# COMPARISON OF THE MANIFEST ANXIETY SCALE AND TEST ANXIETY SCALE AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO GRADE POINT AVERAGE

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# COMPARISON OF THE MANIFEST ANXIETY SCALE AND TEST ANXIETY SCALE AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO GRADE POINT AVERAGE

A Research Paper
Presented to
the Graduate Council of
Austin Peay State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by
Louvenia Peavie
August 1980

#### To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a Research Paper written by Louvenia Peavie entitled "Comparison of the Manifest Anxiety Scale and Test Anxiety Scale and Their Relationship to Grade Point Average." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts degree with a major in Psychology.

Major Professor

Accepted for the Graduate Council:

Dean of the Graduate School

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer wishes to express sincere appreciation to Dr. Linda Rudolph who counseled and supported her during the course of the study, and to Dr. Ted Hayes and Dr. Garland Blair for their guidance and assistance.

The author wishes to thank her fellow student, R. Clay Taylor, for his assistance in computing the results of the data and for his encouragement throughout the study.

Gratitude is also extended to the students who volunteered to serve as subjects in this study. Also, gratitude is extended to the Psychology Department professors who allowed class time for the administration of the questionnaire.

I wish to express my deepest appreciation to my husband, Arthur, and to my sons, Kenneth, Barry, Chris, and Tony for their love, understanding and patience.

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#### CHAPTER I

#### INTRODUCTION

The concept of anxiety assumes a central position in many theories of personality. Anxiety is one of the most extensively discussed, but perhaps one of the least understood, psychological reactions. Chaplain (1968) defines anxiety as "a feeling of mingled dread and apprehension about the future without a specific cause for the fear" (p. 17). This anxiety may be either general or specific. General anxiety is anxiety that is pervasive and diffused, and is expressed or experienced in a variety of situations. Specific anxiety is related only to a particular event or circumstance. One specific type of anxiety that has been investigated widely, and which is part of the focus of the present study, is that of test anxiety—anxiety that affects one in a testing situation.

Although the exact nature of interfering anxiety responses is not known, it seems likely that they include both heightened physiological activity and self-deprecating ruminations (e.g., "I can't pass this test"). While these anxiety responses are assumed to be aroused under stressful conditions, their evocation would not necessarily be expected under neutral conditions (Sarason, 1960).

Within this view of anxiety, anxiety scales may be considered to measure the likelihood of emission of anxiety responses under conditions of personal threat. Furthermore, the closer the content of the anxiety scale is to the situation in which the subject's performance is measured the better predictor of reaction to threat will be the anxiety scale (Sarason, 1961).

#### Review of Literature

Anxiety is one of psychology's most researched concepts, but efforts continue to correlate various anxiety instruments with one another and with other personality instruments in order to further clarify the actual feelings and behaviors that anxiety scales are measuring.

Much research has indicated that measures of general anxiety show little relationship to college achievement (Alpert & Haber, 1960). Several studies have examined the relationship between scores on the Taylor Manifest Anxiety Scale (MAS), a measure of general anxiety, and college grade point averages (GPAs). Matarazzo (1955) and Klugh and Bendig (1955) found non-significant MAS-GPA correlations of -.08 and .01, respectively.

However, one study did find a significant relationship between college achievement and anxiety. Katzermeyer and Spielberger (1959) administered the MAS to all students in an introductory psychology course at Duke University for six consecutive semesters, and GPAs for the subjects were obtained for the particular semester during which the student had taken the MAS.

MAS scores, American College Examination (ACE) scores, and GPAs were available for 640 men. All Pearson correlations were significant at the .01 level (MAS-GPA, -.14; MAS-ACE, -.11; ACE-GPA, .29). Efforts to replicate this study have not been successful (Desiderato & Koskiner, 1969).

The Manifest Anxiety Scale (A scale) was developed by Taylor in 1952 as a part of an investigation of the relationship between anxiety and eyelid conditioning. Taylor selected approximately 200 items from the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) and found these to be indicative of manifest anxiety according to one definition of anxiety. A later revision of the scale (1953) shortened it to 50 scored items.

The reliability of the MAS "A" scale has been shown to vary between .81 and .96, according to the method employed, and thus it is safe to conclude that adequate reliability has been demonstrated. The outstanding deficiency in the research with the "A" scale is the lack of evidence concerning its validity. As originally developed and used by Taylor, the scale was not validated against any criterion of manifest anxiety external to the test itself (Kendall, 1954).

