

**CHAPTER-I**  
**INTRODUCTION**

**Chapter – I****INTRODUCTION****1.1 Meaning of Education**

The development of human personality is like that of a plant from a seed. The plant sprouts, grows, develops, and puts forth branches and bear flowers and fruits. Similarly the individual grows from childhood to adolescence and from adulthood to maturity and continually brings himself to self-reference. At every stage of his self-differentiation he discovers his axiological connections with the complex reality of the human situation. Physical, psychological, intellectual, aesthetic and spiritual factors become the strands weaving the individual's web of experience and thus constitute the process of his education which aims at the drawing out human potentialities to the fullest extent possible. Education is the promotion of the comprehensive self-development of the human being into an integrated personality.

The term 'education' does not have one precise universally accepted definition. It has been interpreted by different people in different ways. Some tries to understand education as formal schooling or to lifelong learning. Some others refer to it as acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes. Etymologically, the term 'education' has its genesis in the Latin words, '*educare*' meaning 'to bring up, to nourish, to rare and to train, '*educere*' which implies to draw out or lead out and '*educare*' where the letter 'e' means 'out of' and '*duco*' means 'to lead'. These meanings implies that education in its truest sense seeks to nourish the good qualities of human beings and draw out the inner potentialities of every individual to help them lead a successful and satisfied life. From Western Philosophers and thinkers like Plato, Aristotle, Froebel and Pestalozzi to great Indian educationists and thinkers like Sri Aurobindo and Swami Vivekananda, all implies that education is the natural, harmonious and progressive development of the innate powers and divine perfections of the soul which already exists in the human being.

Education is a process of living. Education sharpens the intelligence of a person. It enables the mind to find out the ultimate truth which emancipates humanity from the bondage of sin and gives wealth, not of things but of inner light, not of power but love, considering the truth as reality and giving expression to it. Education means the exposition of man's complete individuality. True education is one which directs and consoles the mind and intellect of man towards the earning of pure happiness. It can

be secured only by untiring effort of individual. The scriptures declared that happiness cannot be acquired through happiness. By undergoing unhappiness alone happiness can be won. This has to be instilled through Education. The word 'Education' has a very wide connotation. There is no single objective which can cover the whole gamut of life with its various manifestations. Philosophers and thinkers from Socrates to John Dewey in the west and Yajnavalkya to Mahatma Gandhi in the east have defined education in accordance with their own philosophy of life with the result that there emerged divergent concepts and definitions on education. The concept of education is like a diamond which appears to be of a different colour when seen from a different angle. Education is a continuous and life long process. It is the process of development from infancy to maturity. It includes the effect of everything which influences human personality. Education means growth and growth never stops. It is to bring about the growth of education through experience and activity. Every experience and activity leads to some sort of learning and enrichment to the learner's mind. Philosophers, Politicians, Educationists, Psychologists, Teachers and Priests seem to have their own concept of education which is influenced by their own outlook on life and their past experiences in limited fields

Education lays the foundation for the fulfillment of a person's dreams and aspirations because it is a gateway to the opportunities. It helps a person to meet his/her career objectives and achieve an economic growth and thus builds a resourceful individual out of a raw human being. It contributes to the cultivation of a prudent person and earns the personal satisfaction of having met his/her goals. An educated human being, having experienced the positive effects of education on his/her personality is bound to encourage the idea of education and effectively educate his/her children. Hence one individual thus results in an educated family, taking education a long way along the future generations. Education is one of the most salient instruments of the growth and development of any nation as it fuels newer scientific discoveries, creative innovations, and exploration of knowledge and ideas to lead the nation towards the acme of success. It is the base pillar of a developed and a powerful country (Olufemioladebinu, Adediran & Oyediran, 2018).

"Education may be defined as a systematic process of determining the extent to which instructional objectives are achieved" (Best, 1977). Education, in its broadest sense, may be defined as a process designed to inculcate the knowledge, skills and attitudes

necessary to enable individuals to cope effectively with their environment. Its primary purpose is to foster and promote the fullest individual self realization for all people. Achieving this goal requires understanding of commitment to the proposition that education is a primary instrument for social and economic advancement of human welfare (Verma, 1990). Education of an individual human begins at birth and continues throughout life. Education is able to instill in child a sense of maturity and responsibility by bringing in him the desired changes according to his needs and demands of ever changing society, of which he is an integral part. A well-educated person is known all over the region. He is able to meet the conflicting challenges and tide over all the difficulties which confront him in day to day living. Thus, education develops the Individual like a flower which distributes its fragrance all over the environment. In this sense, education is that conducive process which drags a person from darkness, poverty and misery by developing his individuality in all its aspects-physical, mental, emotional and social.

## **1.2 Theoretical Background of the Study**

Human beings are naturally motivated to learn and to achieve. All human actions are directed towards the achievement of a particular goal. A baby's struggles to reach for a toy, to learn to walk or talk are examples of natural motivation to learn. But this natural motivation of human beings to achieve their goals is hampered by a lot of hurdles and contradictions, which demotivates them and makes them anxious and frustrated. In the academic context too, children are naturally motivated to school related activities such as reading and writing. But something gets in the way of their natural motivation and that affects their academic performance. They believe that they cannot do well in school-related task, becomes easily frustrated and gives up when learning is difficult (Brown & Keith, 1998). Thus, the academic performance which is of paramount importance in a student's life is affected by number of factors and which hampers in drawing out the true potential in them.

The school is a formal agency of education and all the activities that take place in the school are evaluated through the academic performance of the students. Academic Achievement of the students is the end result of all the academic endeavors that has taken place in the school with the collective responsibilities of the teachers, principals, administrators and parents. The achievements of each student is assessed by the

percentage of marks obtained by him/her at the end of an academic year and are denoted as high-achievers, average-achievers and low achievers.

Quality of academic performance has become the key factor for personal progress. Parents desire that their children climb the ladder of academic performance to as high a level as possible. In fact, it appears as if the whole system of education revolves round the academic achievement of students, though various other outcomes are also expected from the system. Thus a lot of time and effort of the schools are used for helping students to achieve better in their scholastic endeavors (Padma, 1988). Moreover, these expectations of parents and school authorities also put a lot of pressure on children for higher achievement as a result of which children start suffering from academic anxiety and these continuous situations of stress and anxiety demotivates them towards their academics.

The Indian Education system has witnessed a paradigm shift in the recent years. Today, the goal of modern education has shifted from merely teaching the prescribed syllabus to opening up the hidden avenues of the psyche, to discover multiple possibilities and prepare the learner with entrepreneurial skills to deal with the problems of everyday life and touch the acme of success. Modern education system gradually progressing towards the goal of quality education with the aims of preparing learners as problem solvers and effective decision makers and equipping them with salient life skills to navigate challenges even if they don't know the solutions to them. In recent years, The National Education Policy (NEP), 2020 has heralded the change towards a more dynamic, customized, individualistic learning beyond the set boundaries of textbooks coupled with the technological advancements that will explore the student's natural curiosity, bridge the gap between learning and doing and lays the foundation for holistic educational practices to prepare an environment to facilitate life-long learning. The use of technology in classrooms has led to many positive changes in the learning curve of students. The amalgamation of artificial intelligence, augmented reality, virtual reality, robotics etc has revolutionized the education sector.

