

CHAPTER-V
FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS AND
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5.1 Introduction

Research is what propels humanity forward. It's fueled by curiosity: we get curious, ask questions, and immerse ourselves in discovering new knowledge which can add its contribution to the expansion of the ocean of knowledge. Research means a systematic analysis and investigation of any phenomena. It requires both replications by other investigators and an explanation consistent with the premises that one starts with. In some path-breaking work- it can lead to giving up or modifying the premises by a new paradigm encompassing previous knowledge and extending to new ideas. Hence, research findings are the way that humans have used to extend their understanding of the universe and all that it contains.

After processing the data, obtaining and interpreting the results in previous chapter, the findings have been delineated and discussed in the present chapter. These findings can be generalized to the extent of representativeness of the sample and methodology employed in the study. In this chapter, the results are discussed to show how these findings are concurrent with some of the empirical studies already conducted in the field. At places, some of the observations did not concur with the findings of some investigators, in such cases, attempts have been made to fathom plausible reasons for these disagreements. Keeping the major findings in view, some suggestions for further research and educational implications of the study have been mentioned. This chapter therefore, is devoted to focusing the findings, discussion of results, educational implications of the study, conclusion and suggestions for further research.

5.2 Summary of the Study

The future of any country depends upon its students. A country's progress rests on the educated youth. In other words, the students are the real treasure of any country. If the power of the students is directed to constructive purposes, the whole nation will move to all round development. Students are the spring of life. They are young, energetic and vibrant, can easily achieve a lot and can do many things for the society. They

carry the power to transform the nation into a better place. They also have the ability to lead their fellow citizens in the right direction. A good seed always grow to a good tree, and only a good tree can give a good fruit. A student will eventually become a good citizen; a good citizen will make a better society.

But the problem arises when we look at the process through which we are preparing our students for the future. In spite of giving them the scope to explore themselves, enrich their knowledge and development natural curiosity for things, the current education system is spoon feeding selective knowledge to them. The students are subjected to baseless competition which snatches their mental peace and natural cheerfulness and glow of youth. With each passing day, the world is becoming more and more competitive in terms of academics and career. Academic achievements have become a major determinant in deciding the success of students in their life. It is often observed that parents want their children stood first in all kinds of examinations. Parents' overemphasize marks rather than real learning and understanding. Due to such kind of attitude, the children develop an attitude of spending more time on rote memorization. As a result, students mug up all the content and vomit in the examination hall instead of understanding it. Not only the parents but also the school administration and sometimes teachers give a lot of attention to academic achievement so as to acquire a standard of excellence in society. The performance pressure in academics and mountain of expectations of parents and teachers are pushing the school students towards an unprecedented level of academic pressure. Nowadays senior secondary school students are working like robots chasing after an offset academic goal set by their parents and teachers. In present times it is a common notion that excellent academic performance is the only potent tool to measure a student's capability.

A mountain of academic pressure on the feeble minds of senior secondary students makes them emotionally unstable, low belief in their abilities and academically anxious. Senior secondary school students are vulnerable to this harsh reality. The present study is focused on senior secondary school students who are in their adolescence stage. Among many factors, academic anxiety has been taken into consideration by the researcher. Students' experiences in school (classroom) have a great impact on their zeal to learn, their interest in academics, and it influences their career choices too. During board exams, exam fever rises in the students and their stress is at its peak and as a result, academic achievement is adversely affected by it.

All these problems in this phase may incline them towards emotional arousal, low level of confidence in their abilities, fear from academics, etc. Hence, it becomes of utmost importance for teachers, parents, school administrators, society, and policymakers to deal effectively with academic anxiety affecting the academic achievement of senior secondary school students. The present study is intended to study the academic achievement in relation to academic anxiety of senior secondary school students. Thus, the study analyzed the relationship and impact of academic anxiety with academic achievement.

5.3 Findings of the Present Study

The main findings came out from the present study are listed below:

5.3.1 Majority of the senior secondary school students (74.27%) have average academic achievement

5.3.2 Majority of the senior secondary school students (60.58%) have moderate levels of academic anxiety.

5.3.3 Male senior secondary school students have significantly higher academic achievement compared to female senior secondary school students.

5.3.4 Female senior secondary school students have significantly higher levels of academic anxiety than male senior secondary school students.

5.3.5 Students of private school were found to have significantly more academic achievement in comparison to their counterpart government school students.

5.4.6 Students of government schools have significantly more academic anxiety than students studying in private schools.

5.4.7 The study has further found a significant negative relationship between academic achievement and anxiety of senior secondary school students.

