Chapter Six

SUMMARY

Anxiety connotes an experience of varying blends of uncertainty, agitation and dread. Different schools have tried to explore different dimensions of anxiety differently. A special type of anxiety is observed in testing and examination situations which many times affects performance and achievement. This type of anxiety has been termed as Test-Anxiety. Sarason (1958) has constructed a Test-Anxiety Scale (TAS) and has (1961) defined test-anxiety as a kind of anxiety which prevents people from doing well in stress situations.

Much research on test-anxiety has been directed toward determining its correlation with performance on different types of tasks (Con, 1960; Sarason, 1961; Ruebush (1963), Ganzer, 1968; Hall and Hinkle, 1972; Gjesme 1972; Morris and Perez, 1972; Berkley and Sproule, 1973; Szetela, 1973; Frederiksen and Evans, 1974; Wittmaier, 1974; Vagt and Kuhn, 1976; Sarason, 1975; Scherr, 1976; Thompson, 1977; Bond, 1977; Geen, 1977; Oner, 1977; Cullar and Holahan, 1980; Kim, 1981; Lukesch and Helmke, 1984; Dew, Galassi
Quite a few factors have been identified as determinants of degree of test-anxiety. Some of them are general or manifest anxiety, locus of control, emotional maturity, level of aspiration, intelligence and academic achievement.

Several investigators have reported close relationship between manifest anxiety and test-anxiety (Watson, 1967; Reiter, 1971; Auerbach and Speilberger, 1972; Stellwagen, 1972; Jones, 1973; Gubbey, 1978; Christmann, 1978; Betz, 1978). Almost all have observed higher test-anxiety in subjects with high manifest anxiety.

Locus of control is a personality factor based on a belief dimension related to measuring the extent to which an individual believes he is self-motivated, self-directed or self-controlled, or, on the contrary, the extent to which he believes that the environment and powerful others play a dominant role in influencing his behaviour. As regards the relationship between locus of control and test-anxiety, it apparently appears that internals should exhibit less test-anxiety as compared to externals.
Emotional maturity implies matured reactions to various emotion-producing situations. There does not seem to be any study dealing directly with the relationship between emotional maturity and test-anxiety. Most of the studies touching emotional side of behaviour are concerned with the relation of emotional arousal with test-anxiety (Speigler et al., 1968; Morris and Perez, 1972; Bishop, 1973; Koening, 1973; Deffenbacher, 1976; and Cooley, 1977).

The concept of level of aspiration refers to the degree of difficulty of the goal towards which a person is striving (Hoppe, 1930). Goal-setting behaviour has been studied in experiments on the level of aspiration. In general, the individual expects to succeed but in case he sets a very high goal he might fail. The studies of level of aspiration suggest that it is a cognitive type of motivation in that the individual becomes involved in the task, estimates his own level of achievement, and experiences success or failure, and thus, sets his own goal. Test-anxiety may be affected by the level of aspiration of the individual. However, most of the studies (Trapp and Kausler, 1958; Meunier and Rule, 1967) had studied the
impact of test-anxiety on the individuals' level of aspiration and observed that high test-anxiety persons tended to devalue their own performance.

General intelligence is found to be one of the main bases of individual difference. Van der Ploeg and Hulshof (1984) have observed that high intelligence enhances test-anxiety. On the contrary, others (Sarason, 1959; Hill and Sarason, 1966; Berkley and Sproule, 1973; and Fischer and Awrey, 1973) have observed that high intelligence individuals exhibit lesser test-anxiety as compared to the low intelligence individuals.

Academic achievement is measured by some test or examination, and it has been observed that it is affected considerably by the degree of test-anxiety. Tryon et al. (1973), Rao (1974), Osterhouse (1975), Munz et al. (1975), and Wittmaier (1976) reported positive correlation between academic achievement and test-anxiety while Sarason (1957), Sarason, (1960), Prell (1973), Berkley and Sproule (1973), Reid et al. (1973), Bierhalf-Alfermann (1976), Oner (1977), Limann (1977) and Ajwani (1986) reported negative correlation between academic achievement and test-anxiety.
The present research aimed at studying the problems pertaining to the effect of manifest anxiety, internal-external locus of control, emotional maturity, level of aspiration, intelligence and academic achievement on test-anxiety of the students. It was carried through two separate studies. In the first study 428 undergraduate males and females were studied for their manifest anxiety, (Sinha's Comprehensive Anxiety Test), locus of control (Valecha et al.'s Internal-External Scale), and emotional maturity (Singh and Bhargava's Emotional Maturity Scale). On the basis of scores on each of these tests, 20 high scorers and 20 low scorers were selected in eight subgroups. In this way, a total of 160 subjects formed the final sample for Study I. These subjects were then tested for their test-anxiety (Sharma's Test-Anxiety Scale).

The second study was initially conducted on 496 undergraduates who were tested for their level of aspiration (Shah and Bhargava's Test of Level of Aspiration), intelligence (Cattells' Test of "g", Culture Fair Scale 3,) and academic achievement (on the basis of marks in last year's annual examination). On the basis of scores on each of these tests, 20 high scorers and 20 low scorers were selected
in eight subgroups. In this way, a total of 160 subjects formed the final sample for Study II. These subjects were then tested for their test-anxiety (Sharma's Test-Anxiety Scale).

The main data in the two studies were in the form of test-anxiety scores. The obtained data were analysed with the help of three-way ANOVA statistic. In Study I all the three individual factors—Manifest Anxiety, Locus of Control and Emotional Maturity—were found to exert their effect on test-anxiety. High anxious individuals, low internals and emotionally less matured (or unstable) persons were found to exhibit high test-anxiety. On the other hand, low anxious, high internals and emotionally more matured (stable) individuals tended to be less test-anxious. As regards the combined effect of these independent variables, all were found to yield insignificant F-ratios indicating thereby an independence among these factors in affecting the extent of test-anxiety. They did exert their effect independently but not jointly.

In Study II it was found that students with high aspiration level, low intelligence and high academic achievement exhibited higher level of test-
anxiety as compared to those having low aspiration level, high intelligence and low academic achievement. As regards the interaction effects, two of them—one between level of aspiration and academic achievement and another among level of aspiration, intelligence and academic achievement—were found to be significant. This indicates that the difference in test-anxiety exhibited by high and low scorers on an independent factor—level of aspiration—varies considerably because of its interaction with academic achievement or with both intelligence and academic achievement. However, the other two insignificant interaction effects indicate toward independent effects of intelligence and aspiration as well as intelligence and academic achievement on test-anxiety.