



ACADEMIC ANXIETY AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

By:

Dr. Harpreet Kaur

Assistant Professor

Sri Sai College of Education, Badhani(Pathankot)

ABSTRACT

The study examined academic anxiety among secondary school students. The 300 students were selected on the basis of convenient and volunteer sampling from 07 selected schools of Punjab. t-test was employed to compare mean difference in academic anxiety of rural & urban students. One way ANOVA was computed to compare mean scores of academic anxiety of students belonging to humanities, science & commerce streams of study. The results revealed that the rural students were found to have significantly higher academic anxiety as compared to urban students. There is significant difference in mean scores of academic anxiety of students belonging to humanities, science & commerce streams of study. The science stream students had high level of academic anxiety, which is secondly followed by commerce students with average level of academic anxiety and thirdly by humanities students with low level of academic anxiety. On the basis of findings, it is suggested that the teachers should encourage participation of secondary school students in sports and hobby clubs which reduce their academic pressure. The principal of the school should encourage and allow the teachers to organise workshops and seminars related to academic anxiety, which ultimately helps in reducing academic anxiety.

Keywords: Academic Anxiety and secondary school students

INTRODUCTION

Webster (1956) described anxiety is a painful uneasiness of the mind over an unbending or anticipated ill. It is characterized with fear, feeling with guilt, insecurity and need of encouragement. Breuer (1999) mentioned that all anxiety disorders are defined by the dual characteristics of excessive emotional fear and physiologic hyper arousals. Anxiety is one of the most widely experienced emotion and one of the most essential constructs of all human behaviour. Academic anxiety can become more harmful over time. Anxiety is appropriate and required, but when continuous too long and exceeds normal limit, it makes the individual suffer from an anxiety disorder. People facing anxiety try to remove themselves from situations which have annoyed them in the past. Anxiety is a psychological feeling of tension or disorder in response to a condition that is supposed negatively. Horney explained that anxiety is a dynamic centre of normal as well as abnormal personality. Generally speaking it is a feeling of diffuse unclear, discomfort, hesitation about threat of same values which the individual holds.

Barlow (2002) suggests that it is a distinction between future and present dangers which divides anxiety and fear. Harris & Coy (2003) defined that anxiety is a basic human emotion consisting of apprehension and uncertainty that typically appears when an individual perceives an occurrence as being a threat to the ego or self-esteem. In the conceptualization, individuals with high level of anxiety generally hold heightened levels of trait anxiety, but in evaluative situations, the state of anxiety also elevated. Tomb & Hunter (2004) examined the academic anxiety in a way, is the most intimate experience to man. It enters into man's life with the first breath and ends with the last. It is the

main cause of all mental disorders. Pandey & Ahmad (2008) explained that in today's time parents always expected to climb as high as possible from the children and those expectations put a lot of pressure on children and make them unhappy and anxious that is also one of the causes of academic anxiety.

REVIEWS OF RELATED LITERATURE

Verma (1996) attempted to explore the main and interactional effect of test anxiety and study habits on academic achievement of adolescents students in different school courses namely: Hindi, English, mathematics, General science and social studies. The sample of the study comprised of 500 students studying in class 10th in secondary school Delhi. They were selected through random cluster sampling technique. The tool used to collect data were Test Anxiety/Inventory of Shimla and Study Habits Inventory. The collected data were treated with mean, SD and two-way analysis of variance. The major finding of the study were: (1) A significant main effect of test anxiety was revealed on academic performance of the students in English, Mathematics, General science and Social Science; (2) students with low test anxiety scored higher in these courses than students with higher test anxiety; (3) as regards interactional effect, there was no significant joint effect of test anxiety and study habits on student's academic performance in Hindi, English, Mathematics, General science and Social studies.