But amidst the glare of high-tech teaching-learning facilities and infrastructure we often ignore the most important aspect which is the physical and mental well-being of the learner. Their condition is no better than the caged parrot from Tagore's short story, 'Tota-Kahini' (The Parrot's Training) which was put inside a golden cage and



special scribes were appointed to 'educate' the bird, the people praised the 'process' and said, 'Education or not, the bird got a great cage, what a lucky bird'. Nobody focused on the fact that there was no food or water for the bird in that golden cage; only reams of pages from hundreds of textbooks were thrust to the beak of the bird with tips of pens and quills. The Bird could not sing, could not even cry out and eventually die (Bhatia, 1994). Quite similarly, the society we live in focus enormously on the academic excellence of the learners. In the Indian education system, students are deliberately pushed into the dark hole of extensive brutal competition from a quite young age. The bogus idea that only if a student gets good marks they will be considered successful and are worthy of love and respect from their parents and society is imbibed into the young minds from quite an early age. They are forced to study in an educational setup where a lion's share of education is theoretical with minuscule scope for practical learning and research on the part of the pupils. There is no space for creative learning and thinking and students are always bound to a specific syllabus and are never dared to go out the boundary. Moreover, our teaching methodology is highly monotonous and there is an absolute dearth of mobility and agility in it. Students are mostly subjected to long lecture hours wherein the sum total of learning that they get is highly questionable. Much like in a jungle where only the powerful can enjoy rights, here in the education system, only the students with high grades can be termed as 'brilliant' and can enjoy every facilities of higher education. In our country we measure talent by the grades of the students. It is not uncommon to consider a student fetching over 90% marks as 'Brilliant' while those getting average marks are considered weaklings with no substantial future. Sports, arts and crafts, extra-curricular activities aren't held in high regard by society, parents and institutions. Academic subjects are given so much importance that teachers are often seen using up the periods allotted to sports and extracurricular activities to finish up their own syllabus. The year-end results and board examinations in the Indian education sphere hold utmost significance and not getting enough marks may subject students to a series of mental bullying, humiliation and loss of confidence. The parents over expectation of their children's academic marks lead to higher levels of academic anxiety among learners (Wani, Nagar & Buhroo, 2018; Rani & Rawat, 2019). Indian parents report removing their cable tv connections and vastly cutting down on their own social lives in order to monitor their children's homework.

Those who fail to meet the expectations of their families often face harsh criticism which gives birth to self-doubt about their abilities and intelligence. Students are constantly pushed to the edge by the parents to succeed in life and this enormous pressure leads to stress and anxiety and often leads to suicide (Poddar, 2020). Psychiatrists have expressed concern at the emergence of education as a serious source of stress for school-going children-causing high incidence of deaths by suicide. Many adolescents in India are referred to hospital psychiatric units for school-related distress exhibiting symptoms of depression, high anxiety, frequent school refusal, phobia, physical complaints, irritability, weeping spells, and decreased interest in school work. Fear of school failure is reinforced by both the teachers and the parents, causing children to lose interest in their studies. This is similar to the scenario of East-Asian countries where psychiatrists use the term 'high school senior symptoms' or 'entrance examination symptoms' to indicate mental health problems among students. The National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) Report data shows that every hour one student commits suicide in India, with about 28 suicides reported every day. Its report also shed light over the alarming rate of student's suicide over the years. 10,159 students died by suicide in the year 2018, a significant increase from 9,905 in 2017, and 9,478 in 2016. According to a 2012 *Lancet* report, suicide rates in India are highest in the 15-19 years age group, among which 40% youths are male and 60% youths are females (Garai, 2020; Mukhopadhyaya, 2019). The situation has worsened in the recent years due to advent of the pandemic. According to 2019 NCRB Report, a total number of 1, 39,123 suicides were reported in the country during 2019 showing an increase of 3.4% in comparison to 2018. The unexpected and sudden shift from the traditionally practiced classroom-based teaching to digital based education due to the pandemic has created a significant gap in learning resulted in higher levels of academic anxiety among learners (D'Souza, 2021). More than 12,500 students died by suicide in the country when pandemic hit in 2020, which was at the rate of 34 person/ day, with many states reporting more than one death per day (Kumar, 2021). In 2020 alone, India witnessed a historic increase of 21% in suicide cases compared to 2019. Out of 12,526 student suicides in 2020, nearly 53% or 6,598 were from six states- Maharashtra, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Tamilnadu, Jharkhand and Karnataka, while all other states and union territories together reported 5,928 deaths (Kumar, 2021). When we look at the world scenario, India is the most depressed country in the

world, followed by china and USA. A 2014 study reported in WHO, conducted for NCMH ( National Care for Mental Health), states that at least 6.5 % of the Indian population suffers from some form of serious mental disorder (India Today, 2019).

In this age of cut-throat competition where a decimal point can be a deciding factor in one's life, it is crucial that we should have a proper understanding of how academic anxiety influences the academic achievement of the learner, particularly the learners studying in the senior secondary stage of education as it is the time when the foundation for future education is laid. The senior secondary students are the worst sufferers. Due to the impact of pandemic, there is a serious gap in the teaching learning process. Thousands of senior secondary students across India are suffering from extreme pressure as their syllabus is not completed yet and they are forced to prepare for exams under such lack of resources. Reports from all over India show how students or class 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> are committing suicide due to exam pressure (Dhawan, 2021). Many experts and teachers feel that these senior secondary students are either suffering from depression or are nearing that stage. But there are no concrete measures to attend their plight.

In such crucial times, it is necessary that we should focus exclusively on issue of academic anxiety and the far reaching effects it had on the senior secondary school student's life in general and on their academic achievement in particular. In the present day world with the advent of knowledge explosion and population explosion, there is more and more demand for the up-coming generations to improve their skills and proficiencies. And these skills and proficiencies of the pupils can be evaluated through their achievement in schools. The effectiveness of any educational system is gauged to the extent the pupils involved in the system achieve, whether it is in cognitive, conative or psychomotor domains. In general terms, achievement refers to the scholastic or academic achievement of the students at the end of an educational programme (Anand & Padma, 1983). But there are a host of factors that affects the academic achievement of a child like personality variables, curricular variables, school and teacher variables, home environment variables, societal variables and so on. This has lead to interest and curiosity among the educationists, teachers and others to investigate into these factors that hampers in the child's performance. And these research studies have been very fruitful in promoting achievement and also removing the deterrents.



The various factors may either lead to academic achievement or academic underachievement among the students. Deka (1989) observes that while considering the factors of school achievement one possibly ignores those aspects in which individuals differ from one another. If we consider a group of students, a few students are found to be high achievers on one hand, and a few are low achievers on the other, while a sizable number of students always appear as moderate achievers. The question arises why such a difference in achievement appears when the schools provide more or less uniform instructional and environmental facilities? Is this difference due to certain psychological factors? Does this difference depend upon inherent qualities? or is there any single factor or host of factors which account for all differences in scholastic achievement? Thapa et al. (2008) states that failure to realize their academic potential is estimated to occur in at least 25 percent of school children. Academic underachievement is a disparity between capacity and performance in which students receive lower grades than they are intellectually capable of learning. Underachievers are students of average or better intelligence who show unexpectedly poor performance in their schoolwork. Young people who are unable or unwilling to utilize their intellectual potential typically squander educational and occupational attainments that would otherwise be within their grasp. This constitutes a waste of youthful potential and is therefore a serious social problem. Vamadevappa (2002) states that while discussing the achievement of students, the Education Commission (1964-66) observes that the problem of academic underachievement is of great concern to a developing country like India. Extraordinary talent unidentified, undeveloped and unexplored is a tremendous waste. The commission has also mentioned the need for diagnosing the causes of low achievement, which hinders the underachievers in coming up to the level of their full potential abilities and then to provide remedial treatment.

