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The Impact of Test Anxiety On the Uniform Bar Exam: A Statistical Study of Law Graduates' Barriers

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ABSTRACT

Before thinking about going to law school it is necessary to understand the possible limitations of the field. This study looks at how test anxiety can impact scores on the Uniform Bar Exam. The risks of bar exam failure are drastic for a person and society needs to understand what could put someone at a higher risk of failure. The method for the research was a survey. The survey was sent by contacting lawyers, and having them answer questions asking about the exam they took and their score. The other survey aspect was they took a short form Test Anxiety Index exam (TAI-5) to determine their level of test anxiety. The survey used the Pearson Coefficient Index which showed that there is not a significant negative correlation between respondents' Uniform Bar Exam score and their Test Anxiety Index score. The new results help society understand that the previous barrier of test anxiety may not be as big of a factor with the Uniform Bar Exam. There are some implications to this study and to further this data a researcher should conduct the study following the participant from law school to after the bar exam.

Introduction

The bar exam has been the subject of professional debate for decades. As the world changes, the bar exam follows. With passing scores substantially decreasing and the high costs of failure, there is a need to understand the reasons for failure. This study aims to compare test anxiety levels to bar exam scores and the relational impact.

The bar exam is a multi-faceted exam that tests some of the skills needed in law practice (Darrow-Kleinhaus, 2004). The bar exam aims to measure minimum competence in law to help protect citizens (Frisby et al., 2020, p. 126). When looking at legal licensing, researchers still follow the same views of protecting citizens with these licensing exams. Hultin (2022) looks at the concept of licensing and concludes that licensing does protect consumers and aids in public safety by preventing incompetence. These studies indicate a strong ideology behind exams like the bar. The issue comes when looking at the occurrence of failure rates.

A study by Kuehn and Moss (2019) specifies the change in bar exam passage rates. During the years after 2014, bar exam passage was at an all-time low. Even more recent data shows that passage rates continue to decrease: "In 2014, the total bar exam passage rate was 74%, and in 2022, only 59% of testers passed" (2022 Statistics, 2023). Additionally, the study of Kuehn and Moss (2019) built upon data from the National Conference of Bar Examiners (2014) that stated a decline in the passage rate (as cited on p. 623). Researchers have theorized causal reasons for the decline. For example, they claimed that one cause was COVID-19. According to Smith (2022), COVID-19 allowed bar exams to be canceled and delayed, gave online options, allowed short-term licenses with supervision, and even gave licenses without the examination (p. 539). While the pandemic

changed the testing scene, hypotheses of causes of bar exam failure are ever-changing and debated, as not one aspect is a sole direct contributor.

Researchers look in-depth at bar exam failure because of the damages endured from failure. According to Frisby et al. (2020), failure results in irrelevant legal skills and wasted years and dollars on education (p. 125). Yakowitz (2010) further supports this claim: "Bar exam failure creates graduates with earning depression and debt accumulation that leaves a worse financial burden if never gone to law school" (p. 40). Researchers are theorizing ways to mitigate the possible damages by aiding exam takers and prospective law students. Some of these studies look at a "new and improved" form of the bar called the Uniform Bar Exam (UBE), which offers a universal test that examines general principles of common law (National Conference of Bar Examiners, 2017, as cited in, Griggs, 2019). While some research looks at key attributes of the exam as a contributing factor, other research focuses on additional factors related to bar exam failure, like when Kaufman et al. (2007) found test anxiety (TA) to be a key contributor to poor bar scores.

The current state of bar exam research is relatively underdeveloped. The bar exam constantly changes, and studies must keep up with changes to provide insight. This study aims to build upon current research on the bar exam and test anxiety and to study the current state of legal examination. Specifically concentrating on this question: Does test anxiety predict failure on the bar exam with the Uniform Bar Exam from 2021-2023?

Literature Review

Three crucial concepts can be examined after considering the bar exam and its causes of failure. These factors are test anxiety, damages from failure, and the Uniform Bar Exam.

