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# CONTENTS

Sr. No.	TITLE & NAME OF THE AUTHOR (S)	Page No.
1.	CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN BUILDING THE EMPLOYEES' ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT: A STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO THE EDUCATION SECTOR (NCR REGION) <i>SANGEETA RANI &amp; PRABHAT SRIVASTAVA</i>	1
2.	COMMON DENOMINATORS OF WRITING DISABILITY <i>DR. SREEDEVI.V.G.</i>	4
3.	CONSUMERS ATTITUDE AND PREFERENCES TOWARDS DAIRY PRODUCT: A STUDY OF MILMA MILK WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO NALLEPILLY PANCHAYATH <i>DR. P. S. CHANDNI &amp; SARANYA .S</i>	10
4.	GOLD JEWELLERY TREND IN INTERNATIONAL GOLD MARKETS <i>GNANADURAI PANDITHURAI &amp; JOJI CHANDRAN</i>	14
5.	IMPACT OF TELEVISION ADVERTISEMENTS OF JUNK FOOD ON CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SALEM CITY <i>DR. S. DHAKSHAYANI &amp; P. V. RAJESWARI</i>	18
6.	FDI IN INDIA: CURRENT TRENDS AND WAY FORWARD <i>BALA DEVI &amp; REKHA RANI</i>	25
7.	WORK STRESS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO EMPLOYEES OF ELANTE MALL (CHANDIGARH) <i>RENU SAINI</i>	28
8.	STOCKHOLM SYNDROME WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF GOVERNMENT-VOTER BEHAVIOUR: COALITION YEARS 1991-2002 IN TURKEY <i>CEYHUN HAYDAROĞLU</i>	34
9.	AN INSIGHT INTO THE CONCEPT OF FINANCIAL SOCIALIZATION WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ROLE OF PARENTS <i>SHIKHA SHARMA</i>	41
10.	A STUDY ON ROLE OF MILKFED IN PUNJAB <i>HARPREET KAUR</i>	45
11.	MANUFACTURING SECTOR: AN MISSED OPPORTUNITY & WAY AHEAD <i>BALA DEVI</i>	48
12.	ROLE OF FISCAL POLICY IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT <i>DARSHINI.J.S</i>	52
13.	ANALYSIS OF THE FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR HOTEL AND LODGING INDUSTRY IN KASHMIR: PERSPECTIVES ON INSTITUTIONAL SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES <i>AIJAZ AHMAD DAR &amp; DR. SUSHIL KUMAR MEHTA</i>	60
14.	RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGIES OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYEES JOB SATISFACTION <i>G. APARNA &amp; DR. C. SUBRAMANIAN</i>	65
15.	A STUDY ON IDENTIFICATION OF TOP FACTORS IMPACTING EMPLOYER BRANDING IN IT MULTINATIONALS IN INDIA & ITS STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS <i>DR. SONAL SHREE, APURVA SAXENA, ASTHA AWASTHI &amp; SEEMA KOHAR</i>	68
16.	ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECT OF GOVERNORS' TERM ON MONETARY POLICY: A CROSS-SECTIONAL ANALYSIS OF SELECTED SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN CENTRAL BANKS <i>DR. IBRAHIM NYABOGA, NYAUNCHO JOSIAH &amp; ELIJAH MAGORI OMOBE</i>	73
17.	VERTICAL INTEGRATION AS GROWTH STRATEGY: AN ANALYSIS IN THE MEXICAN CORN SECTOR <i>JOSÉ G. VARGAS-HERNÁNDEZ, JOSÉ SATSUMI LÓPEZ-MORALES &amp; ROSA PENÉLOPE MARES-GALINDO</i>	78
18.	ANXIETY AND SELF-CONCEPT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS: SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE STATE OF ASSAM AND SIKKIM <i>RASHMI MILI &amp; NAR MAYA SUBBA</i>	83
19.	MODELING THE CAUSES OF STAGNATION OF A MATURED CAPITALIST ECONOMY <i>SAIKAT BHATTACHARYA</i>	88
20.	RISE OF PLASTIC MONEY IN MODERN ERA AND ITS ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS <i>KIRAN SINGH PARIHAR</i>	92
	<b>REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK &amp; DISCLAIMER</b>	97