Singh (2009) conducted a study on level of academic anxiety, self-confidence and the relation with academic achievement in secondary students. The researcher made an effort to know the significant level of Academic Anxiety & self confidence in Male & Female". The major findings of the study are: (1) Significant co-relation between academic anxiety & academic achievement. (2) Significant co-relation between self-confidence & academic achievement. (3) Significant difference between academic anxiety level in male & female. (4) No significant difference between self confidence levels in male and female.

Vankar (2013) found correlation between exam anxiety and educational achievement. The sample included 2084 students of 12th standard. It was to be studied to get the conclusion by a survey over male & female pupil regarding the effect of area & sex. He used t-test and ANOVA with the help SPSS software and through statistical analysis the result found was that (1) Examination anxiety in rural or urban student is also an effective factor on educational achievement. (2) Examination anxiety in boys is an effective factor on educational achievement. (3) Examination anxiety in girls is not effective factor on educational achievement.

Singh (2015) conducted a study on the impact of anxiety on academic achievement and found that moderate and low levels of anxiety among students were positively correlated with the academic achievement. High level of anxiety was negatively correlated. Female students showed higher level of anxiety as compared to the male students.

Azeem (2018) investigated that anxiety is an excited state of nervous system as a result of which sense of tension, nervousness and worry is being inflicted on individual. Sample of 340 secondary school students from various schools of Aligarh were selected for the study. The results of the study clearly revealed that no significant difference is found in the academic anxiety and academic achievement of male and female students respectively. Though, a significant and negative relationship is seen among the academic anxiety and academic achievement. It is also inferred from the finding that a moderate level of anxiety is desired in order to excel in the academics, and when anxiety crosses the limit academic achievement decreases significantly.

Baro & Mishra (2022) analysed the relationship between academic anxiety and socio-economic status of adolescents. Academic Anxiety scale (AASC) developed by Siddiqui. Mamd Rehman. A and socio-economic status developed by Sunil Kumar et al. were used to collect the data. In the present study, the population was concerned only those adolescents who are studying in class 11th in Baksa District of Assam. 400 students (200 male and 200 female) were selected as sample of the study. From the data it was revealed that there is negative correlation between academic anxiety and socio-economic status of adolescents and 51.4% of the variation in the academic anxiety is explained by socio-economic status along with its dimensions.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In the process of education academic anxiety is not a common term. Anxiety is a normal human emotion that everyone experiences at times. Many people feel anxious and nervous, before taking a test or making an important decision. Anxiety makes the person stressful. Therefore anxiety

interferes with the learning. In fact, anxiety might prevent learning or might also fuel it. High levels of academic anxiety can depressingly affect working memory. Students suffering from academic anxiety usually experience a lack of willingness to attend classes continuously, lack of participation in class activities, apathy towards the lessons, consecutive absences and feeling meaningless and incompetent in learning lessons. Studied in the field of education, especially toward academic anxiety, have shown the time management is important when the students face unsuitable situations. In general, academic programs are one of the life affairs with task and objectives that students face often difficulties in assigning time to.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To compare mean scores of academic anxiety among male and female students.
2. To compare mean scores of academic anxiety among students belonging to humanities, science & commerce streams of study.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There is no significant difference in mean scores of academic anxiety of male and female students.
2. There is no significant difference in mean scores of academic anxiety of students belonging to humanities, science & commerce streams of study.

RESEARCH TOOLS

For research problem, the researcher used certain devices to gather new facts or to explore new fields. The devices that are used by researcher for the purpose of data collection are known as the tools of research. For the conduct present study, the researcher used following tools:

1. Academic Anxiety Scale by Siddiqui & Rehman (2017).

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

1. **Academic Anxiety:** It is defined in terms of its dimensions (i) Academic Anxiety Symptoms, (ii) Anxiety from Poor Study Habits, (iii) Anxiety from Subject, (iv) Anxiety from School Environment, (v) Anxiety from Teachers, (vi) Anxiety from Examination (Siddiqui & Rehman, 2017).
2. **Secondary School Students:** The students who are studying in 10th grade of schools in Punjab are considered as secondary school students for the present study.

DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The present study was delimited to schools affiliated to C.B.S.E.
2. The present study was delimited to 10th class students only.
3. The present study was delimited to private schools only.
4. The present study was delimited to 300 students only.

SAMPLE OF THE STUDY

In the present study, sampling frame comprised of 300 private school students of 10th grade. The sampling area was selected from twenty two districts (excluded Malerkota, as included recently) of Punjab on the basis of their literacy rate. The three groups were formed- districts of high literacy rate, average literacy rate and low literacy rate according to the Statistical abstract of Punjab (2020). The district selected from high literacy rate was Hoshiarpur and Pathankot, from average literacy rate was Gurdaspur and from low literacy rate was Faridkot. The schools were selected by random sampling technique (lottery method) and further the 300 students were selected on the basis of convenient and volunteer sampling from 07 selected schools of Punjab.

STATISTICAL TREATMENT OF DATA: The following statistical techniques were used in the present study for analysis of data:

1. t-test was employed to compare mean difference in academic anxiety of rural & urban students.
2. One way ANOVA was computed to compare mean scores of academic anxiety of students belonging to humanities, science & commerce streams of study.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

1. LOCALE-WISE COMPARISON OF MEAN SCORES OF ACADEMIC ANXIETY OF STUDENTS

The first objective was to compare mean scores of academic anxiety of urban and rural students. The data was analyzed with the help of t-test and the results are given in table 1

Table 1
Locale-wise Mean, SD, N and t-value of Academic Anxiety of Students

Gender	Mean	SD	N	t-value
Rural	75.12	10.10	136	2.84**
Urban	72.29	9.72	164	

** $p < 0.01$

The t-value is 2.84 which is significant at 0.01 level with $df=298$ (vide table 1). It indicates that there is significant difference in mean scores of academic anxiety of rural and urban students. Thus null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in mean scores of academic anxiety of rural and urban students is rejected. Further the mean scores of academic anxiety of rural students is 75.12 which is significantly higher than those of urban students whose mean scores of academic anxiety is 72.29. It may be said that rural students were found to have significantly higher academic anxiety as compared to urban students.

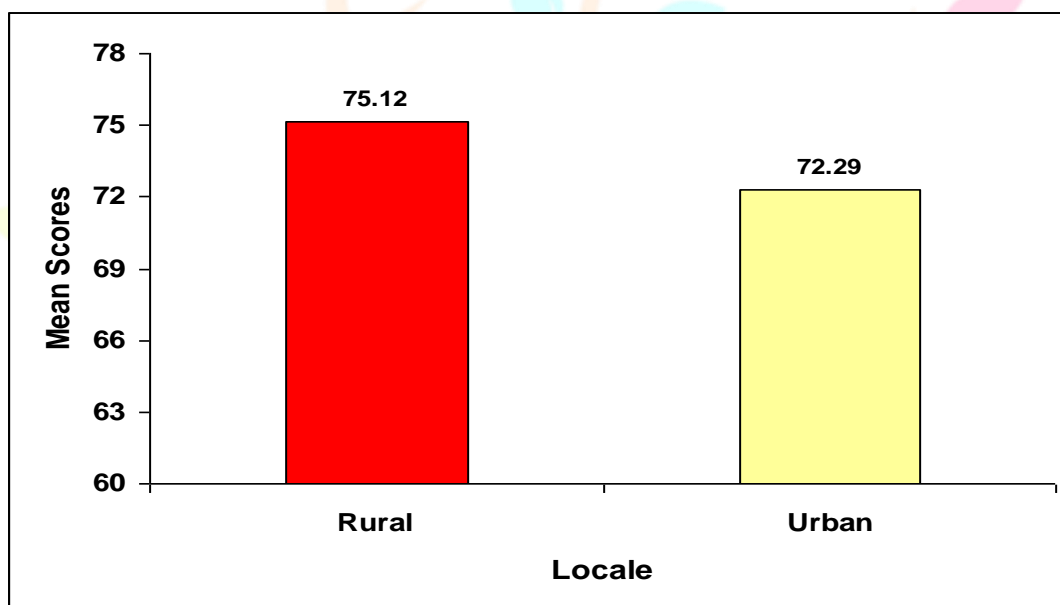


Fig. 1: Locale-wise Comparison of Mean Scores of Academic Anxiety of Students

The fig. 1 depicts that the mean score of rural students is significantly higher than mean score of urban students.

