A STUDY OF THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN RELATION TO ACADEMIC ANXIETY AND ACADEMIC MOTIVATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS OF LOWER ASSAM

ABSTRACT

OF THESIS

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1. Introduction

Human beings are naturally motivated to learn and to achieve. All human actions are directed towards the achievement of a particular goal. A baby’s struggles to reach for a toy, to learn to walk or talk are examples of natural motivation to learn. But this natural motivation of human beings to achieve their goals is hampered by a lot of hurdles and contradictions, which demotivates them and makes them anxious and frustrated.

In the academic context too, children are naturally motivated to school-related activities such as reading and writing. But something gets in the way of their natural motivation and that affects their academic performance. They believe that they cannot do well in school-related task, becomes easily frustrated and gives up when learning is difficult (Brown & Keith, 1998\(^1\)). Thus, the academic performance which is of paramount importance in a student’s life is affected by number of factors and which hampers in drawing out the true potential in them.

The school is a formal agency of education and all the activities that take place in the school are evaluated through the academic performance of the students. Academic Achievement of the students is the end result of all the academic endeavours that has taken place in the school with the collective responsibilities of the teachers, principals, administrators and parents. The achievements of each student is assessed by the percentage of marks obtained by him/her at the end of an academic year and are denoted as high-achievers, average-achievers and low-achievers. Quality of academic performance has become the key factor for personal progress. Parents desire that their children climb the ladder of academic performance to as high a level as possible. In fact, it appears as if the whole system of education revolves round the academic achievement of students, though various other outcomes are also expected from the system. Thus a lot of time and effort of the schools are used for helping students to achieve better in their scholastic endeavours (Padma, 1983-88\(^2\)). Moreover, these expectations of parents and school authorities also put a lot of

pressure on children for higher achievement as a result of which children start suffering from academic anxiety and these continuous situations of stress and anxiety demotivates them towards their academics.

2. Need and Justification of the study

Education plays a very vital role in building a society. But the effectiveness of any educational system is gauged to the extent the pupils involved in the system achieve. There are a host of factors that affects the academic achievement of a child like personality variables, curricular variables, school and teacher variables, home environment variables, societal variables and so on. Studies reveal that many intelligent persons are underachievers while some persons of average intelligence achieve much higher than what is expected from them. So, the question arises as to why such differences in achievement appear when schools provide more or less uniform instructional facilities? And how to detect and control these factors? So, it is of great necessity that for better performance in academic life the responsible factors are detected and controlled.

Academics are the major source of tension amongst the youth nowadays. In today’s competitive world, it is not uncommon to find academic achievement playing the most important role in a child’s life. Being academically successful and making a place for oneself in the society is their priority. Also at the secondary school level, the students reach the adolescence stage which is considered a period of storm and stress and developmental changes which makes their interest and attention divided among many things like peer groups, engaging in entertaining activities like movies, social networking, outings or other everyday activities in the school and community. They may also find the academic activities in the schools not engaging and interesting. Due to the high need and desire to achieve academically on one hand, and getting diverted from academic efforts, creates a situation of continuous stress and anxiety for the adolescents.

A number of studies have been conducted to study the variables which affect academic achievement. Researchers generally have studied the influence of the variables of socio-economic status, personality and intelligence on academic achievement of school children. But very few studies could be found where the researchers have studied the influence of the variables of academic anxiety and
academic motivation. Taking due consideration of these facts, there aroused a
need to conduct a study on the academic achievement of secondary school
students in relation to their Academic Anxiety and Academic Motivation.

3. Statement of the Problem
On the basis of the brief introduction, need and significance and reviews
described above the problem under study is specifically titled as follows,

“A Study of the Academic Achievement in relation to Academic Anxiety and
Academic Motivation of Secondary School Students of Lower Assam”

4. Operational Definition of the Key Terms Used

The Present Study involves the following key terms which are operationally
defined as follows:

a) Academic Achievement

It is the outcome of instructions provided to the children in schools which is
determined by grades or marks secured by the students in the District Board
Examination of Assam state at Class IX level. It is the measure of knowledge
gained in formal education generally indicated by test-scores.

i) High Achievers

High Achievers are those students who receive 60% or above marks in their
class IX District Board Final Examination

ii) Low Achievers

Low achievers are those students who receive marks below 45% in their class
IX District Board Final Examination

b) Academic Anxiety

Academic Anxiety is a kind of state anxiety which relates to the impending
danger from the environment of the academic institutions including teachers,
certain subjects like Mathematics, English, Science etc and also test-anxiety.
c) Academic Motivation

Academic Motivation is the driving force behind student’s motivation to learn. It is the need and desire to excel in academic work and one’s determination to succeed in academic studies.