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## ANXIETY AND SELF-CONCEPT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS: SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE STATE OF ASSAM AND SIKKIM

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### ABSTRACT

*The present age is an age of anxiety with fast track competitions in every aspect of life. Our school going population are the worst sufferers with the demands of this fast paced world. Research shows that high-anxious students are self-disparaging, are unadventurous, possess more negative personality characteristics, and have a strong tendency to indulge in daydreams. Furthermore, high-anxiety leads to low self-concept which leads to low performance of the students. Self-Concept is an important concept of any child's development. The importance of self-concept within educational settings has been discussed by several scholars and has led to the performance of studies examining the role of self-concept in school performance (Oliva, 1999). Keeping these points in view, the objective of the present study was to find out the Anxiety and Self-Concept of Secondary School Students of Assam and Sikkim. The sample size comprised of 200 secondary students that was drawn out through simple random sampling method. Based on a descriptive method of study, standardized tools were used for collecting the data and analysed using correlational method and t-test. Results shows that majority of the students have extreme high anxiety, where there was no significant sex difference in anxiety indicating that both male and female have the same level of anxiety. Results also shows that majority of the students have above average self-concept, where the males were found to have higher self-concept than females. There is also a significant negative correlation between anxiety and self-concept. So, it is important for parents and teachers to check the ever-growing anxieties and frustrations the students are facing in the present day world. The students should also be helped to develop positive self-concept which will help them to reduce their stress and anxieties.*

### KEYWORDS

anxiety, self-concept, secondary school students.

### INTRODUCTION

It is a natural process for human beings to grow from infancy to adulthood and in this process they come into contact with various environmental and social circumstances which make them develop a distinct self-concept and self-image. As they try to adjust with the society having a self-concept of their own and compete with other human being's anxieties develop in them. Adolescents are the worst sufferers of these constructs as this stage is already a period of storm and stress.

According to Yahaya (n.d), Self-concept refers to the totality of a complex, organised and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person holds to be true about his or her personal existence. Parental upbringing, continuous failure, depression and internal self-critic are factors that influence the development of one's self-concept. Self-concept is not innate, but is developed by the individual through interaction with the environment and reflecting on that interaction. According to Mischel and Morf, 2003, as quoted in Weiten and Lloyd (2007), Self-Concept is a multifaceted structure. It is an organized collection of beliefs about self. These beliefs, also called self-schemas, are developed from past experience and are concerned with one's personality traits, abilities, physical features, values, goals, and social roles. People have self-schemas on dimensions that are important to them, including both strengths and weaknesses. Maheswari and Singh (2014) states that self-concept is the individual's perception of his or her abilities, status and roles in the outer world. The ideal self is important for higher aspiration and future performance. The students' self-concept will decide what goals suit him or her and how he or she should strive for their realisation and it will also determine his or her level of aspiration. Additionally, self-concept interacts with self-esteem, self knowledge and social self to form the self. As self-concept is the individual's way of looking at himself, the dimensions of self-concept involves physical, moral, temperamental, educational, intellectual and social self-concept.

The concept of self has three major components: the perceptual, the conceptual and the attitudinal. The perceptual component is the image the person has to the appearance of his body and the impression he makes on others and sex appropriateness of his body, the importance of the different parts of his body, such as his muscles to his behaviour and the prestige that give him in the eyes of others. The perceptual component is often called the 'physical self-concept'.

The conceptual component is the person's conception of his distinctive characteristics, his abilities and disabilities, his background and origin and his future. It is often called the 'psychological self-concept' and it composed of such life adjustment qualities as honesty, self-confidence, independence, courage and their opposites. The attitudinal component refers to feelings a person has about himself, his attitudes about his present status and future prospectus, his feelings about his worthiness and his attitudes of self-esteem, self-reproach, pride and shame (Dash, 1994).