### **1.3 Profile of Purulia**

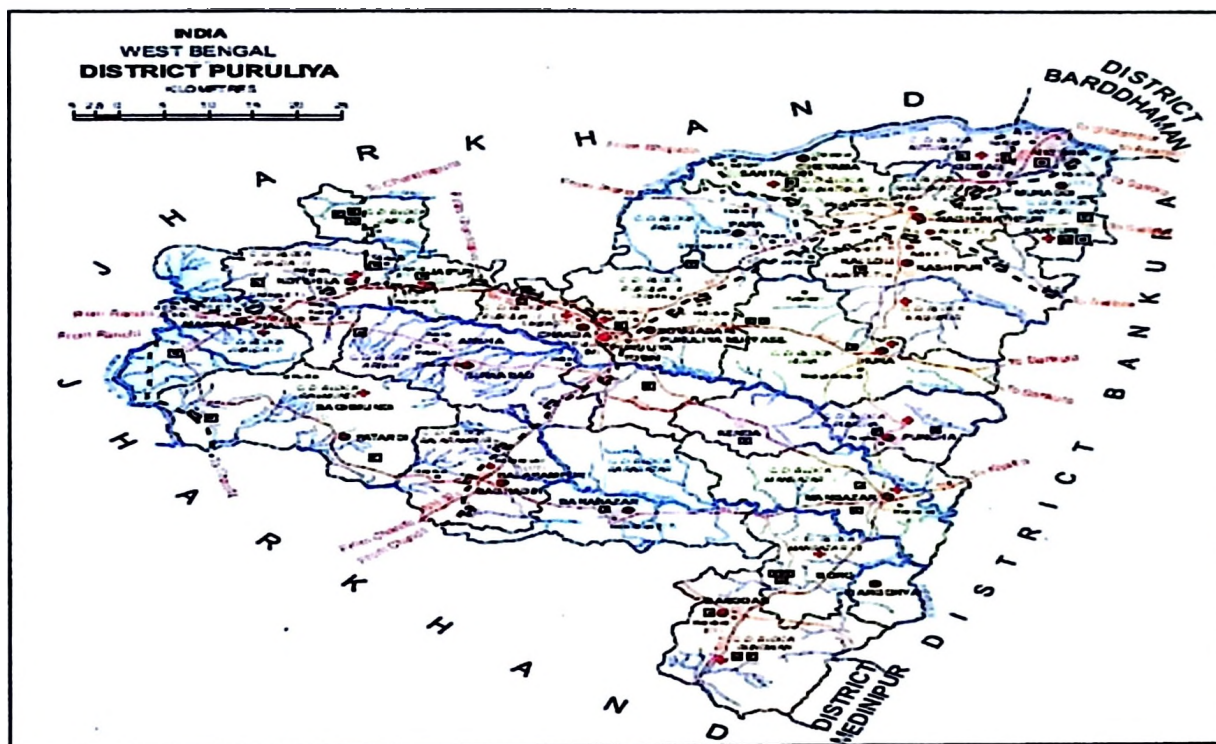
Purulia, the western-most district of the state of West Bengal, originally belonging to former Manbhum district of Bihar, was merged with West Bengal in November, 1956 on the recommendations of States' re-organization committee. The district is at the borderline of neighboring states, Jharkhand and Orissa. Purulia touches a part of Burdwan district on the North-East and Midnapore district on the South-East; while its major eastern boundary coincides with the boundary line of Bankura district.

Purulia is connected with these districts by road and rails. The district is divided into three sub- divisions, Purulia Sadar (East), Purulia Sadar (West) and Raghunathpur. Under these divisions there are twenty-one police stations and twenty blocks. (DCHB, 2011).

The district is currently a part of the Red Corridor. The Red Corridor is a region in the east of India that experiences considerable Naxalite–Maoist insurgency. These are also areas that suffer from the higher illiteracy, poverty and other social issues).

People of Purulia district normally speak in bengali language but in a different style, called Manbhum dialect, the words of which seems to originate from a group of Austic, Santal, Kalarian or other ancient communities. The dialect made its deep rooted place in the local folk songs, dance, festivals and all other artistic forms. With the passage of time, many pure Bengali speaking and few Hindi speaking people became permanent inhabitants here, but Manbhum dialect has survived (DCHB, 2011).

Purulia district has innumerable problems pertaining to illiteracy and low standards of education. There is paucity of resources for developing suitable schooling facilities. Secondly, the need for social demand for education has not been properly realized by all classes of people. Mass Illiteracy is, therefore, one of the glaring problems amongst the various socio-economic and socio-cultural maladies. The most striking problem centers round mass illiteracy in general and female illiteracy in particular, especially in rural communities. But the problems of Illiteracy, in socially under-privileged classes, tribal people and minority-religious groups, are no less important. Very many guardians are unconcerned about schooling of their wards. Hence, parental education, fear educational care of their wards, is a challenging problem. In the context of these socio-economic and socio-cultural problems, the percentage of literacy is low; and it is lowest for the female.



**Figure 1.1: Political Map of Purulia. (DCHB, 2011)**

The percentage of literacy for the whole district was 18.3%, and for the rural communities it was 17% in 1961. These rose to 21.60% and 19.22% respectively in 1971. The percentage of female literacy in 1961 was 5% for the district as a whole and this rose to 8.25% for the whole district and 5.98% for the rural communities during 1971. Though over the years the situation of literacy has improved slightly but it is still significantly low in comparison to the literacy rate of the state of West Bengal. The male literacy percentage of Purulia district has been increased from 62.17 percent in 1991 to 74.14 percent in 2001. The female literacy has been increased from 23.24 percent in 1991 to 37.4 percent in 2001. In case of rural areas female literacy has been increased to 14.34 percent over 1991 and in urban areas it is 7.36 percent over 1991 (DCHB, 2011). But when we compare the literacy rate of Purulia district with the literacy rate of West Bengal, we realize there remains a need to focus on the educational backwardness of the Purulia district. As per the 2011 population census where the literacy rate of the state of West Bengal is 76.26 percent, in the district of Purulia it is only 56.14 percent. The male literacy is 74.14 percent (in comparison to 81.69 percent in West Bengal) and the female literacy rate is alarmingly low at 37.15 percent (in comparison to 70.54 percent in West Bengal) (DCHB, 2011).

upon which their future is very much dependable. In this stage of education, the students are neither too young to need anyone's support nor a full grown adult who can properly analyze the pros and cons themselves and take suitable decisions. Naturally, students face a lot of pressure from school, peers and parents as they find it difficult to decide in which direction they should move.