5. Objectives of the Study

The following objectives were formulated for the present study

i) To find out the Academic Anxiety, Academic Motivation and Academic Achievement of Class IX students.

ii) To study the relationship between Academic Anxiety and Academic Achievement of Class IX students.

iii) To study the relationship between Academic Motivation and Academic Achievement of Class IX students.

iv) To find out the relationship between Academic Anxiety and Academic Achievement of Class IX students when the effect of Academic Motivation is partialled out.

v) To find out the relationship between Academic Motivation and Academic Achievement of Class IX students when the effect of Academic Anxiety is partialled out.

vi) To find out the multiple correlation between Academic Achievement and the two variables of Academic Anxiety and Academic Motivation taken together.

vii) To study the differences in Academic Anxiety between high and low achievers of Class IX students.

viii) To study the differences in Academic Motivation between high and low achievers of Class IX students.

ix) To find out the sex differences in the Academic Anxiety within high and low achievers of Class IX students.
x) To find out the sex differences in the Academic Motivation within high and low achievers of Class IX students.

6. Hypotheses of the Study

For the present study the following null hypotheses were formulated

i) There is no significant relationship between Academic Anxiety and Academic Achievement of Class IX students.

ii) There is no significant relationship between Academic Motivation and Academic Achievement of Class IX students.

iii) There is no significant relationship between Academic Anxiety and Academic Achievement of Class IX students when the effect of Academic Motivation is partialled out.

iv) There is no significant relationship between Academic Motivation and Academic Achievement of Class IX students when the effect of Academic Anxiety is partialled out.

v) There is no significant multiple correlation between Academic Achievement and the two variables of Academic Anxiety and Academic Motivation taken together.

vi) There is no significant difference in Academic Anxiety between high and low achievers of Class IX students.

vii) There is no significant difference in Academic Motivation between high and low achievers of Class IX students.

viii) There is no significant sex difference in the Academic Anxiety within high and low achievers of Class IX students.

ix) There is no significant sex difference in the Academic Motivation within high and low achievers of Class IX students.
7. Delimitation of the Study

a) The Study is delimited to the Class IX students studying in the secondary schools of Kamrup Metropolitan District of Lower Assam.

b) The Study is also delimited to Government and Private Secondary Schools of Kamrup Metropolitan District of Lower Assam, under Secondary Education Board of Assam (SEBA).

8. Design of the Study

The present study is designed as follows

i) Population

The population for the present study consist of all the students studying in Class IX in the Government and Private secondary schools of Kamrup Metropolitan District, Lower Assam. The Kamrup Metropolitan District has a total of 197 secondary schools out of which 87 are government and 110 are private schools. The total enrolment in Class IX in these schools was approximately 19,892 for the year 2014.

ii) Sample

The sample for the present study consist of 995 students (500 males and 495 females) of Class IX which is selected randomly by giving a fair representation to all private and government secondary schools situated in different blocks under rural areas and different wards under urban areas.

iii) Tools Used

The following tools were used for the present study

b) Academic Achievement Motivation Test by T.R. Sharma (2006)4

iv) Procedure of Data Collection

The data was collected by

a) Administering the tools mentioned above on the sample drawn.

b) Marks obtained by the students in their Class IX district board examination (2014-15) was collected from the respective schools.

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v) **Statistical Technique Used**

The present study was analysed using the following statistical techniques

a) Pearson’s Coefficient of Correlation  
b) Partial Correlation  
c) Multiple Correlation  
d) T-test  
e) Percentage

9. **Analysis and Interpretation of Data**

The collected data was analysed and interpreted as follows

9.1 **Status of Academic Anxiety, Academic Motivation and Academic Achievement of Class IX Students.**

The status of Academic Anxiety, Academic Motivation and Academic Achievement of Class IX Students was analysed in terms of percentages and the findings are as follows:

(a) **Status of Academic Anxiety**

i) Most of the students i.e. 48% (Male), 58.99% (Female) and 53.47% (Total sample) fall in the category of High Academic Anxiety.

ii) While 13% (Male), 9.69% (Female) and 11.36% (Total Sample) students fall in the category of Average Academic Anxiety.

iii) About 39% (Male), 31.32% (Female) and 35.17% (Total Sample) students fall in the category of Low Academic Anxiety.

