

Test Anxiety of Higher Secondary Students in Relation to Some Selected Variables

Dr. Marami Goswami¹

Associate Professor, Guwahati College, Department of Education

Piyali Roy²

Research Scholar, Department of Education, Gauhati University

Abstract:

Education now-a-days is more career-oriented than knowledge-oriented. This idea of reading only to secure good marks has made the whole system mechanical. People are more serious about getting higher percentages. Higher secondary examination is the most crucial examination as it decides the future job opportunities. Its excessive pressure creates stress and strain and brings anxiety, nervousness, tension etc. among students. Test anxiety is a major area of concern among students as it brings different negative outcomes like depression, suicide, cheating, using unfair means in examination etc. This paper is meant for studying the Test anxiety on students in relation to some selected variables – gender, locality and management of the schools. To conduct the present study Cluster Sampling and Stratified Random Sampling technique was used and data was collected from a sample of 600 higher secondary stage student of Kokrajhar District, Assam. . The study highlighted that urban students are experiencing more stress than the rural students. Again, girls possess more high anxiety than boys in tests. It reveals that majority of the students possess high test anxiety which indicates a negative effect of modern education system and needs immediate attention and prevention.

Keywords: *Test anxiety, higher secondary education, gender, locality, management type of the institution.*

Introduction:

Education brings all-round development in the individual, which is harmonious and progressive by nature. In India, the structure of general education is 10+2+3, where 10 years are covered by Elementary and High School education, 2 years are covered by Higher Secondary education and 3 years cover the Higher education (under-graduate classes). At present, students decide their career mostly after passing the Higher Secondary examination on the basis of their result. So, this stage plays a very crucial role in a student's life.

Again, these higher secondary stage of education covers the adolescence period in a man's life. Hall defined adolescence as the period of stress and strain. Adolescence is the most crucial and significant stage of development that a man experiences in his life span. This stressful stage thus automatically brings anxiety, tension and depression etc. The stress and tension related to high marks, career and future opportunities give birth to Test Anxiety. Test Anxiety is situational. It appears when the examination comes and automatically disappears when the examination is over. It is a state in which a student fails to concentrate on a test and experiences excessive tension and nervousness. They may also fail to recall the things which they had studied or prepared for the examination. It is an unpleasant state of inner turmoil and often accompanied by fear, worry, fatigue, sweating, faster heart beats, restlessness, nervousness etc. **CHUKWU (2014)** conducted a survey on Test Anxiety among secondary school students and found that and male students have high test anxiety in comparison to the girls. Again, **Soundararajan (2013)** in his study found no difference in the levels of test anxiety between male and female students of

both private and government schools at higher secondary stage. The studies reveal that the status of test anxiety is changing from time to time and place to place. Thus, there is no doubt that studying the test anxiety levels of Higher Secondary students is a very important and interesting topic in research.

Need and justification of the Study:

Modern education is examination-oriented and the target of the students is only to achieve higher marks so that they can get a secured future. As the result of examination is closely associated with getting a good job, thus it automatically brings an excessive stress in the minds of the students. Higher Secondary stage is the most crucial stage which plays a significant role in the career of the students. The marks they get direct them towards the path of their higher studies which again help them to fulfill the desired goals. In such a case, test anxiety is a common problem among the Higher Secondary students which is leading them towards excessive tension and depression. Hence, it is very significant to conduct a study in this area to understand the different levels of test anxiety among the Higher Secondary Students in relation to their gender, locality and management type of the institution.

Objectives:

The Objectives of the present study are –

1. To study the levels of Test Anxiety among Higher Secondary Students.
2. To compare the Test Anxiety of the Higher Secondary students in relation to their gender (boy/Girl).
3. To study the difference in Test Anxiety of the Higher Secondary Students in relation to the locality of the school (urban/rural).
4. To study the difference in Test Anxiety of the Higher Secondary Students in relation to the management type of the school (Government / Private).

Hypotheses:

H₀₁: There exists no significant difference in Test Anxiety of Higher Secondary students in relation to their Gender.

H₀₂: There exists no significant difference in Test Anxiety of Higher Secondary students in relation to the locality (urban/rural) of the school.

H₀₃: There exists no significant difference in Test Anxiety of Higher Secondary students in relation to the management type of the school (Government / Private).