### 1.5 Academic Achievement

The term 'Academic' has its origin in the Latin *Academia* and Greek *Akadēmeia*; the garden of *Akadēmos*," (a legendary Athenian of the Trojan War tales), where Plato and his followers held their philosophical conferences. It means institutions where a specific type of education is provided whereas the word "achievement" simply means attainment or acquirement. The word academic in technical terms indicate towards institutional setting of formal education system transected through school, college, or university. The word 'achievement' in technical terms denotes the learning outcome of the students.

Generally speaking, achievement implies the net result of an individuals' effort over a period of time. It shows the level of proficiency attained in scholastic or academic work. Achievement means accomplishment as proficiency of performance in a given skill or body of knowledge (Good, 1951). Achievement is an enduring personality characteristic in which the individual is predisposed towards success and relatively concerned with failure. Achievement thus means all those behavioral changes, which take place in the individual as a result of variety of learning experiences. In fact, term achievement is used for the level of success and of proficiency attained in some specific area concerning academic work.

Academic achievement plays an important role in the life of an individual. It is according to his academic achievement that he chooses his vocation, his career and his profession. In educational life academic achievement is highly valued. In modern age success in competition has become very important and essential to get a place in higher institution. It has also been noticed that those who have better academic achievement; they are placed high in the society. The parents and the teachers expect and try that the achievement of the students should be the highest. On the basis of the achievement, the child is graded and evaluated as high achiever or low achiever. The main concern of all educational efforts is to see what the learner achieves as



achievement is the end product of all educational endeavors. Academic achievement also means the attained level of students functioning, in school task such as Language, Mathematics, Science etc. as shown by school marks. Academic performance can represent a variety of learning outcomes such as knowledge, understanding, attitude, intelligence, skill and application. Besides the above factors, academic performance serves a variety of purposes that can be broadly categorized under the following headings such as placement, formative, diagnostic and summative. Hence the word achievement or performance mean the end gained or level of success attained by an individual or group on completion of a task whether it be academic, manual, personal or social.

In view of the importance and relevance of academic achievement it has become a growing concern of many concerned in the process of 'Education.' In fact, the importance of academic achievement in the present age of competition has raised several questions for education researchers. What are the factors which prompts achievement in students? How far do the different factors contribute toward academic achievement of a child? etc. Achievement tests are used to measure how much students have learnt as a result of formal or non-formal instructions. These tests measure the present level of performance of individuals or groups in academic learning. The scores of the tests are used to grade a student or to find what the areas of his strength and weaknesses are. Mostly the achievement tests are used for evaluating, the course of study, efficiency of teaching, the teaching methods etc.

Academic achievement is of the paramount importance particularly in the present socio economic and cultural context. Obviously in the school great emphasis is place on achievement right from the beginning of formal education. The school has its own systematic hierarchy which is largely base on achievement and performance rather than ascription or quality. Thus the school tends to emphasize achievement with facilities, among other things, the process of role of allocation for the social system. The school performs the function of selection and differentiation among students on the basis of their scholastic and other attainment and open out avenue for advancement, again, primarily in terms of achievement. The students at school are trained to accept the hierarchy based on achievement. This left him to be released from the family status in certain ways. His personal status is inevitably a direct function of the function of the position he achieve, mainly in the formal classroom



setting. Acceptance of the system of hierarchy in term of achievement help also to integrate the school system in so far as there obtains congruence between the value of a family and those of society. A considerable number of students from school go to colleges and institution of higher learning. It is very important to ensure that such students acquire the requisition competence so as to benefit most of out of higher education. Setting the stage for achievement of the youth is thus a fundamental obligation of educational system at school.

### **1.5.1 Importance of Academic Achievement**

The findings of several studies have revealed that high school marks are the best predictor of the success of students in comparison to standardized achievement tests (Hoffman, 2002; Zheng, Saunders, Shelley II & Whalen, 2002). In the Indian education system a significant importance is given to academic achievement as the marks of higher secondary level determines whether or not a student will be able to occupy seats in top higher academic institutions like the IITs, IIMs, NIT's, AIMS etc. Academic achievement plays a key role in deciding the students' future in academics. The importance of academic achievement cannot be ignored as it is the key criterion of promotion to higher classes, selection in various examinations, getting recognition (for example, scholarships on the basis of academic achievement). It is the basis on which senior secondary school students get selected in higher education institutes and eventually secure better jobs. It also helps teachers as well as recruiters in selection and recruitment for various courses and different jobs. Students who perform better or secure higher marks in school also perform better in their higher studies (Olufemioladebinu et al., 2018). Academic achievement is like an index for measurement of future success that determines the quality of living. It is a major determinant of the future of students in particular and the future of the nation in general. Experts presume that if educators can obtain quality education for students and save their readiness as well as ability for learning, they will be able to increase academic achievement of senior secondary students. Good academic achievement helps students to develop confidence, self-respect, and helps to gain social prestige for them in the competition ridden society.

Academic achievement is considered as a major predictor for vocational and general success. In every phase of life and at every step, some degree of accomplishment

determines one's academic success in life and evaluating the future opportunities for learning to be acquired in later life. Different professions demand different academic qualifications and students are given chances to appear in exams according to their academic achievements and merits. The desire to achieve a high level of academic achievement puts a lot of pressure on both teachers and parents in general and on students in particular. Parents desire that their children could climb the ladder of performance as it is preeminent for progress and promotion in any field. Students with a high level of academic achievement have a better chance to secure reputed jobs and success in life, thus, directing the whole system to revolve around academic achievement. Hence, students in every phase of their academic journey suffer a lot due to this menace. Life is getting faster, tougher, and uglier in the spectrum of competition (Alam, 2017; Kumari, 2018). There is a blind rat race in every field including academics.

### **1.5.2 Factors Affecting Academic Achievement**

If we consider a group of students, then it is seen that only a few students fall in the category of high achievers on the one hand and only a few students fall in the category of low achievers, while a sizable number of students falls in the category of average achievers. Here the question arises as to why such a difference in academic achievement appears when the schools provide more or less uniform instructional and environmental facilities? Is this difference appears due to certain psychological factors? Does this difference in achievement depend upon inherent qualities? Or is there any single factor or host of factors which account for all differences in academic achievement of the child belonging to the same school? Various other questions of these types often appear in the minds of the educators, educationists, policy makers and the psychologists, but with hardly satisfactory answers.

The achievement of the child depends upon the main factors namely child's interest, motivation, conceptual learning, understanding in class, adjustment, school environment, home environment and reading interest. It further depends on numerous factors like child interest and motivation in the subject that they study, the devices and methods adopted by teachers in class, family set up and situational study habits of variables. It is pertinent to mention that economic, social and cultural factors make their contribution in the academic achievement (high or low) for the students. Besides

the mental makeup, personality factors and surrounding plays an important role in shaping the performance of achievement of boys and girls. The students may be highly anxious to achieve high performance but the factors enumerated above to have a direct or indirect effect on his performance at different stages of his education.