(b) **Status of Academic Motivation**

i) Majority of the students i.e. 52.6% (Male), 59.19% (Female) and 55.88% (Total Sample) were found to have Average Academic Motivation.

ii) While a good number of students i.e. 38.2% (Male), 35.15 % (Female) and 36.69% (Total Sample) fall under the category of Low Academic Motivation.

iii) There are only 9.2 % (Male), 5.65% (Female) and 7.43% (Total Sample) students who have High Academic Motivation.
(c) Status of Academic Achievement

i) Majority of the students i.e. 53.6% (Male), 57.98% (Female) and 55.78% (Total sample) falls in the category of Low Achievers.

ii) There are only 23.6% (Male), 20% (Female), and 21.81% (Total Sample) students who are High Achievers.

iii) There are 22.8% (Male), 22.02% (Female) and 22.41% (Total Sample) students in the Average Achievement Category.

9.2 Relationship between Academic Anxiety and Academic Achievement of Class IX students

To study the relationship between Academic Anxiety and Academic Achievement, the following null hypothesis was formulated.

Hypothesis No.1

“There is no significant relationship between Academic Anxiety and Academic Achievement of Class IX students”

The analysis showed that the value of r is negative and significant at 0.01 level for male, female and total sample and therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. It indicates that there is a significant negative relationship between Academic Anxiety and Academic Achievement. It means that the higher the academic anxiety, the lower will be the academic achievement and lower the Academic Anxiety, higher will be the Academic Achievement. This is true for both male and female students.

9.3 Relationship between Academic Motivation and Academic Achievement of Class IX students

To study the relationship between Academic Motivation and Academic Achievement, the following null hypothesis was formulated.

Hypothesis No.2

“There is no significant relationship between Academic Motivation and Academic Achievement of Class IX students”.
The analysis showed that the value of r is significant at 0.01 level for male, female and the total sample and therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. It indicates that there is a significant relationship between Academic Motivation and Academic Achievement. It means that the higher the Academic Motivation, the higher will be the Academic Achievement, and the lower the Academic Motivation; lower will be the Academic Achievement. This is true for both male and female students.

9.4 Relationship between Academic Anxiety and Academic Achievement of Class IX students when the effect of Academic Motivation is partialled out

Hypothesis no. 3

There is no significant relationship between Academic Anxiety and Academic Achievement of Class IX students when the effect of Academic Motivation is partialled out

The analysis showed that there is a significant negative relationship between academic anxiety and academic achievement when the effect of academic motivation is partialled out. It indicates that academic anxiety of the students is negatively related with academic achievement when the influence of academic motivation is controlled. It means higher the academic anxiety, lower the academic achievement and lower the academic anxiety, higher the academic achievement.

If we compare this result with the earlier findings with regards to the correlation between academic anxiety and academic achievement (under hypothesis no.1) we find that there is not much difference between the two findings. It shows that the relationship between academic anxiety and academic achievement remains almost the same even when the influence of academic motivation is controlled.
9.5 Relationship between Academic Motivation and Academic Achievement of Class IX students when the effect of Academic Anxiety is partialled out

**Hypothesis No. 4**

There is no significant relationship between Academic Motivation and Academic Achievement of Class IX students when the effect of Academic Anxiety is partialled out.

The analysis showed that there is a significant positive relationship between academic motivation and academic achievement when the effect of academic anxiety is partialled out. It indicates that academic motivation of the students greatly influences their academic achievement when the influence of academic anxiety is controlled. It means higher the academic motivation, higher will be the academic achievement and lower the academic motivation, lower will be the academic achievement.

If we compare this result with the earlier findings with regards to the correlation between academic motivation and academic achievement (under hypothesis no.2) we find that there is not much difference between the two findings. It shows that the relationship between academic motivation and academic achievement remains almost the same even when the influence of academic anxiety is controlled.