5.4 Discussion of Results

The result indicates that in the purulia district where the study has been conducted, majority of the senior secondary school students (74.27%) have average academic achievement. The reason behind this might be related to the educational backwardness

which is prevailing in purulia district. 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). 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. These factors can be a possible explanation to the result of average academic achievement of the senior secondary school students of purulia district.

The result also shows that majority of the senior secondary school students (60.58%) have moderate levels of academic anxiety. The result cemented the fact that academic anxiety does affect significantly the academic achievement of the senior secondary school students of Purulia district, but it is not the sole factor that is responsible for the average academic achievement of the senior secondary school students. There is a need to explore the other factors which significantly affects the academic achievement of the senior secondary students of purulia district.

The results further highlights that male senior secondary school students have significantly higher academic achievement compared to female senior secondary school students. The present finding is in consonance with the findings reported by Jain (2012), Attri & Neelam (2013), Nandini (2013), Neelam (2013), Siddiraju (2013), Naqvi & Naqvi (2016) who revealed that there is a significant difference in the mean achievement score of secondary school students in social studies based on gender. The mean achievement score of female secondary school students were higher than the mean achievement scores of male students.

For Purulia district where the study has been conducted the possible explanation can be the attitude of parents and general public regarding girls education. As Purulia is a educationally and socially backward district, majority of the girls are discouraged from continuing their studies. According to data from District Level Household and Facility Survey, in 2007-08, West Bengal was the fifth-highest in child marriage. According to data from Census 2011, the state is home to nearly 27.45 million married women, among them 11.06 million were married below the age of 18 years. West Bengal has high prevalence of school dropouts, particularly from IX to XII (Acharya, 2016). This issue is particularly much worse in Purulia district where

the study has been conducted. The West Bengal Govt. has taken various steps to counter these issues such as providing free cycles, textbooks, shoes and school bag to students. But the most significant of them all is the direct cash transfer scheme for girls- the Kanyashree Prakalpa which provides an annual scholarship of 500 rupees and an onetime amount of 25 thousand rupees to unmarried female students who has completed their class 12th exam.

The result further indicates that the female senior secondary school students have significantly higher levels of academic anxiety than male senior secondary school students. The present finding is in consonance with the findings reported by Banga & Sharma,(2016); Ghosh,(2016); Kumari,(2017);KheshtMasjedi et al.,(2019) who revealed that gender plays a significant role in determining the academic anxiety of school students. The mean anxiety score of female secondary school students were higher than the mean anxiety scores of male students. For Purulia district where the study has been conducted, the possible explanation for this can be the extreme pressure put on girls for early marriage. Girls are supposed to be a burden for the house and they are taught to do household works from a very young age. The attitude that girls will go to a different house after marriage prevents rural families from sending their girl child to school. Infact, those who continue their study face tremendous pressure from parents and society. Thus, we can say these can be the reasons which contribute to the high academic anxiety of the female students.

The present study showed that students of private school were found to have significantly more academic achievement in comparison to their counterpart government school students. The present finding is in consonance with the findings reported by Cansiz, Ozbaylanli & Colakoglu (2019) who revealed that school type has comparatively larger effect on the academic achievement of the learners. Similar results were found by Okon & Archibong (2015) which revealed that students in private secondary schools performed better in social studies than those in public schools. The result of the present study also supported by, Dhillon and Kaur (2005), Singh, Kaur and Singh (2010), Bhat (2015) who confirm that private secondary students are higher on academic achievement.

The cause behind this disparity might be the attitude of government teachers who are teaching in government schools. They may be thinking that no one can expel them if the results are not good. On the other hand the teachers in private schools may be thinking that if their results are not good they will be expelled out or they may be

thinking that their schools may not work or may not exist if their results are not good. The other reason might be that the maximum posts are vacant in government schools where teachers are being engaged on academic arrangement, getting low salary as compared to their counterparts who are permanent. This might be compelling the teachers to carry their jobs easily and may result in poor academic achievements of students. According to ASER report by Pratham in 2020, parents prefer private schools for education of boys while girl students are primarily sent to government schools to get basic education. The ASER 2021 report states parents exhibit a unique bias when it comes to selection of schools for their children. (ASER, 2021)

There results also revealed that students of government schools have significantly more academic anxiety than students studying in private schools. The present finding is in consistence with Murthy and Kulshreshtha (1999), Ganesan (2012) who also found that students of government school found to have more test anxiety than private school students. The reason may be that the students from the lower socio-economic strata get admitted in government schools and study primarily in the local language – since in government schools. The students in these schools face communication and comprehension problems, which affect their academic performance. This leads to anxiety – causing school avoidance, decreased problem-solving abilities, and lower academic achievement.