Test Anxiety

As Kaufman et al. (2007) stated, test anxiety is a key contributor to bar exam failure (p. 213). Test anxiety, referred to as TA, is widely defined and utilized. Legal research defines TA as "the disposition to react with intrusive thoughts, mental disorganization, tension, and physiological arousal when exposed to evaluative situations" (Irwin, 1980, as cited in Kaufman et al., 2007, p. 207). To understand TA, it is crucial to understand what it does to a tester. According to Hill & Wigfield (1984, as cited in Rana & Mahmood, 2010, p. 63), TA limits potential performance in test situations. According to Irwin (1984), cited in Kaufman et al.'s (2007) study, they speak on how TA is related to deficits in exam performance on all academic levels (p. 207). This claim is proven by the study of Rana and Mahmood (2010), where, in their analysis, they state that TA is a significant cause of student underachievement at all educational levels (p. 70).

While it is crucial to understand TA and its impact, it is also essential to understand how researchers use TA in studies. TA is not a set state of being. Instead, it accumulates into an opposing force while speculating impacts based on the consequences of test scores (Rana & Mahmood, 2010, p. 71). Researchers started looking into TA because of its impact. TA impacts performance by altering focus (Jeri, 1971, as cited in Kaufman et al., 2007, p. 207). TA's impact on the students raised researchers' awareness of the need to look into TA. Kaufman et al. (2007) incorporated TA into the research, where they found that people with higher TA have a higher chance of failing the 1st and 2nd bar exam attempts (p. 214). However, more is needed for this research.

Damages of Failure

Researchers look into bar exam failure not only to examine the learning or processes of law school but also to understand the sheer impact that bar exam failure has on students. As mentioned above, the earning depression and the income loss created by bar exam failure is to the point where "neverpassers earn $17,000-20,000 less

than the same-age counterparts who passed" (Yakowitz, 2010, p. 31). This earning depression is amplified when looking at the fact that passers and neverpassers recuperation of tuition is dependent on legal professions earnings (Baum, 2015, as cited in González et al., 2021, p. 4). Yakowitz (2010) explains this in-depth, explaining that most failed graduates do not recover from their debt until they are in their 40s or older (p. 33). These damages can create a diminished labor prospect (González et al., 2021). The losses are so significant that many researchers like Yakowitz (2010) feel it would be more beneficial for failures to never attend law school due to the high cost of failure (p. 40). Acknowledging these damages and the contribution of barriers such as TA are increasing the need for research and its utilization. Society should understand what could cause these barriers to better prevent these damages.

Uniform Bar Exam

Finally, we look into the changes of the bar exam. In the past, the primary certification test was the State Bar Exam (SBE), where each state provided an individual test. However, many researchers have questioned the use of SBE in the past few years. The bar exam aims to determine lawyers' competency in protecting society, with the SBE testing "reading comprehension and reasoning, identifying and formulating legal issues, organizing information, following directions, and the ability to write" (Darrow-Kleinhaus, 2004, p. 442). While the premise of the SBE is strong, the exam is based on distinct state rules and regulations. When looking at licensing as a whole, the SBE system causes inconsistencies that make it challenging to go over state lines with each state's licensing (Hultin, 2022, para. 1). This old process caused researchers to question if the SBE was the best assessment tool.

This is where the Uniform Bar Exam (UBE) enters. Griggs (2019) focuses on the UBE, stating that the UBE will eliminate all state law concepts and only test uniform codes and principles of law (p. 2). The UBE is not an entirely newly constructed exam. It utilizes aspects of the old exam, such as the 200-question multiple choice section, essay questions, and law utilization questions (Bonner, 2005, as cited in Griggs, 2019, p. 27). The difference is in what questions are asked on the exam and the exam's focus. The SBE tests specific code, while the UBE tests general law. The hope for the UBE is to increase interest in pursuing a legal career (González et al., 2021, p. 2). Griggs (2019) hopes all states will eventually accept the UBE (p. 11). Full acceptance allows flexibility in legal practice, thus encouraging more students to pursue legal education (González et al., 2021, p. 33). There have been continuous attempts to improve the UBE since its foundation in 2011 (Griggs, 2019). The constant change causes researchers to regularly look into and analyze all forms of the bar exam.

