

Academic Self-Efficacy and Tendency towards Test Anxiety of Secondary School Students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District, Nigeria

¹Sade, Patrick Patrick & ²Ukaegbu, Hanson Manuabuchi, Ph.D

Department of Guidance and Counselling,

Faculty of Education, University of Uyo, Nigeria.

ukaegbuhanson@uniuyo.edu.ng

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.67487/tjesd.v2i4.263>

Citation: Sade, P. P. & Ukaegbu, H. M. (2026). Academic Self-Efficacy and Tendency towards Test Anxiety of Secondary School Students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District, Nigeria. *Transnational Journal of Education and Scientific Development*, 2(4) <https://doi.org/10.67487/tjesd.v2i4.263>

Abstract

This study investigated the predictive influence of academic self-efficacy on the tendency towards test anxiety of secondary school students in the Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District, Nigeria. The study focused specifically on the extent to which study and peer interaction predicted students' tendency towards test anxiety in the study area. Two research questions and two corresponding null hypotheses guided the study. The study adopted a correlational research design. The population of the study comprised 24,215 JS 3 students in public secondary schools in the study area. A sample of 417 students was selected using a multi-stage sampling procedure. A researcher-developed instrument titled "Academic Self-Efficacy and Test Anxiety Questionnaire (ASETAQ)" was used for data collection. The instrument was face validated by experts, and its internal consistency reliability was established using the Cronbach Alpha method, yielding a coefficient of 0.77. Data were analysed using simple linear regression statistics. The R and R² values were used to answer the research questions, while the null hypotheses were tested using the t-test associated with regression at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that study self-efficacy significantly predicted tendency towards test anxiety to a high extent, while peer interaction

self-efficacy significantly predicted tendency towards test anxiety to a moderate extent. The study concluded that academic self-efficacy is a critical psychological factor predicting students' tendency towards test anxiety, as higher levels of self-efficacy are associated with lower levels of test anxiety. Based on the findings, it was recommended, among others, that school counsellors in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District, in collaboration with their principals, should organise regular workshops to enhance students' study self-efficacy through effective learning strategies and academic planning.

Keywords: Study Self-Efficacy, Peer Interaction Self-Efficacy, Secondary School, Students, Test Anxiety

Introduction

The phenomenon of test anxiety has, in recent times, evolved into a critical socio-educational issue in Nigeria, especially within the secondary school context. The persistent tendency of adolescents to experience excessive worry, fear of failure, and psychological tension during examinations can pose a serious threat to their academic performance, self-confidence, and overall adjustment in school. The situation becomes more worrisome when young learners, expected to serve as the future leaders and workforce of the nation, are overwhelmed by negative emotions that hinder concentration, recall, and performance during evaluative situations. This problem may not only undermine the educational system but also jeopardise national development, as poor performance in examinations can limit access to tertiary education and future career opportunities. Secondary school students who are unable to overcome test anxiety are more likely to suffer academic decline, low self-esteem, and in some cases, withdrawal from school-related activities.

According to Zeidner (2018), test anxiety refers to the set of phenomenological, physiological, and behavioural responses that accompany concern about possible negative consequences or failure in evaluative situations. It may manifest through symptoms such as rapid heartbeat, tension, forgetfulness, restlessness, and persistent worry, all of which interfere with concentration and cognitive performance during examinations. Beyond the physiological strain, test anxiety also carries an emotional burden, as students who experience excessive fear

of failure can develop a negative self-concept and perceive academic tasks as threats rather than opportunities for growth.

