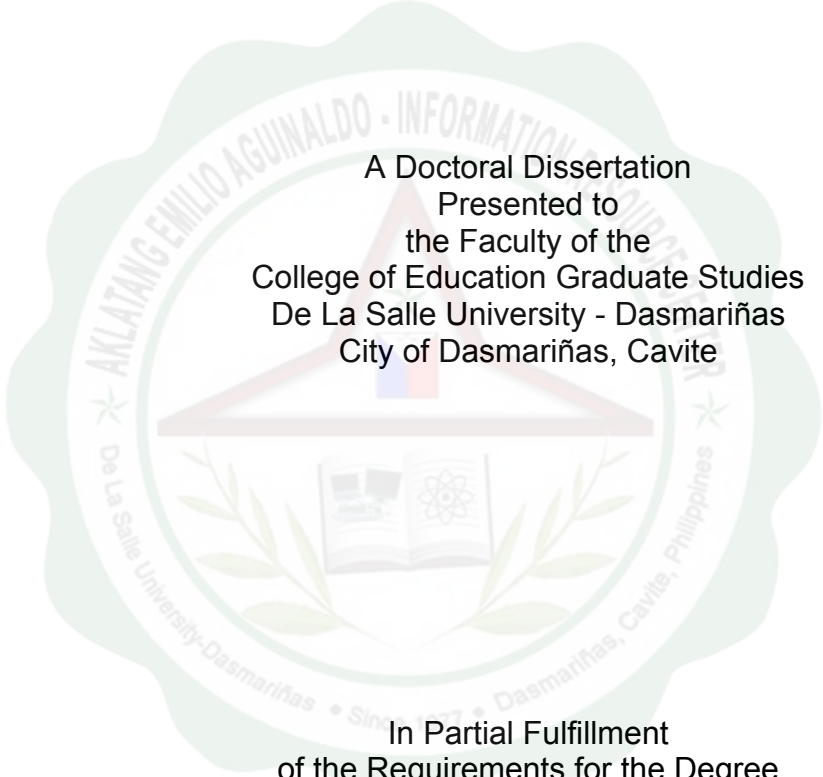


**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MODIFIED-SYSTEMATIC
DESENSITIZATION PROGRAM IN REDUCING
LEVELS OF TEST ANXIETY AND
ENHANCING ACCOUNTING
ACHIEVEMENT**

The seal of De La Salle University - Dasmariñas is a circular emblem with a scalloped border. It features a central shield with a red triangle on top, a blue triangle on the left, and a white triangle on the right. Below the shield is an open book with a gear-like symbol on its pages. The shield is flanked by green laurel branches. The text "AKLATANG EMILIO AGUINALDO - INFORMATION SUPERVISOR" is written along the top inner edge of the seal. The bottom inner edge contains the text "De La Salle University - Dasmariñas • Sinangay, Dasmariñas, Cavite, Philippines".

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with Concentration in Community Counseling

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ABSTRACT

Title of the Research: **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MODIFIED-SYSTEMATIC
DESENSITIZATION PROGRAM IN REDUCING
LEVELS OF TEST ANXIETY AND ENHANCING
ACCOUNTING ACHIEVEMENT**

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Test anxiety is considered a major predictor for low academic performance among students. With this, anxiety should be taken seriously. Students need some form of intervention to reduce anxiety and assist in improving academic performance.

The main thrust of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of Modified Systematic Desensitization Program (MSDP) in reducing test anxiety and enhance Accounting achievement. This study evaluates the test-gain benefits of Modified Systematic Desensitization Program (MSDP), a multi-modal intervention for test-anxious students. Accounting students in the College of Business Administration were screened for high test anxiety. Forty-five anxious students were assigned to an Intervention group, while the remaining forty-five to a Control group.

The study utilized the Matched Pretest-Posttest Group Design. Purposive sampling and matching techniques were employed in the selection of the participants using fishbowl technique. Mean, standard deviation were employed as statistical tools together with t-test to determine the significant differences between the pretest and posttest scores of the experimental and control groups. On the other hand, Pearson correlation coefficient was used to determine relationship between test anxiety and Accounting achievement and Cohen's d to know the effect size of MSDP as an intervention. MSDP includes psycho-education, relaxation training, systematic desensitization, cognitive restructuring and relapse prevention. The intervention was implemented for eight consecutive sessions for a total of eight hours. Test gains were calculated from pretest and posttest results together with the participants' blood pressure and pulse rate.

