

Level of Social Anxiety and Self-Esteem Among Students Studying in Schools of Gangtok, Sikkim

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Introduction

Globally 1.3 billion adolescents accounting 16% of the global population (1). India has the largest adolescent population, 253 million, with every fifth person aged 10 to 19.⁽²⁾ anxiety disorders affect 3.6% of 10-14-year-olds and 4.6% of those aged 15-19 years⁽²⁾.

Self-esteem impacts numerous aspects of life, including relationships, mental health, and achievement in school and the workplace. Self-esteem issues frequently start in childhood, and a negative school atmosphere might also contribute to low self-esteem.⁽¹⁴⁾

Low self-esteem affects one-third to one-half of adolescents, particularly in the early stages of adolescence. Low self-esteem can have short-term effects, but in more severe cases, it can lead to various problems, including depression, anorexia nervosa, delinquency, self-inflicted injuries, and even suicide. Delinquency and academic success are linked to self-esteem. Teens who have low self-esteem are more likely to struggle in school, become pregnant, or impregnate someone else.⁽¹⁶⁾

Students with low self-esteem generally have negative attitudes and a reduced ability to handle everyday challenges. As a result, students with low self-esteem are more prone to engage in negative behaviors such as skipping school, drinking, and smoking, and having mental health issues, including sadness and anxiety. Furthermore, several studies have revealed that low self-esteem may negatively impact an adolescent's social relationships, health, academic performance, and cognitive development.⁽¹⁷⁾

The world's highest concentration of teenagers is found in India, accounting for 243 million individuals aged 10-19 years. India has introduced a National Mental Health Program, which functions at the district level (District Mental Health Program). It also aims to provide mental health services as an integrated component of primary care within the public health system. The National Adolescent Health Program (Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram), launched by the Indian government, prioritizes mental health. However, there is still a significant gap in the care provided for adolescents' mental health requirements. Unfortunately, things have gotten worse since the COVID-19 pandemic.⁽¹⁹⁾

Social anxiety is the 3rd most prevalent mental health issue after severe depression and substance abuse. Most people believe that social anxiety usually starts between the age of 12- 15. Social anxiety interferes with other psychological disorders, such as anxiety, frustration, fear, and low self-esteem. Many environmental and social factors, such as family, various institutions like schools and universities, peers, experiences of success or failure, and physical appearances, such as one's self-image, body, maturity rate, sexual maturity, and physical impairment, can all impact one's sense of self-worth.⁽²⁰⁾

A student who suffers from severe social anxiety cannot achieve or make progress in many aspects of life and also struggles with everyday activities. This has a detrimental impact on his/her performance and value as a contributing member of society, where social efficiency and self-esteem become desirable qualities. The student's efficacy,

expressiveness, and fear of embarrassment are all impacted by social anxiety. These emotions have a detrimental effect on his/her sense of self-esteem, which lowers academic achievement. Without a doubt, social anxiety and low self-esteem contribute to the inability to build relationships with other members of society. As such, social anxiety and self-esteem are the most critical factors in determining an individual's success or failure, particularly academic performance. Numerous research had previously revealed that social anxiety and self-esteem are interrelated. However, social anxiety and self-esteem are associated with various factors, including mood, gender, peer pressure, family, and in-school-going students; it is also influenced by the school environment he/she attends. ⁽²²⁾

Adolescents' self-esteem and its contributing factors, such as intrapersonal and interpersonal influencers, should be carefully considered. Therefore, providing them with the right environment to boost their self-esteem is essential. Academic performance and attendance are significantly impacted by both depression and anxiety. Additionally, students' mental and physical health, as well as their academic performance, may be affected by school surroundings. ⁽²³⁾

Adolescent mental health illnesses have drawn a lot of interest in the field of research studies in recent years. Nonetheless, comparatively little research is done in North East India on adolescents' mental health and mental issues. The present study aimed to assess the relationship between self-esteem and social anxiety. Its salient goal is to determine school students' social anxiety and self-esteem. The findings of this study can help the school authorities take appropriate measures to improve the students' self-esteem and social anxiety. They can also help the parents and teachers better understand an individual, effectively help them improve, and help them achieve more significant achievements in life.

