

# A Review of the Research on Accompanying Reasons for Academic Anxiety

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**Abstract:-** Anxiety is a common phenomenon in modern culture. It is significant in human life since we are all anxious in different ways. The information in this paper was compiled after a thorough examination of previous research in this field. The primary goal of the study was to learn about the numerous elements connected with academic anxiety. High academic anxiety undermines students' efforts and motivation. It interferes with their cognitive processes, causing them to lose track of what they've learnt. Teachers must create a positive learning atmosphere in the classroom and provide remedial sessions to students from remote areas in order to help them achieve success. Further, when students' academic anxiety is high, it affects their attentiveness and memory, both of which are necessary for academic achievement.

**Keywords:-** Academic anxiety, Academic Achievement, Academic Motivation, Home Environment.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Sigmund Freud was the primary to clinically define the human anxious psychophysiological response as a sense of impending and immediate danger, which might be supported objective or moral risk. Anxiety is additionally described by the American Psychological Association (APA) as a sense of stress and worried thoughts. Anxiety, in line with Spielberger (1983), could be a subjective sensation of tension, fear, nervousness, and concern that's caused by the autonomic nervous system being stimulated. According to Cornell University, anxiety serves as a messenger, alerting the body when something is wrong or worth noticing. Anxiety is your body's method of telling you that something within the world needs your urgent attention. High anxiety activates the fight-or-flight reflex, which prepares the body to fight or flee a perceived danger. Bandura (1997) thinks that folks experience anxiety once they recognize a situation as dangerous and off from their control. There are basically two kinds of anxiety (a) State and Trait anxiety (b) Test (Examination) Anxiety or Academic anxiety. The inability to differentiate between state anxiety and trait anxiety is at the foundation of the many of the difficulties in defining anxiety. With the state-trait distinction in mind, one amongst the foremost important issues within the field has been to differentiate between anxiety as "state anxiety," which is characterised as a transient reaction to adversity, and "trait anxiety," which is defined as a more stable personality trait- Spielberger (1970). In other words, state anxiety is best described as an unpleasant spirit or form distinguished by subjective feelings of stress, anxiety, and concern, similarly as autonomic nervous system activation or arousal. Trait anxiety, in contrast to state anxiety, refers to a comparatively stable personality disposition. It reflects individual differences in anxiety proneness. Individuals who

are characterized by high trait anxiety are at risk of threat appraisals and state anxiety when confronted with a critical environmental demand. Trait anxiety doesn't imply that someone is chronically anxious but rather that she or he contains a higher tendency than the low anxious person to experience anxiety-(Spielberger, 1972).

Test (Examination) Anxiety or Academic anxiety - Anxiety could be a common condition discerned in people of all age groups. Test anxiety and its various manifestations has been one in all the foremost common research topics in recent years. There are many external factors that will contribute to anxiety. These include –stress from school, stress during a relationship, stress at work, financial stress, stress that result from an emotional trauma like the loss of dear ones, victimization by crime, a natural disaster, sexual assault or physical abuse, side effects of medication. Academic anxiety is a novel term that is presented as a unifying depiction for many types of specialised anxiety manifestations in learning environments. Students experiencing academic anxiety feel apprehensive over academic tasks. Students can feel anxiety associated with every academic task. Some may only feel anxiety associated with test taking or other specific tasks. Academic anxiety is experienced most frequently during timed exercises to perform their best when the stakes are very high before of others. It's a sort of anxiety that manifests itself most prominently during examinations. The cognitive (often said as "worry") and emotional (or affective) components of test anxiety are overwhelmingly described as a two-factor construct. The foremost common interpretation of the connection between these two variables indicates that the cognitive component incorporates a direct impact on students' exam results, while the emotionality component is said but doesn't directly influence test performance - (Cassady, 2001). Academic anxiety may be a sort of state anxiety that refers to the threat of harm posed by the environment of educational institutions, like teachers and specific subjects like mathematics and English (Singh & Gupta, 1984). Craig et al. (2000) opines that test anxiety indicate the degree to which a student's experience fear, apprehensiveness, nervousness, panic agitation and stress while even thinking of a future test or examination. Anxiety can additionally be seen as a product of doubt, uncertainty about future occasion or situation. Restlessness, strange bodily movements, difficulties concentrating, insomnia, weariness, contraction, abdominal discomfort, and tremors are some of the psychological symptoms that students experience before a test (Porto, 2013). These symptoms have a negative impact on students' life as well as their professional development (Ferreira, Almondes, Braga, Mata, Lemos & Maia, 2014). Academically anxious students often feel difficulty in concentration during study, remembering

