=3.211 and SD=S is 0.611). Mean score of the statement I encourage and support my students to reduce their anxiety level also support that teacher provide opportunities to students for the social development to reduce anxiety level. Overall results from all the statements were showing a smaller

amount of difference among the statements of the teachers and students similar results were presented by (Jennings, & DiPrete, 2010).

**Table 3: Comparison of teachers and students regarding the role of teachers towards reducing anxiety**

Respondents	N	df	Mean	SD	t-value	P-value	Cohen's D
Students	373	535	2.264	0.669	2.84	0.014	0.191
Teachers	164		3.28	0.643			

Significant

Table value at 0.05 = 1.646

Table 3 shows that there is a significant difference between the views of the students and the teachers regarding the role of teachers in reducing anxiety leading to social development of students at 0.05 level of the significance having *t*-value 2.84 and *p*-value 0.014. Furthermore, the teachers were more agreed with the statement as compared to the students with effect size 0.19 which considered as large effect size.

### Findings

The data revealed that teacher plays an important role in reducing anxiety level of the students. Engagement in multiple classroom activities during teaching and learning process help the students to enhance social skills and reduce the level of anxiety. The mean score of the teachers responses agreed (M=3.92 and SD=0.691) shows that diversity of classroom activities can help the learners to reduce anxiety. In contrast the mean score of the statement that teachers help the students whenever the students are undecided with the mean scores of (M=3.211 and SD=S is 0.611). Overall results of the responses of female teachers responses having mean score 3.28 in contrast overall results of the mean score of girls students responses showed mean score 2.26 shows a smaller amount difference the results were similar to (Yan & Horwitz, 2008). Results showed significant of difference between the responses of female secondary school teachers with girl's student's responses. Results revealed that female teachers were more agreed with the statements that they help out the students in reducing anxiety as compare to the responses to girl's secondary school student.

### Conclusions

The comparative research study were conducted to compare the responses of female secondary school teachers with the responses of girl's secondary school students regarding teacher as a facilitator towards reducing anxiety of secondary school students. Quantitative research design was used for the achievement of current objective of the study. For the purpose of data collection all female secondary schools teachers (SST) and all the girls' students of grade 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of district Sawabi were selected as the population of the study. Number of one hundred sixty four (164) female secondary school teachers (SST) and the number of three hundred and seventy three (373) girls' secondary school students of grade 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> were selected through convenient sample technique. Deductive approach was adopted for the purpose of data collection. Primary Data was collected for the purpose of study through self-developed Likert Scale questionnaire. The scale was validated before collecting data from the respondents. For this purposes the guidance of experts of the department of education Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan were taken and questionnaire were improved accordingly. For the purpose of the comparison of the responses of female teachers and girls students two distinct questionnaires were administered and data were collected by the researcher herself.

### Recommendations

1. It was recommended professional development courses should be enriched related to reducing students' anxiety.
2. It was also recommended on the basis of findings that variety of teaching strategies should be implementing during teaching and learning process to deal with student's anxiety problems.

### Limitations and Future Directions

The research study focused only government girls secondary schools to compare the responses of female teachers and girls secondary students to explore teachers as facilitator towards reducing anxiety leading to social development therefore it is recommended that research on the above problem may be conducted on male students and teachers.

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