Purpose of Study

The damages from bar exam failure, like loss of earnings and financial debt, are significant. The damages endured and the losses beg the question: Is the possibility of failure worth the risk of debt? While researchers are attempting to understand the issues, the research methods utilized and the constant changes to the exam still create questions about the applicability of existing studies. This helped theorize a gap. The core foundation of this research is based on Kaufman et al.'s (2007) study on factors of bar exam failure, with one of his key findings being the impact of TA. His study looked at the Multistate Bar Exam back from 1998-2002. Regular bar exam changes increase the possibility of inaccuracy and inapplicability today. The law profession has started to use the UBE as the primary bar exam. The UBE use shows that changes have occurred to the bar exam after the original study by Kaufman et al. (2007). The impact of COVID-19 also brought many changes; thus, the existing data may not be applicable. The changes to the bar exam create the need to relook at the impact of TA on the bar exam, specifically, the UBE. These changes lead to this paper's essential question: Does test anxiety predict failure on the bar exam with the Uniform Bar Exam from 2021-2023?

Methods

The best method to determine if test anxiety (TA) causes Uniform Bar Exam (UBE) failure is Causal-Comparative research. Causal-Comparative research is an experimental design used to identify cause-effect relationships between independent and dependent variables (Velázquez, 2022). This study's independent variable is TA, and the dependent variable is UBE failure. The use of Causal-Comparative research explained the correlation of TA and UBE scores.

Survey Creation

Many researchers in the field utilize various methods, ranging from Causal-Comparison to Correlational research. A commonality among research in the field is the utilization of surveys to collect data (Rana & Mahmood, 2010; Kaufman et al., 2007). This study involved contacting a niche group of participants and utilizing an online survey to obtain widespread contact and maximize potential responses. To view the survey as a whole, see Appendix B.

Before the survey could collect data, participants were asked to consent. The consent form explained the survey method, purpose, benefits, anonymity, and what would be gained from participation (see Appendix A).

Once the survey began, the first section asked for general bar exam data. This data included the year the participant took the exam and the bar exam form. Participants had to have taken the UBE between the years 2021-2023. Looking at participants who took the exam in this period shows the exam changes impact after COVID-19. Kaufman et al.'s (2007) study explains why looking at the bar exam form was needed. The bar exam has significantly changed since the initial study of Kaufman et al. (2007), and more research is needed to focus on the change. One of the most significant changes was introducing the UBE, which allows practice in all states that accept it, as opposed to the SBE, which was limited to a single state (Griggs, 2019, p. 49). This study asked what form of the bar exam was taken since it only looked at UBE scores in correlation with TA to compare it to older studies like Kaufman et al. (2007).

The survey questions that followed asked about the score earned on bar exam attempts. Attempts one and two scores' were both asked because, according to Kaufman et al. (2007), "Test anxiety is the biggest factor in the second attempt as well as the first" (p. 214). Based on this statement, it was recommended that both attempts be looked at because the general level of TA stays consistent, which better determines TA's impact on the UBE score. It is important to note that participants could enter "N/A" to ensure they did not insert false data and skew results because the second attempt is not always taken.

The final section of the survey measured the participants' TA level. One of the most known and utilized TA-level examiners in the field of research is the Test Anxiety Inventory (TAI). The TAI scores range from 20-80, with 20 being low TA and 80 being high TA (Taylor & Deane, 2002, p. 128). This study utilized the TAI-5 (short form inventory), which determines participants' level of TA, due to Kaufman et al.'s (2007) study utilizing the TAI-5 (p. 212). Taylor and Deane (2002) speak on how data showed that TAI- 5 is reliable and produces similar scores to the full TAI (p. 128). Additionally, the TAI-5 is widely used in research due to its ease of determination for participants. The only reason for the full TAI is to differentiate worry and emotionality (Taylor & Deane, 2002, p. 128). Due to the nature of the TAI-5 and this study solely looking at TA, the TAI-5 was a more feasible determiner. The questions utilized were drawn from Taylor and Deane (2002) for the general use of TAI-5 (p. 131).