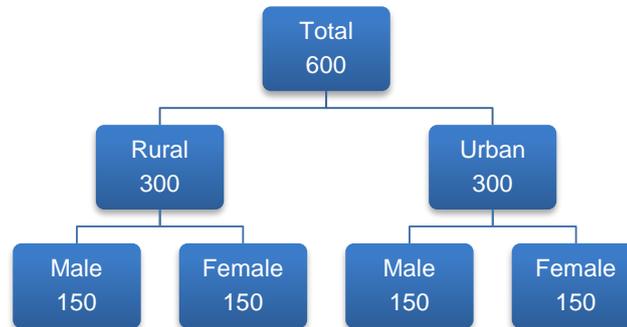
Methodology:

Method: Descriptive Survey Method was used to conduct the present study by the investigator.

Population and sample: Kokrajhar District is one of the twenty-seventh districts of Assam. It is also the capital of Bodoland Territorial Area Districts (BTAD). The population of the present study covers all the students studying in Higher Secondary Final Year in 34 Higher Secondary Schools of Kokrajhar District. These schools were approved by Assam Higher Secondary Education Council (AHSEC).

To conduct the present study Cluster Sampling and Stratified Random Sampling technique was used and a sample of 600 higher secondary school students studying in Higher Secondary Final Year stage were selected to collect data for the study. It was done in two phases. At first sample schools were selected and in the second phase students were selected giving due

representation to gender, locality and management type of the schools. After taking 30% from each private and government institutions of rural and urban area 10 schools were selected for the study. The 600 students were selected from these schools as follows:



Tools:

The researcher had used the following standardized tools to collect required data for the study -

- i. Test Anxiety Scale, by V. P. Sharma.
- ii. Observation

Data Collection: The investigator, at first, distributed the questionnaire to the higher secondary students personally. To find out the different levels of Test Anxiety of the higher secondary students the standardized Test Anxiety Scale developed by Dr. V. P. Sharma was administered. The scale is a Likert type scale which includes 25 test items, each having 5 responses ranging from minimum to maximum level of test anxiety. The sampled students were directed to fill up the questionnaire as per direction given in the questionnaire.

Data Analysis: After collecting the questionnaire the scoring key of each questionnaire was done as per instruction given in the test manual and accordingly test anxiety scores were calculated. The scores were categorized into three levels of test anxiety such as - High (75% and above), Low (25% and below) and Normal (above 25% and below 75%).

Statistical techniques:

In the study different statistical techniques were used to analyze and interpret the result. They are-

A. Descriptive Statistics:

- Graph
- Percentage
- Mean
- Standard Deviation

B. Inferential Statistics:

- t- test

Delimitation of the study:

The study will be limited to the following grounds-

- The findings of the study are limited to the Kokrajhar District in Assam.
- The present study is limited to the Higher Secondary Final Year students (Class XII) who were enrolled during the academic sessions 2014-2015, 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 only.

- Institutions which are approved by Assam Higher Secondary Education Council (AHSEC) are selected for this study only.

Analysis and interpretation:

The objective-wise analysis of collected data for the study are presented below-

Objective 1: To find out the different levels of Test Anxiety of Higher Secondary students

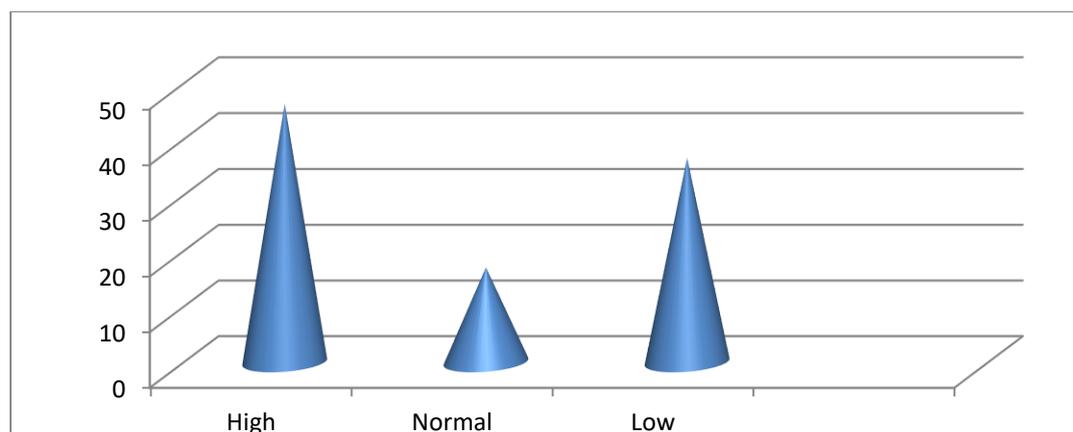
Data were collected from different higher secondary school students irrespective of their gender, locality and management type of the institution. After analyzing the collected data the investigator found the following result regarding the different levels of test anxiety among higher secondary students-