Anxiety refers to a psychological state that occurs when an individual experiences a sense of impending (or) threatening danger. Marmor (1965) states "Anxiety is a normal natural response and is as important to the safety and security of human organism as is the ability to perceive pain." As quoted in Ganesan (1995). Sullivan (1952) states that anxiety is a painful uneasiness of mind, concerning anticipated illness. Anxious person is not clearly aware of the nature of conflicting condition in him that makes him uneasy. According to Freud (1941), anxiety is a disorder within the personality, arising when for example there is clash between incompatible or conflicting tendencies as when a person is torn between conformity and rebellion, resolution and temptation, or between an impure to love and hate or is troubled by remainders of a gap between what he is and what pretends to be. As quoted in Ganesan (1995).

Anxiety is a complex behaviour commonly found in different people and especially among student's adolescence anxiety is defined as reported experiences of worry, poor concentrative and physiological relations such as sweating or breathing problems, negative socio-evaluative fears and sensitivity to failure. Chauhan (1983) repeated that some of the anxieties of students were school work, examination and tests, favouritism on the part of teacher of parents, appearance, unpopularity, inadequacies in their sex role illness of member of the family, quarrel between parents, boys-girls relationship, difficulty in making friends, vocational choices, health problem, religion, money lack of emotional control unrealistic worry about the future, doubts absent identity development, independence and worry about the appropriateness of past behaviour etc. as quoted in Mucchal and Chand (2011).



## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Rochers and Schneider (1999) examined a study on self-concept and anxiety in immigrant children. In order to study the 364 of immigrant and non-immigrant elementary school children were tested. The participants belonged to one of four subgroups: (i) non-immigrant from the western region of Germany (ii) non-immigrants from the Eastern region (iii) German-speaking immigrants from the former German Democratic Republic and (iv) immigrants with poor German language skills from the former USSR. The result of the study indicated that the migration did not seem to lead to a global decrease of self-concept or to an increase of general anxiety. The immigrant children did differ in their self-concept in the German language and in anxiety from the non-immigrant children. The study also showed that the German speaking groups and in the immigrant group with poor German language skills, the self concept was more stable with a longer stay in Germany.

Ali, Javed, Mohammad and Hamid (2007) found that with the increase of self-concept and self-esteem there is decrease of anxiety and a negative significant relation exists between self-concept, self-esteem and depression which will ensue decrease in academic achievement.

Soundararajan (2013) did a study on Test-anxiety and self concept among the higher secondary students in Cuddalore district. The normative survey method was employed and random sample of 300 higher secondary students in 6 higher secondary schools locating in Cuddalore district of Tamil Nadu was selected. The tools used for the study was test anxiety scale by Sharma (1978) and self concept scale by Mukta Rani Rastogi (1979). The statistical techniques such as mean, SD, t-test and correlation were employed. The findings of the study revealed that the mean and SD are found to be 24.19 and 0.39 the higher secondary students level of test anxiety is moderate. The mean at SD are found to be 166.43 and 13.01 and the higher secondary students' level of self concept is low. The computed 't' value 0.76 is not significant at 0.05 level. The boys and girls higher secondary students do not differ in their anxiety. The study also indicated that the computed 'r' value 0.04 is not significant. There is no significant relationship between test anxiety and self concept of higher secondary students it is low correlation.

Maheswari and Singh (2014) conducted a study on self concept among rural girl students. In order to get the information, the 370 respondents selected by using stratified proportionate random sampling technique constituted the sample. The self concept questionnaire developed by Dr. Rajkumar saraswat (1971). The findings of study revealed that more than half (56.5 %) of the respondents had high self concept. The study also revealed that no socio-demographic variable has influence over the respondent's self concept except the course of study.

## IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The school is one of the most important social institutions where the students socialise and educate themselves and prepares themselves as responsible citizens for the future. It is here where they develop a distinct self-concept through their experiences that make them realise who they are. But vis-a-vis self-concept, another construct that develops in them is anxiety that results from the fast-track competitions and academic pressures they receive from school. Research shows that if a student has high anxiety, he or she develops low or negative self-concept and vice-versa. So, the investigators feel the need to study the, "Anxiety and Self-Concept of Secondary School Students with special reference to Assam and Sikkim", as in the north-eastern part of India no studies in this arena could be found. The study will be helpful for teachers, parents and educational administrators in knowing about the level of anxiety and self-concept of secondary school students which greatly affects their overall personality and academic performance as well.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The study undertaken is stated as, 'ANXIETY AND SELF-CONCEPT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS: SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE STATE OF ASSAM AND SIKKIM.'

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the level of self concept and anxiety among the secondary school students in the State of Assam and Sikkim.
2. To study the correlation between self concept and anxiety among the secondary school students.
3. To study the sex difference in self concept among the secondary school students.
4. To study the sex difference in anxiety among the secondary school students.

## HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There is no significant relationship between self concept and anxiety of secondary school students in the State of Assam and Sikkim.
2. There is no significant sex difference in self concept among the secondary school students.
3. There is no significant sex difference in anxiety among the secondary school students.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### METHOD

Descriptive method was used for the present study

### SAMPLE

The sample comprise of 200 students of Class IX i.e.100 students from Dhemaji district of Assam and 100 students from West district of Sikkim. The sample distribution is shown in the table below.

TABLE 1: SHOWING THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SAMPLE

Sl.No	State	Schools	No.of students	Total no.of students
1	Assam	Gogamukh Higher Secondary School	48	100
		Mohoricamp High school	52	
2	Sikkim	Lungchok Secondary School	40	100
		Daramdin, Senior Secondary School	60	
		Total	200	

### TOOLS

The following tools were used for the present study:

- 1) Self-Concept questionnaire by Dr. Raj Kumar Saraswat (1992)
- 2) Sinha's Comprehensive Anxiety Test by A.K.P. Sinha and L.N.K. Sinha (2011)

### STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES

The data collected were carefully analyzed and processed. Statistical test such as mean, standard deviation, correlation and t-test were applied to interpret the data to draw meaningful inferences.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Objective 1: To study the level of anxiety and self-concept among the secondary school students in the State of Assam and Sikkim.**

### I) STATUS OF ANXIETY

The table below shows the Anxiety level of the students in terms of various categories

**TABLE 1: SHOWING THE ANXIETY LEVEL OF THE STUDENTS OF ASSAM AND SIKKIM**

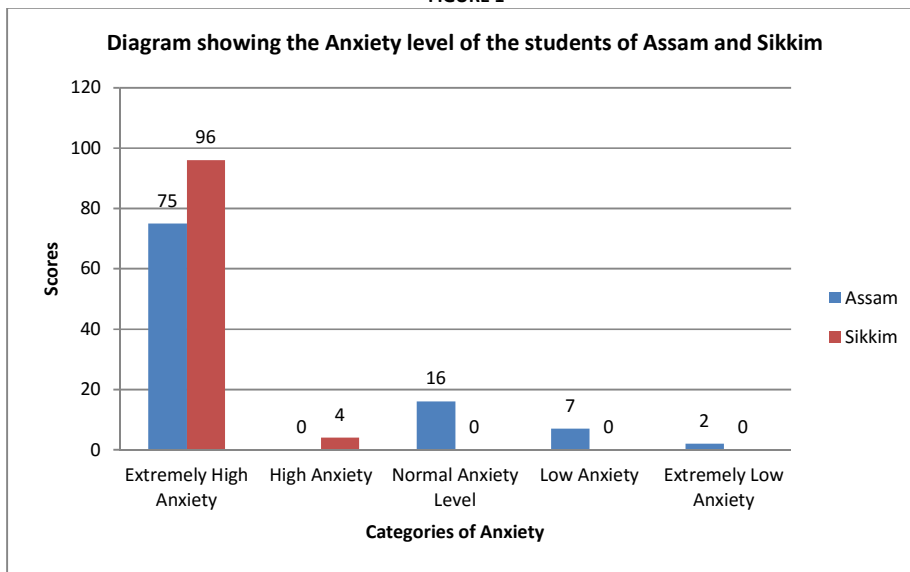
Sl. No.	Range of percentile rank	Limits of score	Name of the States	Frequency	%	*Interpretation
1	P <sub>80</sub> -P <sub>99</sub>	29-71	Assam	75	75%	Extreme high anxiety
			Sikkim	96	96%	Extreme high anxiety
2	P <sub>70</sub> -P <sub>75</sub>	27-28	Assam	0	0	High anxiety
			Sikkim	4	4%	High anxiety
3	P <sub>40</sub> -P <sub>60</sub>	20-25	Assam	16	16%	Normal anxiety level
			Sikkim	0	0	Normal anxiety level
4	P <sub>25</sub> -P <sub>30</sub>	15-16	Assam	7	7%	Low anxiety
			Sikkim	0	0	Low anxiety
5	P <sub>5</sub> -P <sub>20</sub>	4-13	Assam	2	2%	Extreme low anxiety
			Sikkim	0	0	Extreme low anxiety
				200		