Various investigators have explored numerous factors which are found responsible for academic achievement of an individual. Dave (1975) reviewed that intelligence, physical health, socio economic status of the family, gender, caste, distance of school from home and leisure time activities affect academic achievement. Bruce et al. (1977) studied the factors affecting the academic performance of Indian students and found that main factors are self-concept, achievement motivation, anti-Indian discrimination, culture conflict, and family instability; achievement motivation and culture conflict are the most important correlates of academic achievement among urban students. Raychaudhuri, et. al. (2010), found that the students' academic performance depends on a number of factors like students' attendance in the class, family income, mother's and father's education, teacher-student ratio, presence of trained teacher in school, gender of the student and distance of schools. Balasubramaniam (1993) reported that medium of instruction and locality of residence influenced level of achievement. Guha et al. (1995) observed that mother's education had positive effect on academic achievement. Karemera (2003) found that student's performance is significantly correlated with satisfaction with academic environment and the facilities of library, computer lab and etc. in the institution. Shaarawi (2006) found that the most important factor with positive effect on students' performance is student's competence in English. If the students have strong communication skills and have strong grip on English, it increases the performance of the student. Laxmi (1997) reported that children belonging to more educated parents were academically more motivated, whereas Haseen (1999) found that social class, parent-child interaction and dependency behavior had significant effect on academic achievement. Dangwal (2000) noted that obstacle dominance affected negatively and ego defense positively related to academic achievement. Avinashilingan et al. (2005) reported that classroom factors followed by environmental and developmental factor played a major role in affecting the students' academic performance.

## **1.6 Academic Anxiety**

### **1.6.1 Concept of Anxiety**

The word anxiety is derived from the latin word, 'anxietas' (to choke, throttle, trouble, upset) and encompasses behavioral, affective and cognitive response to perception of danger. Anxiety can be understood as a state of suspended unconscious fear, tension, uneasiness characterized by an uncertainty about something that cause of which is unknown (Lohithakshan, 2002). It is a normal human emotion and one of the most essential construct of all human behavior. According to Spielberger (1983) "anxiety as the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry related with an encouragement of the autonomic nervous system." It can refer to not only a person's stable personality but also his transitory emotional state. Accordingly, two anxiety constructs have been developed trait anxiety and state anxiety. Because they are more likely to interpret a wider range of situations as threatening; people with high trait anxiety tend to produce state anxiety more frequently than those with low trait anxiety (Head & Knight, 1988). According to Cattell (1966), "Anxiety is a function of the magnitude of all unfulfilled needs and the degree of uncertainty that they will be fulfilled or more simply stated, anxiety corresponds to uncertainty of rewards or of total need fulfillment". May (1994) defined anxiety as, "the apprehension caused off by a threat to some value, which the individual holds essential to his existence as a self. Anxiety is a generalized mood that can occur without an identifiable triggering stimulus". Weinberg and Gould (2007) defined "anxiety as - a negative emotional state characterized by nervousness, worry and apprehension and associated with activation or arousal of the body. As such, it is distinguished from fear, which is an appropriate cognitive and emotional response to a perceived threat. Additionally, fear is related to the specific behaviors of escape and avoidance, whereas anxiety is related to situations perceived as uncontrollable or unavoidable".

Moderate levels of anxiety is considered to be normal but when it reaches to severe levels anxiety can be a serious problem (Hashempour & Mehrad, 2014), that is why it is recommended by the physicians that cases as such should not be not to taken lightly . A moderate amount of anxiety energizes/motivates the individual and thereby acts as a catalyst in improving performance. If anxiety crosses its limits, it impairs the capacity to think and act freely. Anxiety is regarded as a disorder when it occurs in



the absence of an appreciable degree of fear, threat, or danger, or attached only to some specific objects or situations. Anxiety problems are amongst the most recurrent psychiatric problems and it has been recorded more frequently than other psychological disorders (Bonaccio & Reeve, 2010). Anxiety is a transitory emotion that can affect a child's cognition, and thereby, have an impact on the learning process (Frost, 1968; Bigdeli, 2010; Hashempour & Mehrad, 2014).

### **1.6.2 Meaning and Concept of Academic Anxiety**

In the current Indian education scenario of cut-throat competition, it is normal that every student feels some anxiety at some point in their school life. But for some this anxiety results in hindering their well-being and performance in school. This situation specific anxiety related to the educational scenario is called academic anxiety. With increasing competition in every field including academics, there seems to be a considerable rise in the number of factors that increases anxiety. The factors include pressure of parents/teachers, frustration related to high academic achievement or higher grades, interpersonal competition with peers, rivalry with friends for higher marks, overemphasis on marks/grades, constant comparison with friends, and unwanted pressure to reach the target set by the family as well as by school administration. Students have often deal to the academic pressure to achieve a specific end goal and to procure a position of a bright student in society. If a student fails to live up to the expectations of school and family, he/she grows up as adults with low motivation, inferiority complex, and low confidence. In present times, the marks oriented culture has induced a lot of pressure and strain on adolescents that results in anxiety.

Academic anxiety can be defined as an overwhelming feeling of disturbance and distress among the students from the environment of the academic institutions including teacher or certain subjects like mathematics, English etc. Anxiety is complicated psychological situations which have an effect on cognitive, behavioral and psychological states (Putnam, 2010). Parents craving that their children climb the steps of presentation to as high as a level possible. This craving for a high level of success puts a lot of presser on students that can be a cause of academic anxiety (Pandey & Ahmad, 2008). Anxiety disorders are common mental health conditions among all children in almost every field of their life, especially in the academic field.



From very beginning of children's education, they are trained to acquire more knowledge and high scores in academic field. To achieve the target, students are bound to carry extra educational load compare to their age. This type of pressure creates psychological stress on them. As a result they feel anxious in academic field in the form of panic, helplessness, hypertension and mental disorganization. Anxiety while study is a major predictor of academic performance (McCraty, 2007; McCraty, Dana, Mike, Pam & Stephen, 2000) and various studies have demonstrated that it has a detrimental effect. Researchers found that students' high level of anxiety achieved low academic performance (Luigi et al., 2007; McCraty, 2007). Academic (test) anxiety leads to academic difficulties through irrelevant thoughts, preoccupation and it reduces attention and concentration (Eysenck, 2001). Due to test anxiety students results poor at end of test which causes "achievement stresses" throughout their academic life (Cheek, Bradley, Reynolds, & Coy, 2002). When academic anxiety in the students is high, it interferes with concentration and memory which is critical for academic success. Academic achievement of young pupil is hampered by anxiety (Reilly & Lewis, 1991). Nadeem, et.al. (2011) studied impact of anxiety on the academic achievement of students having different mental abilities at university level in Bahawalpur (Southern Punjab) Pakistan and found that when anxiety increases, academic achievement decreases both in male and female students. Whereas on completely different note, there were some more researches which revealed some findings which were complete against these aforesaid findings. According to Farhan et. al. (2011) subjects who were familiar with the academic tests were less exposed to anxiety as compared with the ones those were less familiar. Jain (2012) and Sridevi (2013) opposed that academic anxiety was negligibly negatively correlated with academic achievement and Cheraghian (2008) found no meaningful relationship between academic anxiety and academic performance. Toibas (1979) suggests that anxiety plays important role in students' learning and academic performance. Alam (2017) found that the academic achievement of the students decreased in case of the high and low anxious students but the moderately anxious students did better in academic achievement. So, from the above conclusion of psychologists, researchers consider that there has some negative relation between academic anxiety and academic achievement. In addition to that, an average level of anxiety is useful in keeping pupil motivated in learning.