9.6 Multiple Correlation between Academic Achievement and the two variables of Academic Anxiety and Academic Motivation of Class IX students

**Hypothesis No.5:**

There is no significant multiple correlation between Academic Achievement and the two variables of Academic Anxiety and Academic Motivation of Class IX students.

The analysis showed that as the calculated F value is greater than the table value of F, it is significant at 0.01 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. It means that there is a significant multiple correlation between Academic Achievement and the two variables of Academic Anxiety and Academic Motivation of the students taken together. It indicates that the
variables of Academic Anxiety and Academic Motivation taken together greatly influence the Academic Achievement of the students.

9.7 Differences in Academic Anxiety between high and low achievers of Class IX students.

To analyse the differences in Academic Anxiety between high and low achievers, the following null hypothesis was formulated.

Hypothesis no. 6

There is no significant difference in Academic Anxiety between high and low achievers of Class IX students.

The analysis showed that the computed value of r was significant at 0.01 level of significance. It indicates that there is a significant difference in Academic Anxiety between high and low achievers of class IX students. The mean difference of 1.52 is in favour of low achievers, indicating that low achievers have higher academic anxiety as compared to high achievers.

9.8 Differences in Academic Motivation between high and low achievers of Class IX students.

To analyse the differences in Academic Motivation between high and low achievers, the following null hypothesis was formulated.

Hypothesis No. 7

There is no significant difference in Academic Motivation between high and low achievers of Class IX students.

The analysis revealed that the computed value of r was significant at 0.01 level of significance. It indicates that there is a significant difference in Academic Motivation between high and low achievers of class IX students. The mean difference of 1.49 is in favour of high achievers, indicating that high achievers have higher academic motivation as compared to low achievers.
9.9 Sex differences in Academic Anxiety within high and low achievers of Class IX students.

To study the sex difference in Academic Anxiety within high and low achievers of Class IX students the following null hypothesis was formulated:

**Hypothesis No. 8**

**There is no significant sex difference in Academic Anxiety within high and low achievers of Class IX students.**

To test this hypothesis, mean and standard deviation for academic anxiety were calculated with respect to high and low achievers among male and female students and the value of mean difference (D) and t-value were calculated.

a) The analysis for the difference between male and female students towards academic anxiety within higher achievers showed that there is a significant difference between male and female students within high achievers with respect to academic anxiety. The mean difference of 1.04 is in favour of females indicating that females have higher academic anxiety than males within high achievers.

b) The analysis for the difference between male and female students towards academic anxiety within low achievers showed that there is a significant difference between male and female students within low achievers with respect to academic anxiety. The mean difference of 0.74 is in favour of females, indicating that females have higher academic anxiety than males within low achievers.

9.10 Sex Difference in Academic Motivation within high and low achievers of class IX students.

To study the sex difference in Academic Motivation within high and low achievers of Class IX students the following null hypothesis was formulated:

**Hypothesis No. 9**

**There is no significant sex difference in Academic Motivation within high and low achievers of Class IX students.**
To test this hypothesis, mean and standard deviation for academic motivation were calculated with respect to high and low achievers among male and female students and then the value of mean difference (D) and t-value were calculated.

a) The analysis for the difference between male and female students towards academic motivation within higher achievers showed that there is no significant difference between male and female students within high achievers with respect to academic motivation. It indicates that the sex of the students within high achievers does not influence their academic motivation. Both male and female students are equally motivated towards their academics in the high achievers group.

b) The analysis for the difference between male and female students towards academic motivation within low achievers showed that there is a significant difference between male and female students within low achievers with respect to academic motivation. The mean difference of 1.82 is in favour of females, indicating that females have higher academic motivation than males within low achievers.

10. Findings, Discussions and Conclusions

The findings, discussions and conclusions of the present study are summarized as under:

10.1 Status of Academic Anxiety, Academic Motivation and Academic Achievement of Class IX students.

The findings of the study with regards to status of academic anxiety, academic motivation and academic achievement of Class IX students are as follows:

(a) Status of Academic Anxiety

Majority of the students (53.46%) were found to have high academic anxiety. A very few number of students (11.36%) falls in the category of average academic anxiety and a good number of them (35.18%) were found to have low academic anxiety.

