



# A Study of the Examination Anxiety among the Secondary School Students of Gandhinagar in the Context of Some Variables

KAMINIDEVI CHAURASIYA  
Researcher,

DR. SANJAY GUPTA  
Lecturer in Senior Scale,  
Department of Education,  
Kadi Sarva Vishva Vidyalay, Gandhinagar

## 1. Introduction

Most of students are suffering from anxiety at some level during an examination. However, when anxiety affects examination performance it has become a problem. Examination anxiety is actually a type of performance anxiety-a feeling someone might have in a situation where performance really count or when pressure's on to do well. Examination anxiety can bring a stomachache or headache. Some people might feel shaky, sweaty; feel their heart beating quickly as they wait for the test to be given out. A student with really strong test anxiety may even feel like he or she might pass out or throw up. Almost everyone feels nervous before an examination. Butterflies in stomach and worrying thoughts - "Will I be able to answer the questions?" "Have I done enough revisions?" – are indications of examination nerve. A certain amount of nervous tension probably helps one to perform to the best of his or her ability, helps to feel alert and focused but too much anxiety can BLOCK thoughts, create a negative frame of mind, lead to panic and potentially poor exam performance. How can one define examination anxiety? Examination anxiety is an excessive worry about upcoming exams and a fear of being evaluated. It is experienced by many normal students. It is not mysterious or difficult to understand. It is manageable by following a plan of helpful suggestions. It is also different from typical nervousness, because it is more intense, more disruptive, more disturbing. It is more potentially overwhelming. It is not helpful or motivating.

Anxiety is present in everyone, yet few will openly admit to its presence. It is one of the most distressing built on enigmas of man. It is presumed to be a sign of weakness, so all deny its existence and attempt to avoid it. It encompasses tension, nervousness, fear and worry. In this age of competition the Secondary School Students feel fear, tension, nervousness and stress. The examination anxiety is a very serious problem as many cases of suicide found in the newspapers during the period of examination. The symptoms of examination anxiety mainly refer to feeling of tension, nervousness and worry as well as trembling, heart palpitations and the throat being dry.

## 2. Statement of the problem

**" A Study of the Examination Anxiety among the Secondary School Students of Gandhinagar in the Context of some Variables "**

## 3. Objectives of the study

The researcher selected following Objectives for the study.

1. To construct examination anxiety scale for the Secondary School Students.
2. To identify the level of examination anxiety of the Secondary School Students.
3. To compare their examination anxiety in the context of their gender.

4. To compare their examination anxiety in the context of their standard.
5. To compare their examination anxiety in the context of their achievement.

### **Hypothesis of the Study**

Following hypotheses were formulated that were tested in the present study. It is Null hypothesis:

**Ho<sub>1</sub>** : There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of boys and girls on the examination anxiety scale.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>** : There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of students of std.9 and std.10 on the examination anxiety scale.

**Ho<sub>3</sub>** : There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of students of urban area and rural area on the examination anxiety scale.

**Ho<sub>4</sub>** : There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of students of low achiever and high achiever students on the examination anxiety scale.

### **5. Delimitations of the Study**

This research was limited to the Secondary School Students of Gandhinagar. This research was limited to the Gujarati Medium Schools only.

### **6. Population of the study**

The researcher selected students of Gujarati medium Secondary schools of Gujarat State as the population for the study. Boys and girls of std-9 and std-10 of urban area and rural area of Gandhinagar district selected as the population. The researcher selected two schools of Gandhinagar district.

### **7. Sample of the study**

The researcher used Stratified random sampling technique to select the sample. The researcher divided the population of this study into strata like gender, standard and educational achievement. In each stratum the units or subjects were homogeneous in terms of variation of the variable characteristic. Subsample from each stratum was randomly selected in proportion to the size of stratum. The researcher used Quartile Deviation to select high educational achiever and low educational achiever students. From the selected sample, the researcher selected 100 students of Secondary schools of two schools as the sample. The sample of the study was selected from urban area of Gandhinagar district. Boys and girls of std-9 and std-10 selected from urban and rural areas of Gandhinagar district.