Academic anxiety can be a devastating problem for many students as high levels of anxiety may impair their performance and well being in future (Culler & Holahan, 1980; Rafiq, Ghazal & Farooqi, 2007). But Academic anxiety is not always a negative or bad thing. In moderation, Academic anxiety provides the motivation a learner requires in a challenging or stressful situation to function productively and complete the task properly, (DordiNejad et al, 2011; Donnelly, 2009). In excess, academic anxiety destabilizes and hinders the performance of an individual (Ramachandran, 1990). If not tackled properly on time, it can have serious and far reaching negative implications such as causing a student to procrastinate, perform poorly in school work, and withdraw from socializing with peers or from other situations (Mattoo & Nabi, 2012).

### **1.6.3 Factors Affecting Academic Anxiety**

There are many factors which are responsible in provoking academic anxiety like personal, familial, social and institutional. Personal factors include emotional disorders, health disorders, maladjustment, low self concept, low aspiration level, intelligence levels etc. (Kaur, 1991; Verma, 1992; Dagur, 1988; Gupta, 1992; Joshi, 1988; Thilagavathi, 1990). Familial factors include low socio economic status, lack of guidance, indifferent attitude of parents and other family problems (Gautam, 2011; Sabapathy, 1986; Vandana, 1988; Barinder, 1985; Yadav 1989). Sometimes, these anxiety disorders are transferred from family members to their offspring (Gary & McNaughton, 2003; Barow, 2002) and results in higher levels of anxiety among children (Weissman, 1993). Social factors include irrational norms imposed on someone, castism, unequal distribution of resources, illiterate locality etc. (Sridevi, 2013; Pant et. al., 2013). Institutional factors may be related to the school type (Government, Private School), school environment, curricular and co-curricular aspects, teacher student relationship etc. (Mohanty, 1985; Mahato & Jangir, 2012; Mattoo & Nabi, 2012; Singh & Jha, 2013; Neel, 2011; Deb 2010). The teacher who handle the classes may not be showing adequate interest in teaching the subject ; the teacher may not be well qualified and yet one another big problem of the peer group influences which may lead to academic neglect (Srinivas, 2000). All the problems that lead to academic under achievement do also lead to academic anxiety. Academic workload, insufficient resources, low level of motivation, bad performance in

academic, continuous poor performance in academic, overcrowded classrooms, and uncertainty of being employed after completing graduation from the university may cause stress among students ( Agolla & Ongori, 2009). These factors may also be responsible for the formation and development of academic anxiety. Barinder (1985) and Deb & Walsh (2010) studied anxiety among adolescents to found out whether gender of the students had any impact on formation of anxiety or not and observed that more boys were anxious than girls. Gautam (2011) found that academic anxiety of adolescent female is affected by their socio-economic status. Yadav (1989) attempted to investigate the effects of socio-economic status and cultural settings as factors on anxiety, frustration and neuroticism of students having different levels of achievement and found that rural high achievers had more anxiety had more anxiety and neuroticism, whereas urban failures had more frustration than their respective counterparts. Low achievers and failures belonging to and middle socio economic status had more frustration than those who belonged to high socio economic status. Lower the socio economic status of girls the higher was their test anxiety. Sabapathy (1986) explored the relationship between manifest anxiety, emotional maturity and social maturity of tenth standard students to their academic achievement and reported that socio economic status was significantly and positively related with all areas of achievement. Ghaderi, Kumar and Kumar (2009) in a comparative study of Indian and Iranian students found that depression, anxiety and stress level of Indian students are significantly more than those of Iranian students. However, gender differences are not found significant. Bhasin, Sharma & Saini (2010) studied depression, anxiety and stress among adolescents belonging to affluent families and reported that depression was significantly more among females than males. Class in which the students are studying has an immense effect on anxiety formation. Anxiety was found to be significantly associated with the number of adverse events in the student's life that occurred in last one year. Kumar (2013) found that the academic anxiety and home environment of adolescents correlated significantly. Joshi, Gumashta, Kasturva & Deshpande (2012) studied academic anxiety a growing concern among urban mid adolescent school children and found that mild, moderate and severe academic anxiety in majority of students shows high pressure for academic performance and therefore related anxiety level.

#### **1.6.4 Symptoms of Academic Anxiety**

The physical effects of anxiety may include heart palpitations, shaking, sweating, shortness of breath, insomnia, chest tightness (Hoehn-Saric & McLeod, 2000; Meuret et al., 2006), tachycardia, muscle weakness and tension, fatigue, chest pain, headache, stomach aches, racing pulse, sweaty palms, shaking hands etc (Tyrer & Baldwin, 2006). As the body prepares to deal with a threat, blood pressure, heart rate, perspiration, blood flow to the major muscle groups are increased, while immune and digestive functions are inhibited (the fight or flight response). External signs of anxiety may include pallor, sweating, trembling, and pupillary dilation, restlessness (Ginsburg, Riddle & Davies, 2006), insomnia (Greaves- Lord et al., 2007), difficulty in concentrating (Masi et al., 2004), decrease in performance level (Ashcraft & Kirk, 2001), irritability (Miloyan, Byrne & Pachana, 2014), sleep disturbances (Johnson, Chilcoat & Breslau, 2000; Taylor, Lichstein, Durrence, Reidel & Bush, 2005; Neckelmann, Mykletun & Dahl, 2007), high self-criticism, depression, and low self-esteem (Cox, Fleet & Stein, 2004) are some of the external symptoms of anxiety. For someone who suffers anxiety this can lead to a panic attack. Although panic attacks are not experienced by every person who has anxiety, they are a common symptom. Panic attacks usually come without warning and although the fear is generally irrational, the subjective perception of danger is very real. A person experiencing a panic attack will often feel as if he or she is about to die or lose consciousness. Between panic attacks, people with panic disorder tend to suffer from anticipated anxiety- a fear of having a panic attack may lead to the development of phobias. Anxiety is the most common mental illness in America as approximately 40 million adults are affected by it".



Table 1.1

*Symptoms of Academic Anxiety*

Physical	Behavioral	Emotional	Cognitive
• Shaking	• Restlessness	• Fear	• Lack of Attention
• Sweating	• Isolation	• Insecurity	• Problem in Recalling
• Pallor	• Insomnia	• Frustration	• Avoidance of Exam
• Chest Tightness	• Eating Disorder	• Irritation	• Lack of Interest
• Heart Palpitation	• Self Criticism	• hopelessness	
• Increased Blood Pressure	• Depression	• Anger	
• Headache	• Low Self Esteem	• Distrust	
• Stomach Aches	• Sleep Disturbances		
• Pupillary dilation	• Trembling		
• Digestive Issues			
• Fatigue			

**1.7 Academic Anxiety & Academic Achievement**

In the grade oriented Indian education system, we put excessive importance on gaining theoretical knowledge with little or no scope for practical thinking or learning according to the needs of the market and economy. When there is no scope for creative thinking and learning beyond the prescribed syllabus, it is quite obvious that the learners feel extreme pressure to achieve higher marks in any way possible. The senior secondary students are its worst victims as their life and future career depends on the marks they score in their Higher Secondary exam. They become puppets in the hands of parents and teachers who view them as pawns who can make their family and school proud by getting highest marks. The students are forced to chase a



ridiculously high percentage (99% or even 100%) in every subject to become toppers which results in higher levels of academic anxiety (Rani & Rawat, 2019). The need to score high marks in 12<sup>th</sup> have raised academic anxiety among senior secondary school students due to which they are unable to explore their potential to the fullest.

