

A Study of Academic Achievement of School Students in Relation to the Examination Fear

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Abstract – Children deal with their fears and their need to attend school in many ways. Some may go through the “morning ritual” but then be unable to leave home or turn back after completing part of the school journey. Others may just refuse to get up, lock themselves in somewhere or run off until it is safe to return home. Some may even endure punishment as the price of not going to school. Many will swear, and mean it at the time, to go this afternoon or tomorrow if they are allowed to stay at home at the present time.

As a child, he may have had a few days when he didn't particularly want to go to school, maybe to avoid a particular classmate or a big homework assignment him failed to complete. This type of reluctance is different from school phobia, a condition wherein a child has a fear of attending school. For these students, walking into a school can be a frightening feeling, and they might be overwhelmed by the school's size, the number of people in it, or feeling lost. This disorder was given its name in 1941 and may also be known as school refusal.

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INTRODUCTION

School phobia is a problem that is stressful for children, families, and school personnel. Failing to attend school has significant short and long term effects on children's social, emotional, and educational development. It is important to identify problems early and provide appropriate interventions to prevent further difficulties. Assessment and management of school phobia require a collaborative approach that includes the family physician, school staff, parents, and a mental health professional.

Examination Fear: It is most unfortunate that our society gives too much weight-age to the marks obtained and since it is publicly known, the teachers are under great pressure to produce high test scores, and that pressure can be passed on to students making them anxious. Even children in kindergarten are not spared. Earlier, they went to school to learn alphabets, numbers and social skills but today, most are expected to read and write. When students develop an extreme fear of performing poorly on an examination, they experience test or examination related anxiety. It is something that impacts students from all ethnic backgrounds. Such students worry excessively and lack self-confidence. They tend to doubt their academic ability and intellectual competence. Some students may feel the need to answer every question on the test correctly and when they are unable to do so, they may think of themselves as being incompetent and they focus on negative thoughts such as, “I know I won't be able to pass this exam.”

“I know I am not smart enough to write this exam.” This brings on a feeling of helplessness leading to depression, and sometimes, even suicide. Test anxiety causes some students to experience physiological reactions such as cold hands, sweaty palms, breathlessness, dry mouth, frequent urination, fatigue, dizziness, headaches or muscle spasm that hinder their writing ability.

According to educational psychologists, excessive worry and fear of failure make adolescents panic and they experience higher levels of stress. This makes it difficult to concentrate. Test anxiety comes in the way of interpreting and organizing information. It is a known fact that some students read the questions on the test paper but fail to comprehend the exact meaning and therefore write wrong answers. Studies have shown that greater level of test anxiety can actually hinder performance on exams. Therefore, reducing test anxiety is the key to improve performance. Another reason for anxiety is not having enough sleep. Today's generation suffers from sleep deprivation due to various reasons. Sleep deficiency can actually make you less sharp mentally which in turn negatively impacts the performance on tests, even if the student spent those missed hours of sleep studying! So, it is very important to get the studying done well in advance and get that quality sleep before the big day.

The study examined examination fear of school students and its consequences among the students. This study noted that examination fear

contribute negatively to students' academic performance, hence, there is the urgent need to exploring for a salvaging means. The researcher raised two research questions and formulated two research hypotheses to guide the study. The significance of the study stems from the benefits of stake holders such as enhanced students' academic performance. The researcher concluded that examination fear is a common phenomenon among the students that result to poor academic performance. Students of higher institutions are associated with anxiety especially when they are preparing for examinations. Examination anxiety is a phenomenon that is associated with low performance of student's academic achievement. Examination anxiety is a combination of physiological, over-arousal, tension along with worries, dread, fear of failure and catastrophizing that occur before or during examination situations (Zeidner, 1998); Examination fear has immense negative impact, hence students' low academic performance in schools. This is a physiological condition with students extreme stress, fear and discomfort during or before taking examinations. Researchers suggested high levels of emotional distress that have direct correlation that reduce academic performance and encourage higher overall students drop-out rates (Andrews and Wilding, 2004; Pritchard and Wilson, 2003 and Valz and Laflamme, 2003). Some anxieties are normal and helpful to canvass for mental and physical alert. The prevalence of anxiety enhances emotional distress which emanates stress in students' concentration and Int. J. Educ. Pol. Res. Rev. 2 creates psychological worries. It should be noted that the presence of reduced academic performance should not be attributed to students' intellectual problems but the examination situations which create in students tensed minds that serve as factor of poor academic performance. Researchers suggested that between 25 and 40 percent of students experience examination fear. Students who experience examination fear tend to be easily distracted during examinations, hence, experience difficulty in comprehending relatively simple instructions and trouble in organizing and recalling of relevant information. Researches on examination anxiety have the notion that examination anxiety prepares threats for higher institution students. Anxiety symptoms are distributed along a continuum and different symptom levels of anxiety and predict outcomes. Responses consisted of increase heart rate, stress hormone secretion, restlessness, vigilance and fear of potential dangerous environments. In contrast, students that are prone to examination fear have a state of anxiety that results to higher levels of nervousness that are specific to examinations. The symptoms of examination anxiety range from moderate to severe anxiety. Students who exhibit moderate symptoms are able to perform relatively well on examinations. On the other hand, students with severe anxiety experience panic (Cherry, 2012); the common physical symptoms include: headache, upset stomach, feeling of fear,

feeling of dread, shortness of breath, sweating, pacing or fidgeting, crying, racing thoughts and blanking out. But to some students, the symptoms are difficult or impossible to handle, making them impossible to focus on examinations. The goal of examinations in higher institutions is to improve the educational process by monitoring the rate of students' achievements.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

