

# Effect of Negative Emotions on General Well-being and Academic Achievement of Higher Secondary Students

## Abstract

Higher secondary stage is a very difficult stage of students' life because not only do they have to cope with the persisting competition, but also have to develop self-concept. They go through drastic changes in their body, mind, emotions, etc and find it difficult to accept these changes thereby developing anger, frustration, anxiety, fear, shame, etc. These negative emotions jeopardize students' personality development and health. They affect the academic performance and the well-being of the students. It is therefore very urgent to explore this area. So, the present study was conducted with the objective of studying the negative emotions prevalent among higher secondary students and their effects on the general well-being and academic achievement.

**Keywords:** Negative Emotions, Academic Achievement, General Well-being.

## Introduction

Living in the age of globalization and liberalization, our traditional ways are becoming obsolete. The youth of present generation finds itself in a dilemma of being unfit and unequipped for the demands of the modernized world. It faces cut-throat competition in almost every walk of life where even basic survival requires one to exhibit one's best qualities. Parents expect their wards to outperform everyone else and become academically and professionally successful. This desire from parents put great pressures on the students.

The recent trends in the academic achievements of higher secondary students have drawn the focus and concern of all the great educationists. There is a consensus of opinion regarding the fallen standards of education, especially at secondary and higher secondary levels. This has led to a rise in the number of questions on academic achievement like what are the factors which affect student's achievement? , how do these factors affect student's achievement?, how can the academic achievement standards of students be raised?, etc. In the past, academic success was mostly related with cognitive processes (like memorization, intelligence, reasoning, etc.) and personality factors. But, a complete and clear-cut solution has not been given so far. However, in the recent years, a predictive validity for emotions and emotional intelligence for academic achievement has received due attention. Humphrey et al (2007) suggested that cognitive and emotional processing cannot be separated and that, emotional processing is an important aspect of rational thinking, as long as the emotions are in our control.

Since time memorable, we have this notion in our mind that it is the positive emotions only, which enhance student's learning, but, problems arise when we start believing that they must be upbeat all the time. Some researches even support the view that certain high arousal positive emotions like excitement, elatedness, etc slow down and retard the process of learning. On the other hand there have been a great number of researches to prove that negative emotions are always harmful for a person but this is not so. Some researchers disagree on this point and state that negative emotions can have positive effects also. In fact, some very common negative feelings like anger, anxiety and sadness are an important part of our life, and accepting and experiencing such emotions is vital to our well-being and mental health. Well-being is central to adolescents' healthy development and attempting to suppress thoughts, especially negative ones can backfire and even diminish our sense of contentment, happy and positive feelings about oneself and enjoyment of



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life, healthy relationships with family and friends, participation in physical exercise and activities, community participation and belonging, etc, all of which are essential components of good well-being.

Unpleasant feelings are just as crucial as the enjoyable ones in helping us make sense of life ups and downs. In proper amounts, each negative feeling help us stay on course towards health and happiness. They do this by telling us when we are veering away from our goals, values, beliefs, standards, comfort zones and physical health. Negative emotions actually differentiate us from the inanimate, uncaring and unfeeling objects.

We must understand this that negative emotions cannot be avoided in educational settings and that these can be used productively if suitable measures are taken. So, it is very important to study the nature of emotions found among higher secondary students, study their effect on students' achievement and well-being and suggest some measures to improve the two aspects.

**Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study were:

1. To study the intensity of negative emotions (anger, anxiety and fear) of higher secondary male and female students.
2. To study the nature of general well-being of higher secondary students.
3. To study the nature of academic achievement of higher secondary students.
4. To study the independent and interactional effect of negative emotions on the general well-being of higher secondary students.
5. To study the independent and interactional effect of negative emotions on the academic achievement of higher secondary students.

**Definitions of the terms used in the study**

Terms used in the study are:

1. Negative Emotions
2. Academic Achievement
3. General Well-being
4. Higher Secondary Students

**Negative Emotions**

Negative emotions are those emotions which are experienced as unpleasant. These are usually negatively toned. These emotions affect learning by driving attention and memory. These are very crucial in the learning of the students.

**Academic Achievement**

Academic Achievement can be considered as the level of accomplishments one has achieved in the field of academics, as opposed to one's capabilities and potentials in the educational goals measured by the examinations.

Academic Achievement has been defined by Crow and Crow (1969) as the extent to which one profits from the instructions in a given area of learning. In other words, we can say that achievement is reflected by the extent to which skill and knowledge imparted to him benefits him in a specific learning area.

**General Well-Being**

General Well-being is defined as a good, or satisfactory state of existence. It comprises of subjective well-being and objective well-being. It reflects a state of balance between all the aspects of one's personality, viz., physical, mental, social, emotional, moral, religious, etc.

**Higher Secondary Students**

Students studying in class 11 and class 12 are included in the higher secondary category of study.