2. STREAM-WISE COMPARISON OF MEAN SCORES OF ACADEMIC ANXIETY OF STUDENTS

The second objective was to compare mean scores of academic anxiety of students belonging to humanities, science and commerce subjects. The mean, S.D. of academic anxiety are given in table 2

Table 2
Mean and SD of Academic Anxiety Obtained by Respondents Classified on the Basis of Streams of Study

S.No.	Stream of Study	N	Mean	SD
1.	Humanities	71	70.19	9.27
2.	Science	137	75.59	10.23
3.	Commerce	92	73.16	9.43

The table 2 shows that the mean scores of academic anxiety of humanities students is 70.19 (SD=9.27); the mean scores of academic anxiety of science students came out to be 75.59 (SD=10.23) and the mean scores of academic anxiety of commerce students is 73.16 (SD=9.43).

In order to find out, significant difference in mean scores of academic anxiety of students belonging to humanities, science & commerce subjects, the data were analyzed with the help of One-way ANOVA and the results are given in table 3

Table 3
Analysis of Variance of Academic Anxiety of Students on the Basis of Streams of Study

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares (SS)	df	Mean Square (Variance)	F-value
Between Groups	1386.67	2	846.02	7.25**
Within Groups	28374.72	297	133.91	
Total	29761.39	299		

** $p < 0.01$

The table 3 shows that the F- value of academic anxiety of students belonging to different stream of study is 7.25 which is significant at 0.01 level of significance. Thus the null hypothesis there is no significant difference in mean scores of academic anxiety of students belonging to humanities, science & commerce streams of study is rejected. So, it may be said that there is significant difference in mean scores of academic anxiety of students belonging to humanities, science & commerce streams of study.

In order to know which stream of study, out of humanities, science & commerce streams of study were found to have significantly higher mean score of academic anxiety, the data was further analyzed with the help of t-test and the results are given in table 4.

Table 4
Comparison of Levels of Academic Anxiety of Students Belonging to Different Streams of Study: Results of Post-hoc Analysis

S. No.	Stream of Study	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value
1.	Humanities	71	70.20	9.28	3.83**
	Science	137	75.60	10.24	
2.	Humanities	71	70.20	9.28	2.01*
	Commerce	92	73.16	9.43	
3.	Science	137	75.60	10.24	1.85
	Commerce	92	73.16	9.43	

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

The table 4 shows that the mean score of academic anxiety of students belonging to humanities and science stream of study came out to be 70.20 (SD=9.28) and 75.60 (SD=10.24) respectively. The t-value came out to be 3.83 which is significant at 0.01 level of significance. This indicates that there is significant difference in mean scores of academic anxiety of students belonging to humanities and science stream of study. Further, the mean score of students belonging to science stream of study came out to be 75.60 which is significantly higher than mean score of students belonging to humanities stream of study i.e. 70.20. Therefore, it can be said that students belonging to science stream of study were found to have significantly higher academic anxiety as compared to students belonging to humanities stream of study.

Further, table reveals that the mean score of academic anxiety of students belonging to humanities stream of study came out to be 70.20 (SD=9.28) and the mean score of academic anxiety of students belonging to commerce stream is 73.16 (SD=9.43). The t-value came out to be 2.01 which is significant at 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that there is significant difference in mean scores of academic anxiety of students belonging to humanities and commerce stream of study.

