CHAPTER VI

IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

6.0 Introduction

6.1 Implications and recommendations of the study

6.1.1 Concerning Academic Anxiety and Academic Achievement

6.1.2 Concerning Academic Motivation and Academic Achievement

6.1.3 Concerning the differences in Academic Anxiety between high and low achievers

6.1.4 Concerning the differences in Academic Motivation between high and low achievers

6.1.5 Concerning the sex difference in Academic Anxiety within high and low achievers

6.1.6 Concerning the sex difference in Academic Motivation within high and low achievers

6.1.7 Some measures to enhance Academic Achievement

6.2 Suggestions for further research
6.0 Introduction

On the basis of the findings and discussions of the previous chapter, some implications can be drawn that will be helpful for the educational practitioners and also some recommendations are put forward by the investigator in the light of the findings. The present chapter is dedicated to this purpose under the following headings:

i). Implications and recommendations of the study

ii). Suggestions for further research

6.1 Implications and Recommendations of the study

The findings of the present study have its implications for teachers, parents, educators, researchers, policy makers and other stakeholders in the field of education. The implications and recommendations of the study are subdivided into the following headings:

6.1.1 Concerning Academic Anxiety and Academic Achievement

a) Implications

The significant negative relationship between academic anxiety and academic achievement found in the present study implies that academic anxiety has a detrimental effect on the academic performance of the students which is a matter of concern. This finding has its implications for parents, teachers, administrators, policy makers and other stakeholders who should pay attention to the rising level of academic anxiety among the secondary school students in the present day competitive world and should try to trace out students having high academic anxiety and adopt measures to help them reduce their anxiety levels. Dove (2015\textsuperscript{100}) states that the rise of technology, overly-protective parenting and ‘exam factory’ schooling are among the reasons psychologist suggest for our generational angst. Huberty (2009\textsuperscript{101}) states that if properly addressed, test and performance anxiety can be significantly reduced in the school setting.


b) Recommendations

A few measures to reduce academic anxiety of the students are recommended below:

i) Attention and support

Students are anxious and fearful because of the authoritative nature of the teachers at school and parents at home. When students feel they were getting the attention and support of their parents and teachers, they feel less anxiety. So, if the children are provided proper attention and support and allowed to express their needs and problems, they will be less anxious and fearful in the academic situations.

ii) Good Study Habits

To develop good study habits the students should first identify their learning style and plan accordingly. The students should learn to be consistent in their studies and have regular, yet shorter study periods. They should study at the same time each day and each week. There should be a proper comfortable place free of distractions for the child to study and also a definite time should be fixed for him or her to study every day.

iii) Well Preparation for Exam

The students should be well prepared for exam that will reduce much of their anxieties and worries on test. They should study well in advance, organise material to be studied and learned, and take practice test. Examining past test papers can also help the students to prepare well for exams.

iv) Time Management

The students should be taught how to manage their time properly. They can make a schedule or time-table of their academic activities according to priority. Co-curricular activities also should be included along with academic activities because such activities help to release stress and anxieties. Studies have reported that better time management skills helps in reducing anxiety and improving academic performance of student.
v) Reducing Curriculum Load

The overloaded academic activities in the school, homework, tuitions and coaching classes of different kinds makes the students stressed and anxious and makes them lose the sense of joy in the learning process. The National Curriculum Framework (2000) has also addressed the problem of curriculum load on children and emphasised on learning without burden. In a study by Sansgiry and Sail (2006), test anxiety was positively correlated with students’ perceptions of course load and negatively related to their ability to manage time with course work.

vi) Understanding the Signs and Symptoms of Anxiety

Most of the anxious behaviour of the students are unrecognized and left untreated. If the teachers at school and parents at home can understand the signs and symptoms of anxious behaviour of the children, they can be helped to overcome their problems. Minahan (2012) states that educating teachers about anxiety and the behavioural signs they may see in the classroom makes this invisible disability easier to detect and understand.

vii) Relaxation Techniques

The students can be exposed to relaxation techniques in the school or at home like yoga and mindful meditation courses which will help them to cope with anxious situations in the academic environment. These relaxation techniques will help them to calm their mind and release their worries and apprehensions. In a pilot study conducted by Beauchemin, Hutchins & Pattersa (2008), a 5-week mindfulness meditation intervention was administered to 34 adolescents and all outcome measures showed significant improvement, with participants who completed the program demonstrated decreased state and trait anxiety, enhanced social skills and improved academic performance.

