

ACADEMIC PERCEPTION OF IX STANDARD STUDENTS IN THE SCHOOLS IN TRICHY IN RELATION TO THEIR SCHOOL ANXIETY

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Abstract

The present era is an age of Anxiety. Anxiety has been observed to manifest itself in different spheres. Every living being on the earth tries to satisfy the needs of one's life. Very often an individual failing in one's life feels frustrated and disappointed. Gradually these feelings become intense and take the form of worry that is anxiety. Highly anxious students even if they are brilliant may do poorly in their achievement due to fear.

Anxiety is a painful uneasiness of mind concerning impending or anticipated ill. Hence anxiety is a response to a hidden and subjective peril. But fear is a response to an obvious and objective danger. Arthur T. Jersilid et. al., (1978) correctly said Fear exists so generally in contemporary life that our time has been called the "Age of Anxiety"(P.318) .

Due to high competition, the students tend to be anxious. Anxiety is a highly unpleasant and painful state of tension which the individual wants to get rid off. In these lines the investigators wanted to identify whether there is any relationship between the Academic Perception of the students and their school Anxiety. For this purpose they took up a survey study. Students studying in Secondary classes in Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools were considered the population of this study. Descriptive Survey method was adopted and 333 students of standard nine are considered as sample of this study by simple random technique. Standardised Tools were used for this study. Arithmetic mean, Standard deviation, 't' test, and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation were used in statistical analysis. The major findings were the majority of the students have neutral academic perception, only (31.83%) have positive academic perception. Likewise, majority of the students have moderate school anxiety, only (16.52%) have low school anxiety. But there is no significant relationship between Academic Perception and their School Anxiety.

Introduction

In a highly technologically advanced civilization of today, Anxiety is a crucial psychological state of mind for the efficient functioning of an individual. According to Freud (1948) “Anxiety is as something felt, unpleasant effect of state or condition” (Robert S. Feldman, 1997) The learning process is influenced by the Anxiety of students, which highly influences the effectiveness of teaching process.

Sarson (1960) and his associates identified the highly anxious child as the one who is unduly concerned about his progress in class, who worries about not understanding what his teacher is saying or what his teacher expects of him, who characteristically experiences tension when called upon to answer and who suffers acute distress before and during school examinations. According to Harry Stack Silluvian (1953), high anxiety cuts off insight and foresight (P.355)

The individual's capabilities and potentialities are affected by Anxiety. Anxiety develops from fear and worry. The anxious child is often unaware of the causes of his / her anxiety. He does not realise that it comes from feelings of insecurity within himself and not from an external situation. Due to high competition, the students tend to be anxious. It has almost become an inseparable feature of human personality. Anxiety is a highly unpleasant and painful state of tension, which the individual wants to get rid off.

Need for the Study

In many situations, to perceive is to learn (William C. Morse and Max Wingo, G., 1968,) Students who perceive themselves academically are known for self - understanding, realistic expectations, absence of emotional stress, stable self - concepts etc. These characteristics marks in turn make him or her a matured person, comfortable and emotionally well balanced. Similarly, persons who place themselves favourable in group situations are found to be well - adjusted, open minded and dramatic. This psychological behaviour of the individual boosts their self - image, higher perception in academic and social life. Both School anxiety and Academic perception influence their psychological characteristics that influence not only on the overall development but also their scholastic achievement. The investigator likes to know whether the selected psychological factor namely School Anxiety is likely to influence 9th standard students' Academic Perception. Thus the investigator has pin pointed this topic.

Methodology

Students studying in Secondary classes in Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools are considered as population of this study. Descriptive Survey method was adopted and 333 students of standard nine represented the sample of this study by simple random technique. Two *standardised tools* were used Academic Perception Scale designed and validated by Brookeover (1976) and Test of School Anxiety

validated by *Dale (1969)*. In Statistical Analysis Mean, Standard Deviation, t - test, Pearson's Product Moment Correlation were used.

Objectives

The following are the objectives framed for this study

- i. To find out the significance of Difference in Academic Perception of 9th standard students with regard to Gender.
- ii. To find out the significance of Difference in the School Anxiety of 9th standard students in terms of Gender.
- iii. To find out the relationship between the Academic Perception and School Anxiety.

Hypotheses

The following are the Hypotheses framed for this study

- i. There is no *significant Difference* in *Academic Perception* of 9th standard students with regard to Gender
- ii. There is no *significant Difference* in *School Anxiety* of 9th standard students with regard to Gender
- iii. There is no *significant relationship* between *Academic Perception* of 9th standard students and their *School Anxiety*

Administration of the Tools

The investigator explained the tools to the students. The respondents were requested to answer all the questions and submit them promptly to the investigator. The data were tabulated for analysis.