Sarason developed a scale designed to measure how anxious a person feels in testing situations (Sarason & Mandler, 1952). Two groups of 18 subjects each were selected from a class of 340 students on the basis of their extreme scores on a slightly modified Test Anxiety Scale, and then seen twice in individual sessions. The sessions consisted of rest periods and discussions of their feelings about tests. Skin-conductance tests were taken during these sessions as a measure of anxiety. Three outstanding results were noted: (1) with the exception of the Session 1 rest period, the high-anxiety group had a significantly higher skin conductance for all periods than the low-anxiety group (p < .05); (2) both groups tended to be relatively less apprehensive in the second session as indicated by decreases in skin conductance for both rest and discussion periods, although these decreases tended to be of only borderline significance; and (3) the high- and low-anxiety groups did not change significantly in the amount of anxiety exhibited. These results suggested that Sarason's scale reflects partly a general anxiety factor, as well as a specific test anxiety factor, which accounts for the general differences in conductance level between the groups (Martin and McGowan, 1955).

Cordon and Sarason (1955) reported that anxiety in a testing situation is significantly associated with anxiety in a variety of other situations. The subjects were 389 Yale college undergraduates enrolled in an introductory psychology course. Two questionnaires were administered to the subjects in succession during a single, regular class session. The formal structure of the "generalized anxiety" questionnaire and the method of computing scores were identical with those of the "test anxiety" questionnaire. The Pearson product-moment correlation between "test anxiety" and "generalized anxiety" was .468, indicating a highly significant relationship between the two measures.

Sarason has reported the correlation between the Test Anxiety Scale (TAS) and the Manifest Anxiety Scale (MAS) in two separate studies. In one (Sarason, 1959), the correlation between the two instruments for males was .41, and for females .49. In a later study (Sarason, 1961), these correlations were .46 and .53, respectively. The subjects were 326 males and 412 female students enrolled in introductory psychology and introductory sociology courses at the University of Washington. Those correlations in Sarason's study are high enough to suggest that the different scales are measuring similar types of anxiety.

The MAS was administered to all students enrolled in introductory psychology courses at Duke University at the beginning of each of six consecutive semesters from September 1954 through June 1957 by Speilberger (1962). Only male students were included in the study, since it had been found previously that MAS scores for male and female college students may not have the same intellectual correlates. The scores from

the American College Examination (ACE) served as the measure of scholastic ability. Grade point averages (GPAs) for the single semester during which each student took the MAS served as one criterion of academic achievement.

Those male students scoring in the upper and lower 20 percent of the MAS distribution (raw score of 19 and above or 7 and below) were designated as high-anxiety subjects (HA) and low-anxiety subjects (LA). After the data for the six-semester sub-samples were pooled, MAS scores, ACE scores and GPAs were available for a total of 140 HA students and 144 LA students whose Lie scores were below 7. The students were subdivided further into 5 levels of scholastic ability on the basis of their ACE total scores. Each level consisted of approximately 20 percent of the total sample. The lowest level of ability was designated I; the highest was designated V. The ACE score ranges for levels I through V were: 62-102; 103-116; 117-126; 127-137 and 138-174, respectively. The GPAs of the HA and LA students were then compared for all ability levels. A differing relationship between manifest anxiety and grades for students of varying levels of scholastic ability was noted. In the broad middle range of ability, the HA students obtained poorer grades than did the LA students. There appeared to be no differences between the HA and LA students at the extremes of ability. Anxiety level made no difference among high- or low-aptitude students. Perhaps the most important implication of the Spielberger study is that it appears possible to identify members of the college population who, because of emotional problems, are not likely under general conditions to function at levels commensurate with their intellectual potential.

The Test Anxiety Questionnaire (TAQ) has been used as a criteria in many studies to validate the TAS. Harper (1971) compared the concurrent validity of each of the three sections of the (TAQ) Test Anxiety Questionnaire, a specific anxiety measurement, plus its composite total with the criterion of cumulative grade point average (CGPA) in college academic courses. The researcher tested the hypothesis that of the four scores possible on the TAQ, taking each section by itself and the total score of all three, the score on the section dealing with Course Examination Anxiety would correlate most highly, but negatively, with CCPA. Two samples of college students were studied. The first sample included 57 males and 168 females in the third year of their undergraduate career at the University of Minnesota. The second sample consisted of 44 males and 43 females enrolled in the University of Western Ontario, Canada, all of whom had just been graduated with a Bachelor's degree. The specificity theory of test anxiety was given further credibility by the findings. All correlations between CGPA and Course Examination Anxiety were significant, a fact which was not true of the total score correlations. Correlations for Course Examination Anxiety and CCPA for Minnesota males were -.47, significant at the .005 level; Candaian males, -.29, significant at the .05 level; Minnesota females, -.18, significant at the .01 level; Canadian females, -.25, significant at the .05 level.