Data Gathering

Data collection began based on the survey that was created. The needed participants for this study were past law students who took the Uniform Bar Exam between 2021-2023. Thus, the initial ideology of gathering data was to utilize colleges, as done in the study by Kaufman et al. (2007, p. 210). Using colleges would offer easy gain of participants and lower the risk of falsified data. However, this was not feasible due to the limited period of less than eight months and the need for an Institutional Review Board. Conversations and analysis of other papers determined that the best method was to contact individuals by email. Initial contact was through LinkedIn, but contacting participants was a struggle. Instead, law firms found on U.S. News websites were contacted directly and asked to send the survey to associates. Initial participants could have sent the survey to old law school friends, and hopefully, the snowball effect would have occurred. Snowballing would gather data from those who scored poorly and may not be reachable from law firms. However, this was less successful than initially hoped. Thus, after debate and discussion about data credibility, the survey was uploaded to law forums on Reddit and Facebook to gather a broader range of responses. Social media is used nationwide and allows the gathering of widespread data. Despite this study having gathered data from lawyers and law forums, the most significant limitation of this method was the risk of a lack of credibility in the responses. There was no guarantee that the respondents were lawyers. Additionally, despite attempts to reach firms nationwide, most were located in major cities. These limitations could have reduced the true data spread since the data was not necessarily looking at smaller firms.

Data Analysis

Data analysis began after all responses were gathered and the survey was closed. The data analysis was one of the most complex steps of the process. Analysis began by gathering the TAI-5 score and giving quantitative data on TA to analyze. Each question was on a scale of one to four. For this score to match the scale of 20-80, the initial scale scores were multiplied by four (Taylor & Deane, 2002, p. 128). Each participant's score was connected to their TAI score following the scaling. Scores were then entered into a spreadsheet. Each column was split by TAI scores 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70-80. The scores in each column were averaged into the descriptive statistics (mean, median, mode, range, maximum, minimum, standard deviation, first quartile, third quartile, interquartile range, skewness, and kurtosis). The Pearson Correlation Coefficient (PCC) was determined from these descriptive statistics. PCC is used to measure linear correlation. It is a scale of negative one-to-one correlation; negative one-to-zero is a negative correlation where one variable increase causes another variable increase. Zero is no correlation and no relation. Then zero to one, which is a positive correlation increase of one, causes an increase in another variable (Turney, 2022, para. 1).

While most of this method was similar to Kaufman et al., the analysis is where the studies differed. Kaufman et al. (2007) utilized a t-test, a statistical test used to compare the means of two groups, and looked at the difference between scores due to TA with both the bar exam and the Law School Admission Test (p. 214). This study looked at the relation and correlation of TA levels and UBE scores, not differences in determining scores on the broad scale that Kaufman et al. (2007) did. Additionally, when determining the initial analysis method, data quantities were collected: they went in order and were narrowed down, starting with sample numerical data with discrete and finite data. The data was discrete through ratio data because the scores could not be negative. The independent variable was the Test Anxiety Inventory, and the dependent data was the Uniform Bar Exam score. Thus, descriptive statistics were used, with two variable measurements. These variables and factors all pointed to the usage of PCC (Turney, 2022). With the usage of the PCC, hypotheses were created. The initial hypothesis was that there is a significant negative correlation between test anxiety and Uniform Bar Exam failure. The initial belief in this study followed the alternative hypothesis. However, there was a need to

understand the other possibility. This other possibility was the null hypothesis: no significant negative correlation exists between test anxiety and Uniform Bar Exam failure.

Results

The survey was sent to over 100 law firms and posted on two legal forums. Despite this effort, only 30 responses were obtained, and only 23 were usable in data analysis. Additionally, second-attempt scores could not be recorded since only one response included a second-attempt score. However, the data obtained shows a correlation between test anxiety levels and the Uniform Bar Exam score.

