



# SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' EXAMINATION ANXIETY AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

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## Abstract

Students, the future of our nation and the agents of change in our societies, are flourishing and thriving in the educational institutions. They progress through a series of institutions facing changes time to time and year to year in schools, classes, teachers, peers, environment and activities. These changes may either help in developing abilities and skills to deal with the demanding situations and standards or vex or trouble them. Failure to negotiating these challenges can lead to stress and anxiety issues, retardation in educational achievements, school refusal or dropout.

The aim of the present article is to determine the level of examination anxiety and academic achievement of secondary school students and to study examination anxiety in context to their academic achievement. A sample of 200 students was selected by random sampling technique from 10 Govt. and Private Secondary schools of Bhagalpur city in Bihar state. Pie diagram was plotted for graphic representation and F-value was calculated for one way analysis of variance. This study reveals that there is significant difference in examination anxiety of students of different academic achievement levels.

**Keywords-** Secondary school students, Examination Anxiety, Academic achievement

## Introduction-

In modern age, academic achievement is given utmost importance for students. Academic achievement represents performances outcome that indicate the extent to which an individual has accomplished specific goals that were the focus of activities in the instructional environment. It is multidimensional and intricately related to cognitive, emotional, social and physical aspects. Therefore, it is not surprising that most of the students suffer from anxiety at some level during or prior to an examination. Psychologists, intellectuals and educationists emphasized the effect of anxiety on human beings. Research has proved an optimal level of arousal is necessary to best complete a task such as an exam, performance and competitive event. However, when the anxiety or level of arousal exceeds that optimum level, there is a decline in performance. Anxiety affects the performance and achievement. Failure in exam or real life situation is

one of the major causes of depression and suicide in young generation. Ego centered instructions and circumstances are responsible for anxiety.

The root meaning of the word anxiety is to vex or trouble in either presence or absence of psychological stress. It is a psychological and physiological state characterized by emotional, cognitive and behavioral components. It is the displeasing feeling of fear, worry, uneasiness and concern. A special form of anxiety known as examination anxiety or test anxiety refers specifically to students; many workers share the same experience with regard to their career or profession. It is a failure to meet a standard or fear of not holding the appropriate standard. Psychologists believe that some anxiety is essential because it facilitates change and helps an individual to deal with a demanding situation by prompting them to cope with it. But it has also been observed that high levels of anxiety may block recall ability and expression of individual's potentials. Effects of anxiety are:-

- Physical effects: - Heart palpitations, muscle weakness and tension, fatigue, nausea, chest pain stomach aches or headaches, sweating, trembling, dizziness.
- Emotional effects:- Feelings of apprehension or dread, trouble concentrating, anticipating the worst, irritability, restlessness, watching (and waiting) for signs (and occurrences) of danger, feeling like mind's gone blank etc.
- Cognitive effects: - Thoughts about suspected dangers such as fear of dying.
- Behavioral effects: - Withdrawal from situation which have provoked anxiety in the past, sleeplessness, nervous habits such as fingernails biting, foot tapping and drumming on the desk.

According to I. G. Sarason and B. B. Sarason, "Exam anxiety is one of the most pervasive reactions which individuals experience."

"Exam anxiety is the set of phenomenological, physiological and behavioral responses that accompany concern about possible negative consequences or failure on an exam or similar evaluative situation."

-M. Zeidner

The examination anxiety can be classified into following three phases:

- i) Pre examination anxiety:- Expectations from parents, peers, schools, teachers and society
- ii) During examination anxiety:- Effects of anxiety on physical and mental health, anxiety in examination hall and anxiety related to subject
- iii) Post examination Anxiety:- anxiety related to result of examination

### Objectives of the study:-

1. To study the examination anxiety of Secondary School students.
2. To study the academic achievement of Secondary School Students.
3. To study the examination anxiety of Secondary School students in context to their academic achievement.

## Hypotheses of the study:-

Ho<sub>1</sub>: There shall be no significant difference in the examination anxiety of secondary school students of different academic achievement levels.