Numerous studies have provided evidence that test anxiety (anxiety experienced specifically in testing situations) is a specific, measurable factor, and it has an interfering influence on test performance (Alpert

and Haber, 1960; Baldry and Sarason, 1967). There is also evidence to support the hypothesis that specific anxiety has a generalizing effect over a period of time, causing anxiety in other related areas (Jacobson, 1970).

Sarason and Palola (1960) conducted three experiments investigating three variables—anxiety, task difficulty, and differential motivating instructions. Two measures of anxiety, one general and one specific to subject's reactions in testing situations, were employed. Because of the use of an evaluational threat, it was predicted that the specific anxiety measure would relate more systematically to performance in these experiments than would the general anxiety measure. The results supported the hypothesis that the more closely the anxiety scale specifically taps anxieties aroused in the experimental situation, the greater the likelihood of that scale relating to behavior in the specific situation studies.

#### Purpose of Study

A review of the relevant literature indicates that anxiety affects academic performance. Additionally, there exists in the literature a controversy over the constructs of general anxiety and specific anxiety and their relationship to academic performance. Researchers, counselors and teachers prefer to use the most valid instrument available for their particular purpose. Therefore, it is the purpose of the present study to further investigate the relationship of the MAS, a test of general anxiety, and TAS, a test of specific anxiety, and to determine the relationship of each to academic performance.

#### CHAPTER II

#### METHOD

#### The Subjects

The subjects used in the present study were 89 undergraduate students enrolled in lower and upper division psychology courses at Austin peay State University, Clarksville, Tennessee, during the summer quarter of 1980. The sample was composed of 53 females and 28 males. Because grade point averages (GPAs) were not available for some beginning freshmen, eight of the students originally tested were not included in the data computations.

#### Description of the Instruments

Sarason's (1971) Test Anxiety Scale (TAS) was employed as a measuring instrument of specific anxiety. The purpose of the TAS is to measure specific fear in a test-taking situation. Many inventories deal with anxiety-proneness or predisposition as a general characteristic of the respondent. Test anxiety and achievement anxiety scales illustrate the attempt to measure an important, specific, situational fear rather than the general trait.

The TAS is a true-false questionnaire consisting of 37 items.

Ralphelson (1957) found a correlation of .53 between the Manifest Anxiety

Scale and the Test Anxiety Questionnaire developed by Mandler and Sarason,

which was an earlier and shorter form of the TAS. Based on normative

data accumulated, a score above 22, or 5 standard deviations above the

mean, on the TAS is considered to be indicative of high test anxiety

(Watts, 1971).

Taylor's (1953) Manifest Anxiety Scale (MAS) was employed as a measuring instrument of general anxiety. The MAS is a measure of a general "trait" or predisposition to experience pervasive anxiety, as can be seen from the use of words such as "often," "frequently," "usually," and "hardly ever" in the scale questions. Subjects are not required to report their emotional state as it exists at a particular moment in time, but rather are asked to indicate their general state of being.

Correlations between scores on anxiety inventories average about .35. General anxiety inventories usually are found to be unrelated to measures of intelligence or of intellectual performance, while test anxiety measures show moderate, negative correlations with measures of academic achievement and intelligence. The use of short-forms or variations in scoring systems appears to have little or no effect on experimental results (Levitt, 1967).

#### Administration and Scoring

The MAS and TAS were combined and administered individually to each subject by the present researcher. The pages of the questionnaire were arranged so that the MAS and TAS questions were alternated. The assumption behind administering the two scales in the same sitting without an opportunity for subjects to interact was that a longer testing time would be effective in reducing inhibitions to admissions of worry or fear on the questionnaire. This procedure was recommended by Watts (1971). Each questionnaire was scored according to the directions for scoring.