**Hypotheses of the Study**

- H<sub>01</sub>.** There will be no significant negative emotions among higher secondary male and female students.
- H<sub>02</sub>.** There will be no significant independent and interactional effect of negative emotions on the general well-being of higher secondary students.
- H<sub>03</sub>.** There will be no significant independent and interactional effect of negative emotions on the academic achievement of higher secondary students.

**Methodology of the Study**

Descriptive Survey Method was used to arrive at the results of the study.

**Sample of the Study**

A sample of 200 students (100 male and 100 female) of class 11 of C.B.S.E. Board schools was selected for study. The sample was selected by stratified random sampling method.

**Tools Used in the Study**

1. For negative emotions, a self-made Negative Emotions Scale with dimensions Anger, Anxiety and Fear was used.
2. For general well-being, General Well-being Scale- KADA by Dr. Ashok K. Kalia and Dr. Anita Deswal was employed.
3. For Academic Achievement, Achievement Test in Science by S.C. Ghakar and Rajnish was used.

**Research Findings**

Higher secondary students have moderate level of negative emotions with girls having more of these as compared to boys. The mean values of anger for male and female students were found to be 42.52 and 42.07, which are almost comparable and their t-value is 0.816 which is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. This shows that both male and female students experience anger to almost same degrees.

**Table showing the mean, S.D. and t-values for Negative Emotions**

Negative Emotions		N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Sig. level
Anger	Males	100	42.52	5.48	0.816	<0.05
	Females	100	42.09	4.91		
Anxiety	Males	100	45.52	8.56	0.999	<0.05
	Females	100	45.44	8.92		
Fear	Males	100	35.39	6.11	3.09	>0.05
	Females	100	40.30	5.85		

As observed from the table, the mean values of male and female anxiety scores are 45.52 and 45.44 respectively. The t-value for the 2 groups is 0.999 which is insignificant at 0.05 level of significance which means that the 2 genders do not differ significantly in respect of anxiety levels. However the most striking difference between male and female students is found in terms of their scores for fear where, the mean values for 2 groups are 40.30 and 35.39 respectively. The t-value 3.09 is significant at 0.01 level of significance which means that the 2 groups differ significantly in respect of the

fear that they experience. Since the mean value is higher for girls, so we can say that female students experience more fear than the male higher secondary students.

The Higher Secondary Students have average or moderate level of general well-being as their mean value is 199.86. There are 03 levels of general well-being- High general well-being, Average general well-being and Low general well-being. 24% students are found to be possessing low general well-being, 51% students have average general well-being and 25% students have high general well-being.

**Table showing Statistical Preview of General Well-being Scores**

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Level of significance
Male	100	198.6	22.68	0.819	<0.05
Female	100	201.12	20.55		

Male and female higher secondary students do not differ much in their general well-being as there is little difference in their mean values which are 198.6 and 201.12 respectively. This is implicit from the above table. The t-value which is 0.819, is also insignificant at both 0.05 and 0.01 levels of significance. Hence, it can be inferred that the males

and females have comparable levels of general well-being.

The mean value of the scores of Academic Achievement of higher secondary students is 24.2 which means that the higher secondary students have average level of academic achievement.

**Table showing the statistical preview of Academic Achievement Scores**

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Level of significance
Male	100	23.58	4.57	3.05	>0.05
Female	100	26.81	3.81		

There are 03 different levels of academic achievement among the higher secondary students. These 03 levels are high, average and low. Out of the total sample, 19% students have low achievement, 56% students have average or moderate achievement while 25% students have high academic achievement. The mean value of female students is found to be higher than the mean value of male students, which are 26.81 and 23.58 respectively. The t-value, 3.09 of male and female students is significant at 0.01 level of significance. So

we find that females are comparatively brighter academically than the male students.

Negative emotions were found to affect the general well-being of the higher secondary students. The results show that anxiety and fear adversely affect the well-being of adolescents, while anger has no significant role in moderating their well-being.

To know the effect of Independent Variable (negative emotions) on the Dependent Variable (general well-being), 3\*3 factor 2-way ANOVA was calculated and its summary is shown as:

**Table 4.13: Summary of ANOVA**

Dependent variable: General Well-being

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	18402.475 <sup>a</sup>	26	707.787	1.619	0.037
Intercept	4353463.177	1	4353463.177	9960.498	0.000
anxiety	1796.520	2	898.260	2.755	0.050
Fear	719.388	2	359.694	2.823	0.049
Anger	658.148	2	329.074	.753	0.473
anxiety * fear	3869.002	4	967.251	2.613	0.047
anxiety * anger	959.379	4	239.845	.549	0.700
fear * anger	1956.711	4	489.178	1.119	0.349
anxiety * fear * anger	3442.130	8	430.266	2.984	0.050
Error	75613.605	173	437.073		
Total	8082820.000	200			
Corrected Total	94016.080	199			

Looking at the interactional effect, we find that the f-value comes out to be 2.613 which is significant at 0.05 level for the effect of anxiety and fear on well-being, which in turn shows that the 2 emotions together affect general well-being of higher secondary students. The other 02 pairs of anger and anxiety and, anger and fear have no significant effect

on the general well-being of higher secondary students. However, the 03 negative emotions, when taken together on the whole affects the general well-being of higher secondary students as clearly reflected from the significant f-value, which is 2.984 for 0.05 level of significance. Thus, with 95% of confidence, it can be said that the Negative Emotions

have an effect on the general well-being of the students. Thus the null hypothesis, "there is no significant effect of negative emotions on the general well-being of higher secondary male and female students" is REJECTED. The results indicate that if the students have different levels of negative emotions, then their well-being also differs. It is also found out that more the negative emotions, lesser is their general well-being and vice-versa.