Having a healthy adolescent is crucial for future generations. High self-esteem and positive social activity positively impact an individual's accomplishments, interpersonal relationships, and quality of life. Adolescents who don't get proper support are more likely to experience psychological issues like depression, eating disorders, social anxiety, low academic performance, and other psychological diseases.

Objective of the study

1. To estimate the level of social anxiety and self-esteem of school students.
2. To determine the relationship between social anxiety and self-esteem.
3. To find an association between social anxiety and self-esteem with the demographic variables.

Material and Methods:

An analytical cross-sectional design was carried at two government senior secondary school Gangtok, Sikkim from November 2023 to December 2023. 300 students from classes IX-XII, aged 12-19 selected through simple random sampling who meets the inclusion criteria of the study.

Data collection tools and techniques:

The present study employed the self-report method for data collection. Data were collected using Demographic Proforma to obtain participant background characteristic including age, gender, class, residing in, religion, domicile, birth order, No. of siblings, type of family, family monthly income, Parents' s education, occupation of parents. Social Anxiety Interaction Scale (SIAS) was used to assess the level of anxiety experience by participants during social interaction. The scale consists of item related to feeling, emotion, interpersonal interaction and various social situation. Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale (RSES) was administered to measure participant self-esteem scale which includes self-satisfaction, attitude towards oneself, feeling of self-worth and perceptions of personal qualities.

Study size

The sample size is determined, using the prevalence of social anxiety i.e.: 23% from a study conducted by (Rajkumar and team) in 2022 on the prevalence of social mental health problems among rural adolescents in India: A systematic review and meta-analysis, and adding 10% possible drop out during the final data collection make the final sample size 299.(51)

Where,

n = sample size

Z = level of confidence (95% i.e.: 1.96)

p = population proportion (23%)

d = margin of error (5% i.e.: 0.05)

$$n = \frac{Z^2 p \times (1 - p)}{d^2}$$

$$n = \frac{1.96^2 \times 0.23 \times (1 - 0.23)}{(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{3.8416 \times 0.23 \times 0.77}{0.0025}$$

$$n = 272$$

$$\text{Taking 10\% dropout: } \frac{10 \times 272}{100} = 27$$

So, final sample size: n = 299

Round- up sample n= 300

Data analysis:

SPSS Version 16.0 was used for statical analysis. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to analyse the data.Karl Pearson's correlation was used to determine the relationship between social anxiety and self-esteem. Fisher's Exact test and chi-square test were used to determine the association of social anxiety and self-esteem level with **selected** demographic variables.

Result

The sample was predominatly composed of students aged 16-17years and female.Most participants practiced hindusim.The majority belong to nuclear families and were living with both paretns.Detail of socio demographical characteristic are present in table.1.

Table 1 Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Demographic Variables. N-300

S.No	Demographic Variables	Frequency-(f)	Percentage (%)
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Age in years

a. 13-15	96	32
b. 16-17	147	49
c. 18-19	57	19

Gender

a. Male	113	37.7
b. Female	187	62.3

Class

a. IX	92	30.6
b. X	80	26.7
c. XI	72	24
d. XII	56	18.7

Residing in

a. Home	280	93.3
b. Hostel	20	6.7

Religion

a. Hindu	135	45
b. Christian	14	4.7
c. Buddhist	60	20
d. Others	91	30.3

Domicile

a. Urban	200	66.6
b. Rural	100	33.4

Birth order

a. One	103	34.3
b. Two		
c. Three	113	37.7
More than three	51	17
	33	11

Number of siblings

a. Zero	46	15.3
b. One		
c. Two	93	31
More than two	78	26
	83	27.7

Type of family

a. Nuclear	159	53
b. Joint		
Extended	107	35.7
	34	11.3

Living with

a. Single parents	43	14.3
b. Both parents		
c. Guardians	210	70
	47	15.7

Family monthly income

a. Below Rs 10,000	92	30.7
b. Rs 10,000 – 20,000		
c. Rs 20,000 – 30,000	96	32
d. Rs 30,000 and above	48	16
	64	21.3

p<0.05 level of Significance*NS-Non significant**

Fig 1 depicts level of social anxiety among school students. The finding reveals that 49.4% of student had no anxiety ,43.3% had low social anxiety, and 7.3 % had high social anxiety .These results indicate that high social anxiety is relatively uncommon among students ,where as a substantial proportion experience low levels of social anxiety.