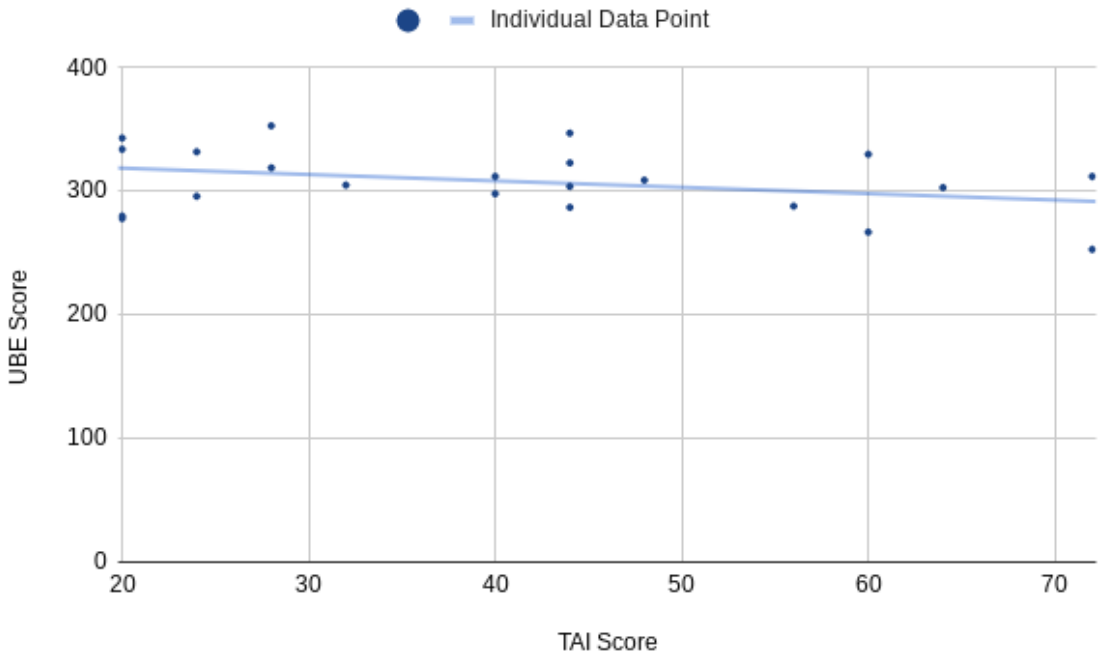

Figure 1. Individual's Responses UBE Score in Correlation with TAI Level. Note: Each dot on the chart represents an individual's score. The sloped line represents the average UBE Score decreasing as the TAI Score increases.

Figure 1 provided a general understanding of the analysis of the average score for each TA level compared to the UBE score. This helped gather an overall picture of the results from the survey and created initial conclusions from the data. In the graph, the general trend shows that as TAI increases, the UBE score decreases. It represents each data point utilized and gives an introductory view of the results. It shows that the average score has a shallow-sloped decrease. It also shows a mix of where scores fall in relation to the average, which depicts data ranges.