The above findings support the findings of Mahato and Jangir (2012), and Deb et al (2010). Thus, it can be inferred from the above findings that the
students’ anxiety towards their academics is a real and a pressing problem in the present day world.

**b) Status of Academic Motivation**

Majority (55.88%) were found to have average academic motivation. While a good number of students (36.69%) were found to have low academic motivation. Only a very few number of students (7.43%) were found to have high academic motivation.

The above findings support the findings of Krishnamurthy (2000). Hence from the above discussion, we can infer that a good number of secondary school students lack academic motivation. This may be because at the secondary school level, the students reach the adolescence stage which is considered a period of storm and stress and developmental changes which makes their interest and attention divided among many things like peer groups, engaging in entertaining activities like movies, social networking, outings or other everyday activities in the school and community.

**c) Status of Academic Achievement**

Majority of the students (55.78%) falls in the category of low achievers, while a few (21.81%) falls in the category of high achievers and (22.41%) falls in the category of average achievers.

The above finding goes in consonant with the findings of Lamare (2012) and Jayaraj (2014). Hence it can be inferred from the above discussion that the majority of the students are having low academic achievement and it is a cause of concern. A host of cognitive factors like intelligence, attention, memory, reasoning, scholastic aptitude and non-cognitive factors like anxiety, motivation, self-concept, study habits, self-regulation etc affects the academic performance of the students.

10.2 **Relationship between Academic Anxiety and Academic Achievement of Class IX students.**

It is found from the present study that there is a significant negative relationship between academic achievement and academic anxiety of Class IX students,
which is true for both male and female students. The above findings are in consonant with the findings of Yousefi et al (2010), Ergene (2011), Mokashi et al (2012), Iroegbu (2013), Kumar (2013), Das et al (2014), Tugan (2015). From the above discussion, we can infer that when the students are highly anxious or apprehensive towards the environment of the academic institution including the teacher, certain subjects like mathematics, English etc or towards examination, they develop feelings of distress and fearfulness, finds it difficult to concentrate while studying and remembering information which negatively affects their academic performance.

10.3 Relationship between Academic Motivation and Academic Achievement of Class IX students

It is found from the present study that there is a significant relationship between academic motivation and academic achievement of Class IX students, which is true for both male and female students. The above findings are in consonant with the earlier findings of Gottfried (1985), Tripaity (1990), Fortier et al (1995), Krishnamurthi (2000), Dubey (2010), Amrai et al (2011), Kumar (2013), Momanyi et al (2015). When the students have high academic motivation, they concentrate more in the classroom, have better study habits, are more persistent, put forth more effort and as a result they perform better in the exam.

10.4 Relationship between Academic Anxiety and Academic Achievement of Class IX students when the effect of Academic Motivation is partialled out

The study found a significant negative relationship between academic anxiety and academic achievement when the effect of academic motivation is partialled out. It indicates that academic anxiety of the students is negatively related with academic achievement even when the influence of academic motivation is controlled. In a study by Ismail et al (1985), a significant correlation was found between locus of control, cognitive style, anxiety and academic achievement while partialling out general intellectual ability. In the present study too, it can be concluded that true negative relationship between
academic anxiety and academic achievement still exists even after partialling out academic motivation.

10.5 Relationship between Academic Motivation and Academic Achievement of Class IX students when Academic Anxiety is partialled out

It is found from the study that there is a significant relationship between academic motivation and academic achievement when the effect of academic anxiety is partialled out. It indicates that academic motivation of the students greatly influences their academic achievement even when the influence of academic anxiety is controlled. In a study by Srivastava (1982), a true relationship between academic motivation and academic achievement was found even after partialling out the effect of intelligence and socio-economic status. In the present study too, it can be inferred that academic motivation still contributes to academic achievement even after eliminating the effect of academic anxiety.

10.6 Multiple correlation between Academic Achievement and the two variables of Academic Anxiety and Academic Motivation of Class IX students.