The study has further found a significant negative relationship between academic achievement and anxiety of senior secondary school students. This finding is supported by Thilalgavathi (1990), Murthy and Kulshreshtha (1999), Chery (2009), Bhasin, Sharma and Saini (2010), Kaur (2016), and Suresh (2016) who has also observed a significant negative relationship between academic achievement and anxiety. In the present study, it is found that students have less anxiety have better academic achievement. The present study is in consonance with Vitasaria et al., (2010), Nadeem, Ali Maqbool & Zaidi (2012), and Shakir (2016) who has also found a significant difference in the academic achievement of high academic anxiety group and low academic anxiety group of students. The academic achievement of low academic anxiety group is better than the academic achievement of high academic anxiety group.

5.5 Educational Implications of the Study

Teachers and parents always play a major role in students' academic achievement as they help students in channelizing their energy into a constructive manner. They should understand the kind of pressure the senior secondary school students go through in this challenging age. Therefore, both the stakeholders should act as facilitators so that senior secondary school students can deal with different kinds of problems effectively.

In light of the results of the present study, the researcher proposes some educational implications that can be implemented in schools and homes for improving the students' academic achievement. Educational implications of the study are divided into two main categories – the first is for teachers, school administrators and policymakers and the second is for parents:

5.5.1 Educational Implications for Teachers, School Administrators and Policymakers

The feeling of stress and anxiety is part and parcel of life but if the level of anxiety rises beyond a certain level it will have fatal effects (Nandini, 2013; Hasan, 2016; Alam, 2017b). Senior secondary school students have a lot of pressure related to their board exams, career, etc. Academic anxiety can influence the academic achievement of a student as much as any other learning disability can cause (Owens et al., 2012). Various measures should be adopted by education system and its stakeholders to reduce the academic anxiety of senior secondary school students.

1. The result of the present study indicated an inverse relationship between academic anxiety and academic achievement for total sample of senior secondary school students. Sometimes senior secondary school students feel trouble in comprehending knowledge and organizing their cognitive domain. Teachers should try to complete the syllabus before time and then take practice tests as much as possible. Teachers should stick to the formula of “revise, revise and again revise” as it will enhance students' confidence and increase their morale. Teachers should make cooperative group where students share their academic problems and collaborate with other students in order to solve them. These peer support groups also offer the advantage of a relaxed atmosphere where students can support one another academic journey and motivate each other to excel in academics that leads to low academic anxiety and high academic achievement.

2. In a classroom senior secondary school students often feel bored, unenthusiastic about their academic work, or disengaged when they feel problem in linking past knowledge to the present. Teachers should create a conducive and congenial environment in the classroom for an active teaching-learning process. Teachers should facilitate a democratic environment in the classroom so that every student can clarify his/her doubt and query without any fear. Teachers should involve themselves in students' academic matters personally as it has been found that teachers' personal interest, support, and care improve their learning experiences and creates a positive teaching-learning environment in the classroom. It helps in lowering the level of academic anxiety of students and it keeps them away from the menace of academic anxiety.

3. The finding of the present study indicated that senior secondary school students having high level of academic anxiety have low academic achievement. Teacher should follow learner centered teaching-learning techniques and approaches so that students may develop an interest in learning. Teachers should use several cognitive strategies like questioning, concept mapping, brainstorming, etc. that focuses on students' academic needs. They should have frequent interactions with students who are facing problems in certain subjects or in a specific area or on some particular topic. The teacher should diagnose the difficulty of students and then suggest the remedy. Teachers should ensure a stress-free learning atmosphere as students perform better if they are stress free and are not overburdened with academics. It will help in lowering the level of academic anxiety among senior secondary school students.

4. A high level of academic anxiety may cause various problems (physical as well as psychological) to the students and it may also have a direct effect on student's academic achievement. Thus, for lowering the level of academic anxiety among senior secondary school students, school administrators and policymakers should take following measures that will be beneficial for students. Ensure the provision of exercise/yoga camps so that students feel relaxed from their busy schedule of studies. A healthy mind resides in a healthy body. There should be a provision for regular exercise which is beneficial for body as well as mind. Regular exercise releases feel-good hormone (endorphins) that allows mind to relax and reduce anxiety. Conducive teaching-learning environment requires quality teachers as they are the key factor in the whole education process. Policymakers should make it mandatory that in-service teachers have to attend orientation and training programmes regularly for the better

management of the classroom, how to resolve conflict, stress management, sensitize the teachers regarding the hazards of academic anxiety, etc. so that they manage and normalize the level of academic anxiety among senior secondary school students.

