

Grade level differences in the cognitive, behavioral and psychological components of test anxiety

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The capacity to cope with test anxiety that contain high concentrations of cognitive, behavioral, and physiological manifestations, is becoming increasingly important in educational contexts as well as evaluative settings. The developing ability to deal with test anxiety relative to the increasingly strict evaluative practices students encounter points that students' test anxiety may decline as they move through school years. This study examined three test anxiety components (thoughts, off-task behaviors, and autonomic reactions) with students from 3 public schools in Istanbul, Turkey. Using a diverse sample of elementary (Grade 4; N = 414) and middle (Grade 6; N = 201) school students, grade level differences in these components were investigated. Applying a multivariate approach, significant differences were found in the overall test anxiety, favoring fourth grade students. The results also revealed Grade 4 advantage for off-task behaviors and autonomic reactions, $\eta^2 = .014$ and $\eta^2 = .011$, but no grade level differences in the thoughts. Educational implications of the findings are discussed.

Biography

Utkun Aydin has her expertise in the relationship between affective constructs and mathematical thinking. She is especially interested in the development and adaptation of instruments that focus on metacognition and test anxiety. She uses quantitative techniques such as structural equation modeling and multilevel modeling to investigate the direct and indirect effects of the hypothesized constructs.

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