N=300

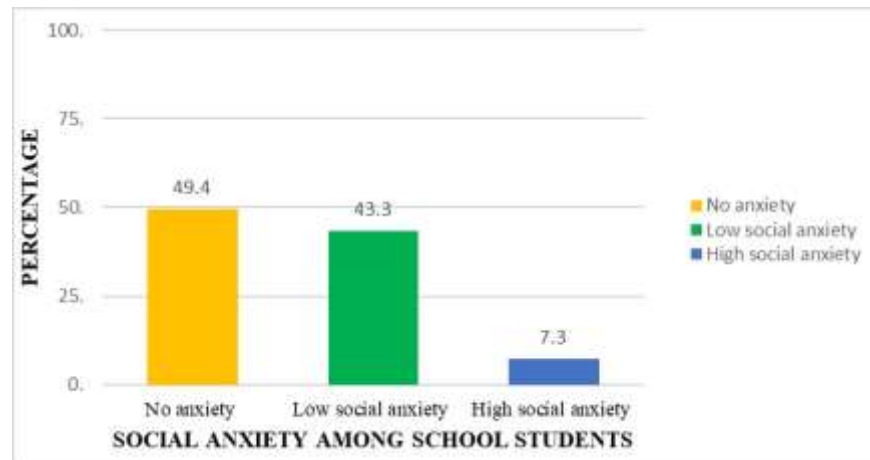
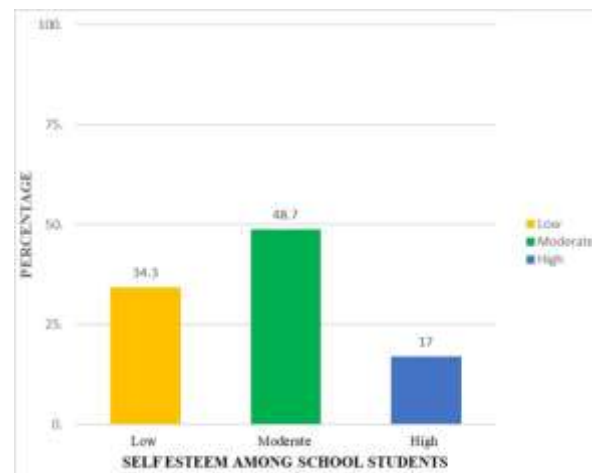


Fig 1: Percentage distribution of level of social anxiety among school students

Figure 2 depict the level of self-esteem among school students. The finding showed that 48.7%of students had moderate self-esteem followed by 34.3% with low self esteem and 17.0% with high self-esteem. This Suggest that moderate self esteem was the most prevalent among the participants.



N=300

Fig 2: Percentage distribution of level of self-esteem among school students

Table 2: Correlation between social anxiety and self-esteem among school students N=300

Correlation	Mean	SD	r value	p value
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Social anxiety	35.27	14.89		
			-0.327	0.001*
Self- esteem	16.27	4.51		

