A Case Study of Academic Anxiety on Secondary Students at Rural Area in Jaipur District

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Abstract

This study is undertaken with a view to find out the differential level of Academic anxiety of secondary Adolescence at rural secondary school students at Jaipur district. It was hypothesized that there exist a significant differences in Academic anxiety of secondary Adolescence learners having differential level i.e. high, moderate and low level of academic anxiety. For verification of hypothesis, the data were collected by administering Academic Anxiety Scale for children (AASC) on 300 secondary school students of Jaipur, Rajasthan by random sampling. The data was analyzed using the descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, "Z" test and percentile ratio). The results show that Academic Anxiety was prevalent in the sample with 55.33% of boys and 62.0% of girls found to be suffering from high anxiety. More girls were anxious than boys. In the end, results have been discussed and implications have been made.

Keywords: Academic Anxiety, Adolescence, Gender and Secondary School Students.

Introduction

Adolescence is characteristically an important period of life span, a transitional period, a time of change, a problem age, a time when the individual searches for identity, a dreaded age, a time of unrealism, and the threshold of adulthood the changes in a young person during adolescence differ with culture. Some other problems include familial problems like starting arguments, breaking rules or withdrawing from family; delinquency like missing school, stealing, and acts of vandalism. In some cases they face some problems in school and show decreased interest, negative attitude, and drop in performance and discipline problems. Hence, academic achievement occupies a very important place in education as well in the learning process. In Adolescence, achievement brings personal satisfaction as well as social recognition. They want to get prestige in the eye of society. The term achievement refers to the degree of success attained in some specific tasks, especially school performance. Therefore, scholastic achievement is the attained ability to do school tasks either general or specific in a given subject or related content. Adolescence faces many hazardseous conditions such as physically as well as mentally like suicide or a attempts at suicide are becoming increasingly common among today (Sibnath, 2010). They set unrealistically high standards for themselves for themselves, there is a gap between what they want to be and what they think are – as reflected in what they believe other think of them. But when this gap become wide, they are likely to consider themselves worthless and contemplate or even attempt suicide. Anxiety is a normal human emotion that everyone experiences at times. Many people feel anxious, or nervous, when faced with a problem at work, before taking a test, or making an important decision. According to the Dictionary of Education, anxiety means "apprehension, tension, or uneasiness characterized by fear, dread, or uncertainty, the source of which is largely unknown or unrecognized by the individual; may consist in persistent apprehensions of future events as well as in generalized emotional reactions to any choice point or decision" .It plays an important role in human life because each and every person today is the victim of anxiety in different ways (Lenka and Kant, 2012). Anxiety amongst adolescent boys and girls is very common and natural. Be it about self, career, academics or any other issue, the youths undergo feelings of anxiety at some phase of their lives. Anxiety emerges for some children during the preschool or elementary school. Anxiety is the

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most prevalent psychiatric disorder; Academic anxiety during education is the most important kind of anxiety in teen years. It threatens student psychological health and affects their efficiency, aptitude, personality formation and social identity. Academic anxiety is a general expression which refers to a social phobia or social anxiety in which the person falters in their function and cannot confront situations assessing themselves, such as examinations. In fact, academic anxiety is a self-obsession which is characterized by feelings of self-inferiority, regarding their abilities and students often tend toward negative cognitive assessment, lack of concentration, undesirable physiological reactions, such as increase of heart rate, cold fingers, drop in blood pressure and lower educational performance. This anxiety is related to students competition with their classmates and reduction in standards of educational performance, assignments, examinations and high rigidity, ability to study and worry about the future. It seems that in our country fear of low marks, and associated blame from families, classmates and friends ridicule, fear of inability to continue education, especially on entry to university, bothers high school students psychologically. A Child's life is also affected by the environment in which he/she lives when parents begin to make unrealistic demands or hold overly high expectations for their children's performance. The parents then react negatively to their children's failure to meet their expectations, and the children in turn become fearful of evaluation in achievement situations and overly concerned about adult reaction to their academic successes and failures (Sridevi, 2013). Obviously, only a few children can excel when such comparative standards are used to judge classroom performance. These factors increase the anxiety of many children, especially those not doing well or as well as they would like. Most students in many schools may wish to rank in the top part of their class because of parental, peer, or self-induced aspirations and expectations. This will place many students under strong pressure to achieve at a higher level than they can, resulting in strong anxiety dynamic. In our highly competitive educational system and society, this pressure increases with age, which may account in good part. For the increasingly strong debilitating effects of evaluation anxiety across the elementary and secondary school years. Academic anxiety is not always bad. An average level of anxiety is useful in keeping people motivated and responsible and also helpful for people in having a more sustainable and prosperous life without any anxiety most of the people would lack the motivation to do anything in life. Therefore, moderate level of academic anxiety is essential to motivate students to study for examination and may incline them for better achievements. It has been observed that a high level of anxiety interferes with concentration power and also affects memory. In this way high academic anxiety may be one of the obstacles to academic achievement. Academic anxiety cannot be ignored at any cost, if we are concerned about students' performance Neelam (2013). If it is not properly addressed it can have serious and long lasting consequences such as causing a student to

procrastinate, perform poorly in school work, and withdraw from socializing with peers or from other situations (Mattoo and Nabi, 2012). This paper emphasis on secondary level students academic anxiety level in rural areas because adolescents of secondary level appearing board exam in first time. The board exams (secondary level) is the fear in itself for those students who are going to appear at this level particularly girls, these who are appearing in high school board exams first time, are highly tensed because on one hand they which to secure good percentage for getting admission for their further education and on the other hand they also want to prove themselves better than boys in this highly competitive age (Trivedi and Bhansali, 2008; Sahukar, 2011)).