It is found from the present study that there is a significant multiple correlation of Academic Achievement with the two variables of Academic Anxiety and Academic Motivation of the students taken together. It indicates that the variables of Academic Anxiety and Academic Motivation taken together greatly influence the Academic Achievement of the students. The above findings are in consonance with the findings of Khalaila (2015), who found that intrinsic motivation moderates the negative effect of test anxiety on academic achievement. Therefore, inferences can be drawn that when the students have high academic anxiety but at the same time if they are motivated towards their academics, the motivation moderates their anxiety level and that has a positive effect on the academic performance.
10.7 Differences in Academic Anxiety between high and low achievers of Class IX students.

The present study found that there is a significant difference in Academic Anxiety between high and low achievers of Class IX students. As the difference is in favour of low achievers, it indicates that low achievers have higher academic anxiety as compared to high achievers. The above finding goes in consonant with the earlier findings of Khalid and Hasan (2009), Ajwani and Sharma (2014), who found that high achievers experience less test anxiety as compared to low achievers. Hence from the above discussion it can be concluded that the low achievers experience higher levels of anxiety that makes them fearful of the academic environment, towards certain subjects like maths, science, english or towards the teacher and also towards examination that negatively affects their performance.

10.8 Differences in Academic Motivation between high and low achievers of Class IX students.

The present study found that there is a significant difference in Academic Motivation between high and low achievers of Class IX students. As the difference is in favour of high achievers, it indicates that high achievers have higher academic motivation as compared to low achievers. The above finding goes in line with the findings of Srivastava (1982), who found that high achievers continuously score higher on the list of academic motivation in comparison to low achievers. Thus from the above discussion inference can be drawn that high achievers have interest in achieving excellence and success and are goal-oriented and focussed that makes them motivated towards their academics. On the other hand the low achievers may be less motivated due to their chronic failing experiences.

10.9 Sex differences in Academic Anxiety within high and low achievers of Class IX students.

The study found that in both the high achievers and low achievers group females were having higher academic anxiety than males. This might be due to the fact that today’s girls are getting more involved in career worries and
competitions. The above findings are in agreement with the findings of Cassady and Johnson (2002), Deb et al (2010), Muchhal and Chand (2011), Nadeem et al (2012), Haldar and Mishra (2014). Females are growing more and more competitive and having more career worries in the present day world. Whether the female students are in the high achievers or low achievers group, anxiety seems to affect them.

10.10 Sex Difference in Academic Motivation within high and low achievers of Class IX students.

In the high achievers group both males and females are equally motivated towards academics but in the low achievers group males have lower motivation than females. The finding goes in agreement with the finding of Koseoglu (2013), where females scored higher than males in academic motivation. The author stated that it may be due to developmental differences between boys and girls. Thus, from the above discussion inference can be drawn that there are a few research findings that supports that females score higher than males in academic motivation. However, the present study also holds the conclusion that only in the low achievers group females are more academically motivated than males. But in the high achievers group both male and female are equally motivated towards their academics. Although females in the low achievers group are academically motivated, their high level of anxiety might be affecting their performance level.

11. Implications and Recommendations

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:

11.1 Concerning Academic Anxiety and Academic Achievement

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. 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. So, if the children are provided proper attention and support and let them 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.

iii) **Good 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.

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. 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 (2005) has also addressed the problem of curriculum load on children and emphasised on learning without burden.

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.

vii) **Relaxation and yoga**

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.

11.2 Concerning Academic Motivation and Academic Achievement

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. 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. 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. 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.

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. The teacher can make the academic activities 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

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.
v) 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.

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

The significant difference in Academic Anxiety between high and low achievers, with the low achievers group having higher levels of academic anxiety implies that the amount of anxiety the low achievers goes through in the academic situations at school affects their performance.

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.

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 and yoga

The low achievers can be given 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.

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

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.

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. 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). 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.

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

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.

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 and yoga

They can also be exposed to relaxation techniques like mindful meditation, yoga asanas, 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.

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

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.

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

Stevens (2006) states that physical activities such as running and jumping keeps the male students brain developing in healthy ways that promotes learning. Let them explore, touch and manipulate things that will help them develop the skills he will need to be successful in school.

11.7 Some measures to enhance Academic Achievement

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 with high academic anxiety and low academic motivation which is evident from the present study. 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), failure to realize their true academic potential is estimated to occur in at least 25 percent of school children. 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

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

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), significant gains in academic achievement were found among a group of high-school underachievers by a programme of group guidance and counselling.

v) Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

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. 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), 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.