Academic anxiety is a common issue that students cannot ignore if they want to achieve academic success in school. If academic anxiety is not properly addressed, it can have many serious, severe and long lasting consequences such as causing a student to start hating a subject or a teacher, procrastinate, tell lies to parents, perform poorly on school work, absent classes to pursue activities that interest him and withdraw from socializing from peers or friends and may recoil into his own cocoon and drop school (Mahato & Jangir, 2012). It also leads to problems concentrating while studying and remembering information while completing tests, which make the student, feel helpless and like a failure. In a study by Deb et al. (2015), 66% of the students were reported feeling pressure from their parents for better academic performance. According to U.S Department of Education (2006), 61% of all students reported being affected by academic anxiety. The study found a strong negative relationship between academic anxiety and test performance. A student who is troubled by anxiety may feel powerless to cope with the demands being made on him by his teachers and consequently feels that whatever success results from his attempts at learning is more a matter of chance than the amount of effort he has invested. The unwillingness to elevate one's aspirations-to expect the best of oneself-may be due to anxieties about failure. We expect individuals to strive for ever higher levels of self-improvement, but we also are extremely critical of failure. Thus the inadequate student is in a "double mind"; if he attempts to achieve more, he runs the risk that he may fail and thus be disgraced; if he makes no attempt to achieve, he violates the ethic that requires constant self improvement. In the long run, the learning situation seems bound to produce anxiety no matter what the learner does (Lindgren, 1967). Children who are troubled by an over-abundance of anxiety have difficulty in making progress in learning task. For example, a student who takes an examination in a state of heightened anxiety is likely to misinterpret or misread test questions, forget important facts, and produce a test paper that does not reflect his true level of competence or ability. High-anxious students are self-disparaging, are unadventurous, possess more negative personality characteristics and have a strong tendency to

indulge in daydreams. Classmates appear to react unfavorably against the high anxious, while teachers, see them as possessing characteristics as negative and unfavorable.

Various studies have shown that academic anxiety is a major predictor of academic performance; and many others have shown that it has a negative effect on academic achievement. A student with higher levels of academic anxiety leads to mental trauma and impact their academic performance (Murthy & Kulshreshtha, 1999; Jain and Jain, 2007). The students with high academic anxiety find it difficult to memorize content, hold their attention on a topic for long and concentrate on study. Infact, severe academic anxiety can lead to the subsequent inability of storing, managing and retrieving information. Higher levels of academic anxiety leads to procrastination, avoidance of homework, avoidance of school, hatred towards class tests etc. They stay in constant fear of failing in class tests and exams which leads to poor academic performance. Academic anxiety has the power to destroy a person bit by bit not only from the inside but also from the outside. Higher levels of academic anxiety manifest itself through different physical symptoms like frequent headaches, stomach aches, sweaty palms and shaking hands during any academic work, papillary dilation, increased heartbeat and a constant feeling of restlessness. They often stay in isolation and suffer from depression and insomnia (Ahmed, Banu, Al-Fageer & Al-Suwaidi, 2009). Academic anxiety can impact a person's cognitive abilities of taking decisions, concentrate on subjects and remembering things (Heimberg et al., 1993). Due to these adverse effects a lot many students become extremely self-critical and gradually lose their self confidence (Bhasin, Sharma & Saini, 2010). Academic anxiety even interferes with a person's emotional states. An academically anxious person always moves in a state of constant fear and insecurity with occasional bouts of irritation and frustration in academic activities (Manani & Sharma, 2011).

A moderate amount of academic anxiety actually enhances academic achievement by giving intrinsic motivation (Singh, 2015). The higher level of academic anxiety affects the academic performance of students (Dobson, 2012; Siraj et al., 2014). If academic anxiety is not properly addressed on time it may have many serious and lasting consequences (Chang & Lu, 2007; Banga, 2014; Kumari, 2018). Academic anxiety can creep up on students without them realizing it and prove detrimental to them (Anderson, 2007; Huberty, 2009; Shahroui, 2016). Academic anxiety plays a

major role in determining the educational outcomes of the institution in general and affecting the career choices of students in particular (Ashcraft, 2002; Beilock & Maloney, 2015). Academic support from teachers and parents help in lowering the level of academic anxiety among students and assuring their academic success (Maharajan et al., 2017).

Some educational psychologists see one of the primary roles of the skilful teacher, especially in the elementary and secondary school years, as being to promote and sustain positive self-concept in the child. If high anxiety interferes with academic achievement, and if teachers are unable to identify the high-anxious child and takes steps to promote a more positive self-concept, then it seems unlikely that the anxious child will achieve a positive sense of identity, a goal which many psychologist see as being necessary for successful personality development in childhood and adolescence (Gaudry & Spielberger, 1971). Research shows that high anxiety is associated with relatively low performance at both the school and university level. This conclusion is based on the negative correlations that were obtained in a number of studies between different measures of anxiety and a variety of measures of academic aptitude and achievement.

### **1.8 Statement of the Problem**

In the light of above discussion, the researcher has taken up the problem to identify significant effect of academic anxiety on the academic achievement of senior secondary school students. The problem is now formally stated as **“Study of Academic Achievement in Relation to Academic Anxiety of Senior Secondary School Students of Purulia District of West Bengal.”**

### **1.9 Significance of the Study**

The future of India depends of the holistic development of its younger generation. When the students feel motivated to learn, to question, argue and imagine creatively, it makes a nation grow stronger. But unfortunately our education system is such which focuses more on theoretical knowledge rather than creativity and practical application of knowledge. When we compare the education of India with western countries we realize Indian education system is still following the outdated system and there is a need to change the system to foster creativity and progress. In India,

education is a formality, part of routine where everyone must earn a degree, regardless of the fact that you have learned or not. Whereas foreign education curriculum contains everything from arts to sports along with studies, US has arts, sports, music and theatre in syllabus, in Australian college curriculum they focus on sports but in India there is no room for extracurricular in our education system. . Nowadays education has become highly commercial and academic success is measured through the academic achievement of a student. This obsession to excel in the domain of knowledge has created competition in academics. The aggravated aspirations to outperform the peers have made the situation tougher that resulted in the blind race for higher grades and academic excellence. Parents and teachers obstruct the natural style of learning and give little focus to the creative imagination of child's ability to comprehend the knowledge by ignoring their instincts during the teaching-learning process.

Yashpal Committee Report (1993) emphasized on learning without burden and further emphasized that learning has become a source of stress among students. On the same line, the National Curriculum Framework (NCF, 2005) has focused on an activity based teaching-learning process. School education is sowing grounds for the upcoming success of students with the help and proper direction of their teachers and parents. In fact the National Education Policy (NEP, 2020), has proposed to reconfigure the curricular and pedagogical structure of school education to make it responsive and relevant to the developmental needs and interests of learners at different stages of their development, corresponding to the age ranges of 3-8, 8-11, 11-14 and 14 to 18 years respectively, guided by 5+3+3+4 design to make the learning holistic, integrated, enjoyable and engaging. The aim of education will not only be cognitive development, but also building character and creating holistic and well-rounded individuals equipped with the key 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. There will be enough scope for critical thinking and more holistic, inquiry based, discovery based, discussion based and analysis based learning. It aims at adopting experiential learning in all stages, including hands-on training, arts-integrated and sports-integrated education, story-telling based pedagogy to make the learning more interesting, engaging and reduce the burden of textbooks and academic anxiety of the learners.