#### CHAPTER III

#### RESULTS

Pearson-product moment correlation coefficients were computed for all data. The TAS scores were compared with MAS scores, and both were compared separately with GPAs. Table 1 summarizes the correlations.

Means and standard deviations are given in Table 2.

Table 1 Correlations between the TAS, MAS, and GPAs

Ite	em		r	
1.	TAS	and MAS	.59*	
2.	TAS	and GPA	27**	
3.	MAS	and GPA	.05	
		<b>/</b> 01		_
	* **	p <.01 p <.05		

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations

Iter	n	Mean	SD
1. T	AS	16.71	6.52
2. M	AS	20.65	6.67
3. 0	PA	2.66	.63

N = 81

#### CHAPTER IV

#### DISCUSSION

The validity coefficient of .59 between the TAS and MAS obtained in this study is significant at the .01 level and is fairly consistent with correlations between the Test Anxiety Scale and Manifest Anxiety Scale reported by Sarason in two separate studies (1959, 1961). This result indicates that the two tests are measuring highly similar factors. Sarason (1957) reported in his study on test anxiety, general anxiety, and intellectual performance a similarly high correlation of .55 between general anxiety and test anxiety.

Some literature has indicated that general anxiety scores are unrelated to grade point averages. This contention is made on the basis that knowing that an individual is anxious in a variety of situations does not necessarily mean that he will be anxious in a learning situation. The low and nonsignificant correlation between the MAS and GPA found in the present study is in agreement with the results as reported by Sarason (1957), indicating that general anxiety does not necessarily affect academic performance. This result gives support to the contention that in discussing the effects of anxiety on performance, it is necessary to be clear as to the situations in which subjects admit to experiencing anxiety.

The present researcher found a negative, but significant, correlation between the TAS and GPA. Sarason (1957) stated that there is a significant tendency for TAS scores to correlate negatively with intellectual measures

A negative correlation of -.48 was reported by Alpert and Haber (1960) between such situation-specific anxiety scales as the Achievement Anxiety test and GPA. This correlation is similar to the present researcher's finding of -.27 between the TAS and GPA. The finding is consistent with the more frequent report that specific anxiety measures of anxiety are better predictors of college grades.

Desiderato and Koskiner (1969) attempted unsuccessfully to confirm Speilberger's (1962) finding that high scores on the Taylor Manifest Anxiety scale are related to impaired grade-point average for college men and women of average scholastic aptitude. While a forced-choice form of the MAS was also unrelated to GPA, it was found that women scoring at the extreme anxiety ends of the Alpert-Haber scales of debilitating and facilitating academic anxiety showed significant differences in GPA. Differences in level of academic anxiety were also related to differences in study habits, and these were, in turn, related to GPA. The results indicate the use of specific rather than general scales of anxiety as predictors of academic performance. The results of the present study are in agreement with Desiderato and Koskiner.

The TAS correlates highly enough with the GPAs to be considered a valid instrument for predicting the effect of anxiety on academic success in college. Although several reports of correlations between measures of general anxiety, such as the MAS, and intellectual measures are to be found in the literature, it does not appear that this relationship is consistent. Specific test anxiety, on the other hand, does seem to relate

negatively to achievement measures. It has been suggested that indices of specific anxieties such as test anxiety may prove more valuable for specific purposes than more general indices like MAS.

Perhaps one of the most important implications of the findings of previous studies and the present study is that it appears possible to identify members of the college population who, because of emotional problems, are not likely under general conditions to function at levels commensurate with their intellectual potential. By identifying such students at the earliest possible time and offering them therapeutic opportunities, the academic mortality among able students who fail because of difficulties in their emotional adjustment could be reduced.

It was noted while reviewing the literature on anxiety that most studies have been conducted with college-age students as subjects. Since either general or test anxiety can have a facilitating or debilitating effect on students early in their academic careers, it would seem important to further investigate the relationship of general and specific anxiety as it affects both elementary and secondary students. Additionally, some research (Spielberger, 1962) has suggested that anxiety has differential effects on males and females, and on low- and high-ability students. This area would seem to be worthy of further study.

The question of a factor of general anxiety or specific anxiety remains unresolved. However, the results of much of the literature and the results of the present research indicate that a measure of specific, situational anxiety could be a more useful instrument for working with students who are experiencing test anxiety and the accompanying undesirable effects on academic performance.