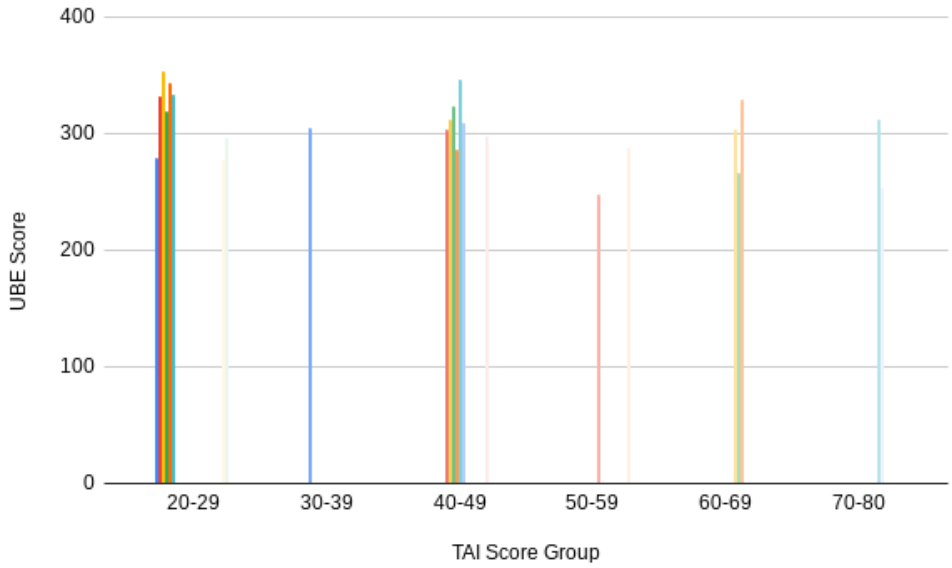

Figure 2. Individual's Responses UBE Score grouped by TAI Scores

Figure 2 furthers the data, showing the general grouping of the data. The figure shows that the UBE score is generally grouped within each TAI score range. While Figure 1 shows the average decrease in scores as a general trend, this figure allows us to understand how scores are shown in relation to the group and exemplifies score change from group to group. The data shows some differentiation between scores in the same group. It also shows how scores are similar from group to group. There is a slight decrease seen in the visual trends but nothing significant. Further tables provide a better understanding of these trends.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of UBE Scores by TAI Group

Statistics	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-80
Mean	316.875	305	311.4285714	268	300	282.5
Median	325.5	305	309	268	303	282.5
Maximum	353	305	347	288	330	312
Minimum	278	305	287	248	267	253
Standard Deviation	25.60794148	#DIV/0!	20.13620289	#DIV/0!	25.45584412	#DIV/0!
1st Quartile	292	305	301	258	285	267.75
3rd Quartile	336.25	305	317.5	278	316.5	297.25
Interquartile Range	44.25	0	16.5	20	31.5	29.5
Skewness	-0.3536564119	#DIV/0!	0.9438815816	#DIV/0!	-0.4232731603	#DIV/0!
Kurtosis	-1.612632609	#DIV/0!	1.345995802	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!

Note: #DIV/0! Occurs when there are not enough data points (less than three) to complete the measurement.

Figure 2 is then built upon through Table 1. This table shows descriptive statistics of data from each group, which explains trends from the data. The mean shows the average scores from the group. The average scores show a relatively slight decrease in score as UBE Group increases with a few minute outliers like 40-49 increasing and 50-60 with a drastic decrease. The data is further extended with the Standard Deviation (STDEV). STDEV explains the actual range of mean data. It determines the deviation from the mean, which shows what data points fit into the mean (Hargrave, 2023). Looking at the group 20-29, STDEV is 27, meaning that any values within $290<x<344$ are a part of the median. Looking at skewness, we see how values lie in relation to the median. If skewness is negative, most values are to the right of the mean, which is a higher score, and outliers to the left lower the mean. Positive skewness shows that most values fall to the left of the mean, and outliers to the right increase the mean (Chen, 2024). Looking at the group 20-29, the skewness is -0.35, meaning most values are slightly more than 316. In the group 40-49, 0.94 skewness scores show that most values are less than 311. Finally, we look at kurtosis, which explains how far data points lie from the mean. There are three forms of kurtosis: mesokurtic, leptokurtic, and platykurtic. Mesokurtic is when the kurtosis value (x) equals three and resembles the average distribution. Leptokurtic value is when $x>3.0$, and many outliers narrow the average mean range. Finally, there is platykurtic when $x<3.0$, and there is little to no data, and all points are stable to the mean (Kenton, 2023, para. 8). Since kurtosis is $x<3.0$ in all values, the data is platykurtic, with little to no outliers. These statistics help conclude how reliable the statistics are. There is less of a trend than initially anticipated. Utilizing this table and the graphs gives a broader understanding of the results.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics Total UBE Data vs. Total TAI Data