Despite curricular reforms, continuous assessment policies, and support systems such as guidance services, many students continue to approach examinations with apprehension, which results in poor preparation, underachievement, and a decline in self-confidence. The danger of test anxiety is multifaceted. It not only undermines effective study habits and test-taking strategies but also leads to psychosomatic complaints such as headaches, fatigue, and insomnia. In severe cases, test anxiety can impair long-term motivation, increase school avoidance behaviours, and weaken students' overall academic resilience. Thus, test anxiety can pose both short-term and long-term risks to adolescents' educational development. In the short term, it can reduce performance on critical academic tasks and creates emotional distress, while in the long term, it can threaten persistence in education, undermines the development of self-regulated learning skills, and may even contribute to dropout tendencies. This makes it imperative to investigate the link between academic self-efficacy and test anxiety, particularly in contexts like Nigeria, where academic success is highly emphasised as a measure of personal and family achievement.

According to Umeh and Okeke (2020), academic self-efficacy refers to a learner's belief in their capacity to organise, regulate, and successfully complete academic tasks, even in the face of challenges. Park and Kim (2021) emphasised that individuals with high self-efficacy view difficult tasks as opportunities to learn and grow, whereas those with low self-efficacy see them as threats to be avoided. When secondary school students possess strong academic self-efficacy, they are more likely to approach examinations with confidence, which reduces their anxiety levels and enhances performance. Conversely, students who doubt their academic competence tend to experience worry, fear, and tension during tests, which negatively impacts their achievement. Academic self-efficacy is not a single construct but comprises several sub-variables that capture different aspects of students' academic confidence. For the purpose of this study, only study and peer interaction self-efficacy were studied.

Study self-efficacy refers to a learner's belief in their ability to organise, regulate, and successfully complete academic tasks, particularly in the face of challenges (Eze & Uzochukwu, 2020). It is emphasised that such efficacy beliefs are central to academic functioning, as they shape motivation, persistence, and the way students handle evaluative situations. From a positive perspective, when students demonstrate strong study self-efficacy, they are more likely to engage in effective learning strategies such as systematic revision, note-taking, and content mastery. This confidence can foster a sense of preparedness, enabling them to approach tests with composure and optimism. Students with high study self-efficacy may also be able to regulate their emotions, maintain concentration, and draw upon constructive coping strategies that buffer against the debilitating effects of worry and tension during evaluative situations. Conversely, low study self-efficacy can predispose learners to poor study habits, procrastination, and disorganisation, all of which heighten their susceptibility to test anxiety.

Peer interaction self-efficacy focuses on students' ability to collaborate with classmates, seek help when necessary, and participate in group learning activities (Adebayo & Sanni, 2022). From a positive perspective, students with strong confidence in their peer interaction skills are more likely to form supportive study networks, share learning resources, and engage in cooperative problem-solving. Such collaborative engagement can foster a sense of belonging and emotional security, reducing feelings of isolation and academic stress. Conversely, weak peer interaction self-efficacy can lead to social withdrawal, reluctance to ask for help, and disengagement from group learning opportunities. Students who lack confidence in interacting with their peers may feel isolated, alienated, or fearful of negative evaluation, which can heighten academic stress and anxiety. Their inability to participate fully in collaborative learning may deprive them of emotional encouragement and academic support, making examinations appear overwhelming. Such students may internalise feelings of inadequacy, which foster negative self-comparisons and amplify worry before and during tests.

In Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District, secondary school students are continually faced with academic demands in a highly competitive educational environment. Examinations such as the Junior Secondary Certificate Examination,

West African Examination, and other external examinations can create anxiety, especially for students who lack strong academic self-efficacy beliefs. The pressure to succeed, combined with insufficient preparation strategies and inadequate coping mechanisms, has made test anxiety a recurring challenge in the Senatorial District. Reports from teachers and school counsellors suggest that many students, despite being intelligent, underperform during tests due to nervousness and fear of failure. This trend raises concern about the underlying role of academic self-efficacy in shaping students' emotional responses to examinations.

Based on the foregoing, the present study argues that the tendency towards test anxiety of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District cannot be fully understood without examining the sub-variables of academic self-efficacy (such as time management, motivational, peer interaction, and test self-efficacy) that influence students' academic functioning. If self-efficacy-based factors are ignored, interventions to curb test anxiety may remain incomplete and ineffective. Thus, this study seeks to investigate the extent to which academic self-efficacy predicts tendency towards test anxiety of secondary school students in the Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District.