### **8. Research Method**

The researcher used Survey method for the study. Survey method was employed because the researcher was interested to know negative attitudes of Secondary school students regarding examination. The researcher constructed and standardized 'Examination Anxiety Scale'. The researcher classified examination anxiety of the students into three phases:

- a. Anxiety before examination
- b. Anxiety during examination
- c. Anxiety after examination. Sub-points of the phases are following .

#### **(1) Time before examination**

- Expectations from Parents
- Expectations from Schools and Teachers
- Expectations from Society

#### **(2) During examination**

- Effects of anxiety on Physical Health
- Effects of anxiety on Mental Health
- Anxiety in Examination Hall - Anxiety related to Subject

### **(3) After examination**

#### **Anxiety related to Result of Examination**

The researcher constructed sentences for each phase of the Scale. The primary examination anxiety scale was constructed which consisted 88 sentences. The researcher gave five ratings for each sentence: (1) Total agree (2) Agree (3) Neutral (4) Disagree (5) Total disagree. Students have to select one option for each sentence by marking '√' for selected option.

### **9. Method of Data collection**

The researcher collected data from the secondary school students selected as sample with the help of tool constructed for the research study. The researcher personally went to respondents for collecting data. The researcher first took prior permission from the principals of different secondary schools and explained the purpose and importance of the study. The researcher went to different secondary schools and established a rapport with the students of std-9 and std-10. The researcher also convinced them that the information given by them remain secret and used only for the research study. The researcher gave necessary instructions of giving information. The students were motivated and gave correct information.

### **10. Method of data analysis**

The researcher first classified the collected data according to variables and checked whether the information filled up in the tool is partial or complete. The tools with incomplete information were discarded. The tools with complete information used for classification. Information or data collected from students analyzed and scored according to scoring key of the tool. This obtained examination anxiety scores of the students classified according to variables. This classified data analyzed statically. The method of analysis was selected by taking into consideration the objectives of the study, population and the sampling design- on the basis of which a sample of appropriate size was drawn. In addition to these, variables, levels of variables, accuracy of measurements, hypothesis were taken into account for selecting the method of analysis. t test used to analyze the Null hypothesis.

### **11. Findings**

Interpretation of the data according to hypothesis testing is following:

1. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of boys and girls on the examination anxiety scale.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of students of std.9 and std.10 on the examination anxiety scale.
3. There is a significant difference between the mean scores of urban and rural area students on examination anxiety scale. Mean score of the Examination anxiety of urban area students is 166.91 and Mean score of the Examination anxiety of rural area students is 181.43. It is clear from the Mean score of examination anxiety of urban and rural area that examination anxiety of rural area students is higher than examination anxiety of urban area students.
4. There is seen significant difference between the mean scores of students of high achievement and low achievement on the examination anxiety scale. Mean score of the Examination anxiety of high achiever students is 113.18 and Mean score of the Examination anxiety of low achiever students is 231.36. It is clear from the Mean score of examination anxiety of low achiever and high achiever students that examination anxiety of low achiever students is higher than high achiever students.

### **12. Outcomes of the Study**

The importance of the research is related to outcomes of the research. Generally there are two kinds of outcomes: (1) Outcome in the form of Tool of Research and (2) Outcome in the form of Program of Research. The outcome of the present research is in the form of Tool of Research. The researcher constructed and standardized the Examination Anxiety Scale. The Examination Anxiety Scale was constructed to measure examination anxiety of secondary school students. It is an attitude scale having

five point ratings: (1) Total agree (2) Agree (3) Neutral (4) Disagree (5) Total disagree. The Examination Anxiety Scale was classified into three phases: (1) Anxiety before examination (2) Anxiety during examination (3) Anxiety after examination. Test –Retest reliability of the Scale is 0.573 and Spearman-Brown Split-Half reliability of the Scale is 0.68. Concurrent validity of the Examination Anxiety Scale is 0.81.

### 13. Comparison of the Results with Previous Researches

There was no significance difference of gender in the findings of the previous researches. Significant difference of gender is also not seen in the finding of the present research. Effect of General anxiety on educational achievement was not seen but significant effect of examination anxiety on educational achievement was seen in the previous research. Significant effect of examination anxiety on educational achievement of the students is seen in the present research. It is seen in the present research that low achiever students have more examination anxiety than high achiever students. It is also seen that students of rural area have more examination anxiety than students of urban area.