---

6.1.2 Concerning Academic Motivation and Academic Achievement

a) Implications

Another implication of the study is a significant positive correlation found between academic motivation and academic achievement, which shows the importance of motivation in enhancing the scholastic performance of students. The youths of today often lacks academic motivation as their attention is diverted and divided among many things like peer group, fashion and incessant entertainment or the academic activities at school are not engaging. Thus, understanding the prevalence of lack of academic motivation among the secondary school students becomes imperative for teachers and parents to undertake steps to enhance the academic motivation of the students and their academic performance. Students face many difficulties that make it difficult for them to sustain motivation in their educational lives. Lack of motivation among students today is probably the result of several causes (Renchler, 1992). The absence of academic motivation can lead to feelings of frustration and discontentment and can encumber productivity and well-being (Legault et al, 2006).

b) Recommendations

In the light of the findings a few recommendations on enhancing the academic motivation of the students are given below:

i) Needs and Interest of the students

The needs and interest of the students should be taken into consideration because an individual is motivated when his or her needs are satisfied. It is only when children see a purpose in what they are doing that we can expect their whole-hearted participation. So, the curriculum should be framed relating to the needs and interest of the child and also related with the real-life situations and experiences of the child. Mouly (1968) states that the teacher can provide moral support to the child who is frustrated by the demands of school, a change of work for the child who is bored, special projects for the child whose interest have not yet been tapped by the school’s routine. The teacher will have to keep a

---

nice balance between difficulty and ease of material so that the child is neither frustrated nor bored.

**ii) Activity-based learning**

The academic task or teaching-learning process in the school should be activity based that will arouse the curiosity and interest of the learner. If the academic activities are boring, tedious, uninteresting the students will not be motivated. The unappealing characteristics of the academic task may indeed lead to academic disengagement. The teacher can make the academic work activity-based by making the students indulge in hands-on activities, group work, relating the content with the students’ life experiences and interest by taking them to field trips and excursions.

**iii) Reinforcement**

Research studies indicate that the more teachers praise, reward and encourage children for their academic work, the more the children will expect to succeed and the harder they will try (Thapa et al, 2008108). The teacher can motivate the child by manipulating incentives and goals that will induce the child to learn or act to reach the desired goal. When students are positively reinforced after completing a task they are motivated to learn more when similar situation arises.

**iv) Social Support**

Academic Motivation of the students is strongly influenced by key social agents i.e. teachers, parents and friends in the students environment. Research supports the conclusion that students motivation benefits if teachers and parents support their autonomy and competence. Legault et al (2006109) states that students who perceive their social support network (e.g., parents and teachers) as

---


supporting and fuelling their autonomy and competence are more intrinsically motivated at school.

**v) Child-centred approach**

The child-centred approach focuses on allowing the child to learn at his or her own pace and giving more freedom to the child and the teacher should be more of a facilitator in the learning process. The teacher should adjust the classroom instruction according to the needs, abilities and readiness of the child and also physical, mental and social maturation of the child. Wentzel and Wigfield (1998)\(^\text{110}\) states that teachers’ instructional practices as well as the quality of their interpersonal interactions with students appear to make critical contributions to students’ motivation and performance.