Statement of the Problem

Academic achievement is one of the most important determinants of students' educational progress and future opportunities. However, one major barrier that can hinder the realisation of students' academic potential is test anxiety, a psychological state that disrupts concentration, weakens confidence, and reduces performance in evaluative settings. Despite the existence of guidance and counselling services in some secondary schools in the Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District, the persistence of high test anxiety levels suggests that interventions have not fully addressed the link between students' academic self-efficacy and their ability to cope with evaluative pressures.

However, if this problem is left unaddressed, the implications could be far-reaching. Students who continually perform below their capacity due to test anxiety may lose self-confidence, develop negative attitudes towards schooling, and in extreme cases, disengage from academic pursuits altogether. This will not only

undermine individual educational aspirations but could also weaken the human resource potential of the senatorial district and, by extension, the nation. Based on the foregoing, therefore, it became very pertinent to investigate the predictive influence of study and peer interaction self-efficacy on secondary school students' tendency towards test anxiety in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the predictive influence of study and peer interaction self-efficacy on the tendency towards test anxiety of secondary school students in the Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to determine the following:

- i. The extent to which study self-efficacy predicts the tendency towards test anxiety of secondary school students.
- ii. The extent to which peer interaction self-efficacy predicts tendency towards test anxiety of secondary school students.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the conduct of the study:

- i. To what extent does study self-efficacy predict the tendency towards test anxiety of secondary school students?
- ii. To what extent does peer interaction self-efficacy predict tendency towards test anxiety of secondary school students?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses guided the conduct of the study:

- i. Study self-efficacy does not significantly predict the tendency towards test anxiety of secondary school students.
- ii. Peer interaction self-efficacy does not significantly predict tendency towards test anxiety of secondary school students.

Scope of the Study

This study focused on the extent to which academic self-efficacy predicts the tendency towards test anxiety of secondary school students in the Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District. The sub-variables of academic self-efficacy investigated as the independent variables include study and peer interaction self-efficacy, while the tendency towards test anxiety served as the dependent variable. The study was delimited to Junior Secondary 3 students in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District in the 2025/2026 academic session.

Theoretical Framework

Self-Regulated Learning Model by Barry Zimmerman (2000)

The Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) Model was developed by Barry Zimmerman in 2000 as an extension of social cognitive principles to academic learning contexts. Zimmerman defined self-regulated learning as the degree to which learners are active participants in their own learning, using self-generated thoughts, feelings, and behaviours to achieve academic goals. Central to this model is the role of self-efficacy beliefs, which influence students' capacity to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning processes. The model outlines three cyclical phases of self-regulation: forethought (goal-setting and strategic planning), performance (self-control and self-monitoring), and self-reflection (self-judgement and self-reaction). The relevance of the Self-Regulated Learning Model to this study lies in its focus on the sub-variables of self-efficacy. For example, study self-efficacy directly impacts how students adopt and sustain effective study strategies; peer interaction self-efficacy facilitates collaborative approaches to problem-solving. When these efficacy beliefs are weak, students' self-regulatory processes are disrupted, leading to poor preparation, reduced persistence, and heightened test anxiety. Therefore, Zimmerman's model provides a comprehensive lens for understanding the link between self-efficacy and test performance anxiety among secondary school students.

Two-Component Theory of Test Anxiety by Liebert and Morris (1967)

The Two-Component Theory of Test Anxiety was introduced by Liebert and Morris in 1967. This theory conceptualises test anxiety as consisting of two primary components: worry and emotionality. The *worry* component refers to the cognitive dimension of anxiety, such as intrusive negative thoughts, fear of failure, and concerns about evaluation. The *emotionality* component refers to the physiological arousal associated with anxiety, such as increased heart rate, sweating, or tension. According to this theory, worry is more detrimental to performance because it interferes with working memory and problem-solving, while emotionality amplifies the perception of stress but has less direct cognitive interference.

