

Academic Anxiety amongst High School Students in Context of Motivational Components

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted on 150 high school female students for the empirical verification of three hypotheses (a) the subjects with high need achievement would suffer from more academic anxiety than those with low need achievement, (b) the subjects with high aspiration level would have more academic anxiety than those with low aspiration level, and (c) the subjects with high security need would have more academic anxiety than those having less security need. Mukherjee sentence completion test, Singh's aspiration level scale, Choubey's security/insecurity scale and Academic Anxiety Scale by Singh and Sen Gupta were administered for measuring need achievement, aspiration level, security/insecurity and academic anxiety respectively. The analysis of the obtained data based on t-test supported all the three hypotheses. It was found that high need structure dimensions induce academic anxiety. Thus it is concluded that need structure has direct relation with academic anxiety.

Introduction:

This is a common phenomenon that day by day students suffer from academic stress in increasing order. Academic stress refers to the anxiety to learn all those things which are prescribed by the school curriculum. Gupta & Khan (1987) defined academic anxiety as a mental distress with respect to some anticipated frustration associated with academic failure or even the awareness of possibility of such failure. This anxiety or stress plays a vital role in the academic achievement of children both quantitatively and qualitatively. So it seems justified and significant to analyse the antecedents leading to this stressful situation. The present study has been undertaken to ascertain if academic anxiety of children is a function of their need structure especially the level of achievement motive, aspiration level and security.

Purpose:

The present study has been undertaken with certain objectives stated below

- (i) The study intends to ascertain whether need

achievement has any positive or negative effect on academic anxiety of the respondents. In other words it intends to examine if high level of need achievement is more conducive to academic stress.

- (ii) The study also intends to examine the effect of aspiration level of children on their academic stress.
- (iii) Further, the study aims at ascertaining the impact of security/insecurity on children's academic anxiety.

Hypotheses:

Keeping in view the objectives of the present study, the following hypotheses were formulated for empirical verification

- (i) The respondents having higher level of need achievement would show more academic anxiety than those having lower level of need achievement.
- (ii) The respondents having higher aspiration level would show more academic anxiety than those showing lower aspiration level.
- (iii) The respondents with high need for security would show more academic anxiety than those with lesser need for security.

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Method of Study:

Sample : The study was conducted on a sample consisting of 150 male students of high schools located in the central area of Patna town in the age group of 11-13 years. They were matched in other respects as far as practicable.

Research tools

(i) Mukherjee Sentence Completion Test : This test was used for measuring the need achievement of the respondents. The test consists of 50 items. The respondents are required to complete the incomplete sentences. Each item has three alternative answers. Scoring is very simple. One score is given for every correct answer indicating the presence of need achievement. The test is highly reliable and valid.

(ii) Aspiration level scale : This scale was developed by Singh for measuring aspiration level of the respondents. It contains occupational aspiration, educational aspiration, money aspiration, consumption aspiration and social aspiration. The response of the subjects indicating high aspirations carries two scores and of low aspirations carries one score. The maximum score is 22 and the minimum score is 9.

(iii) Security / Insecurity Scale : This scale

was developed by Choubey for measuring the level of security / insecurity of the respondents. It consists of eleven pair statements. The response indicating need for security is given one score and the response indicating insecurity is given zero score. So the greater is the number of scores, the more is the need for security.

(iv) Academic anxiety scale:

This scale was developed by Singh and Sen Gupta for measuring academic stress of children. Its split half reliability is 0.65. It consists of both positive and negative items. The scoring is made as per its manual. The higher is the number of scores, the higher is the academic anxiety and vice versa.

Procedure:

The study was conducted in 10 phases—each phase consisting of two sessions. In the first session, the academic anxiety scale was administered to the respondents and data were collected. In the 2nd session, sentence completion test, aspiration level scale and security/insecurity scale were administered to the same respondents and respective data were collected.

Data analysis : The collected data were analysed and treated with the help of t-test and the obtained results were recorded in three tables.

Results and Interpretations

Table-01

Showing the significance of difference between the high and the low need achievement group of subjects in terms of academic anxiety.

Subjects	N	Mean	SD	t-ratio	df	p
High need achievement group	50	17.37	5.22	5.49	148	<.01
Low need achievement group	100	12.43	5.13			

The results recorded in table-01 strongly supported the first hypothesis. ($t = 5.49$; $df = 148$; $p < .01$). The rationale of this finding is based on the fact that persons with high level of need achievement are more afraid of failure and humiliation as compared to those with lower level of need achievement.

Table- 2

Showing the significance of difference between the high aspirational level group and low aspirational level group of subjects in terms of academic anxiety.

Subjects	N	Mean	SD	t-ratio	df	p
High aspiration level group	40	18.93	6.20	6.93	148	<.01
Low aspirational level group	110	11.51	4.47			

Results displayed in table-2 strongly supported the second hypothesis. This finding can be interpreted on the rationale that need achievement affects the academic anxiety as it is one important need for students.

Table-03

Showing the significance of difference between the high security group and the low security group of respondents in terms of academic anxiety.

Subjects	N	Mean	SD	t-ratio	df	p
High security group	80	16.88	5.33	4.44	148	<.01
Low security group	70	13.11	5.10			

The results displayed in table-3 are indicative of the fact that the third hypothesis, too, is confirmed. The rationale of the finding is based on the fact that the person having high need for security are more afraid of the consequences of their future performance compared to those having lesser need for security.

Conclusions:

- (i) Children with high level of need achievement are more likely to develop academic anxiety as compared to those having lower level of need achievement.
- (ii) Children having higher aspiration level are more likely to fall victim to academic anxiety than those having lower aspiration level.
- (iii) Children having more need for security are more likely to fall victims to academic anxiety than those having low need for security.

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