Descriptive Statistics	UBE Score	Total TAI Score	Comparison
Mean	307.8636364	41.09090909	
Median	307	42	
Mode	312	44	
Maximum	353	72	
Minimum	267	20	
Standard Deviation	26.19577475	17.24586656	
1st Quartile	290	25	
3rd Quartile	328.25	54	
Interquartile Range	38.25	29	
Skewness	-0.170044641	0.3634981298	
Kurtosis	-0.4171989218	-1.018404476	
Correlation			-0.3399049014

Table 2 helps conclude the data and thoroughly explains the research. The mean is the basis of the research. The average score correlation is a 308 UBE score, equivalent to a 41 TAI Score. This average score initially shows the alternative hypothesis to be proven valid as the UBE score decreases and the TAI Score increases because the PCC shows a value of -0.34. However, the standard deviation shows that this is not entirely true, but this may be due to the smaller sample size. The UBE values 282-334 all fit into the mean and show the majority. As for the TAI Score, the range is from 24-58. The broader range with higher TAI Scores shows that UBE scores do not drastically change based on higher TA. Finally, the skewness shows that most data falls near the mean with only slight differentiation that proves the score impact, with kurtosis leaning towards a lower score and TAI leaning towards a higher score. The kurtosis score is platytkurtic, meaning there are few outliers in the average data, thus explaining the correlation. With a Pearson Correlation Coefficient of

-0.34, there is no significant negative correlation between the increase in the TAI Score and the decrease in the UBE Score. This data concluded that the null hypothesis was proven true.

Discussion

The results of this study helped create an understanding of the question: Does test anxiety predict failure on the bar exam with the Uniform Bar Exam from 2021-2023? The Pearson Correlation Coefficient shows no significant correlation between the Test Anxiety Inventory score increase and the Uniform Bar Exam (UBE) score decrease between 2021-2023. The lack of correlation means that Kaufman et al.'s (2007) findings with the Multistate Bar Exam and Test Anxiety Inventory score having significant negative correlation are not shown in the UBE score based on this data. Despite the nonsignificant correlation, there was still a slight trend of a decrease in the UBE Score as the TAI score increased. Thus, the claim by Rana and Mahmood (2010) that TA limits the potential performance (p. 71) or Kaufman et al. (2007) statement on how TA results in exam deficits is not completely debunked with the new exam (p. 207). Instead, it shows that these deficits may be less significant with the new exam. This finding could also be attributed to a higher success rate due to the new exam. With the higher success rate, damages stated by González et al. (2021) and Yakowitz (2010) may have a smaller impact than they had in the past. This could, in turn, reduce the level of anxiety's impact, as shown by the data. The hope of Griggs (2019) that the UBE will draw new prospective law students may be true when they see that TA is not a drastic determiner of a poor score (p. 70). This data creates a new understanding that, with the Uniform Bar Exam from 2021-2023, the Uniform Bar Exam score slightly decreases as test anxiety level increases. Thus, if trends continue, test anxiety does predict Uniform Bar Exam failure. However, it is not significant.

Limitations

Unfortunately, this data is not perfect, and there are critical limitations to note. First, it is crucial to note that only 23 usable responses were obtained. There were only about 50 days available for data collection. This time included weekends when firms had no office work and no email response. Over 125 law firms were contacted, but with the lack of time and resources, it was difficult to constantly follow up and gather 125+ responses. Due to this, there was a very limited class of data. The limited class of data meant that there was a relatively narrow range of data. Figures 1 and 2 show an apparent excess of TAI Scores in ranges 20-29 and 40-49, totaling 52% of all data gathered, each with 6 of the 23 responses. Thus, the data may be skewed, and the results may not have accounted for many possibilities. To prevent this issue, one would need to follow-up data to ensure a broader range of responses.