A Study of Academic Performance of Schools Students in Relations to School Phobia and Examination Fear.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To study the level of academic performance of school students of various streams at Kurukshetra.
 - 1.1 To study the level of academic performance of girls students of various streams at Kurukshetra.
 - 1.2 To study the level of academic performance of boys students of various streams at Kurukshetra.
2. To study the school phobia of school students of various streams at Kurukshetra.
 - 2.1 To study the school phobia of girls students of various streams at Kurukshetra.
 - 2.2 To study the school phobia of boys students of various streams at Kurukshetra.
3. To study the examination fear of school students of various streams at Kurukshetra.
 - 3.1 To study the examination fear of girls students of various streams at Kurukshetra.
 - 3.2 To study the examination fear of boys students of various streams at Kurukshetra.
4. To study the relationship between academic performance and school phobia of school students of various streams at Kurukshetra.
 - 4.1 To study the relationship between academic performance and school phobia of girls students of various streams at Kurukshetra.

- 4.2 To study the relationship between academic performance and school phobia of boys students of various streams at Kurukshetra.
5. To study the relationship between academic performance and examination fear of school students of various streams at Kurukshetra.
- 5.1 To study the relationship between academic performance and examination fear of girls students of various streams at Kurukshetra.
- 5.2 To study the relationship between academic performance and examination fear of boys students of various streams at Kurukshetra.

Hypotheses of the study:-

1. The level of academic performance of students of various streams at Kurukshetra is significant average.
 - 1.1 To study the relationship between academic performance and examination fear of girls students of various streams at Kurukshetra.
 - 1.2 To study the relationship between academic performance and examination fear of girls students of various streams at Kurukshetra.
2. The level of school phobia of students of various streams at Kurukshetra is significant average.
 - 2.1 The level of school phobia of girls' students of various streams at Kurukshetra is significant average.
 - 2.2 The level of school phobia of boys' students of various streams at Kurukshetra is significant average.
3. The level of examination fear of students of various streams at Kurukshetra is significant average.
 - 3.1 The level of examination fear of girls' students of various streams at Kurukshetra is significant average.
 - 3.2 The level of examination fear of boys' students of various streams at Kurukshetra is significant average.
4. There is no significant relationship between the academic performances of students at Kurukshetra.
 - 4.1 There is no significant relationship between the academic performances of girls' students at Kurukshetra.

- 4.2 There is no significant relationship between the academic performances of boys students at Kurukshetra.
5. There is no significant relationship between the academic performances of school phobia students at Kurukshetra.
 - 5.1 There is no significant relationship between the academic performances of school phobia of girls' students at Kurukshetra.
 - 5.2 There is no significant relationship between the academic performances of school phobia boys students at Kurukshetra.
6. There is no significant relationship between the academic performances of examination fear students at Kurukshetra.
 - 6.1 There is no significant relationship between the academic performances of examination fear girls' students at Kurukshetra.
 - 6.2 There is no significant relationship between the academic performances of examination fear boys students at Kurukshetra.

1.7 Clarification of the terminology stated in the problem:-

(a) Academic performance:

Academic performance means performance level of the students. It can be defined as what a student does or achieve at his school. It is common practice to promote students from a lower class to a higher class on the basis of his academic performance. It helps in declaring students successful or unsuccessful, choosing students for various courses and selection students for different jobs. It is the level of learning in a particular area of subject in terms of knowledge, understanding, skill and application usually evaluated by teachers in the form of test scores in their annual examination.

(b) Examination Fear:

Examination fear is very common in children from primary to higher level these days. It is experienced by more or less every student which is very painful and is a state of uneasiness about the future uncertainties. Though difficult, but it can be defined as some changes in behaviour associated with the feeling of being examined in written test related to courses of study. The term 'Fear' is described as an 'unreasonable' phobia. This fear is based on some perceived event that yet to has taken place. In that way examination fear can be defined as having extreme examination pressure which help the student realize that the pressure

could be the causes of failure. Different researcher defined 'Examination fear' in different way. Examination fear is real and destructive. It is very natural as well as healthy way to approach examination. Examination pressure, to some degree is needed for the students for ensuring them to perform better, but too much pressure for obtaining high marks by the parents and teachers sometimes becomes barrier for developing mental blockage and low performance. When the exam stress or pressures become 'Fear' students worry excessively, lack self-confidence, and develop different psychological reaction like frequent urination, fatigue, dizziness, sleep disturbances, headache, diarrhea and a number of sudden disability. Research Studies on exam fear have been conducted by different researcher taking different variables as well as to find out the causes of such problems. Some worth mentioning studies are, Sufiana Khatoon, Farhat Parven studied on "Examination Fear among secondary students.