Table 1: Level wise identification of students having Test Anxiety

Levels of Test Anxiety	Number of students	Percent
HIGH	278	46.33%
LOW	220	36.67%
NORMAL	102	17%
Total	600	100%

The above table presents different levels of test anxiety among the Higher Secondary students selected from the higher secondary institutions of Kokrajhar district. According to the test norms given in the test manual, scores between percentile of 75 and above indicate the High Test Anxiety, scores between percentile of 25 and below indicate Low Test Anxiety and scores between percentile 25 and 75 indicate Normal Test Anxiety among the students. The percentage of students having test anxiety as High, Normal and Low level are 46.33%, 36.67% and 17% respectively. The different levels of Test Anxiety can also be shown with the following graphical representation of data-

Fig. 1: Graphical Representation: Students having different levels of Test Anxiety



Objective 2: To study the levels of Test Anxiety of the Higher Secondary students in relation to gender.

H₀₁: There exists no significant difference in Test Anxiety of the students of Higher Secondary in relation to their gender.

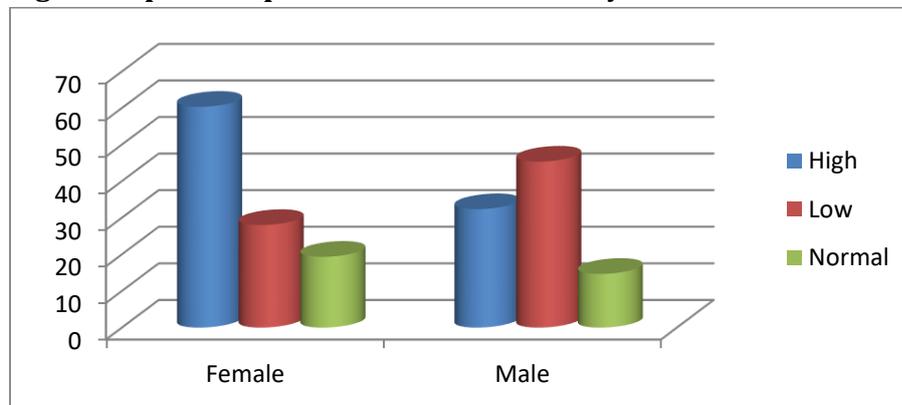
The study was also conducted to understand the gender based discrimination regarding the levels of Test Anxiety among Higher Secondary students. Anxiety scores are calculated separately for both male and female students and result is shown in the table below -

Table 2: Test Anxiety Level on the basis of Gender

GENDER	LEVEL OF TEST ANXIETY			Total
	HIGH	LOW	NORMAL	
Female	181 (60.33%)	84 (28%)	58 (19.33%)	300
Male	97 (32.33%)	136 (45.33%)	44 (14.66%)	300
Total	278	220	102	600

The table shows that the level of Test Anxiety is much higher in female students (60.33%) than male students (32.33%). Again it is totally opposite in case of Low Test Anxiety. Here, the number of male students is higher (45.33%) than that of the female students (28%). Only a few students possess Normal Test Anxiety in both groups, i.e. only 19.33% in case of female students and 14.66% in case of male students. Scores showing different levels of Test Anxiety on the basis of their gender can also be shown with the help of the following graphical representation of data-

Fig. 2: Graphical representation: Test Anxiety level on the basis of Gender



For studying the significance of the mean difference in Test Anxiety for male and female students 't' test has been applied and the result is shown in the following table-

Table 3: 't-test' showing significance of Mean difference in Test Anxiety scores of the Higher Secondary students on the basis of gender

GENDER	N	Mean	SD	SE _D	t value	Level of significance
Female	300	81.54	20.67	1.72	8.55	Significant at 0.01 level
Male	300	66.84	21.31			

Here, the computed t-value is 8.55 which is higher than the critical value at 0.01 level (2.58). Hence, mean difference is significant and the null hypothesis is rejected. So, we can conclude that

there is significant difference in Test Anxiety among the students of Higher Secondary in relation to their gender (male/female).

