

ABSTRACT

Test anxiety is a phenomenon that can be commonly encountered at school. Test anxiety can be seen as a substantial non-intellectual factor affecting the quality of pupils' school work. In the literature we can find a form of fear and anxiety negatively related to school performance, however we can also find a form of anxiety that facilitates school work and results in improved performance. The thesis focuses on test anxiety and fear and examines its form among pupils in mathematics. Using the questionnaire survey in 8th grades of primary schools, we were mapping motivational situation with emphasis on test anxiety in the domain of mathematics and test anxiety before and after performing two mathematical tasks. We were interested in a form of test anxiety in mathematics and whether test anxiety in mathematics overlaps with the anxiety in the school task situation. We focused mainly on the evaluative situation itself. We examined the existence of several components of test anxiety (with the regard to basic distinction between emotional and cognitive dimension) with an emphasis on their links with school performance, the direction in which fear and anxiety affect performance (facilitating, debilitating) and the links among test anxiety and other characteristics. We also pay attention to overlap of fear indicators that can be seen in the literature.

Our results suggest that test anxiety in mathematics can be seen rather as debilitating tendency, which is associated with negative emotional experience during the evaluative situations. Furthermore, test anxiety likely affected the phase before and after performing the mathematical tasks. Test anxiety was also associated with lower self-efficacy. Anxiety in mathematics can be seen as a characteristic that is rather steady (mathematical test anxiety was also reflected in the task situation). Research findings support the view of test anxiety as a multidimensional construct and demonstrate the presence of both cognitive and emotional symptoms of test anxiety. Therefore, to some extent emotional symptoms can help teachers to recognize pupils with test anxiety. Research findings have shown the important role of self-efficacy. Self-efficacy was positively related to school performance and experiencing of evaluative situations. The study can provide a basis for an operationalization and the creation of diagnostic methods in the area of pupils' fear.

KEYWORDS

motivation, fear, mathematics, school task situation, test anxiety