The relevance of the Two-Component Theory to this study lies in its explanation of how test anxiety manifests among secondary school students. Weak study and peer interaction may heighten *worry* by making students focus on possible failure, while also intensifying *emotionality* through increased physiological stress. On the other hand, students with strong self-efficacy in these domains are better able to reframe challenges positively and maintain composure. Thus, the theory underscores how the sub-variables of self-efficacy act as protective factors against the dual dimensions of test anxiety.

Related Empirical Studies

Study Self-Efficacy and Tendency towards Test Anxiety

A study by Musa and Okoro (2017) on study self-efficacy and test anxiety among senior secondary students in Abuja revealed a significant negative relationship. The study population comprised 4,050 junior secondary school students. A correlational research design was adopted, and 325 students were selected using a stratified random sampling technique. Instruments used for data collection were the Study Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (SSEQ) and the Test Anxiety Inventory (TAI). Regression analysis showed that students with higher study self-efficacy reported lower levels of test anxiety. In another study, Ibrahim and Hassan (2018) investigated study self-efficacy and tendency to test for anxiety among undergraduates in Kano State. The study population consisted of 10,127 secondary school students, and 555 were selected using a purposive sampling technique. A

correlational design was employed, with the Academic Study Self-Efficacy Scale (ASSE) and the Examination Anxiety Questionnaire (EAQ) used as instruments for data collection. Regression analysis revealed that self-efficacy significantly predicted reduced test anxiety, as confident students approached examinations with lower stress levels. A study on study self-efficacy and examination stress was carried out by Adeyemi and Lawal (2020) in Oyo State. The study population included 5,155 students. A descriptive survey design was used, and 340 junior secondary school students were selected using a multi-stage sampling procedure. Instruments used for data collection included the Students' Study Self-Efficacy Inventory (SSSEI) and the Examination Stress and Anxiety Scale (ESAS). Data analysis using PPMC showed that study self-efficacy was negatively related to test anxiety, as students with higher study confidence were less distressed during exams.

Peer Interaction Self-Efficacy and Tendency towards Test Anxiety

A study by Johnson and Olatunji (2017) on peer interaction self-efficacy and test anxiety among secondary school students in Lagos State revealed a significant negative relationship. The study population comprised 26,752 secondary school students. A correlational research design was adopted, and 830 students were selected using a stratified random sampling technique. Instruments used for data collection were the Peer Interaction Self-Efficacy Inventory (PISEI) and the Test Anxiety Inventory (TAI). Regression analysis showed that students with high confidence in interacting with peers reported lower levels of test anxiety. In their own study, Okene and Owbor (2020) examined peer interaction self-efficacy and test anxiety among secondary school students in Rivers State. The study population comprised 16,465 junior secondary students. A correlational design was adopted, and 465 were selected using a stratified sampling technique. Instruments used for data collection included the Peer Interaction Efficacy Checklist (PIEC) and the Students' Anxiety Rating Scale (SARS). Regression analysis showed that students with strong peer interaction efficacy experienced reduced test anxiety and performed better in collaborative academic tasks. A study on peer interaction self-efficacy and examination stress was carried out by Adebanjo and Lawal (2020) in

Ekiti State. The study population included 6,164 secondary school students. A descriptive survey design was used, and 388 students were selected using a multi-stage sampling procedure. Instruments used for data collection included the Peer Support Self-Efficacy Inventory (PSSEI) and the Examination Stress and Anxiety Scale (ESAS). Data analysis using PPMC showed that peer interaction self-efficacy was negatively related to test anxiety, as students with higher confidence in peer collaboration were less distressed during exams.