**vi) Use of teaching aids and devices**

Use of relevant teaching aids and devices are very helpful in the development of motivation among the students. Teachers can use models, pictures, charts, maps, tape recorders, PowerPoint etc relating to the content being taught and the students also should be involved in the use of these aids that will motivate and engage them in the learning process and also all the senses are involved in the use of aids and devices that keeps learning in the memory for a longer period of time.

**6.1.3 Concerning the differences in Academic Anxiety between high and low achievers**

**a) Implications**

The significant difference in Academic Anxiety between high and low achievers, with the low achievers group having higher levels of academic anxiety implies the amount of anxiety the low achievers goes through in the academic situations at school which affects their performance. This finding has implications for teachers, parents and school administrators who can take adequate steps to remove the situations that make the low achievers more academically anxious.

b) Recommendations

A few measures for helping the low achievers to reduce their anxiety are given below:

i) Unbiased Classroom

The high and low achievers should be treated equally in the classroom by the teacher which will help the low achievers overcome their fears and anxieties. They should be made to express their apprehensions and worries that will help the teachers to find out the reasons behind their problems in the academic situations.

ii) Supportive and Democratic Environment

The teachers and parents should be supportive and provide a democratic environment which will help the low achievers to overcome their fears and anxieties towards the teachers, towards certain subjects, test-anxiety and the academic environment in general. Research shows that when students get the attention and support of their teachers and parents they develop better self-concept and self-efficacy and are less anxious and perform better.

iii) Teaching Study Skills

The low achievers can be oriented with study skills such as organizational skills, practice exercises and study guides that will help them to prepare well in advance and reduce much of their worries.

iv) Set realistic, attainable goals

The teachers and parents should set realistic, attainable goals and expectations for the low achieving child. They should not be overburdened with high expectations and goals that are beyond their capability. The low achievers may be capable in other co-curricular activities that interest them more than the academic activities.

v) Relaxation Techniques

The low achievers can be taught yoga and mindful meditation courses to relax their anxious mind. The schools can also organise personality development courses to give more practical exposure to the low achievers.
6.1.4 Concerning the differences in Academic Motivation between high and low achievers

a) Implications

Another implication of the study is a significant difference in Academic Motivation between high and low Achievers, with the low achievers group having lower academic motivation than the high achievers. Hence the teachers and parents should try to find out the reasons behind the lack of motivation towards their academics among the low achievers and take measures to bring them back to the track and develop interest and motivation so that they can perform better.

b) Recommendations

A few measures to motivate the low achievers are given below:

i) Attention and Support

The low achievers should be paid special attention in the classroom by the teacher and parents at home. Dunne and Dyson (2007) states that low achievers have low self-esteem, poor concentration and are emotionally immature. The teachers agreed that low-attaining pupils took longer to complete activities, and were less able to work independently, often needing more attention and teacher support.

ii) Engaging Classroom Activities

To motivate the low achievers, classroom activities should be engaging. The teacher can conduct small group discussions among the students, make them work on some projects or group presentations. The teacher can also use audio-visual aids and devices in the classroom that will draw their attention and also involve them in the use of these aids and devices that will retain the content learnt in their memory for a longer period of time.

iii) Positive Reinforcement

Developing positive self-concept and use of positive reinforcement by the teacher will help the low achievers to get motivated towards their academics.

---

The teacher can praise, give encouraging or favourable comments to a child when he or she is doing well. Sorenson (1964\(^{112}\)) states that positive reinforcement has a favourable effect not only on learning but also on the mental health of the learner. The students also should be given feedback of how they are doing, that will motivate them to work harder and better.

iv) Favourable Home Environment

Research findings shows that an academically favourable home environment is likely to enhance the child’s motivation to achieve academic success which in turn will contribute to good performance in school (Moula, 2010\(^{113}\)). It is recommended that parents should give encouragement and proper learning facilities to the low achieving child at home.

v) Parent-Teacher meeting

The schools should organise parent-teacher meeting very often and orient the parents on giving proper guidance to their wards because it is found that often the children from the low achievers group are from home backgrounds where there is no proper parental guidance, poor socio-economic background and lack of proper infrastructural facilities.

vi) Self-regulated learning strategies

Students can be encouraged to adopt self-regulated learning strategies because research shows that self-regulated strategy use is more strongly related to a positive motivational orientation for the low achieving students. Self regulated learning is the conscious planning, monitoring, evaluation and ultimately control of one’s learning in order to maximize it (Nilson, 2014\(^{114}\)).