The Experimental group (A) attained significant test gains over the Control group (B), with considerably stronger gains (HTA $t=11.58$, $p=0.000$; MTA $t=7.76$, $p=0.000$; LTA $t=.6.37$, $p=0.000$). Test gains correlated positively to anxiety reduction benefits and an increase in Accounting achievement. But a negative relationship existed between test anxiety and Accounting achievement of the two groups in the pre and post treatment intervention (A group: TA $r=-0.422$, $p=0.118$; BP $r=-0.148$, $p=0.606$; PR $r=-0.115$, $p=0.683$ / B group: TA $r=-0.092$, $p=0.745$; BP $r=-0.045$, $p=0.875$; PR $r=-0.168$, $p=0.550$). Methodological limitations warrant some caution in interpreting the findings, although the strength of the results attained benefits suggest that

MSDP does improve academic achievement in Accounting. Likewise, MSDP helps stabilized Blood pressure and Pulse rate for struggling students with high (TAS 23-37), moderate (TAS 16-22) and low (TAS 1-15) test anxiety.

These findings demonstrate that MSDP is an effective technique in the reduction of test anxiety and enhancement of Accounting achievement among test-anxious participants.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
TITLE	1
ABSTRACT	2
APPROVAL SHEET	5
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	7
TABLE OF CONTENTS	10
LIST OF TABLES	13
LIST OF FIGURES	16
Chapter 1 THE PROBLEM AND ITS BACKGROUND	
Introduction	17
Theoretical Framework	21
Conceptual Framework	22
Statement of the Problem	27
Hypotheses	28
Scope and Delimitation of the Study	29
Significance of the Study	30
Definition of Terms	32
Chapter 2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	
Conceptual Literature	35
Research Literature	48
Synthesis	60

Chapter 3	METHODOLOGY	
	Research Method	63
	Population and Sampling	64
	Participants	65
	Instrument	65
	Procedure	67
	Statistical Treatment of the Data	71
Chapter 4	PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA	
	Blood Pressure and Pulse Rate of Experimental and Control Group with HTA, MTA and LTA Before MSDP	74
	Academic Achievement in Accounting of the Experimental and Control Group with HTA, MTA and LTA Before MSDP	77
	Difference in the Experimental and Control Groups Before MSDP in Terms of Blood Pressure, Pulse Rate and Academic Accounting Achievement of HTA, MTA and LTA	80
	Mean of Experimental and Control Groups in Terms of Blood Pressure and Pulse Rate of HTA, MTA and LTA	85
	Mean of Experimental and Control Groups in Terms of Accounting Achievement of HTA, MTA and LTA after MSDP	93

Difference Between the Pre and Post MSDP Scores of The Experimental and Control Groups in Terms of Blood Pressure, Pulse Rate and Academic Accounting Achievement of HTA, MTA and LTA	93
Relationship Between Test Anxiety and Academic Accounting Achievement	98
Effectiveness of MSDP as an Intervention	103
5 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
Summary	105
Findings	106
Conclusions	109
Recommendations	110
REFERENCES	113
APPENDICES	
A Modified-Systematic Desensitization Program	
B Letter of Request to the Vice Chancellor for Academics	
C Letter of Request to the Dean, College of Business Administration	
D Letter of Request to Chair, Accountancy Department	
E Letter of Request to the Dean, College of Engineering, Architecture and Technology	
F Letter Asking Permission to I.G. Sarason	
G Letter to Participant	

- H Participant Information
- I Certification from the Editor
- J Certification from the Statistician
- K Contract Form
- L Test Anxiety Scale
- M Relapse Prevention Worksheet
- N Evaluation Form
- O Transcript of MSD Program
- P Sample of Test Anxiety Hierarchy Statements
- Q Grading System of DLSU-Dasmariñas
- R Classification of Blood Pressure for Adults
- S Resting Heart Rate Classification
- T Sample Statistical Computation
- U Curriculum Vitae

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE		PAGE
1	Mean Blood Pressure and Pulse Rate of the Experimental Groups with HTA, MTA and LTA Before the Modified-Systemation Desensitization Program	74
2	Academic Achievement in Accounting of the Experimental and Control Groups with HTA, MTA and LTA Before the Modified-Systematic Desensitization Program	78
3	Difference in the Experimental and Control Groups Before the Modified-Systematic Desensitization Program in Terms of Blood Pressure, Pulse Rate and Academic Accounting Achievement of HTA, MTA and LTA	81
4	Mean of the Experimental and Control Groups in Terms of Blood Pressure and Pulse Rate of HTA, MTA and LTA After the Modified-Systematic Desensitization Program	85
5	Mean of the Experimental and Control Groups in Terms of Academic Accounting Achievement of HTA, MTA and LTA After the Modified-Systematic Desensitization Program	90
6	Difference Between the Pre and Post Modified-Systematic Desensitization Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups in Terms of Blood Pressure, Pulse Rate and Academic Accounting Achievement of HTA, MTA and LTA	93

7	Relationship Between Test Anxiety and Academic Accounting Achievement	98
8	Effectiveness of MSDP as an Intervention	103



LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE		PAGE
1	Research Paradigm of the Study	26
2	Matched Pretest-Posttest Control Design	64