Objective 3: To study the levels of Test Anxiety of the Higher Secondary students in relation to their locality

H₀₂: There exists no significant difference in Test Anxiety of the students of Higher Secondary in relation to their locality

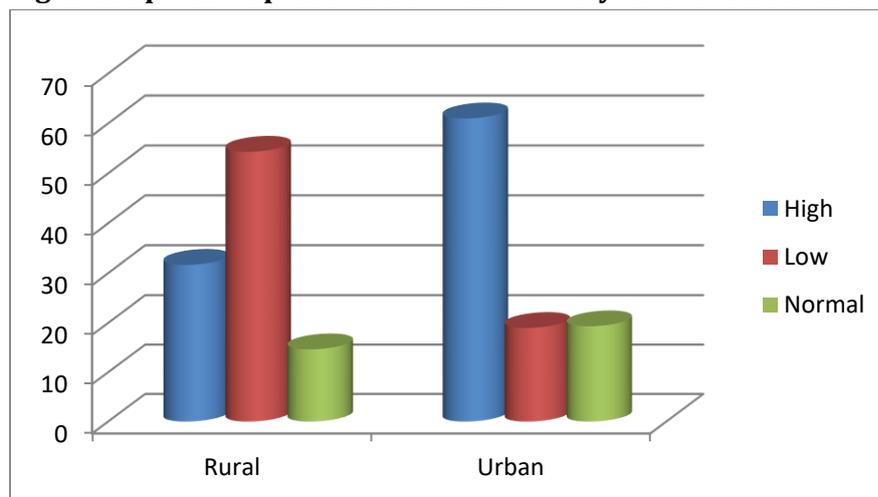
Another objective of the study is to determine the locality-based or area-based differences of test anxiety among Higher Secondary students. It means whether the levels of test anxiety among the students of urban area differ from the test anxiety levels of students of rural area. Now, anxiety score of students having rural and urban background are calculated separately and the investigator found the following outcome-

Table 4: Test Anxiety Level of students on the basis of locality

LOCALITY	LEVEL OF TEST ANXIETY			Total
	HIGH	LOW	NORMAL	
Rural	95 (31.66)	163 (54.33%)	44 (14.66%)	300
Urban	183 (61%)	57 (19%)	58 (19.33%)	300
Total	278	220	102	600

The table shows that students of urban area suffer more from High Test Anxiety (i.e. 61%) than the students of rural area (31.66%). Again, the level of Low Test Anxiety is much higher among rural students (54.33%) than the urban students (19%). The number of students having Normal Test Anxiety is less in case of both urban and rural area, i.e. 14.66% among rural students and 19.33% among urban students. The same can be expressed with the help of the following graph-

Fig. 3: Graphical representation Test Anxiety level of students on the basis of locality



For studying the significance of the mean difference in Test Anxiety for urban and rural students, 't' test is applied and the result is shown in the following table-

Table 5: 't' test showing significance of Mean difference in Test Anxiety scores of the Higher Secondary students on the basis of locality

LOCALITY	N	Mean	SD	SE _d	t value	Level of significance
Urban	300	78.32	21.63	1.71	4.02	Significant at 0.01 level
Rural	300	71.45	20.19			

Our calculated 't' value is higher than the critical value at 0.01 level. Hence, it is significant at this level and thus, we reject our hypothesis here. Therefore, it can be said that there exists a significant difference between the students from urban and rural area regarding their test anxiety.

Objective 4: To study the difference in Test Anxiety of the Higher Secondary Students in relation to the management type of the school (Government / Private).

H₀₃: There exists no significant difference in Test Anxiety of Higher Secondary students in relation to the management type of the school (Government / Private).

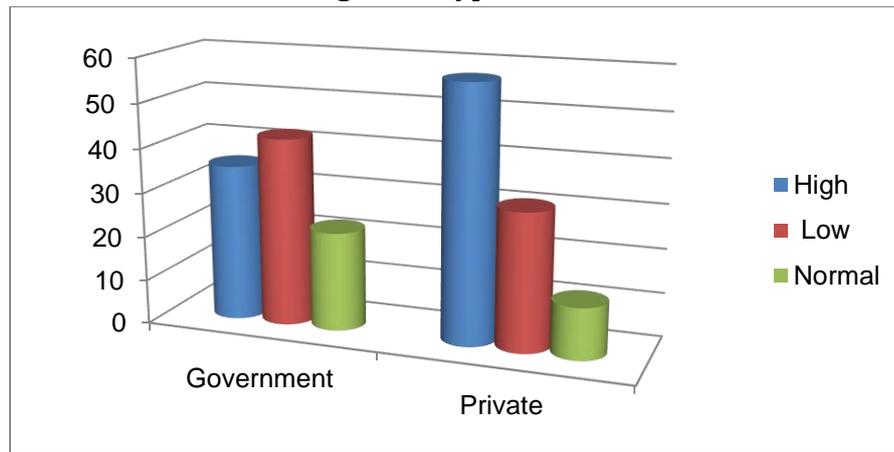
After collecting data for studying the levels of Test Anxiety of the Higher Secondary students in relation to management type of the institutions, i.e. Private or Government, the investigator found the following result-