\*As per manual

The above table shows that:

1. Majority of the students have extremely high anxiety i.e. 75% of the students of Assam and 96% of the students of Sikkim
2. In the level of high anxiety, 4% of the students of Sikkim fall in this category while none of the students of Assam fall in this category.
3. In the level of normal anxiety, 16% of the students of Assam fall in this category while none of the students of Sikkim fall in it.
4. 7% of the students of Assam fall in the level of low anxiety, while none of the students of Sikkim fall in this level.
5. 2% of the students of Assam fall in the extremely low anxiety level, while none of the students of Sikkim fall in this level.

**FIGURE 1**



**II) STATUS OF SELF-CONCEPT**

The table below shows the level of Self-Concept of the students in terms of various categories

**TABLE 2: SHOWING THE LEVEL OF SELF-CONCEPT OF THE STUDENTS OF ASSAM AND SIKKIM**

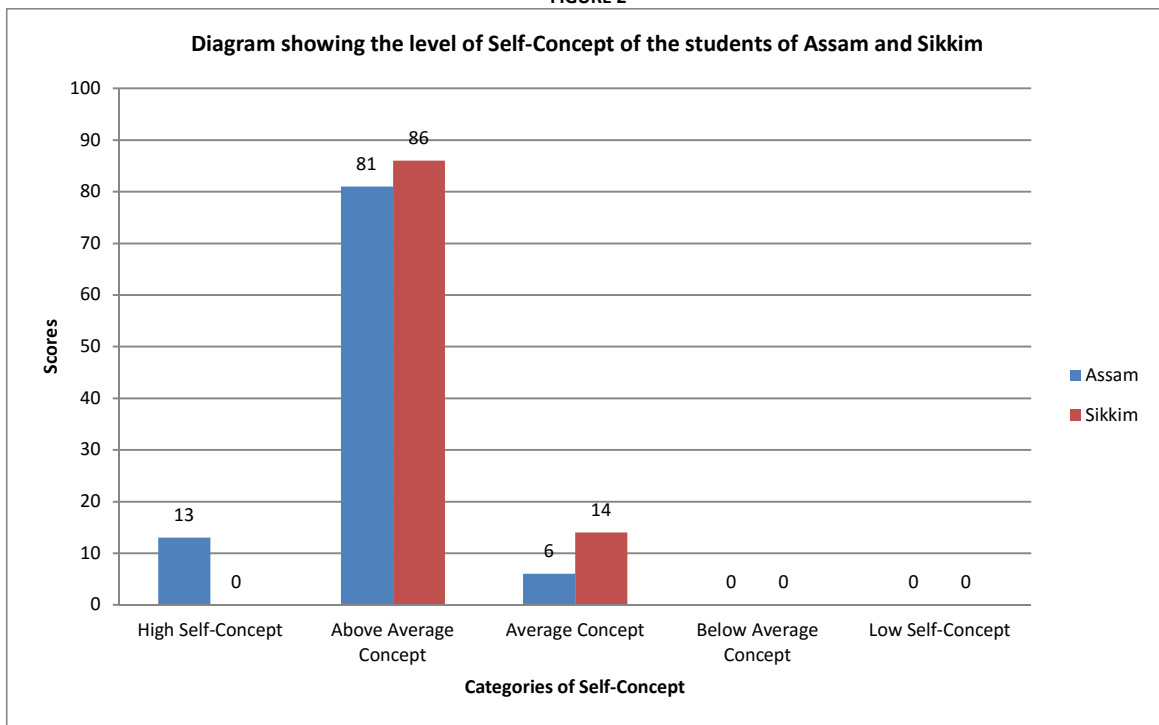
Sl.No.	Limits of the Scores	Name of the States	Frequency	%	*Interpretation
1	193 to 240	Assam	13	13 %	High Self-Concept
		Sikkim	0	0	High Self-Concept
2	145 to 192	Assam	81	81 %	Above Average Self-Concept
		Sikkim	86	86 %	Above Average Self-Concept
3	97 to 144	Assam	6	6 %	Average Self-Concept
		Sikkim	14	14 %	Average Self-Concept
4	49 to 96	Assam	0	0	Below Average Self-Concept
		Sikkim	0	0	Below Average Self-Concept
5	1 to 48	Assam	0	0	Low Self-Concept
		Sikkim	0	0	Low Self-Concept
			200		