From the review of empirical literature, it was observed that there is a paucity of research addressing this relationship within the context of secondary school students in the Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District, Nigeria. Therefore, this study sought to bridge this gap by investigating the extent to which study and peer interaction predict the tendency towards test anxiety of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District, Nigeria.

Design of the Study

A correlational research design was adopted for this study. This design is suitable for examining the degree of association between two or more variables without direct manipulation. It enables the researcher to identify and analyse patterns of relationships among variables as they occur naturally. The choice of this design was justified, as it provided the means to determine the extent to which academic self-efficacy predicts the tendency towards test anxiety of secondary school students in the Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District, Nigeria.

Population of the Study

The study population comprised 24,215 Junior Secondary 3 students enrolled in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District, Nigeria (Akwa Ibom State Secondary Education Board, Uyo, 2026). The senatorial district has a total of 89 public secondary schools as at the time of this study.

Sample and Sampling Technique

A sample of 417 JS 3 students in public secondary schools in the Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District was selected for the study using a multi-stage sampling

procedure. In the first instance, the 9 Local Government Areas (LGAs) served as strata. At the second stage, a simple random sampling procedure using the cap and draw method was used to select 6 LGAs out of the 9 LGAs in the district. At the third stage, 5 schools were selected from each of the 6 LGAs using a simple random sampling technique, which brought the total number of sampled schools to 30. Finally, a proportionate sampling technique was used to select JS 3 students from each of the sampled LGAs in proportion to their population of JS 3 students in public secondary schools in the district (see Appendix One).

The choice of 417 JS 3 students as the sample size was guided by Taro Yamane's minimum sample size determination formula (see Appendix Two). Though 420 copies of the questionnaire were administered, only 417 copies were properly completed and found usable for analysis, while 3 copies were improperly filled. The 417 copies were used for statistical analysis.

Instrumentation

A researcher-developed instrument titled "Academic Self-Efficacy and Tendency towards Test Anxiety Questionnaire (ASTTAQ)" was used for data collection. The questionnaire was structured into two sections. Section A assessed academic self-efficacy across two dimensions, namely study and peer interaction self-efficacy. Each dimension was measured with five items, making a total of 10 items in this section. Section B focused on students' tendency towards test anxiety and comprised 15 items designed to capture their responses. All items on the instrument were rated on a four-point scale: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD), assigned weights of 4, 3, 2, and 1, respectively.

Validation of the Instrument

The face validation of the instrument was carried out by three experts, comprising two from the Department of Guidance and Counselling and one from the Department of Psychological Foundations of Education, Faculty of Education, University of Uyo, Nigeria. The experts thoroughly reviewed the items for clarity, relevance, appropriateness, and language suitability. Their constructive

observations, suggestions, and corrections were carefully considered and integrated into the final version of the instrument.

Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the instrument was established using the internal consistency method. For this purpose, the questionnaire was administered to a sample of 30 Junior Secondary 3 students drawn from the study population but excluded from the main study. The responses were analysed using the Cronbach's alpha statistics, which yielded an overall reliability coefficient of 0.77, indicating that the instrument possesses an acceptable level of reliability for the study.

Method of Data Collection

The researchers, assisted by two well-briefed research assistants, administered the instrument to the selected Junior Secondary 3 students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District. Prior to the administration, the researcher obtained formal permission from the Akwa Ibom State Secondary Education Board through a letter of introduction issued by the researcher's institution. This approval was to grant the researcher access to the JS 3 students and facilitate their participation in responding to the items contained in the questionnaire. The administration of the questionnaire lasted two weeks.