6.1.5 Concerning the sex difference in Academic Anxiety within high and low achievers

a) Implications

The study found a significant sex difference in Academic Anxiety within high and low achievers, where females were found to be more academically anxious than the males in both the high and low achievers group. This finding implies that females are more nervous, worried and apprehensive of the stressful events in the academic environment. Thus, the teachers at school and parents at home should be conscious of the higher levels of academic anxiety faced by the females and pay special attention and support to them.

b) Recommendations

In the light of the findings, a few suggestions are given below that might help the female students in overcoming their anxieties:

i) Reducing Gender Bias

There should not be any gender bias in the classroom and also at home. Both male and female should be treated equally involving all the students in the learning process and avoiding gender stereotyping.

ii) Special orientation programmes

Teachers and parents should be supportive of the dreams and aspirations of the female students and special orientation programmes should be organised for them to build up their confidence. They should be allowed to express themselves and can be given counselling accordingly.

iii) Leisure time activities

The female students should be given proper opportunities to indulge in leisure time activities like sports, exercises and other hobbies that help to release stress and anxiety.

iv) Relaxation Techniques

They can also be exposed to relaxation techniques like mindful meditation, yoga asanas and cognitive behavioural therapies, which will help them to calm their mind and release their stress and anxieties. In a study
conducted by Kang, Choi, and Ryu (2008), found that a stress coping program based on mindfulness meditation was an effective intervention for female nursing students to decrease their stress and anxiety and could be used to manage stress.

6.1.6 Concerning the sex difference in Academic Motivation within high and low achievers

a) Implications

Another finding of the study is a significant sex difference in Academic Motivation within low achievers, where males were found to have lower academic motivation than females. This finding has implications for teachers and parents to help the males in the low achievers group in getting interested and motivated towards their academics. Might be the males in the low achievers group gets more distracted and interested to the incessant entertainment, peer groups and other activities than the academic activities. The females in the low achievers group should also be helped because although they are motivated towards their academics the higher level of anxiety might be interfering with their performance.

b) Recommendations

A few measures that might help the male students to get motivated towards academics are given below:

i) Making Academic Activities Interesting

To bring the low achieving males back to track the teachers and parents should make the academic activities interesting by relating the academic activities with their needs and interest and relating with real life situations. Research shows that male students are motivated when they are given choice, access to appealing materials, project-driven works, and given goals and recognition. Thus, the teachers and parents can incorporate these components to motivate the low achieving male students.

ii) Teaching Study Skills

The low achieving males can be taught proper study skills. The teacher should try to find out the learning style of the child to better understand what works for him. They should be taught to set up a schedule of study, manage time properly, organise work, take good notes and review notes on a regular basis.

iii) Positive and Open Academic Environment

The teacher should create a positive and open environment in the classroom that will help the low achieving male students to express their academic problems. Research shows that students learns best in a safe and positive environment and also helps in shaping the learning and behaviour of students.

iv) Physical Activities

Research shows that physical activities such as running and jumping keep the male students brain developing in healthy ways that promotes learning. So, they can be made to explore, touch and manipulate things that will help them develop the skills that are needed to be successful in school.