Further, the mean score of students belonging to commerce stream of study came out to be 73.16 which is significantly higher than mean score of students belonging to humanities stream of study i.e. 70.20. Therefore, it can be said that students belonging to commerce stream of study were found to have significantly higher academic anxiety as compared to students belonging to humanities stream of study.

The table 4 further highlighted that the mean score of academic anxiety of students belonging to science stream of study came out to be 75.60 (SD=10.24) and the mean score of academic anxiety of students belonging to commerce stream is 73.16 (SD=9.43). The t-value came out to be 1.85 which is not significant. This indicates that there is no significant difference in mean scores of academic anxiety of students belonging to science and commerce streams of study.

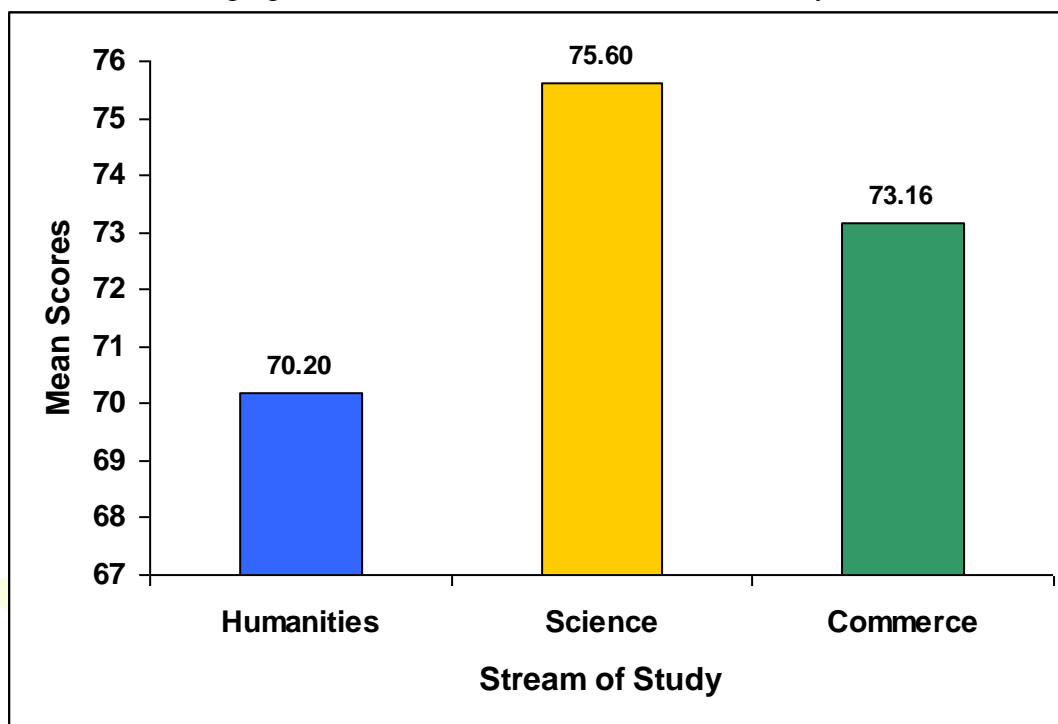


Fig. 2: Comparison of Mean Scores of Academic Anxiety of Students Belonging to Different Stream of Study

The fig. 2 depicts that science stream students had high level of academic anxiety, which is secondly followed by commerce students with average level of academic anxiety and thirdly by humanities students with low level of academic anxiety.

So, it may be said that science stream students had high level of academic anxiety, which is secondly followed by commerce students with average level of academic anxiety and thirdly by humanities students with low level of academic anxiety.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. The rural students were found to have significantly higher academic anxiety as compared to urban students.
2. There is significant difference in mean scores of academic anxiety of students belonging to humanities, science & commerce streams of study. The science stream students had high level of academic anxiety, which is secondly followed by commerce students with average level of academic anxiety and thirdly by humanities students with low level of academic anxiety.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

1. The principal of the school should encourage and allow the teachers to organise workshops and seminars related to academic anxiety which ultimately reduces it.
2. The rural students were found to have significantly higher academic anxiety as compared to urban students. So, school should provide such platform to both rural and urban students in the form of group activities, project work which helps to decrease the level of academic anxiety among secondary school students.