Method of Data Analysis

Simple linear regression was used to answer research questions by computing the coefficient of correlation (R) and the coefficient of determination (R^2). In testing the null hypotheses, the study adopted a 0.05 level of significance, with the associated p-values from the regression outputs serving as the basis for determining statistical significance. All collated data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Results

Table 1: Simple regression coefficient on the extent to which study self-efficacy predicts tendency towards test anxiety of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District, Nigeria (n = 417)

Model	R	R Square	Adj. R Square	Std. Error of Estimate	Remarks
1	.786	.617	.588	12.65413	High Extent

Source: Field Work (2026)

The R-squared value of .617, as indicated in Table 1, implies that study self-efficacy explained only 61.7% of the variation in test anxiety tendency, while 38.3% could be due to other factors. This indicates that study self-efficacy predicts the tendency towards test anxiety of secondary school students to a high extent, as indicated in the decision rule.

Table 2: Simple regression coefficient on the extent to which peer interaction self-efficacy predicts tendency towards test anxiety of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District, Nigeria (n = 417)

Model	R	R Square	Adj. R Square	Std. Error of Estimate	Remarks
1	.698	.487	.464	12.00875	Moderate Extent

Source: Field Work (2026)

The R-squared value of .698 as indicated in Table 2 implies that peer interaction self-efficacy explained only 69.8% of the variation in test anxiety tendency, while 30.2% could be due to other factors. This indicates that peer interaction self-efficacy predicts the tendency towards test anxiety of secondary school students to a moderate extent, as indicated in the decision rule.

Table 3: Summary of t-test associated with simple regression coefficient on the extent to which study self-efficacy predicts tendency towards test anxiety of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District, Nigeria (n = 417)

Predictor	B	SE B	Beta	t	p	Decision
(Constant)	38.27	1.95	-	12.097		
Study Self-Efficacy	-2.115	.093	-.074	-.825	.000	Sig.

Source: Field Work (2026)

Table 3 shows the summary of the t-test associated with the simple regression analysis on the extent to which study self-efficacy predicts tendency towards test anxiety in secondary school students. The probability value of 0.761 was greater than the .05 level of significance. Based on the result, studying self-efficacy significantly predicts the tendency towards test anxiety of secondary school students. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected based on the decision rule.

Table 4: Summary of t-test associated with simple regression coefficient on the extent to which peer interaction self-efficacy predicts tendency towards test anxiety secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District, Nigeria (n = 417)

Predictor	B	SE B	Beta	t	p	Decision
(Constant)	37.19	1.31	-	14.045		
Peer Self-Efficacy	-1.227	.728	-.140	-1.633	.000	Sig.

Source: Field Work (2026)

Table 4 shows the summary of the t-test associated with the simple regression analysis on the extent to which peer interaction self-efficacy predicts tendency towards test anxiety of secondary school students. The probability value of 0.727 was greater than the 0.05 level of significance. Based on the result, peer interaction self-efficacy significantly predicts the tendency towards test anxiety of

secondary school students. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected based on the decision rule.

Discussion of Findings

Study Self-Efficacy and Tendency towards Test Anxiety

In response to the research question on the extent to which study self-efficacy predicts tendency towards test anxiety of secondary school students, analysis of data indicated that study self-efficacy contributes to the tendency towards test anxiety to a high extent. More so, the test of the corresponding hypothesis showed that study self-efficacy significantly predicts tendency towards test anxiety in secondary school students. This indicates that students who possess a high level of confidence in their study abilities exhibit a lower tendency towards experiencing test anxiety. Study self-efficacy serves as an important psychological factor that shapes how students approach academic tasks and examinations. Students with strong study self-efficacy are more likely to prepare adequately, adopt effective study strategies, and maintain a positive mindset during tests, which reduces their tendency to feel anxious in examination situations. Conversely, students with low study self-efficacy often doubt their abilities, feel unprepared, and become overwhelmed during examinations, thereby increasing their tendency towards test anxiety. This finding underscores that belief in one's academic capability is a critical factor in shaping students' tendency towards emotional responses during tests and in promoting better academic adjustment among secondary school students.