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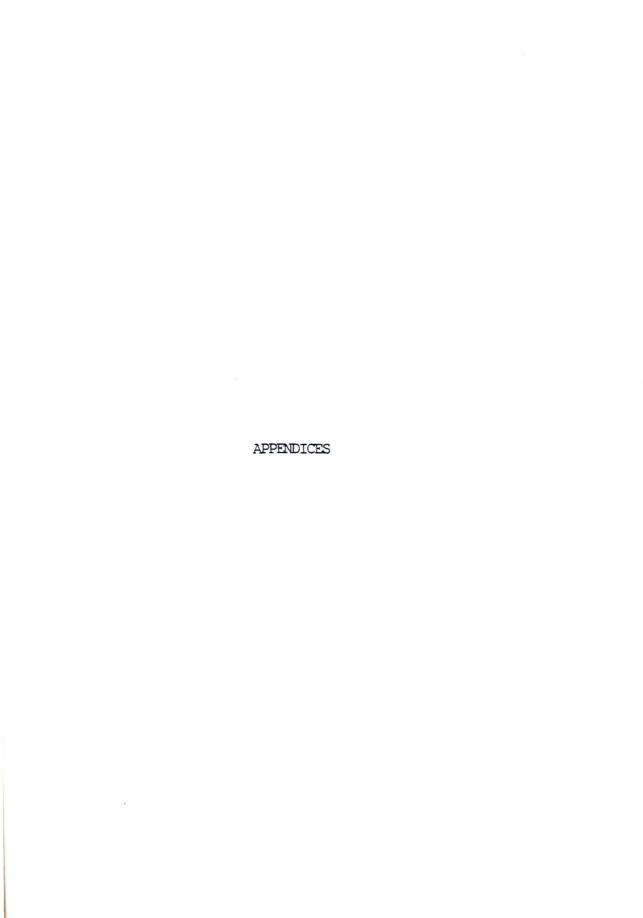
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#### APPENDIX A

#### DEPARIMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY AUSTIN PEAY STATE UNIVERSITY

### INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

The purpose of this research is to investigate the relationship between anxiety and GPA. The GPA information collected will be used only for the purpose of analysis. Your responses are confidential. At no time will anyone other than the investigator have access to this information.

Thank you for your cooperation.

I agree to participate in the present study being conducted under the supervision of a faculty member of the Department of Psychology at Austin Peay State University. I have been informed either orally or in writing or both, about the procedures to be followed and about any discomforts or risks which may be involved. The investigator has offered to answer any further questions as I may have regarding the procedure. I understand that I am free to terminate my participation at any time without penalty or prejudice and to have all data obtained from me withdrawn from the study and destroyed.

I have been informed that all information on this sheet and results from the survey shall be kept confidential and reported in the research without identification of those who took part in this study.

Louvenia Peavie has permission to obtain my GPA (Grade Point Average) for this study.

Name	(Please	Print)	
Signature			
Date			

When you are told to begin, you will circle either T (TRUE) or F (FALSE) for each item on the following pages. You are to read and answer each item as quickly and as honestly as you possibly can.

#### APPENDIX B

#### QUESTIONNAIRE

## CIRCLE EITHER T (TRUE) OR F (FALSE) FOR EACH ITEM.

- F I seem to defeat myself while working on important tests.
- ${\mathbb T}$  F As soon as an exam is over I try to stop worrying about it, but I just can't.
- T F I wish examinations did not bother me so much.
- ${\mathbb T}$  F I would rather write a paper than take an examination for my grade in a course.
- $\ensuremath{\mathbb{T}}$  F If examinations could be done away with I think I would actually learn more.
- $_{\mathbb{T}}$  F I really don't see why some people get so upset about tests.
- T F Thinking about the grade I may get in a course interferes with my studying and my performance on tests.
- ${\tt T}\ {\tt F}\ {\tt On}\ {\tt exams}, \ {\tt I}\ {\tt take}\ {\tt the}\ {\tt attitude},\ "{\tt If}\ {\tt I}\ {\tt don't}\ {\tt know}\ {\tt it}\ {\tt now}\ {\tt there's}\ {\tt no}\ {\tt point}\ {\tt worrying}\ {\tt about}\ {\tt it."}$
- T F I don't study any harder for final exams than for the rest of my course work.
- T F Even when I'm well prepared for a test, I feel very anxious about it.
- T F Thoughts of doing poorly interfere with my performance on tests.
- T F I seldom feel the need for "cramming" before an exam.
- T F I start feeling very uneasy before getting a test paper back.
- T F I dread courses where the professor has the habit of giving "POP" quizzes.
- The university ought to recognize that some students are more nervous than others about tests and that this affects their performance.
- T F I don't enjoy eating before an important test.
- $^{
  m T}$   $^{
  m F}$  Before an important examination I find my hands or arms trembling.
- T F It seems to me that examination periods ought not to be made the tense situations which they are.