Negative emotions were also found to affect the academic achievement of the higher secondary students. The results show that anxiety and fear adversely affect the academic achievement of

adolescents as their F-values are significant and are 3.441 and 2.784 respectively, while anger has no significant role in moderating their achievement. This is also supported by researchers like Felicidad.T.Villavicencio and A.B.I.Bernardo, 2013 (Negative emotions moderate self-efficacy and academic achievements); and Pekrun, Elliot and Maier, 2006 (No relationship between achievements related anger and GPA).

To know the effect of Independent Variable (Negative Emotions) on the Dependent Variable (Academic Achievement), 3\*3 factor 2-way ANOVA has been calculated and its summary is shown

**Dependent Variable:** Academic Achievement

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	599.535 <sup>a</sup>	26	23.059	1.320	0.151
Intercept	57748.222	1	57748.222	3305.359	0.000
Anger	54.694	2	27.347	1.565	0.212
anxiety	15.414	2	7.707	3.441	0.051
Fear	97.293	2	48.647	2.784	0.049
anger * anxiety	64.584	4	16.146	.924	0.456
anger * fear	37.855	4	9.464	.542	0.565
anxiety * fear	179.280	4	44.820	2.665	0.047
anger * anxiety * fear	152.159	8	19.020	2.889	0.049
Error	2987.556	171	17.471		
Total	118790.000	198			
Corrected Total	3587.091	197			

Looking at the interactional effect, we find that the f-value comes out to be significant (2.665) at 0.05 level for the effect of anxiety and fear on achievement, which shows that the 2 emotions together affect academic achievement of higher secondary students. The other 02 pairs of anger and anxiety and, anger and fear have no significant effect on the academic achievement of higher secondary students. The perusal F-value of the predictive variable Negative Emotions for Academic Achievement is 2.889 which is significant at 0.05 level of significance. Thus the null hypothesis, "there is no significant effect of negative emotions on the academic achievement of higher secondary male and female students" is REJECTED. The results indicate that if the students have different levels of negative emotions, then their academic achievement is also affected by these emotions.

### Conclusion

Higher secondary students have average levels of negative emotions and even in these students, females experience these more in comparison to the male students. And female students also appear to be more fearful than the male students. The reason may be that they have to face many problems in their day to day life as they have dual responsibilities- of family as well as their career. Negative emotions affect students' general well-being as well as their academic achievement. Anxiety and fear have their effects separately also on the general well-being and academic achievement of the students and in interactional way also, but, anger does not affect the 02 variables significantly. The interaction of

the 03 negative emotions has an effect on the general well-being as well as the academic achievement of the students. Findings related to the effect of negative emotions led to the conclusion that negative emotions play an important role in controlling the general well-being and academic achievement of the higher secondary students.

In essence, it can be inferred that negative emotions are one of the influencing factors for general well-being and academic achievement of both the male and female higher secondary students to a considerable extent, which ultimately means that, negative emotions are a powerful manager of the general well-being and achievement of the higher secondary students.

### Significance of the Study

In the modern world of cut-throat competition, students make every possible effort to excel. Under such dire circumstances, it becomes imperative to manage stress, strain and negative emotions to keep up with the demands of the world. How they manage emotions is crucial for better performance. Even after they get into the fields of their choice, their academic achievement is not always adequate. Academic success can be predicted more adequately by emotional measures than the classroom performance. Parents and teachers tend to focus more on the academic performance of the students by nurturing their intelligence and give tiniest importance to their emotions. These emotions can affect a student in many ways. Intelligence can only help students in acquiring subject specific knowledge but control over emotions will enrich their learning proficiency and make them

efficient and good achievers. Hence, the present study was taken up with the motive of studying students' negative emotions which affect their academic achievement and well-being adversely. The study will not only be useful for the students, but also for their parents, teachers and the educational planners and administrators.

#### The study will be helpful for

1. Finding out the nature of emotions which affect students' achievement and well-being.
2. Understanding the individual differences among boys and girls, and among each student in terms of dealing with negative emotions.
3. The parents, who will be able to understand the emotions of their wards in a better manner.
4. The teachers, so that they can plan such classroom learning activities which will help in channelizing students' negative emotions in the positive direction.
5. The educational planners and administrators, who will help in formulating such curriculum which will reduce the burden from students' shoulders and improve their efficiency.
6. Enhancing the overall well-being of the higher secondary students.
7. Improving their academic achievement
8. Improving the overall quality of education at higher secondary level.

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