Examination fear is an important area of study in these days. It is really unfortunate that our present society giving too much weight-age to the marks obtained by a student, as a result most of the student developing examination fear, due to excessive pressure given by the parents and teachers. As a result the students who are adolescents and not quite matured cannot cope with these tremendous pressures and in extreme stage committed suicide.

Limitations of study:

The limitation of the study is a necessary point research. Because it saves to wastage of time, money, labour and over sources researcher. Therefore, adopted Limitation processes of the study are given below:-

1. The study related to only Sr. Secondary School students, Kurukshetra district of Haryana State, Urban and rural school students only.
2. School Phobia and examination fear in relation to their academic performance of Senior Secondary School Students only.
3. In the present study 600 samples selected 300 male students and 300 female students.
4. 600 samples selected from 200 students Arts, 200 students Commerce and 200 students Science.
5. The sample selected only each division 150 students and each streams 50 students taken each division.
6. The study conducted related to only two variables, Academic performance, School phobia and Examination.

Name of the Tools:-

After the selection of the sample, next step was to choose suitable tools for the collection of data. In the present study, the following tools were used for collection of the data:

"Examination-Fear scale" Developed by Dr. Asrarul Ghani

Scoring the Date: - According to the annual

Statistical Techniques Used:-

For the purpose of analysis of data, the frequencies and percentages were calculated for each item of the Questionnaire of general information. Also the score value and the scale value for each item were calculated in order to determine the rank order of the different items/statements.

School Phobia Scale and Examination – Fear Scale items were calculating with the help to the scoring key. Also the score value and the scale value for each item were calculated in order to determine the rank order of the different items/statements.

MAIN FINDINGS:-

1. It is found that girls have more school phobia in the comparison of boys students in the Thanesar division in district Kurukshetra.
2. It is found that 20% girls are very high phobia about school in Thanesar division in Kurukshetra district.
3. It is found that 24% girls are high phobia about school in Thanesar division in Kurukshetra district.
4. It is found that 40% girls are moderate phobia about school in Thanesar division in district Kurukshetra.
5. It is found that 18.7% boys are low phobia about school in in Thanesar division in district Kurukshetra.
6. It is found that 5.3% girls are very low phobia about school in Thanesar division in Kurukshetra district.
7. It is found that girls' numbers are less in the comparison of boys in the category of very low phobia about school in the thanesar division in Kurukshetr district.
8. It is found that large number of boys and girls falls in the category of moderate

- phobia in Thanesar division in Kurukshetra district.
9. It is found that 24% girls are very high phobia about school in division Pehowa in district kurukshetra.
 10. It is found that 6.7% boys are very low phobia in Phowa division in district Kurukshetra.
 11. It is also found that 38.7% boys are moderate phobia about school in division Phowa in Kurukshetra division.
 12. It is also found that 17.3% boys are fall in the category of low phobia about school in division Pehowa in Kurukshetra division.
 13. It is found that only 2.7% girls are fall in the category of very low phobia about school in Pehowa division in district Kurukshetra.
 14. It is found that large number of boys and girls falls in the category of moderate phobia in Thanesar division in Kurukshetra district.
 15. It is found that large number of girls and girls falls in the category of moderate phobia in Thanesar division in Kurukshetra district.
 16. It is found that girls have more school phobia in the comparison of boys' students in the Thanesar division in district Kurukshetra.
 17. It is found that 16% girls are very high phobia about school in district Shahabad in district Kurukshetra.
 18. It is found that 29.3% girls are high phobia about school in district Shahabad in district Kurukshetra.
 19. It is found that only 12% boys are very low phobia about school in district Kurukshetra.
 20. It is also found that 40% girls are fall in the moderate phobia about school in the comparison of girls in division Shahabad in district Kurukshetra.
 21. It is found that only 4% girls fall in the low phobia about school in division Shahabad in Kurukshetra district.
 22. It is found that girls' numbers are more in comparison boys in moderate phobia in division Shahabad in district Kurukshetra.
 23. It is also found that boys number are more in comparison girls in the category of very low phobia.
 24. It is found that 13.3% boys are in low phobia about school in division Shahabad in District Kurukshetra.
 25. It is found that boys' numbers are less in the comparisons of girls in the category of very low phobia about school in division Ladwa in district Kurukshetra.
 26. It is found that boys' numbers are less in the comparisons of girls in the category of high phobia about school in division Ladwa in district Kurukshetra.
- It is found that 21.3% girls are very high phobia in the comparison of boys in the division Ladwa in district Kurukshetra.

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