5. Based on the findings of the present study, the researcher proposes that there is an immediate need for curriculum reforms especially at the senior secondary level as the academic load is too high. It pushes the students towards academic anxiety hence, affecting students' health (physical as well as mental) and academic achievement. The findings of the study may help the policymakers and educators in modifying the syllabus and changing the evaluation system so that the academic anxiety of the senior secondary school may be managed effectively.

5.5.2 Educational Implications for Parents

1. It was revealed from the finding of present study that negative relationship existed between academic anxiety and academic achievement. Parents should not overburden their children with their baggage of unfulfilled dreams. They should understand that their children are individuals with their own likes, dislikes, strengths, weaknesses, and dreams. Parents have to understand that every child is unique and blessed with different abilities. The curiosity, interest, and intrinsic motivation bloom at a varied pace as there are individual differences. So, they not focus only on marks because it can actually impair students' academic achievement and lead them to academic anxiety.

2. In the present study, academic anxiety emerged as a significant predictor of academic achievement of senior secondary school students. Parents should be realistic in expectations and stop putting unnecessary pressure on their children related to their academic performances. Parents should not compare their children with other children. Parents have to understand that high marks and academic achievement are not the only criteria for deciding one's success in the future. Securing low marks in a certain exam or in a particular subject is not the end of the world. Comparison with other children makes a child shattered, hopeless, and stressed thereby, a victim of a high level of academic anxiety.

3. Based on the findings of the present study, for reducing the level of academic anxiety among children, parents should encourage their children in their academic journey and provide appropriate guidance whenever children feel low. They should help their children in home assignments/projects/reports and should remind their

children of their long term goals. It increases students' commitment towards their academic work and motivate them to achieve that goal. Parents should demonstrate their interest and enthusiasm in their children's school and in their studies. It will help in lowering the academic anxiety of children.

4. The finding of the present study showed that senior secondary students having high academic anxiety have low academic achievement. Parents should create a positive and stress-free environment at home for their children. They should also focus on creating a healthy learning environment so that children will feel relaxed and motivated to work hard. Parents should make understand the importance of time management to their children as children often get anxious when they are running out of time or have no time to prepare for an important examination. Time management helps students to prepare for exams in advance and helps in feeling focused and relaxed. Thus, it helps in lowering the level of academic anxiety.

5. Based on the findings of the present study, parents should be willing to understand the genuine academic needs of their children and try to help their children with their academic problems. It shows that parents should have a genuine interest and care for their academic problems. It will help in lowering the level of academic anxiety of children. Parents should attend the parents-teacher interactions regularly to have an eye on the academic record of their children. It will give insight into the struggles of a child in the academic field. Parents should help their children in improving their weaknesses and provide reinforcement like small gifts, rewards, praise, etc. to their children so that they may get motivated to do better that result in lowering the level of academic anxiety hence, higher academic achievement.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Research

The researcher while conducting the research work observed that there are a number of other aspects that remained untouched. Some of the future research studies that can be carried out are as follows:

1. Dimension wise studies of academic anxiety and its effect on academic achievement of senior secondary school students can be observed to make the relationship crystal clear.

2. In the present study, only gender and type of schools were taken as a demographic variable so it is suggested that some more demographic variables like locale, stream, religion, etc. can also be taken up.
3. There are a number of various other factors that directly or indirectly affect academic achievement like academic resilience, spiritual intelligence, socioeconomic status, creativity, parents educational qualification, study habits, etc. can also be employed.
4. The present study is confined only to senior secondary school students. A similar study may be conducted on secondary school students and can go up to graduate and postgraduate levels.
5. The present study is confined only to Purulia district of West Bengal. A similar investigation may also be conducted in other districts of West Bengal. The study can also be extended to other states of the country.
6. As the data collection for the present study was confined to the government and private senior secondary school students, therefore it is recommended that similar study may be conducted on other kinds of schools like aided, non-aided, army schools, etc.
7. Replication of the study can be done to produce more information in this area. A different setting for the research, with a different kind of population and with various other data collection methods and techniques may be encouraged in such studies.
8. Future study is desirable to be conducted on the other psychological variables as in the present study only one independent variables i.e., academic anxiety was taken into consideration. Thus, there may be some other potential variables that may account for the unexplained variance in the academic achievement of senior secondary school students.
9. The nature of the present study is quantitative. Therefore, it is suggested that the replication of the study may be done by employing a mix of both methods (quantitative as well as qualitative) for better results.