Analysis of Data

The merit and essence of a research depends upon the measurement and analysis of the performance of each individual involved in the research. The various tools used for the investigation bring out the data, which satisfy the quest of the investigator and answer her questions in the form of scores.

Hypotheses Testing

Table 1.1 Distribution of Scores of Academic Perception of 9th standard students

| Back ground Variable | | Total | Negative | | Neutral | | Positive | | |
|----------------------|------------------|--------------|----------|-------|---------|--------|----------|-------|-------|
| | | | N | % | N | % | N | % | |
| ACADEMIC PERCEPTION | TOTAL | 333 | 70 | 21.02 | 157 | 47.15* | 106 | 31.83 | |
| | GENDER | MALE | 212 | 42 | 19.81 | 99 | 46.70* | 71 | 33.49 |
| | | FEMALE | 121 | 28 | 23.14 | 58 | 47.93* | 35 | 28.93 |
| | TYPE OF SCHOOL | Government | 112 | 25 | 22.32 | 49 | 43.75* | 38 | 33.93 |
| | | Aided | 179 | 33 | 18.44 | 87 | 48.60* | 59 | 32.96 |
| | | Private | 42 | 12 | 28.57 | 21 | 50.00* | 9 | 21.43 |
| | NATURE OF SCHOOL | Boys | 119 | 22 | 18.49 | 60 | 50.42* | 37 | 31.09 |
| | | Girls | 104 | 27 | 25.96 | 48 | 46.15* | 29 | 27.88 |
| | | Co-Education | 110 | 21 | 19.09 | 49 | 44.55* | 40 | 36.36 |
| | BIRTH ORDER | First Born | 156 | 34 | 21.79 | 71 | 45.51* | 51 | 32.69 |
| | | Middle Born | 65 | 10 | 15.38 | 34 | 52.31* | 21 | 32.31 |
| | | Last Born | 112 | 26 | 23.21 | 52 | 46.43* | 34 | 30.36 |

(* indicates the level)

From the above table it is found that most of all the 9th standard students have **Neutral Academic perception** with regard to Gender, Type of School, Nature of school and their Birth order.

Table 1.2 Distribution of Scores of School Anxiety of 9th standard students

| Back ground Variable | | Total | Low | | Average | | High | | |
|----------------------|------------------|--------------|-----|-------|---------|--------|--------|-------|-------|
| | | | N | % | N | % | N | % | |
| SCHOOL ANXIETY | TOTAL | 333 | 35 | 16.52 | 200 | 60.06* | 78 | 23.42 | |
| | GENDER | MALE | 212 | 34 | 16.04 | 123 | 58.02* | 55 | 25.94 |
| | | FEMALE | 121 | 21 | 17.36 | 77 | 63.64* | 23 | 19.01 |
| | TYPE OF SCHOOL | Government | 112 | 19 | 16.96 | 70 | 62.5* | 23 | 20.54 |
| | | Aided | 179 | 31 | 17.32 | 94 | 52.51* | 54 | 30.17 |
| | | Private | 42 | 5 | 11.9 | 36 | 85.71* | 1 | 2.38 |
| | NATURE OF SCHOOL | Boys | 119 | 10 | 8.4 | 90 | 75.63* | 19 | 15.97 |
| | | Girls | 104 | 10 | 9.62 | 87 | 83.65* | 7 | 6.7 |
| | | Co-Education | 110 | 35 | 31.82 | 23 | 20.91* | 52 | 47.7 |
| | BIRTH ORDER | First Born | 156 | 20 | 12.82 | 99 | 63.46* | 37 | 23.72 |
| | | Middle Born | 65 | 10 | 15.38 | 36 | 55.38* | 19 | 29.23 |
| | | Last Born | 112 | 25 | 22.32 | 65 | 58.04* | 22 | 19.64 |

(* indicates the level)

From the above table it is observed that most of all the 9th standard students have **Average School Anxiety** with regard to Gender, Type of School, nature of school and their Birth order.

H₀ 1: There is no *significant Difference* in the *Academic Perception* of 9th standard students with regard to gender

Table 1.3 *Difference in the Academic Perception of 9th standard students with regard to gender*

| Gender | N | Mean | SD | Calculated 't' Value | Table value | Remark |
|--------|-----|-------|------|----------------------|-------------|--------|
| Male | 212 | 23.60 | 4.91 | 0.66 | 1.96 | NS |
| Female | 121 | 23.26 | 4.33 | | | |

Since the Calculated 't' value is less than the table value at 331 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is accepted.