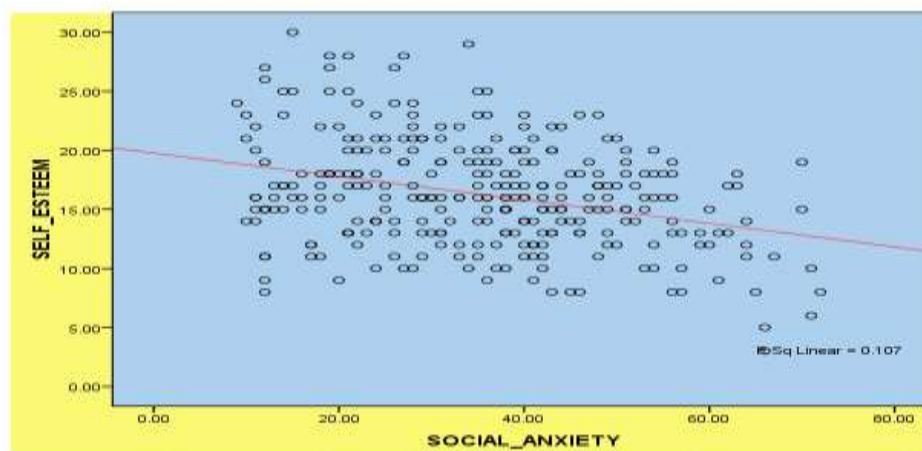


Fig 4.3: Correlation between social anxiety and self-esteem among school students

Table 3: Association between social anxiety among school students with their selected demographic variables
N=300

S. No	Demographic variables	Social Anxiety			Fishers/ c ² value	df	p value	
		No anxiety	Low social anxiety	High social anxiety				
1	Age in years							
	a.	13-15	51	41	4	2.861	4	0.583 ^{NS}
	b.	16-17	68	65	14			
	c.	18-19	29	24	4			
	2	Gender						
a.		Male	58	49	6	1.158	2	0.560 ^{NS}
b.		Female	90	81	16			

3	Class					
	a.	IX	45	39	8	
	b.	X	40	36	4	
	c.	XI	38	29	5	
	d.	XII	25	26	5	
					1.937	6 0.934 ^{NS}
4	Residing in					
	a.	Home	137	121	22	
	b.	Hostel	11	9	0	
					1.193	2 0.550 ^{NS}
5	Religion					
	a.	Hindu	70	59	6	
	b.	Christian	6	6	2	
	c.	Buddhist	32	21	7	
	d.	Others	40	44	7	
					7.066	6 0.291 ^{NS}

S. No	Demographic variables	Social Anxiety			Fisher's/ χ^2 value	df	p value
		No anxiety	Low social anxiety	High social anxiety			
6	Domicile						
	a.	Urban	107	82	13		
	b.	Rural	41	48	9		
					3.408	2	0.182 ^{NS}

7	Birth order						
	a. One	48	44	11			
	b. Two	63	44	6			
	c. Three	26	21	4			
	d. More than three	11	21	1			
					8.949	6	0.165 ^{NS}
8	Number of siblings						
	a. Zero	24	18	4			
	b. One	45	40	8			
	c. Two	42	30	6			
	d. More than two	37	42	4			
					3.590	6	0.738 ^{NS}
9	Type of family						
	a. Nuclear	76	71	12			
	b. Joint	53	46	8			
	c. Extended	19	13	2			
					0.712	4	0.957 ^{NS}
10	Living with						
	a. Single parents	18	20	5			
	b. Both parents	108	87	15			
	c. Guardians	22	23	2			
					3.014	4	0.555 ^{NS}

S. No	Demographic variables	Social Anxiety			Fishers/ c ² value	df	p value
		No anxiety	Low social anxiety	High social anxiety			

Family monthly income

a. Below Rs 10,000	43	42	7
b. Rs 10,000 – 20,000	50	38	8
c. Rs 20,000 – 30,000	23	23	2
d. Rs 30,000 and above	32	27	5

111.774 6 0.946^{NS}**Fathers education**

a. No formal education	18	23	5
b. Primary	50	53	8
c. Secondary	42	19	4
d. Highers secondary	24	23	5
e. Graduate and above	14	12	0

1212.81 8 0.109^{NS}**Mothers education**

a. No formal education	22	32	4
b. Primary	47	43	9
c. Secondary	47	34	4
d. Highers secondary	18	14	5
e. Graduate and above	14	7	0