\*As per manual

The above table shows that:

1. 13% of the students of Assam has high self-concept, while none of the students of Sikkim has high self-concept
2. Majority of the students of both the states have above average self-concept i.e. 81% for the students of Assam and 86% for the students of Sikkim
3. 6% of the students of Assam has average self-concept, while 14 % of the students of Sikkim has average self-concept.
4. None of the students of both the state of Assam and Sikkim fall in the category of below average self-concept.
5. None of the students of both the state of Assam and Sikkim fall in the category of Low self-concept.

FIGURE 2



**Objective 2: To study the correlation between self concept and anxiety among the secondary school students in the State of Assam and Sikkim**

The following hypothesis was formulated for the above objective;

**Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between self concept and anxiety of secondary school students in the State of Assam and Sikkim.**

**TABLE 3: SHOWING THE CO-EFFICIENT OF CORRELATION BETWEEN SELF-CONCEPT AND ANXIETY OF CLASS IX STUDENTS**

Variables involved	Sample size	Computed correlation value (r)	Table value of r	Df	Level of significance
Self-concept and Anxiety	N=200	-0.18	0.138	198	Significant at 0.05 level

From the above table it is found that the value of r is negative and is significant at 0.05 level and therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. It indicates that there is a significant negative relationship between Anxiety and Self-Concept. It means the higher the Anxiety, the lower will be the Self-Concept and lower the Anxiety, higher will be the Self-Concept.

**Objective 3: To study the sex differences in self-concept among the secondary school students.**

The following hypothesis was formulated for the above objective;

**Hypothesis 2: There is no significant sex difference in self-concept among the secondary school students.**

**TABLE 4: SHOWING THE MEAN, SD, MEAN DIFFERENCE AND Z-VALUE FOR MALE AND FEMALE STUDENTS WITH RESPECT TO THEIR SELF-CONCEPT**

Variables Involved	Sex	N	Mean	SD	Mean Difference (D)	Computed z-value	Table z-value	Significance
Self-Concept	M	98	167.54	15.53	5.69	2.32	1.97	Significant at 0.05 level
	F	102	161.85	19.04				

Comparison of Self-Concept between male and female students, the table above reveals that the mean value for male students (167.54) was slightly higher than that for female students (161.85). To test the significance of the difference t-test was applied, and was found significant at 0.05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. It means that there is a significant difference between male and female students in Self-Concept. Since the difference is in favour of male students, it means that male students have higher self-concept than female students.