6.1.7 Some measures to enhance Academic Achievement

a) Implications

The present study found that (about 55.78%) are low achievers, indicating that majority of the students are underachievers which implies the graveness of the situation. It appears that children are suffering from high academic anxiety and low academic motivation which is evident from the present study. Thus, this finding has implications for teachers, parents, school administrators and other stakeholders in the field of education to take note of the low level of academic achievement of the secondary school students and also take measures to reduce the factors affecting their performance.

b) Recommendations

A few measures are suggested below for enhancing the academic achievement of the students.
i) Building congenial Academic Climate

According to Thapa et al (2008)\textsuperscript{116}, failure to realize their true academic potential is estimated to occur in at least 25 percent of school children. Academic underachievement is a disparity between capacity and performance in which students receive lower grades than they are intellectually capable of learning. So, the schools should create a congenial atmosphere in the classroom and in the school environment as a whole so that the students feel secure and free which will enable them to show their true academic potential.

ii) Effective Teaching

The most important factor affecting student learning is the teacher. If the teacher is ineffective, students under the teachers’ guidance will show inadequate progress academically regardless of how similar or different they are regarding their academic achievement (Wright et al, 1997)\textsuperscript{117}. So, teachers can play a vital role in creating an environment that encourages learning and hence improving academic performance. A positive student-teacher relationship should be developed that will motivate the child to learn and will also remove their fears and anxieties that might be suppressing their true academic potential.

iii) Parental Involvement

The family has a major role to play in facilitating the achievements of students. Parental involvement is an important factor in student achievement. Schools must take the lead in teaching parents basic parenting skills and to improve their skills in facilitating their children’s academic performance. A number of studies show that parental involvement is associated positively with academic performance of the child.

iv) Academic Guidance and Counselling

School counsellors and psychologist should be appointed in every school who can teach the students study skills, help students overcome the


influence of emotional problems and work with the parents to deal with the student’s academic difficulties. The Education Commission (1964-66) has also recommended establishment of Guidance and Counselling Centre in every school. In a study conducted by Dandapani (2003\textsuperscript{118}), significant gains in academic achievement were found among a group of high-school underachievers by a programme of group guidance and counselling.

v) Motivation

a) Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic Motivation refers to doing an activity for the inherent satisfaction of the activity itself. When the students are inherently motivated they derive pleasure and satisfaction in participating in the work. So, the teachers and parents should try to make the students intrinsically motivated by giving them autonomy and support and make them work according to their interest and abilities that will draw out the full potential in them.

b) Extrinsic Motivation

Extrinsic Motivation is related to behaviour that is not done for its own sake but for external reasons like rewards and punishment. Not all activities can be intrinsically motivated. Sometimes the students have to be extrinsically motivated through some rewards and punishment, but these have to be used judiciously.

vi) Focus on Individual and Cultural differences

Individual and cultural differences of the students should be taken into consideration. According to Huitt (1997\textsuperscript{119}), there are a variety of individual differences that must be of concern to classroom teachers. Some of the most prominent are academic ability (or intelligence), achievement level, gender, learning style and ethnicity and culture. Classroom grouping, cooperative learning, individualised instruction, mastery learning etc. are different approaches for dealing with individual differences among students.

6.2 Suggestions for further study

The present study investigated into the academic achievement in relation to academic anxiety and academic motivation of Class IX students of Kamrup Metropolitan District of Lower Assam. But the study has its own delimitations pertaining to the sample, tools used and design. The sample chosen was confined only to secondary school students of Kamrup Metropolitan District of Lower Assam. Hence the following suggestions may be offered for prospective researchers.

i. Academic Anxiety and Academic Motivation of primary school students can be investigated as not much research has been done on anxiety and motivational levels of elementary school students. Research shows that anxious behaviour and lack of motivation takes its roots from the elementary level of schooling.

ii. The study can be further extended to find out the differences in academic anxiety, academic motivation and achievement between rural-urban, tribal-nontribal students, private-government schools and also students of different socio-economic strata.

iii. Another study can be conducted on the academic anxiety and motivation of students at the university level and also on research scholars.

iv. Qualitative methods like case studies, observations and interviews may also be used to find out the causes of anxiety and lack of motivation among the students towards their academics to further validate the findings of the present quantitative study.