1310.27 8 0.226^{NS}

S. No	Demographic variables	Social Anxiety			Fishers/ c ² value	df	p value
		No anxiety	Low social anxiety	High social anxiety			
14	Fathers Occupation						
	a. Unemployed	22	25	1			
	b. Business	24	17	6			
	c. Private employee	38	48	10			
	d. Government employee	64	40	5			
				13.26	6	0.034*	
15	Mothers Occupation						
	a. Homemaker	104	88	14			
	b. Business	7	17	3			
	c. Private employee	12	9	5			
	d. Government employee	25	16	0			
				15.66	6	0.011*	

*p<0.05 level of Significance

NS-Non significant

Table 4: Association between self-esteem among school students with their selected demographic variables
N=300

S. No	Demographic variables	Self Esteem			Fishers/ c ² value	df	p value
		Low	Moderate	High			

1	Age in years					
	a.	13-15	44	41	11	
	b.	16-17	37	83	27	
	c.	18-19	22	22	13	
					14.34	4
						0.006*
2	Gender					
	a.	Male	32	57	24	
	b.	Female	71	89	27	
					3.944	2
						0.139 ^{NS}
3	Class					
	a.	IX	42	43	7	
	b.	X	24	39	17	
	c.	XI	23	38	11	
	d.	XII	14	26	16	
					15.94	6
						0.014*
4	Residing in					
	a.	Home	94	137	49	
	b.	Hostel	9	9	2	
					1.215	2
						0.524 ^{NS}
5	Religion					
	a.	Hindu	36	71	28	
	b.	Christian	3	9	2	
	c.	Buddhist	25	25	10	
	d.	Other	39	41	11	
					10.11	6
						0.111 ^{NS}

S. No	Demographic variables	Self Esteem			Fishers/ c ² value	df	p value
		Low	Moderate	High			

6	Domicile						
	a. Urban	69	97	36			
	b. Rural	34	49	15			
					0.304	2	0.859 ^{NS}
7	Birth order						
	a. One	36	50	17			
	b. Two	35	59	19			
	c. Three	23	19	9			
	d. More than three	9	18	6			
					4.532	6	0.605 ^{NS}
8	Number of siblings						
	a. Zero	15	23	8			
	b. One	32	48	13			
	c. Two	28	35	15			
	d. More than two	28	40	15			
					1.310	6	0.971 ^{NS}
9	Type of family						
	a. Nuclear	52	72	35			
	b. Joint	39	57	11			
	c. Extended	12	17	5			
					6.421	4	0.170 ^{NS}
10	Living with						
	a. Single parents	20	15	8			
	b. Both parents	72	102	36			
	c. Guardians	11	29	7			
					7.003	4	0.136 ^{NS}

S. No	Demographic variables	Self Esteem			Fishers/ c ² value	df	p value
		Low	Moderate	High			
11	Family monthly income						
	a. Below Rs 10,000	30	45	17			
	b. Rs 10,000 – 20,000	33	51	12			
	c. Rs 20,000 – 30,000	20	21	7			
	d. Rs 30,000 and above	20	29	15			
				4.775	6	0.573 ^{NS}	
12	Father's education						
	a. No formal education	15	23	8			
	b. Primary	41	55	15			
	c. Secondary	24	27	14			
	d. Highers secondary	14	28	10			
	e. Graduate and above	9	13	4			
					4.179	8	0.847 ^{NS}

Mother's education						
13	a. No formal education	24	22	12	10.70	8
	b. Primary	38	50	11		
	c. Secondary	22	46	17		
	d. Highers secondary	14	18	5		
	e. Graduate and above	5	10	6		
					0.219 ^{NS}	

S. No	Demographic variables	Self Esteem			c ² value	df	p value
		Low	Moderate	High			
14	Fathers Occupation						
	a. Unemployed	11	25	12			
	b. Business	19	20	8			
	c. Private employee	37	49	10			
	d. Government employee	36	52	21			
					8.071	6	0.233 ^{NS}
15	Mothers Occupation						
	a. Homemaker	66	107	33			
	b. Business	12	13	2			
	c. Private employee	12	9	5			
	d. Government employee	13	17	11			
					8.051	6	0.227 ^{NS}

*p<0.05 level of Significance

NS-Non significant

DISCUSSION

The present study assessed social anxiety and self-esteem among school students. Its findings were discussed in relation to the observations made by the other studies.