3. The results also reveals that the science stream students had high level of academic anxiety, which is secondly followed by commerce students with average level of academic anxiety and thirdly by humanities students with low level of academic anxiety. So, such workshops should be inculcated in the schedule which improves one's time management skills and decision making skills among science & commerce secondary school students.

REFERENCES

- Azeem, M. D. A. (2018). Study of academic anxiety and academic achievement among senior secondary school students. *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences*, 8. Retrieved April 23, 2022 from <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Academic-Anxiety-among-Secondary-School-Students-to-Zhari/c902512151adc70f4e8c31c6b1910f9d7552836#paper-header>
- Barlow, D. H. (2002). Unrevealing the mysteries of anxiety and its disorders from the perspective of emotion theory. *American Psychologist*, 55(11), 1247-1263. Retrieved April 16, 2022 from <https://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/handle/10603/220701>
- Baro, K., & Mishra, L. (2022). Academic anxiety among adolescents in relation to their socio-economic status. *Journal of Positive School Psychology*, 6(3). Retrieved April 23, 2022 from <https://www.journalppw.com/index.php/jpsp/article/download/2017/1194>
- Breuer, A. (1999). Biofeedback and anxiety. *Psychiatric Times*, 16(2), 1-2. Retrieved January 17, 2023 from www.core.ac.uk
- Harris, H. L., & Coy, D. R. (2003). *Helping students cope with the test anxiety*. ERIC Counselling and student services clearinghouse, ERIC Identifier: ED479355. Retrieved April 16, 2022 from <https://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/handle/10603/220701>
- Pandey, S. N., & Ahmad, F. (2008). Significance of difference between male and female adolescents on academic achievement, intelligence and socio-economic status. *Journal of Community Guidance and Research*, 25(1), 34-39. Retrieved January 18, 2023 from <https://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/handle/10603/375488>
- Siddiqui, M. A., & Rehman, A. U. (2017). *Academic Anxiety Scale*. Agra: National Psychological Corporation.
- Singh, M. (2015). Impact of home environment on educational aspiration of intermediate school students. *International Journal of Advanced Engineering Research & Studies*, IV(II), 365-366. Retrieved December 31, 2022 from <https://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/handle/10603/220701>
- Singh, Y. G. (2009). Level of academic anxiety: self confidence and the in relation with academic achievement in secondary students. *International Research Journal*, 1(7). Retrieved January 7, 2023 from <https://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/handle/10603/220701>
- Statistical Abstract Punjab. (2020). *Government of Punjab: Economic and Statistical Organisation, Publication No. 962*. Punjab: Economic advisor to Government. Retrieved May 5, 2022 from <https://punjabassembly.nic.in/images/docs/Statistical%20Abstract.pdf>
- Tomb, M., & Hunter, L. (2004). Prevention of anxiety in children and adolescents in a school setting: The role of school-based practitioners. *Children and Schools*, 26(2), 87-101. Retrieved April 15, 2022 from www.researchgate.net
- Vankar, P. M. (2013). Effect of examination anxiety on the educational achievement of the students of standard 12 of Gujarat state. *International Journal for Research in Education*, 2(1), 107-111. Retrieved April 16, 2022 from <https://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/handle/10603/220701>
- Verma, B. P. (1996). Anxiety and study habits. A study of main and international effect on academic achievement. *Indian Journal of Applied Psychology*, 33(2), 55-61. Retrieved April 14, 2022 from <http://dSPACE.lpu.in:8080>
- Webster (1956). *Webster's New coeigate dictionary*. Springfield Mass: Merriam. Retrieved April 14, 2022 from <http://dSPACE.lpu.in:8080>