facts then on, which can develop a sense of helplessness and failure (Jain, 2012; Nandini, 2013; Das et al., 2014; Shakir, 2014). Academic anxiety arises out of the apprehension or rebuke from teachers, parents and peers reading the failures of performing the responsibilities of a tutorial properly. Developing a state of educational anxiety causes a decrease in span, concentration and memory which might end in having a negative effect on the performance of the individual (Watson, 2009). Many students have the cognitive capacity to do well on examinations, but test anxiety prevents them from doing so. Because of the social emphasis on testing, it is possible that their educational and career possibilities may be limited (Zeidner, 1990).

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### A. Academic anxiety in relation with Academic achievement

Academic achievement means achievement level of the scholars. It will be defined as what a student does or achieve at his school. Crow and Crow (1969), defined it because the “extent to which a learner is benefiting from instructions during a given area of learning i.e., achievement is reflected by the extent to which skill or knowledge has been imparted to him”. Academic achievement of scholars is laid low with many factors that will reduce it; academic anxiety is one of them. Hancock (2001) revealed that students with high anxiety level performed poorly and were less motivated to learn. It was found that a major negative relationship exists between test anxiety scores and students’ achievement scores. Results showed that cognition (worry) contributes more in test anxiety than affective factors (emotional). As a result, it's stated that test anxiety is one of the elements that contribute to students' underachievement and poor performance, but it may be addressed by suitable training of students in coping with test anxiety-causing circumstances, Rizwan and Nasir (2010). The study of Nadeem et al. (2012) revealed that, when anxiety increases, academic achievement decreases both in male and female students. It's also noteworthy within the results that there's more impact of hysteria on female students as compared to male students. Another study undertaken by Iroegbu (2013) showed that the themes with low anxiety and female gender performed better than the male gender. Furthermore, anxiety and gender, as well as anxiety self-concept and gender on academic performance, have a significant relationship. The findings of the study Sridevi (2013), there's a negative low correlation between test anxiety and academic achievement. A study conducted by Azeem (2014) revealed that there's a significant correlation between the educational anxiety and academic achievement. It's also inferred from his findings that a moderate level of educational anxiety is important for the scholars 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 cognitive operation that results in breakdown in their learning process. This results into an occasional achievement in students' performance. Therefore, academic anxiety must not be ignored at any cost. According to the findings of Das et al. (2014), academic anxiety may be a barrier to educational success. Academic anxiety diminishes students' efforts and

motivation, even if they achieve academic success. However, a small level of educational anxiety is possible in students. Academic anxiety and academic achievement are also found to be negatively associated in the study. The correlation is exceedingly small, indicating that it isn't statistically significant. So, to summarise, academic anxiety does not have a significant negative impact on students' academic achievement. Low level of hysteria was found to be positively correlated with academic achievement. Moderate level of tension was found to be negatively correlated with achievement. High level of anxiety was also found to possess a correlational statistics with academic success- Singh (2015). However, the findings of Ramakrishna (2007) and Al-Qaisy (2011) contradicts where they found a positive relationship between anxiety and academic achievement. As a result, it's reasonable to conclude that the greater the tutorial anxiety, the lower the educational achievement.