H₀ 2: There is no *significant Difference* in the *School Anxiety* of 9th standard students with regard to gender

Table 1.4
Difference in the School Anxiety of 9th standard students with regard to gender

| Gender | N | Mean | SD | Calculated 't' Value | Table value | Remark |
|--------|-----|-------|------|----------------------|-------------|--------|
| Male | 212 | 11.88 | 3.10 | 1.09 | 1.96 | NS |
| Female | 121 | 11.50 | 2.94 | | | |

Since the Calculated 't' value is less than the table value at 331 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is accepted.

H₀ 3: There is no *significant relationship* between the *Academic Perception* of 9th standard Students and their *School anxiety*

Table 1.5 Distribution of Scores of the Academic Perception of 9th standard Students and their School Anxiety

| Variables | N | Calculated 'r' Value | Table value | Remark |
|---------------------------------------|-----|----------------------|-------------|--------|
| Academic Perception Vs School Anxiety | 333 | 0.066 | 0.108 | NS |

Since the Calculated 'r' value is less than the table value at 331 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Major Findings

- 21.02% of 9th standard students have negative Academic perception, 47.15% of them have neutral academic perception and 31.83% of them have negative Academic Perception.
- 16.52% of the students of 9th standard have low School Anxiety, 60.06% of them have average school Anxiety and 23.42% of them have high School Anxiety
- There is no significant difference found between Male and female students of 9th standard in the *Academic Perception*.
- There is no significant Difference found between male and female students of 9th standard in the *School Anxiety*.
- There is no significant relationship found between Academic Perception of 9th standard students and their School Anxiety.

Interpretation

From the findings of the present study, it is found that majority of the 9th students have neutral academic perception. Moreover, a good percentage of them have positive Academic Perception. On Analyzing their gender, type of school, nature of school, birth order and father's Occupation, it is manifest that they have *neutral* Academic Perception. This may be due to the reason that the secondary students studying 9th standard do not perceive much regarding their Academic activities, because of their **non- conducive atmosphere** found in their schools.

Majority of them have average School Anxiety. Anxiety while studying is a major predictor of academic performance (McCraty, 2007 and McCraty, *et al.*, 2000) and various studies have demonstrated that it has a detrimental effect. Little is known that there exists a possible association between high level of anxiety and low academic performance among students. Researchers revealed that high levels of anxiety influence on the decrease of working memory, distraction, and reasoning in students (Aronen *et al.*, 2005). Tobias in Ibrahim

(1996) has recognised that anxiety plays significant role in student's learning and academic performance, moreover anxiety has been known to have both facilitating and debilitating effects on academic achievement. Research on the correlation of anxiety and the effect of academic performance among school students, disclose that among high school students with higher level of anxiety have lower academic performance (McCraty, 2007) and greater anxiety would be associated with poorer academic achievement (Luigi *et al.*, 2007).

While studying in terms of their *gender, type of school, nature of school, and birth order* it could be seen that they have an **average School Anxiety**. These findings reveal the fact that the secondary students are much worried about their over workload provided by their concerned teachers. At the same time, the parents and school authorities compel the students to work hard in order to achieve more marks in the examinations. These entities develop their School anxiety.

The differential analysis revealed that the 9th standard students of different gender, type of school, nature of school, birth order and father's occupation do not have significant influence on their Academic Perception and school anxiety. The finding supports with McCraty (2000) where anxiety plays significant role in student's learning and academic performance; moreover it was revealed that a high facilitating achievement anxiety was related to low debilitating achievement anxiety. This shows that the students of these categories are found to be the same in their Academic Perception and in their school anxiety. This implies the fact that the students who do not enjoy the conducive climate found in their schools and possess average or high level school anxiety cause the significant difference.

The correlation analysis also revealed that there is no significant relationship between Academic Perception of 9th standard students and their School anxiety.

Conclusion

On the completion of present study the investigator has been prompted to conclude that the School Anxiety and the background variables included in the present study are not influential enough to alter the Academic Perception. On contrary to the study done by Prima Vitasari, *et.al.*, (2010), *The Relationship between Study Anxiety and Academic Performance among Engineering Students*, the result shows a significant correlation between study anxiety and Academic Performance. Students who have high level anxiety achieve low academic performance. In the present study, the result shows there is no significant correlation between Academic Perception and School Anxiety.

The investigator would like to highlight some of the recommendations:

- i. The schools may take up the responsibility of arranging series of formal and informal talks, workshops and seminars for providing all necessary inputs to the students regarding the positive perception of their Academic activities.

- ii. The students may be assisted to record their difficulties in learning their school subjects and the problems encountered by them during their regular classroom sessions. By undertaking necessary activities, they may develop a positive perception. Novel as well as creative measures should be taken up by the schools and also by the teachers to provide a consistently happy, useful and successful learning atmosphere through the classroom teaching.

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