Statement of the Problem

To examine the Academic anxiety of Rural Adolescent Boys and Girls of secondary level.

Objectives of the Study

The Objectives of the Study were

1. To study the academic anxiety level of rural adolescent of secondary level.
2. To compare the academic anxiety level of rural boys and girls learner having high, moderate and low level of academic anxiety.

Hypothesis of the Study

The following hypotheses were framed to achieve the set objectives are as follows:-

1. There will be no significant difference in academic anxiety of rural secondary level students.
2. There will be no significant difference in academic anxiety of rural boys of secondary level having high, moderate and low level of academic anxiety.
3. There will be no significant difference in academic anxiety of rural girls of secondary level having high, moderate and low level of academic anxiety.

Methodology

In the present study descriptive survey method was employed.

Sample

In the present study, a representative sample of 300 students having Jaipur district of Rajasthan. For this purpose, the investigator used purposive sampling for the selection of school but students were selected by random sampling method.

Research Tool

Academic anxiety scale for children developed and standardized by Dr. A. Sen Gupta and Dr .A.K. Singh used for measuring academic anxiety level on rural adolescents of secondary school level.

Statistical Technique

In order to obtain empirical verification of the proposed hypothesis, the data was analyzed by applying mean, standard deviation, z test and percentile etc. to calculate the significant difference between the academic anxiety among boys and girls of secondary level.

Results and Interpretation

From Table 1 shows that there is significant difference in the level of academic anxiety of rural boys and girls of secondary level students, as the

calculated 'z' value is higher than the table value at 0.05 level of significance. From the table 2, we can say that 58.66% of students suffer from high academic anxiety among secondary schools and24% are of moderate level and only 17.33% of secondary rural students suffer lower academic anxiety. The results shows that as compared to boys girls having high level of academic anxiety (Sahukar, 2011). On the basis of the findings discussed above we may conclude that academic anxiety is becoming more serious problem of secondary school students. However, it is more severe among girls as compared to boys. However, Moderate level of academic anxiety is essential for the students to keep them motivated towards their studies and for achieving high standards in education. High academic anxiety can block learners' performance in several ways. It affects their mental process that leads to breakdown in their learning process. This results into a low achievement in students' performance. Academic anxiety decreases students' learning capabilities and hinders excellent academic performance. Therefore, school and family must assist students in managing their academic anxiety through counseling, relaxation and behavioral techniques. Selected preventive activities can be undertaken at senior secondary schools on targeted students with academic problems.

Table 1
Percentage of Different Levels of Academic Anxiety

Groups	Total no.	Mean	S.D.	'z' Value	Significance at 0.05 level
Boys	150	13.88	2.80		
Girls	150	13.52	2.59	2.0	Significant

Table 2
Significance of Difference in the Level of Academic Anxiety among Boys and Girls of Secondary Level

S.No	Area	Gender and Total no. of students	Anxiety level score	No of students show anxiety level out of total students	Percentages (%)
1.	Rural	Boys 150	Low(≥10)	21	14
			Moderate (11-13)	46	30.66
			High(14 ≤)	83	55.33
		Girls 150	Low(≥10)	31	20.66
			Moderate (11-13)	26	17.33
			High(14 ≤)	93	62
		Total 300	Low(≥10)	52	17.33
			Moderate (11-13)	72	24
			High(14 ≤)	176	58.66

Suggestions
1. Academic anxiety is a severe problem of adolescence studying in secondary schools. Concerted efforts are needed to create an environment in schools free from anxiety by providing counseling to students for choosing appropriate stream (science/non-science) according to the abilities, interest & potential of students.
2. Teachers must create an environment in classroom free from anxiety by providing extra attention to those who are from lower sections of society (SCs, STs, OBCs) and lower socio economic status because they suffer more from academic anxiety.
3. Girls are more prone to anxiety as compared to boys. It may be because of family obligations, gender biasness etc. They must be given appropriate attention inside the school so that they can get relieve from academic anxiety disorder.
4. Parents and Teachers must play an active role in minimizing the academic anxiety of students by expecting academic performance from students that is not beyond their abilities, interest, potentials etc because over expectations from parents and teachers also lead students towards more academic anxiety.

Implications of the Study
The findings of this research study have implications for teachers and professionals in addressing the academic anxiety of the students at secondary level. As high academic anxiety is responsible for low academic achievement. Therefore, various measures must be applied by the teachers to manage academic anxiety among students; these can be as simple as inculcation of confidence among the learners, teaching them best strategies for examination preparations, training regarding seeking social support, training of relaxation, and of using humor in a best possible way etc. Teachers should create a low-stress environment that allows students to concentrate on the test rather than being distracted by academic anxiety. The students with higher academic anxiety must be identified and treated to increase their academic achievement and for timely and effective gender-sensitive counseling and therapeutic interventions for secondary school students. Educationists, governments and policy maker have to realize the importance of one's expectation of the overcome, so the children can realize their potential and expectation.

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