### B. Academic anxiety in relation with achievement motivation and gender

Human behaviour is fuelled by motivation. It explains why people act and behave the way they are doing. In all stages of education and learning, motivation is the key. A well-motivated child is extremely focused; he devotes himself completely to his work and achieves maximum accomplishment. Motivation is significant in any human activity that aims to realize a goal-(Bhatnagar, 1995). “Achievement motivation is defined in terms of the way a person orients himself towards object of conditions that he doesn't process. If he values those objects and condition and he feels that he should process them, he is also thought to be having an achievement motive.” -Irving Sarnoff.

In Chauhan's analysis, the achievement motivation score of male students was found to be significantly higher than that of female students. Among both urban and rural students, there's a major gap in achievement motivation. As compared to rural students, the achievement motivation score of urban students was found to be higher. There's a considerable gap in achievement motivation between students in private and government schools. The achievement motivation score of private school students was found to be on top of that of students in government schools. Academic stress and achievement motivation in urban students are linked in a very significant way. Academic anxiety and achievement motivation in rural students don't have any significant relationship. There's no connection between academic anxiety and achievement motivation among students of private schools. There's no connection between academic anxiety and achievement motivation among students in government schools. In both genders, there's no significant relationship between academic anxiety and achievement motivation. Academic anxiety features a significantly negative relationship with achievement motivation- Chaturvedi (2019).

According to Zeidner, test anxiety is a collection of phenomenological, physiological, and behavioural responses that accompany concern about the potential negative consequences of failing an exam or other evaluative scenario. A study conducted by Nunez et al. (2016) revealed

that students exhibit a type of anxiety when their academic achievement is assessed through formal tests whether multiple choice or descriptive type exams and this anxiety is called test anxiety. Gender differences were studied and it was found that female students report higher levels of math anxiety, trait anxiety and test anxiety in comparison to their male counterparts. However, the academic achievement of both the genders was same or in other words there was no indication of lower level of academic achievement of female students. The consistent results were also found by Wenjuan et al. (2020) in their research study. Anxiety is considered to be the most general and prevailing issue among college students, particularly for female students. The result of their research study reflected that females experienced anxiety above the threshold level. It was also revealed in their study that there exists positive correlation between anxiety and introverted personality among newly admitted college students. These results were also supported by the study conducted by the Mehnaz et al. (2019). They also came up with the result that teenager girls exhibit higher levels of anxiety and fearfulness than teenager boys. In their study they also discussed about difference in the kinds of symptoms of anxiety among teenagers and the association between teenage years and anxiety. It has been found from the study of Rao and Chaturvedi (2017), there is no significant mean difference of academic anxiety among boys and girls class 9th students of secondary schools.

#### *C. Academic anxiety in relation with locale, type of school and home environment*

One of the elements linked to academic anxiety could be the locale, type of school and home environment. The association between academic anxiety with locale, type of school and home environment is viewed differently by different studies. One such study conducted by Surjit (2013), revealed that rural and urban high school students differ significantly in their level of anxiety. Another study conducted by Bihari (2014), concluded that, on their academic anxiety between overall mean scores of secondary school boys and girls and rural and urban students there exists no significant relationship. Similarly, Sultan and Bhat (2019) revealed that academic anxiety of rural secondary students is more as compared to urban secondary school students. This result is contradicted by the results of Sharma and Shakir (2019) and they in their study disclosed that in comparison to the rural students, urban students exhibit more academic anxiety. Rao and Chaturvedi (2017) revealed in their study that significant mean difference is found among 9th class students of secondary school situated in rural and urban area on their academic anxiety level. There is a significant difference in the academic anxiety between urban and rural students. The academic anxiety score of urban students found to be higher as compared to the rural students discovered by Ajay (2016). So, it is the responsibilities of the teachers to create a positive classroom learning environment at school and provides remedial class to the students coming from rural area that can contribute to good academic achievement by students.