This finding aligns with the study of Musa and Okoro (2017), who reported that study self-efficacy was a significant predictor of test anxiety among senior secondary school students in Abuja. However, this finding contrasts with that of Adeyemi and Lawal (2020), who found that although study self-efficacy was negatively related to test anxiety, it did not significantly predict students' anxiety levels in all cases. They argued that external factors such as examination pressure, environmental stress, and individual differences may weaken the influence of study self-efficacy on students' emotional responses. The discrepancy between Adeyemi and Lawal's finding and the present study could be attributed to contextual

differences such as location, population, and measurement tools, as well as varying academic environments that may either strengthen or reduce the role of study self-efficacy in determining students' tendency towards test anxiety.

Peer Interaction Self-Efficacy and Tendency towards Test Anxiety

In response to the research question on the extent to which peer interaction self-efficacy predicts tendency towards test anxiety of secondary school students, analysis of data indicated that peer interaction self-efficacy contributes to the tendency towards test anxiety to a moderate extent. More so, the test of the corresponding hypothesis showed that peer interaction self-efficacy significantly predicts tendency towards test anxiety of secondary school students. This indicates that students who possess a moderate to high level of confidence in their ability to interact and collaborate with peers exhibit a lower tendency towards experiencing test anxiety. Peer interaction self-efficacy serves as an important social-psychological factor that shapes how students engage with others in academic settings. Students with strong peer interaction self-efficacy are more likely to participate in group discussions, seek academic support from classmates, and share ideas which can enhance understanding and reduce their tendency to feel anxious during examinations. Conversely, students with low peer interaction self-efficacy often feel isolated, reluctant to seek help, and less confident in collaborative learning situations, thereby increasing their tendency towards test anxiety. This finding underscores that confidence in one's ability to interact effectively with peers is a key factor in shaping students' tendency towards emotional responses during tests and improving their academic adjustment.

This finding aligns with the study of Johnson and Olatunji (2017), who reported that peer interaction self-efficacy significantly predicted test anxiety among secondary school students in Lagos State. However, this finding contrasts with that of Adebajo and Lawal (2020), who found that although peer interaction self-efficacy was negatively related to test anxiety, it did not significantly predict anxiety levels in all situations. They argued that external factors such as academic pressure, individual differences, and environmental stress may weaken the influence of peer interaction self-efficacy on students' emotional responses. The

discrepancy between Adebajo's and Lawal's finding and the present study could be attributed to contextual differences such as location, population, and measurement tools, as well as variations in academic environments that may either strengthen or reduce the role of peer interaction self-efficacy in determining students' tendency towards test anxiety.

Conclusion

In view of the findings of the study, it is concluded that academic self-efficacy is a critical psychological factor predicting students' tendency towards test anxiety. The various dimensions of self-efficacy, such as study and peer interaction, play significant roles in shaping how students respond emotionally to examination situations.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommended the following:

- i. School counsellors in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District in collaboration with their principals should organise regular workshops to enhance students' study self-efficacy through effective learning strategies and academic planning.
- ii. Secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District should promote peer interaction through group learning, peer tutoring, and collaborative academic activities to strengthen social confidence.
- iii. Secondary school teachers in the study area should conduct regular mock tests and provide constructive feedback to improve students' test self-efficacy and reduce examination fear.