CIRCLE EITHER T (TRUE) OR F (FALSE) FOR EACH ITEM.

I am more sensitive than most other people. F T

I frequently find myself worrying about something. F

F

F

F

F

T

T

T F

T

T F

T

T F

I worry quite a bit over possible misfortunes.

I practically never blush.

I am often afraid that I am going to blush.

I have nightmares every few nights. F

My hands and feet are usually warm enough. F

I sweat very easily even on cool days. T

> Sometimes when embarrassed, I break out in a sweat which annoys me greatly.

I have had periods in which I lost sleep over worry. I hardly ever notice my heart pounding and I am seldom short of breath.

I have a great deal of stomach trouble.

I feel hungry almost all the time.

I am seldom troubled by constipation.

My sleep is fitful and disturbed.

I dream frequently about things that are best kept to myself. T

T F I have diarrhea once a month or more. T I worry over money and business.

T F I blush no more often than others.

I frequently notice my hand shakes when I try to do something. T F

> I cannot keep my mind on one thing. I work under a great deal of tension.

T F I have very few headaches.

T I do not tire quickly.

F I am troubled by attacks of nausea.

# CIRCLE EITHER T (TRUE) OR F (FALSE) FOR EACH ITEM.

- While taking an important examination I perspire a great deal.
- While taking an important exam I find myself thinking of how much brighter the other students are than I am.
- $_{\mathbb{T}}$  F During tests I find myself thinking of the consequences of failing.
- ${\mathbb T}$  If I were to take an intelligence test, I would worry a great deal before taking it.
- $_{\mathbb{T}}$  F If I knew I was going to take an intelligence test, I would feel confident and relaxed beforehand.
- T F During course examinations I find myself thinking of things unrelated to the actual course material.
- $\ensuremath{\mathbb{T}}$  F After important tests I am frequently so tense that my stamach gets upset.
- $_{\mathbb{T}}$  F I get to feel very panicky when I have to take a surprise exam.
- ${ t T}$   ${ t F}$   ${ t I}$  freeze up on things like intelligence tests and final exams.
- T F I sometimes feel my heart beating very fast during important tests.
- T F After taking a test I always feel I could have done better than I actually did.
- T F Getting a good grade on one test doesn't seem to increase my confidence on the second.
- T F I have an uneasy, upset feeling before taking a final test.
- T F I usually get depressed after taking a test.
- T F During a course examination I frequently get so nervous that I forget facts I really know.
- $^{
  m T}$  F I think I could do much better on tests if I could take them alone and not feel pressured by a time limit.
- F During exams I sometimes wonder if I'll ever get through college.
- When taking a test my emotional feeling does not interfere with my performance.
- The harder I work at taking a test or studying for one, the more confused I get.

CIRCLE EITHER T (TRUE) OR F (FALSE) FOR EACH ITEM.

- I believe I am no more nervous than most others. F
  - At times I think I am no good at all. F
- It makes me nervous to have to wait. F T
  - I have very few fears compared to my friends. F
  - I am a high-strung person. F
- Life is a strain for me much of the time. F
- I am entirely self-confident. F
- I sametimes feel that I am about to go to pieces.
- I shrink from facing a crisis or difficulty. F I am usually calm and not easily upset. F
- I am happy most of the time. F

F

F

- T
- I feel anxiety about something or someone almost all the time. F I must admit that I have at times been worried beyond reason over T F something that really did not matter.
- I have been afraid of things or people that I know could not hurt me. T F I have sometimes felt that difficulties were piling up so high that
- I could not overcome them. Sametimes I become so excited that I find it hard to get to sleep. F T F
  - I have periods of such great restlessness that I cannot sit long in a chair.
  - I find it hard to keep my mind on a task or job.
- F I am unusually self-conscious.
- I am inclined to take things hard. T F
- I am certainly lacking in self-confidence. F
- I certainly feel useless at times.
- I am easily embarrassed.
- F I wish I could be as happy as others seem to be.