**Objective 4: To study the sex difference in anxiety among the secondary school students.**

The following hypothesis was formulated for the above objective;

**Hypothesis 3: There is no significant sex difference in anxiety among the secondary school students**

**TABLE 5: SHOWING THE MEAN, SD, MEAN DIFFERENCE AND Z-VALUE FOR MALE AND FEMALE STUDENTS WITH RESPECT TO THEIR ANXIETY**

Variables Involved	Sex	N	Mean	SD	Mean Difference (D)	Computed z-value	Table z-value	Significance
Anxiety	M	98	42.07	12.08	1.26	0.70	1.97	NS*
	F	102	43.33	13.20				

\*not significant

To compare the Anxiety between male and female students, the mean and standard deviation measures are presented in the Table 5. From the table it can be observed that the mean anxiety score for female (13.20) was slightly higher than male (12.08). But when the significance of the difference was tested using t-test, it was not significant. Hence the null hypothesis was accepted. It means there is no significant sex difference in anxiety among the secondary school students of Assam and Sikkim. Both the male and female students have the same level of anxiety.

**FINDINGS**

- The study found that majority of the students of both Assam (75%) and Sikkim (96%) fall in the category of extreme high anxiety which is a matter of great concern. It could be due to cut-throat competitions, lots of academic pressures from the schools and parents high educational expectations. A very few number of students fall in the category of normal and low anxiety.
- Another finding of the study is that majority of the students of both Assam (81%) and Sikkim (86%) fall in the category of above average self-concept, which is a good sign and parents and teachers should play a very important role to develop positive self-concept among the students. A very few number of students fall in the category of high self-concept and average self-concept. And none of the students fall in the category of below average self-concept and low self-concept.

- The present study also found that there is a significant negative relationship between Anxiety and Self-Concept. It means the higher the Anxiety, the lower will be the Self-Concept and lower the Anxiety, higher will be the Self-Concept. So it is important that parents and teachers should take steps to lower the anxiety of the students and develop positive self-concept, and when the students develop high self-concept of themselves automatically their anxiety will also decrease.
- When the significance of the difference between male and female students on self-concept was tested, it was found significant at 0.05 level. It indicates that there is a significant difference between male and female students on Self-Concept. Since the difference is in favour of male students, it means that male students have higher self-concept than female students. This could be due to the more extrovert nature of males and the more freedom and independents they get at home than the females.
- But when the significance of the difference in anxiety between male and female students were tested, it was found not significant. It indicates that both the male and female students have the same level of anxiety. This could be due to the fast track competitions in the present day world where both male and female have to compete equally.

### SUGGESTIONS

- The educational institutions should not give too much academic pressure to the students. They should be allowed to learn according to their own pace keeping into consideration their interests and abilities. Learning-by-doing method of teaching should be followed in every school which will help the students to develop interest and creativity and will also help in reducing anxiety. Co-curricular activities should be encouraged that will help the students to release their pent-up feelings.
- The teachers and parents should be very tolerant and co-operative in their approach towards the child and should have knowledge on child psychology which will help them to know the psychological problems the child is going through that has made them anxious or have low self-concept.
- Teachers and parents also should always encourage and motivate the child to do what interest them, and reinforce them when they have done something good or achieved something. This in turn will help the child to develop positive self-concept and also reduces their stress and anxiety.

### CONCLUSIONS

The present age is an age of anxiety. The school going population is at cross-roads with the fast-track competitions, academic pressures, parental high expectations, and also with the ever-growing knowledge and population explosion. This in turn hampers in developing their self-concept. It is palpable from the present study that the students of secondary school from both the State of Assam and Sikkim are having extreme high anxiety which if not taken care of immediately might lead to long term effects and they might grow up into anxious adults incapable of handling life. The students should also be helped to develop positive self-concept which will help them to reduce their stress and anxieties.

### DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

1. The study is delimited to only 4 secondary schools of Dhemaji District of Assam and West District of Sikkim.
2. The study is also delimited to class IX students studying in Government rural secondary schools.

### SCOPE FOR FURTHER STUDY

- The study can be done on a larger sample, taking a larger cross-section of population that will lead to more reliable results.
- The study can also be correlated with academic performance of the students.

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