References

- Adebanjo, T., & Lawal, F. (2020). Motivational self-efficacy and examination stress among secondary school students in Ekiti State. *Journal of Educational Development and Practice*, 11(2), 92–108.
- Adebayo, T., & Sanni, M. (2022). Peer interaction self-efficacy and social adjustment of secondary school learners in Nigeria. *Journal of Educational and Social Psychology*, 14(2), 55–70.
- Adeyemi, K., & Lawal, F. (2020). Study self-efficacy and examination stress among junior secondary school students in Oyo State. *Journal of Educational Psychology and Counselling*, 15(1), 88–102.
- Eze, J., & Uzochukwu, C. (2020). Study self-efficacy and academic performance of secondary school students in Anambra State. *Journal of Educational Foundations in Nigeria*, 11(2), 61–76.
- Ibrahim, M., & Hassan, Z. (2018). Study self-efficacy and tendency to test anxiety among undergraduates in Kano State. *Kano Journal of Education Studies*, 6(2), 44–60.
- Johnson, R., & Olatunji, B. (2017). Peer interaction self-efficacy and test anxiety among secondary school students in Lagos State. *Lagos Journal of Educational Psychology*, 5(3), 99–115.
- Musa, A., & Okoro, D. (2017). Study self-efficacy and test anxiety among senior secondary students in Abuja. *Journal of Educational Foundations*, 12(1), 15–28.
- Okene, A., & Owbor, T. (2020). Peer interaction self-efficacy and test anxiety among secondary school students in Rivers State. *Rivers State Journal of Social and Educational Studies*, 6(2), 80–96.
- Park, S., & Kim, H. (2021). Self-efficacy, procrastination, and test anxiety among Korean adolescents. *Korean Journal of Educational Psychology*, 35(4), 321–335.

TJESD

TRANSNATIONAL JOURNAL OF EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENT



A PUBLICATION OF WORD ASTRA
wordastrajournals@gmail.com
www.wordastrajournals.com

Volume 2, Issue 4, July 2026 - ISSN: 3092-9431

Sade, Patrick Patrick & Ukaegbu, Hanson

Manuabuchi, Ph.D

Umeh, C., & Okeke, E. (2020). Self-efficacy beliefs and test anxiety in Nigerian secondary schools. *Journal of Educational Assessment in Africa*, 5(1), 66–78.

Zeidner, M. (1998). *Test anxiety: The state of the art*. Plenum Press.

ACADEMIC SELF-EFFICACY AND TENDENCY TOWARDS TEST ANXIETY QUESTIONNAIRE (ASETAQ)

Instruction: Please, indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each of the items by ticking (✓) against any of the response options such as Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

Section A: Academic Self-efficacy

S/N	Study Self-Efficacy	SA	A	D	SD
1	I can understand difficult topics if I study hard enough.				
2	I am confident in my ability to take notes that help me remember lessons.				
3	I can complete my homework without giving up, even when it is difficult.				
4	I believe I can organize my study materials effectively.				
5	I am confident in my ability to learn new topics quickly.				
	Peer Interaction Self-Efficacy				
6	I work well with my classmates during group assignments.				
7	I know I can share my ideas freely in group discussions.				
8	I can ask my classmates for help even when I do not understand the subject.				
9	I can explain difficult topics to my peers.				
10	I can cooperate with my peers to solve academic problems.				

TJESD

TRANSNATIONAL JOURNAL OF EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENT



A PUBLICATION OF WORD ASTRA
wordastrajournals@gmail.com
www.wordastrajournals.com

Volume 2, Issue 4, July 2026 - ISSN: 3092-9431

Sade, Patrick Patrick & Ukaegbu, Hanson

Manuabuchi, Ph.D

Section B: Tendency towards Test Anxiety

	Items	SA	A	D	SD
1	I usually get tensed whenever tests are approaching.				
2	I often think about failing before the test even begins.				
3	I panic easily at the thought of an upcoming exam.				
4	I sometimes lose sleep the night before examinations.				
5	I often doubt my performance no matter how much I prepare.				
6	I find it difficult studying at times because I believe the exam will still be difficult.				
7	I become anxious when I cannot complete all my reading before a test.				
8	I get nervous when classmates talk about how tough the test will be.				
9	I feel anxious immediately exam dates are announced.				
10	I often worry that my peers will perform better than me.				
11	I become tense when I do not understand a question in an exam.				
12	I lose focus because I keep worrying during tests.				
13	I feel tensed whenever examination is approaching.				
14	I become restless whenever I am reminded of examinations.				
15	I sometimes avoid group study because it increases my fear of tests.				