The information generated from the study could be utilized by teachers, policymakers, and stakeholders to frame better professional identities and tackle poor academic



result yielded by academic anxiety. Further, the results would help in suggesting better ways of training and equip students with all the necessary skills required for a balanced personality. The present study may also be helpful to the educationists, psychologists, policymakers, school administrators, teachers, parents, etc. in mooting out the evaluation system, development of effective teaching strategies, and establishing a conducive learning environment for active meaningful teaching learning process. Academic achievement is a necessary factor that determines the success of a student in life. The main focus should be on facilitating the congenial learning environment and promoting a burden-less and friendly learning atmosphere that caters to the individualized need of the students who are unique in themselves. There is a strong need to educate senior secondary school students about academic anxiety and provide training to deal with them effectively. Academic anxiety has become a matter of serious concern in the senior secondary students' life (Deb et al., 2010). It seriously affects students' physical, psychological, and emotional health (Fields & Prinz, 1997). Development of anxiety management programmes for students emphasize the cultivation of hardy attitudes of commitment, control, and strength to face the challenge or pressure encountered during the teaching-learning process. Moreover, the results would be helpful in the developing rapport between teachers and learners, and maintain a democratic learning environment in the classroom that caters to the overall development of students with positive learning outcomes.

The significance of present research is that it explores the relationship between academic anxiety with the academic achievement of senior secondary school students. Further, it highlights the contribution of academic anxiety for the prediction of academic achievement of senior secondary school students. However, this research may have a significant role in bringing out the effects of academic anxiety on the academic achievement of senior secondary school students. The presence of academic anxiety among senior secondary school students is one of the main factors that influence the teaching-learning process (Rizwan & Nasir, 2010; Yousefi et al., 2010; Iroegbu, 2013). Demographic variables play an important role in analyzing current trends and planning future prospects. Gender gap is prevalent in West Bengal (Census Survey of India, 2011) and academic stream determines the psychological state of senior secondary school students. Therefore, the results of the present study may also



be helpful in unfolding the role of gender and academic stream in the speculated variables of the senior secondary school students and on their academic achievement. Every child is unique in its own sense and is born with certain natural endowments which are later modified to establish the child as a productive member of the society. The present study is based on the objective that no child should be left behind in the development of academic achievement and lowering of academic anxiety. Regardless of the many international and national studies on the variables, the researcher has found no direct study on the academic anxiety with academic achievement among senior secondary school students of Purulia district. Apart from these, the results of the present study may have a significant contribution in opening new avenues for further researches on academic achievement with other variables and demographic constructs. So the findings of this research endeavor would be helpful in realizing the senior secondary school students would be the primary beneficiaries of findings of this study and then the teachers, school administrators, parents, and other stakeholders. Therefore, this research would be beneficial to the society at large.

## **1.10 Operational Definitions of Key Terms**

### **1.10.1 Academic Anxiety**

**Conceptual Definition:** Anxiety is a feeling of uneasiness of the mind over an impending or anticipated fear or threat, the source of which is largely unknown. High Anxiety has a negative effect and it can significantly impact the efficiency of a person and in the long run he/she can likely develop serious neurotic illnesses.

**Operational Definition:** For the present study, it can be defined as the scores obtained by the senior secondary school students studying in class XI enrolled in the session 2020-21 on academic anxiety scale (AAS-SSSM) developed by Sharma and Shakir (2019).

### **1.10.2 Academic Achievement**

**Conceptual Definition:** Academic achievement can be defined as the student's level of learning outcome in particular areas of the subject in relation to knowledge, understanding, skill and application accomplished by the actual execution of

curricular and co-curricular work in the school setting. It is the end product of the formal teaching-learning process which is evaluated by concerned subject teachers in the form of marks, grades and percentages.

**Operational Definition:** In the present study the academic achievement can be defined as the final marks obtained by the senior secondary school students studying in class XI in their previous class i.e. class X in the session 2019-2020.

### **1.10.3 Senior Secondary School Students**

Senior secondary school students are those students who are studying in class 11<sup>th</sup>.

### **1.11 Objectives of the Study**

Framing objectives is a crucial step as it helps in achieving the aim of the research and around which the entire course of the action revolves. Following are the objectives of the present research work –

#### **Objective 1**

To find out the level of academic achievement of senior secondary school students.

#### **Sub-Objectives**

- 1.1 To find out the level of academic achievement of senior secondary male and female students.
- 1.2 To find out the level of academic achievement of government and private senior secondary school students.

#### **Objective 2**

To find out the level of academic anxiety of senior secondary school students.

#### **Sub-Objectives**

- 2.1 To find out the level of academic anxiety of senior secondary male and female students.
- 2.2 To find out the level of academic anxiety of government and private senior secondary school students.

#### **Objective 3**

To compare the mean scores of academic achievement of senior secondary school students

**Sub-Objectives**

**3.1** To compare the mean scores of academic achievement of senior secondary male and female students.

**3.2** To compare the mean scores of academic achievement of government and private senior secondary school students.

**Objective 4**

To compare the mean scores of academic anxiety of senior secondary school students.

**Sub-Objectives**

**4.1** To compare the mean scores of academic anxiety of senior secondary male and female students.

**4.2** To compare the mean scores of academic anxiety of government and private senior secondary school students.

**Objective 5**

To study the relationship between academic achievement and academic anxiety of senior secondary school students.

**1.12 Null Hypotheses ( $H_0$ ) of the Study**

In order to achieve the objectives, the researcher formulates the following hypotheses:

**$H_{01}$ :** There is no significant difference in the mean scores of academic achievement between male and female senior secondary school students.

**$H_{02}$ :** There is no significant difference in the mean scores of academic achievement between government senior secondary school students and private senior Secondary School Students.

**$H_{03}$ :** There is no significant difference in the mean scores of academic anxiety of male and female senior secondary school students.

**$H_{04}$ :** There is no significant difference in the mean scores of academic anxiety between government senior secondary school students and private senior secondary School Students.

**H<sub>05</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between academic achievement and academic anxiety of senior secondary school students.

### **1.13 Delimitations of the Study**

Due to the limitation of time and the availability of resources, it is inconceivable to cover every aspect of the associated variables with the problem under investigation.

Hence, the study is delimited to several ways:

- (i) The study was confined to Purulia district of West Bengal only. Other districts could not be included due to the paucity of time and resources.
- (ii) The present study was focused only on senior secondary school students of class 11<sup>th</sup> only. Therefore, the results may not be generalizable to primary, secondary and college students.
- (iii) The study is delimited to a sample of only 241 senior secondary school students.
- (iv) The Study is delimited to government and private senior secondary schools.
- (v) The study is delimited to only male and female students.
- (vi) The study is delimited to one dependent variable i.e. Academic Achievement and one Independent variable i.e. Academic Anxiety.
- (vii) Out of several demographic variables only Gender and type of school has been taken for the present study.