Mahato and Jangir (2012) revealed that the type of school had a significant relation with the academic anxiety. Sharma and Shakir (2018) also revealed in their study that a significant difference is found in the academic anxiety in relation to type of school. Private school students are more anxious than the govt. school students in relation to their academic activities (Mahajan, 2014; Sharma & Shakir, 2019). It may be due to the reason that the private school students feel more pressure from parents as well as from teachers to perform well which cause the increased level of academic anxiety among them. In other words, type of school was found to be a source of academic anxiety. There is no significant difference in the academic anxiety between private and government school's students discovered by Ajay (2016).

The most important role any institution plays for the child's optimum growth and development is his home environment where parental supervision helps in strengthening and shaping the desired behaviour of their child, thus it is undeniable that home environment has a very strong effect on their learning process. Home environment where there is full provision of love, care, affection, nourishment, protection and freedom of expression for a child has a positive impact on their learning achievements. Good home environment maintains the physical and emotional stability of a child. Kumar (2013), disclosed that academic anxiety and home environment correlated significantly. This result is also supported by the study conducted by Gosain (2019), but the above stated results are contradicted by the recent research study conducted by Shukla (2021), who argued that between home environment and academic anxiety there exists negative but low relationship between the two and finally concluded that in statistical terms it means that there exists no significant relationship between academic anxiety and home environment of secondary school students.

#### *D. Academic Anxiety in relation with physical activity and Parental Encouragement.*

Aristotle beautifully quoted the "Education is the creation of a sound mind in a sound body". W.H.O. defines physical activity as any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires energy expenditure. Physical exercise encompasses all forms of movement, whether it is done for fun, to go to and from locations, or as part of one's job. Physical activity, both moderate and strenuous, is beneficial to one's health. According to a study conducted in Pakistan by Kayani et al. (2020), students who engage in physical activity and exercise on a regular basis have less academic anxiety than those who do not. Physical activity also improves thinking, learning, and judgement skills, according to the World Health Organization.

Parental encouragement can help children realise their hidden potential and lead to success in a variety of fields. Mahajan (2014) found that academic stress was strongly and negatively connected with parental encouragement in his study. The negative relationship between parental encouragement and academic anxiety suggests that parental support, direction, and responsiveness reduce academic anxiety.

### III. CONCLUSION

The level of academic achievement of a student is referred to as academic achievement. It can be defined as a student's academic achievements. A lot of factors influence students' academic achievement, one of which is academic anxiety. Test anxiety ratings and student accomplishment scores were found to have a strong negative association. Academic progress is hampered by significant academic anxiety, which reduces students' efforts and motivation. It has an effect on their mental processes, resulting in a learning breakdown. Students' academic performance falls as a result. Because the correlation is so low, the negative correlation isn't statistically significant. There is a considerable difference in academic anxiety between urban and rural students. Ajay (2016) discovered that the academic anxiety score of urban students was greater than that of rural students. It is the responsibility of teachers to create a positive learning atmosphere in the classroom and to provide remedial classes to students who come from rural areas in order to help them achieve good academic results. Male students' achievement motivation was found to be significantly higher than female students. There is a significant achievement motivation gap between urban and rural students. Academic stress and achievement motivation are strongly linked in urban students. There is a significant achievement gap between students in private and public schools. A child's physical and emotional well-being is maintained by a good home environment. A child's learning achievements are positively impacted by a home environment that provides full provision of love, care, affection, nourishment, protection, and freedom of expression. According to Kumar (2013), there is a significant link between academic anxiety and home environment. Anxiety is thought to be the most common and prevalent problem among college students, particularly among females. Female students report higher levels of math anxiety, trait anxiety, and test anxiety than their male counterparts, according to a study by Nunez et al. (2016). In the study, both genders had comparable academic achievement. Among newly admitted college students, there is a positive relationship between anxiety and introversion. The type of school had a strong influence on academic anxiety. In terms of academic activities, private school students are more concerned than government school students. It could be because private school students are under more pressure from their parents and teachers to perform well. Academic stress was found to be both positively and negatively correlated with parental support. Physical activity improves thinking, learning, and judgement skills. Students who regularly exercise and engage in physical activity have lower levels of academic anxiety than those who do not.

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