## Review of related Literature:

- Janette U. Shukla (2013) conducted a study of the Examination Anxiety among the Secondary School Students in the Context of some Variables. There is no significant effect of gender and standard on the examination anxiety of students. There is significant effect of area and educational achievement on the examination anxiety of students. There is no significant effect of interaction between gender and standard, gender and area, gender and educational achievement, standard and area, standard and educational achievement on the examination anxiety of students. There is significant of interaction between area and educational achievement on the examination anxiety of students. There is no significant effect of interaction among gender, standard and area; gender, standard and educational achievement on the examination anxiety of students. There is significant effect of interaction among standard, area and educational Achievement; among gender, area and educational achievement on the examination anxiety of students. There is significant effect of interaction among gender, standard, area and educational achievement on the examination anxiety of students.
- Tuncay Ergene (2011) conducted a research project on “The Relationships among Test Anxiety, Study Habits, Achievement, Motivation, and Academic Performance among Turkish High School Students”. A significant correlation was found between test anxiety and academic success. Significant correlation was found between scores of study habits and level of academic success. A positive relationship was found between study habits and level of achievement motivation. No correlation was observed between achievement motivation and academic success. Test anxiety and study habits were associated positively with academic success and there was no association with achievement motivation.
- Manish C. Parekh (2008) conducted “A Study of Examination Anxiety of Students of Secondary Schools” It was found that Girls had more examination anxiety than boys. Students of std-8 had more examination anxiety than students of std-9 and std-10. Students of social backward class had more examination anxiety.
- Ravi Chinta (2005) investigated “Exam Anxiety Effect on Exam Performance: An Empirical Replication in the Middle East” A significant relationship was not observed between expected course grade at the start of the academic term and the level of anxiety experienced at the time of the final exam. Significant relationships were observed between performance expectations at the time of the final exam and level of anxiety at that time. Positive relationships were found between test anxiety exhibited at the time of the final exam and the scores received on the first two exams.
- Jerrell C. Cassady and Ronald E. Johnson (2001) conducted a research on “Cognitive Test Anxiety and Academic Performance”. The Findings are as follow: i) Higher levels of cognitive test anxiety were associated with significantly lower test scores on each of the three course examinations. ii) High levels of cognitive test anxiety also were associated with significantly lower Scholastic Aptitude Test scores. iii) Procrastination in

- contrast, was related to performance only on the course final examination. iv) Gender differences in cognitive test anxiety were documented, but those differences were not related to performance on the course exams. v) Examination of the relation between the emotionality component of test anxiety and performance revealed that moderate levels of physiological arousal generally were associated with higher exam performance.
- M. Borinder (1985) “A Study of General Anxiety and Examination Anxiety in the Context of External and Internal Factors of Atmosphere” There was significant difference in general and examination anxiety of boys and girls. It was found that level of general anxiety and examination anxiety of girls was more than boys. It was found that the relation between general anxiety and examination anxiety was positive. There was no significant difference on general and examination anxiety of boys in the context of social economical status. There was significant difference in general anxiety of girls in the context of social-economical status. There was significant difference in examination anxiety of girls in the context of social-economical status. There was significant difference in general anxiety and examination anxiety of girls.
  - M. Q. HUSSAIN (1977) studied academic attainment in relation to level of aspiration and anxiety. He found the academic performance of the group with moderate anxiety was significantly better than that of both the high and the low anxiety groups. High anxiety had adverse effect on academic performance. Low anxiety also showed a lack of drive and motivation in the students.
  - P. N. Ray (1974) conducted “A Comparative Study of Higher and Lower Achievement of the Students in the Context of some Variables” It was found that personality related anxiety affected the educational achievement of students. It was found that lower level of anxiety motivated students in getting higher achievement whereas higher level of anxiety became obstacle in getting higher achievement. Positive relation between educational achievement and intelligence on anxiety was found whereas adjustment of students, anxiety, expected achievement were related to a person.

### **Methodology:-**

Survey method was followed to carry on the present study with the help of standardized tool. A sample of 200 students from 10 Govt. and Private Secondary schools of Bhagalpur city in Bihar state was selected by random sampling technique. Under statistical treatment, Pie diagram was plotted for graphic representation and F-value was calculated for one way analysis of variance.

### **Tools of the study:-**

In this study, Students' examination anxiety test (SEAT) developed by Dr. Madhu Agrawal and Miss. Varsha Kaushal (Meerut) was used.

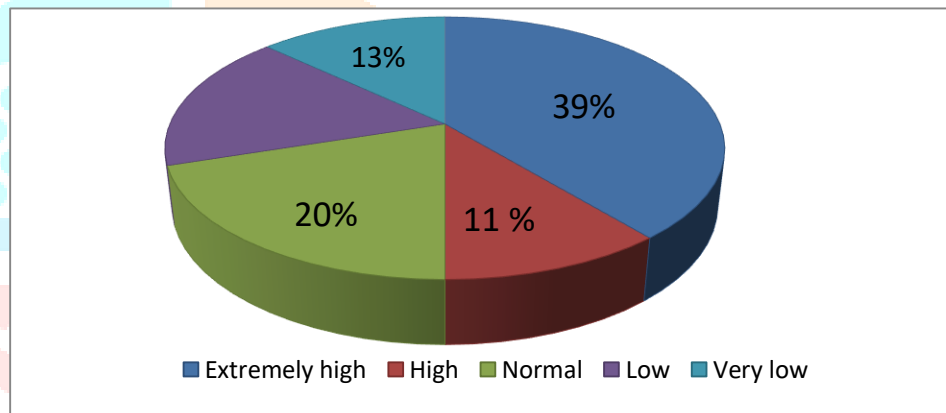
**Data Analysis and Interpretation:-**

The obtained scores were classified and tabulated for analysis and interpretation.

