

Motivational Differences between High and Low Creative Students on Self-Actualization and Anxiety of Secondary class in Himachal Pradesh.

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Abstract

The present study investigates motivational and psychological differences between high and low creative students with respect to self-actualization, state anxiety, and trait anxiety. Using independent samples t-tests, significant differences were observed across multiple dimensions. High creative students' demonstrated significantly higher self-actualization and state anxiety but lower trait anxiety compared to low creative students. Gender-based analyses revealed nuanced patterns, including significant differences in self-actualization among high creative males and females, but not among low creative groups. The findings highlight the complex relationship between creativity, motivation, and emotional regulation, contributing to both classical and contemporary psychological literature.

Keywords

Creativity, Self-Actualization, State Anxiety, Trait Anxiety, Motivation, Gender Differences

1. Introduction

Creativity has long been associated with higher-order psychological functioning, particularly in the domain of motivation and personality. Early humanistic theorists such as Maslow (1954, 1957) emphasized self-actualization as the highest level of human motivation, often linked with creativity. At the same time, research has demonstrated complex associations between creativity and anxiety (Raina, 1968; Spielberger, 1972).

This study aims to explore motivational differences between high and low creative students, focusing on:

- Self-actualization

- State anxiety
- Trait anxiety

Additionally, gender differences within creative groups are examined to provide a comprehensive understanding.

2. Review of Literature

Early studies suggested that highly creative individuals tend to exhibit greater self-actualization (Maslow, 1957; Bhan, 1973; Jha, 1975). Research on anxiety and creativity has produced mixed findings. Some studies reported higher anxiety among low creative individuals (Raina, 1968; Nair, 1975), while others indicated that moderate anxiety may facilitate creativity (Dagur, 1981; Qureshi, 1982).

Later developments in psychology distinguished between:

- State anxiety (temporary emotional condition)
- Trait anxiety (stable personality disposition) (Spielberger, 1972)

Recent perspectives suggest that creativity may involve heightened situational arousal but better long-term emotional regulation.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

A comparative research design was used. The present study was carried out within ex-post-facto research design.

3.2 Sample

The sample of the study was 500 students comprised of 228 male and 272 female students studying in class 10th in two districts namely Solan and Sirmour of Himachal Pradesh.

A total of 500 students (228 male, 272 female) from the 10th grade were sampled for this study. These students were drawn from two districts of Himachal Pradesh, namely Solan and Sirmaur, via a random sampling technique.

Students were categorized into:

- High creativity group

- Low creativity group

Further classification was done based on gender.

3.3 Variables

- Independent Variable: Level of Creativity (High vs Low)
- Dependent Variables:
 - o Self-actualization
 - o State anxiety
 - o Trait anxiety

3.4 Statistical Analysis

Statistical tools such as mean, median, mode, t-test and other desired techniques is employed.

Independent samples t-test was used to examine differences between groups.

4. Results

4.1 Self-Actualization (High vs Low Creativity)

High creative students (M = 155.66, SD = 20.36) scored significantly higher than low creative students (M = 148.67, SD = 16.96), $t = -4.155$, $p < 0.01$.

Interpretation:

Creativity significantly enhances self-actualization.

4.2 State and Trait Anxiety

State Anxiety

High creativity (M = 45.84) > Low creativity (M = 42.18)

$t = -4.975$, $p < 0.01$

Trait Anxiety

High creativity (M = 47.86) < Low creativity (M = 54.56)

$t = 5.809, p < 0.01$

Interpretation:

- Creativity increases situational anxiety
 - Creativity reduces long-term anxiety
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4.3 Male Students (High vs Low Creativity)

- Self-Actualization: Significant ($t = -4.523, p < 0.01$)
- State Anxiety: Significant ($t = -3.896, p < 0.01$)
- Trait Anxiety: Significant ($t = 3.310, p < 0.01$)

Conclusion:

High creative males show higher self-actualization, higher state anxiety, and lower trait anxiety.

4.4 Female Students (High vs Low Creativity)

- Self-Actualization: Not significant ($p = 0.082$)
- State Anxiety: Significant ($p = 0.002$)
- Trait Anxiety: Significant ($p < 0.01$)

Conclusion:

Creativity in females is more strongly linked with anxiety than self-actualization.

4.5 Gender Differences (High Creative Students)

- Self-Actualization: Significant (males higher)
 - State Anxiety: Not significant
 - Trait Anxiety: Not significant
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4.6 Gender Differences (Low Creative Students)

No significant differences found in:

- Self-actualization
 - State anxiety
 - Trait anxiety
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5. Discussion

The findings confirm that creativity plays a crucial role in shaping motivational and emotional characteristics.

Key Insights

1. Self-Actualization and Creativity

Consistent with Maslow (1957), high creativity is linked with higher self-actualization.

2. Dual Role of Anxiety

- o Higher state anxiety may reflect cognitive engagement and sensitivity
- o Lower trait anxiety suggests better emotional stability

3. Gender Differences

- o Male creative students show stronger motivational outcomes
- o Female creativity is more associated with emotional variables

4. Consistency with Previous Studies

- o Supports Raina (1968), Nair (1975)
 - o Aligns with Dagur (1981) and Qureshi (1982)
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6. Conclusion

The study concludes that:

- Creativity significantly enhances self-actualization

- Creativity increases state anxiety but reduces trait anxiety
- Gender differences exist mainly in self-actualization among high creative
- Low creativity is associated with higher chronic anxiety

These findings highlight creativity as a psychologically complex construct involving both motivational strength and emotional dynamics.

7. Educational Implications

- Schools should foster creativity to enhance self-actualization
- Controlled anxiety may be beneficial for creative performance
- Counseling programs should address trait anxiety in low creative students

8. Limitations

- Limited demographic scope
- Cross-sectional design
- Reliance on self-report measures

9. Suggestions for Future Research

- Longitudinal studies on creativity and emotional development
- A study may be designed to find out the relative contribution of various types of motives in the development of creativity among the school going children
- Cross-cultural comparisons

10. Educational Implications:

- Introduce school-based counseling services in secondary schools.
- Normalize discussions around stress, failure, and emotional regulation.
- Include mindfulness, socio-emotional learning (SEL), and coping strategies in the curriculum.

- Include modules on creativity, motivation, and adolescent psychology in teacher education.
 - Train teachers to:
 - o Encourage divergent thinking
 - o Provide constructive feedback without discouraging originality
 - o Recognize anxiety symptoms
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