Discussion on the findings are arranged under the following belongings:

1. Discussion related to level of social anxiety

The result revealed that the majority had no social anxiety, i.e., 148 (49.4%), 130 (43.3%) had low social anxiety, and 22 (7.3%) had high social anxiety.

The present study contradicts the findings of the study conducted by Ingrida Pikioniene et al. on "Social anxiety in 15-19 years adolescents in association with their subjective evaluation of mental and physical health." The study of these findings suggested that 58.5% (n = 971) of adolescents were characterized by high anxiety. High avoidance was determined to be 14.7% of the research sample (n = 252), with most adolescents (85%) low on avoidance in social situations. ⁽³⁴⁾

2. Discussion related to level of self-esteem

The result revealed that the majority of students, 146 (48.7%), had a moderate level of self-esteem, 103 (34.3%) had a low level of social anxiety, and 51 (17%) had a high level of self-esteem.

The present study was consistent with the findings of the study conducted by Laveena D'Mello et al. on "A Study on the Self-Esteem and Academic Performance among the Students," in which the majority 50 % of the respondents had high self-esteem, 26% had a moderate level of self-esteem, and the remaining 24% had low self-esteem. ⁽¹⁸⁾

3. Discussion related to the relationship between social anxiety and self-esteem

The results obtained revealed that ($r = -0.317$) indicates a negative correlation between social anxiety and self-esteem among school students, and ($p = 0.001$) was statistically significant.

The present study was consistent with the findings of the study conducted by Nasreen Bano et al. on "Relationship of self-esteem and social anxiety: A comparative study between male and female adolescents." The study results obtained ($r = -0.418$, $p < 0.001$) clearly show a strong and statistically significant negative correlation between social anxiety and self-esteem. ⁽³⁷⁾

The findings are also consistent with the findings of the other study conducted by Odeh Suleiman Murad et al. on "Social anxiety in relation to self-esteem among university students in Jordan." The study results suggested that there is a negative correlation between self-esteem and social anxiety as the correlation coefficient between both variables reached (0.55), statistically significant at ($\alpha \leq 0.01$). ⁽⁹⁾

4. Discussion related to association with demographic variables and self-esteem

The study findings revealed that demographic variables such as age and class were significant at $p < 0.05$ level with the level of self-esteem.

The present study was consistent with the findings of the study conducted by R Naganandini on, "Self-esteem among adolescents," as the findings suggested that variables like age in years ($\chi^2 = 15.099$, $p < 0.05$), year of education ($\chi^2 = 14.62$, $p < 0.05$), type of family ($\chi^2 = 15.513$, $p < 0.05$), father's education ($\chi^2 = 14.527$, $p < 0.05$), mother's education ($\chi^2 = 12.697$, $p < 0.05$), occupation of the head of the family ($\chi^2 = 18.299$, $p < 0.05$) and the number of siblings ($\chi^2 = 12.846$, $p < 0.05$) had a significant association with the level of self-esteem. ⁽³⁵⁾

CONCLUSION

Though the majority of students (49.4%) experience no social anxiety, there are students with low and high levels, totalling 50.6%, which might have an impact on their self-esteem and academic performance. The findings suggest that students with low self-esteem may exhibit higher levels of social anxiety or vice versa. Thus, the present study emphasizes that it is equally important to improve one's self-esteem to achieve low levels of social anxiety and improve the students' well-being. Adolescence is a critical period for developing social skills and self-esteem. A positive self-concept and the development of healthy social connections might be hindered by social anxiety, which

may result in long-term psychological and social issues. Effective support systems, including family, friends, and school counsellors, all play a crucial role in mitigating the effects of social anxiety and fostering higher self-esteem.

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