Additionally, the used data had little responses of failure. The minimum passing score range depends on the state; the passing minimum varies between 260 and 270 on the Uniform Bar Exam (2022 Statistics, 2023). Of the two failures recorded, one scored a 253 but retook and got a 275. The other failing score recorded was a 248. Since only one retake score was recorded, not much could be looked at for second attempts. Also, one question was not filled in for the TAI score, and the data could not be used. Finally, one person did not give a score; what they did say was, "Did not pass in the state I took it in". These results indicated two limitations and issues. One possible reason for the lack of failing responses, as Yakowitz (2010) shows, is that many people are damaged and embarrassed by failure. When the person does not give a score, it possibly shows the embarrassment of failure. Additionally, there is a lack of data due to failure. This lack of data means the data found does not directly answer how TA indicates Uniform Bar Exam failure. It does show that as the TAI score increases, the UBE score decreases with a nonsignificant negative correlation. This data answers the question by showing a trend in the data. This trend could be used to defend that if someone fails, it would be due to a

higher TAI score because the trends indicate that a higher test anxiety level lowers the UBE score. However, the level of the prediction is not to a significant extent.

Another data issue occurs with validity. The last five responses were after the survey was posted on a Reddit forum for law. The use of Reddit could have impeded data validity, and this occurred. Two of the five data points created issues. One said they scored a one on the exam, and the other took the exam at a time dated too far back. There was an attempt to root out any fabricated data by reading through responses and removing any questionable answers that did not apply to the exam. However, due to survey anonymity, there was no way to guarantee real responses. These responses could have possibly skewed the results, but only three of the used data points were from Reddit, which hopefully limited the risk of response skewness.

The final issue occurred when looking at the survey results after data collection. One of the lawyers who said they took the exam explained that there is a possible issue with the survey starting with the TAI-5 and ending with the bar exam questions. The issue presented in the survey was that participants thought about their bar exam and then answered the TAI-5. This order could have altered how they responded to the TAI-5. If they had gotten a higher score than anticipated, they could have answered as if they had a lower TA. Alternatively, if they got a lower score than anticipated, they could have answered as if they had a higher TA. It is possible that if they responded to the TAI-5 first, it could give a more accurate TAI score. This order may have provided a more accurate correlation between TA and UBE scores.

Implications

This data changes the current knowledge of how students should approach law school and the bar exam. As stated earlier, the damages caused by bar exam failure can put students in worse financial shape in the long term than ever before going to law school (Yakowitz, 2010, p. 40). When deciding to go into law school, prospective students must understand these risks and make decisions based on these barriers to success. According to Cochran (2010), test anxiety is a variable that is a bar exam predictor; for most to succeed, they need to learn how to minimize their anxiety. While this could be a barrier, the data from this research shows that this may not still be a prevalent issue. The lack of significant difference between TA and UBE scores indicates that the current knowledge for students has changed. Students with higher test anxiety may now be able to have a lower fear that it will be an indicator of failure. With the Uniform Bar Exam test, anxiety could have a lower impact and may be easier to overcome. Thus, the risk for current prospective students is minimized when people are deciding if they should enter law school.

Conclusion

The bar exam is a relatively understudied area, especially when examining test anxiety's impact on the exam. Most of the existing data is dated and does not consider the new Uniform Bar Exam or the general changes in today's society. This study attempted to determine if the test anxiety factor still applies to scores in the new world of the Uniform Bar Exam. This study suggests that there is not a significant negative correlation between test anxiety and Uniform Bar Exam scores. There is a minor negative correlation showing that a Test Anxiety Inventory score increase can cause a Uniform Bar Exam score decrease. However, it is not enough of a correlation to present a drastic problem.

Further research needs to look at the Uniform Bar Exam scores in relation to test anxiety on a broader scale with more participants. Many issues with surveys can occur due to the lack of responses. If researchers collect data by going through law school or college, they could follow participants and ensure a broader range of responses. They would be able to get more secure data on people who both pass and fail the exam and data that gives a broader view of test-taking anxiety for both first and second-attempt scores. This data could be

obtainable for a different group using this paper's methodology and data-gathering protocols. This would give a new perspective on the researched data and enhance the field of law. Additionally, the passage rate has fallen by 15% in the previous eight years (2022 Statistics, 2023). This study shows that test anxiety might not be the issue, but future researchers should attempt to determine what has caused this decrease. Ultimately, the paper gives a new perspective compared to other papers and helps create a new understanding of the possible causes of UBE failure.

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