### 14. Implications

It is clear from the present study that problem of examination anxiety was faced by many students. Following steps can be applied to reduce examination anxiety.

#### 14.1 Steps of reducing examination anxiety

- (1) Preparation of effective planning of study
- (2) Healthy lifestyle
- (3) Collection of accurate information
- (4) Time management
- (5) Positive attitude
- (6) Development of rational thinking
- (7) Test taking strategies
- (8) Anxiety reduction techniques

#### 14.2 Examination anxiety reduction techniques

- (1) Before examination
  - Learn materials thoroughly and organize materials needed for the test. - Try to establish a pattern of revision that gives time to relax and develop confidence. - Avoid speaking with any fellow students who have not prepared or who express negativity or who will distract your preparation.
  - Use a mantra or meditation technique for relaxation.
  - Try to distract your attention from anxious thoughts and keep your mind busy.
  - Use self talk. In examination anxiety students often give themselves negative messages, 'I cannot do this', 'I am going to fail', 'I am useless'. Try to consciously replace these thoughts with positive and encouraging thoughts: 'This is just anxiety, it cannot harm me'. 'Relax, concentrate, it is going to be Ok' - Get a good sleep before examination.
- (2) During examination
  - Don't go for examination with empty stomach.
  - Read the directions of question paper carefully.
  - Keep yourself focused and positive. - Pick a question and start writing without any nervousness.
- (3) After examination:
  - Whether you did well or not, be sure to follow through on the reward you promised yourself and enjoyed it.
  - Try not to dwell on all the mistakes you might have made.
  - Do not immediately begin studying for the next test and indulge in something relaxing for a while.

It is clear from the findings of the present research that Examination anxiety of low achiever students is higher than examination anxiety of high achiever students. It means that there is significant effect of educational achievement on the examination anxiety of students. Following suggestions can be given to low achiever students:

- Review your personal strengths and weaknesses. - Develop good study habits. - Learn time management.
- Organize Reading material for the study.
- Visualize success, think logically and positively.
- If you are giving examination and feel panic or go blank, don't feel nervous. Skip the question and select another question and start writing.
- Use positive reinforcement for yourself.
- List what did not work for improvement. - List what did work for improvement. - Review your past performance and learn from experience.

#### **Following suggestions can be given to teachers**

- Teachers should consider individual differences of the students.
- Teachers should not use insulting words to low achiever students in the classroom.
- Teachers should teach students that examination is only a technique of expressing their abilities and skills. - Teachers should not only give importance to percentage or rank of the students but also give importance to their career development.
- Teachers should also keep in mind the aptitudes of students.
- Teachers should also play a role of counselor to low achiever students. □ Following suggestions can be given to parents:
  - Parents should be sympathetic and co-operative to their children.
  - Parents should take care that their children might not be frustrated during examination. - Parents should avoid discussion in front of their children regarding the result of examination.
  - Parents should not force their children for the first rank only to gain social prestige.
  - Parents should teach their children that "Failure is the pillar of Success."
  - Parents should decide the career of their children according to their abilities, skills and aptitudes.

#### **15. Conclusion**

This research is a study of the examination anxiety of the secondary school students of Gujarat State. Examination anxiety of the students was measured by the Examination Anxiety Scale. The researcher represented findings, outcome and implications of the study. The researcher also provided recommendations of future researches.

#### **Reference**

1. Benjamin B. Walman, (1965). Contemporary Theories and Systems on Psychology, New York, Harper and Row, p.35.
2. Fillmare H. Samfore, (1961). Psychology, Wordsworth Publishing Co. Inc. p.240.
3. Rosenwald, G. C. (1961). The Assessment of Anxiety in Psychological experimentation: A Theoretical Reformulation and Test, Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 62(3), pp.666-673.
4. Sarason ,I.G. and B.B. Sarason, (1990), Test Anxiety, Handbook of Social and Evaluative Anxiety, New York, Plenum Press, p.12.
5. Zeidner, M. (1998), Test Anxiety : The State of the Art, New York, Plenum Press, p.17