Table no.-01  
Examination anxiety level and percentage

Examination anxiety level	Number (N)	Percentage %
Extremely high	78	39
High	22	11
Normal	40	20
Low	34	17
Very low	26	13
Total	200	100 %

Figure no.-01  
Bar diagram showing percentage of examination anxiety level

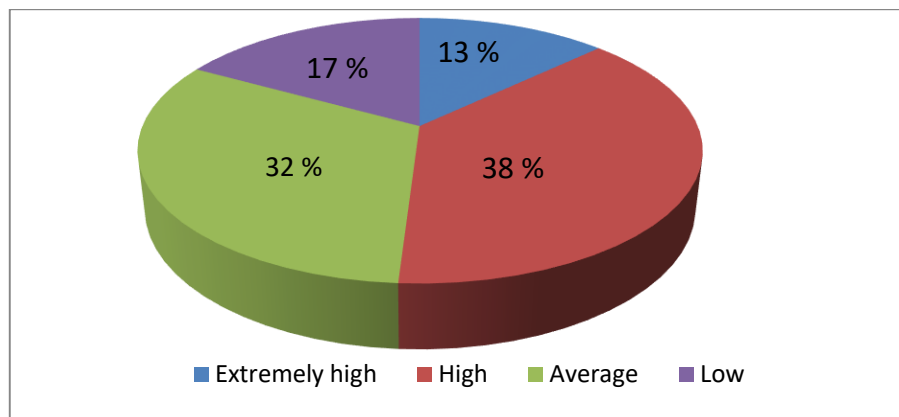
**Interpretation-**

It is evident from the table and figure no.-01, the examination anxiety level of 39% students are extremely high, that of 11% students are high, that of 20% students are normal, that of 17% students are low and that of 13% students are very low.

Table no.-02  
Academic achievement level and percentage

Academic achievement level	Number (N)	Percentage %
Extremely high	26	13
High	76	38
Average	64	32
Low	34	17
Total	200	100 %

Figure no.-02  
Bar diagram showing percentage of academic achievement level



#### Interpretation-

It is evident from the table and figure no.-02 that the academic achievement level of 13% students are extremely high, that of 38% students are high, that of 32% students are average and that of 17% students are low.

Table no.-03

Examination anxiety scores of different academic achievement levels

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square Variance	F-value	Remark
Between Group	489.76	3	$489.76/3 = 163.25$	$163.25/38.95 = 4.19$	Significant at 0.01
Within Group	7634.23	196	$7634.23/196 = 38.95$		

#### Interpretation-

It is evident from the table no.-03 that the calculated F-value is greater than the table value (3.88) for 3 Between Group df and 196 Within Group df at 0.01 level of significance, therefore, it proves to be significant.

#### Findings of the study:-

- The examination anxiety level of 39% students are extremely high, that of 11% students are high, that of 20% students are normal, that of 17% students are low and that of 13% students are very low.
- The academic achievement level of 13% students are extremely high, that of 38% students are high, that of 32% students are average and that of 17% students are low.
- There is significant difference in examination anxiety of students of different academic achievement levels.

**Conclusion and Suggestions:-**

A variety of people, parents, teachers, schools, community groups are involved in quality and effective education. However, there are lots of opportunities to contribute from our part. Further development depends on joining up these elements in a coherent way to meet the educational needs of the learners. Following are the suggestions:-

- Review personal strengths and weaknesses.
- Develop good study habits.
- Develop time management.
- Organize Reading material for the study.
- Visualize success, think logically and positively.
- Review past performance and learn from experience.
- Provision of guidance and counseling

**Educational implication of the study:-**

- It will provide knowledge of examination anxiety level of the students.
- It will provide an opportunity to explore the measures for removal of examination anxiety of the students.
- The performance and achievement of the students will be improved.
- Recall ability and expression potentialities will be improved by debate and discussion.
- It will help in making students emotionally stable.
- It will help in developing interest in curricular and co-curricular activities.
- It will be helpful in creating social-emotional environment in the schools.
- It will help in developing classroom communication and interactions.
- Opportunities will be provided to develop speech and writing ability.
- It will help in undertaking future research.
- It will provide measures to reduce examination anxiety of the school students.
- It will help in developing the physical, social, educational, moral and intellectual aspect of the students.

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