Table 6: Level wise identification of students having Test Anxiety on the basis of the management type of the institution

MANAGEMENT TYPE	Level of Test Anxiety			Total
	HIGH	LOW	NORMAL	
Government	106 (35.33%)	127 (42.33%)	67 (22.33%)	300
Private	172 (57.33%)	93 (31%)	35 (11.66%)	300
Total	278	220	102	600

Different levels of Test Anxiety on the basis of their management type of the institutions can also be shown with the help of the following graphical representation-

Fig. 4: Graphical representation of level wise identification of students having Test Anxiety on the basis of the management types of the institutions



The table and the graphical representation of data roughly show that the level of Test Anxiety is much higher in students of private institutions (57.33%) than the students of government institutions (35.33%). Again in case of Low Test Anxiety, the number of government institutions' students is much higher (49.33%) than that of the private institutions' students (31%). Only a few students possess Normal Test Anxiety in both groups, i.e. only 11.66% in case of 'private' students and 22.33% in case of 'government' students.

After analyzing and interpreting the data, the investigator found that, for private institutions, the M is 82.31, SD is 21.43 and SE_M is 1.24. Again, for the students of government institutions, these values are 71.22, 20.11 and 1.16 respectively. For studying the significance of the mean difference in Test Anxiety for the students of private and government higher secondary schools, 't' test is applied and the result is shown in the following table-

Table 7: 't' test showing significance of Mean in Test Anxiety scores of the Higher Secondary students on the basis of management type of the institution

MANAGEMENT	N	Mean	SD	SE_D	t value	Level of significance
Private	300	82.31	21.43	1.84	4.76	Significant at 0.01 level
Government	300	71.22	20.11			

In the above mentioned table the computed t-value (4.76) is higher than the critical value at 0.01 level. Hence, it is significant and we can reject the null hypothesis. So, we can say that there is a significant difference in Test Anxiety among the students of Higher Secondary in relation to their management type of the institution (private/government).

Findings of the study:

On the basis of the analysis and interpretation data, the following major findings are obtained:

1. Levels of Test Anxiety of the Higher Secondary students

- The students having normal test anxiety are very less in number. Only 17% students possess this.
- 46.33% students possess high and 36.67% possess low level of test anxiety.

- Majority of the students are suffering from high test anxiety.

2. Test Anxiety in relation to gender

- Female students possess high test anxiety (60.33%) more than the male students (32.33%)
- Male students possess low test anxiety (45.33%) more than the female students (28%).
- The study reveals that there is a significant difference in test anxiety among higher secondary students on the basis of gender (male/female).

3. Test Anxiety in relation to locality

- High test anxiety is more in urban students (61%) than the Rural students (31.66%).
- 54.33% students from rural area have low test anxiety whereas only 19% urban students possess the same.
- There is negligible difference in normal test anxiety between rural and urban students.
- The study reveals that there is a significant difference in test anxiety among higher secondary students on the basis of locality (urban/rural).

4. Test Anxiety in relation to management type

- 57.33% students from Private institutions have High test anxiety whereas only 35.33% students from the Government institutions possess it.
- 42.33% students from Government and only 31% from the Private institutions possess low test anxiety.
- Regarding Normal test anxiety 22.33% students from Government institutions and 11.66% students from private institutions possess it.
- The study reveals that there is a significant difference in test anxiety among higher secondary students on the basis of management type (government/private).

Conclusion:

Test anxiety is a growing problem. It is growing at a faster rate among the Higher Secondary students which can paralyze the whole education system. The target of education is to bring development and not to develop any negativity among students. In the study we have found that urban students are experiencing more stress than the rural students. Again, girls possess more high anxiety than boys in tests. The study reveals that majority of the students possess high test anxiety which indicates a negative effect of modern education system and needs immediate attention and prevention.

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