

Examination Anxiety among Prospective Secondary School Teachers in Aizawl District

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Abstract

In Mizoram, examination anxiety is a common factor that every student faced during their academic year. Be it is a school going students, college going students or teacher trainees, everyone has examination anxiety either low, moderate or high. Hence, this paper explores the examination anxiety among prospective secondary school teachers in Aizawl district of Mizoram. For the study the investigators used quantitative survey method. The sample consisted of 300 prospective secondary school teachers selected through simple random sampling method. The findings reveal that majority of students have moderate level of examination anxiety. Whereas compare to male students, female students possess higher level of anxiety. First year students tend to have higher level of examination anxiety as compare to second year students. No significant difference was found between the institutions and locale. The study highlights the need of counselling and stress management programme especially for female students and first year students.

Key words: Anxiety, Examination, Prospective Secondary School Teachers

1. Introduction

Examinations play a significant role in the educational system as they are widely used to assess students' academic achievement, abilities, and learning outcomes (Zeidner, M 1998). Examination performance is considered an important indicator of educational success and often influences students' future educational and career opportunities (Putwain, 2007). However, the pressure associated with examinations frequently creates psychological stress among students, leading to examination anxiety (Spielberger, C. D., & Vagg, P. R. 1995).

Examination anxiety refers to a psychological condition in which students experience excessive fear, tension, worry, and nervousness before or during examinations (Sarason, 1984). It is one of the most common emotional problems faced by students at different levels of education and has become a growing concern in modern educational settings (Zeidner, M 1998). Examination anxiety may adversely affect students' concentration, memory, emotional stability, and academic performance (Cassady & Johnson, 2002).

Prospective secondary school teachers are particularly vulnerable to examination anxiety because they undergo rigorous academic and professional training during their teacher education programme (Akinsola & Nwajei, 2013). As future educators, their psychological well-being and academic preparedness are essential for effective teaching and professional competence (Kyriacou, 2001). Therefore, understanding the level of examination anxiety among prospective secondary school teachers is important for improving teacher education programmes and providing appropriate psychological support.

Anxiety is a natural human emotion experienced in response to stressful or challenging situations (Spielberger, C. D. 1972). It is characterized by feelings of uneasiness, nervousness, worry, and fear, often accompanied by physical symptoms such as rapid heartbeat, sweating, shivering, or shortness of breath (American Psychiatric association, 2013). While occasional anxiety is a normal part of life, excessive anxiety can interfere with daily functioning and overall well-being (Sarason, 1984). In academic settings, one specific and increasingly common form of anxiety is examination anxiety, which has drawn significant attention from educators, psychologists, and researchers (Zeidner, M 1998).

2. Research Objectives:

1. To find out examination anxiety level of prospective secondary school teachers in Aizawl district.
2. To compare examination anxiety level of prospective secondary school teachers in Aizawl district with respect to gender.
3. To compare examination anxiety level among prospective secondary school teachers with respect to locale.
4. To compare examination anxiety level between first year and second year prospective secondary school teachers of Aizawl district.
5. To compare examination anxiety level among prospective secondary school teachers of different institutions.

3. Research Hypotheses:

1. There is no significant difference in examination anxiety level of prospective secondary school teachers in Aizawl district with respect to gender.
2. There is no significant difference in examination anxiety level of prospective secondary school teachers with respect to locale.
3. There is no significant difference in examination anxiety level between first year and second year prospective secondary school teachers in Aizawl district.
4. There is no significant difference in examination anxiety level among prospective secondary school teachers of different institutions.

4. Methodology

The study adopts a quantitative, descriptive survey design. It aims to assess and describe the level of examination anxiety among prospective secondary school teachers in Aizawl district. A descriptive approach is chosen as it helps in gathering numerical data and analyzing patterns of anxiety without manipulating any variables.

Using a simple random sampling technique, a total of 300 students were selected from three different institutions.

For the present study, Examination Anxiety Scale (EAS-ss) developed by Dr. Subhash Sarkar (2005), Vice Chancellor of Netaji Subhas Open University was used.

For collection of data, questionnaires were distributed through google form after obtaining permission from the Head of the Department (HOD) of selected institutions.

5. Analysis and interpretation of Data

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, and percentage to determine the overall level of examination anxiety among the prospective secondary school teachers. Further independent t-test was applied to examine differences in anxiety level with respect to gender, locale and year of study, while ANOVA was used to analyze the examination anxiety level between different institutions.

1. Examination anxiety level of prospective secondary school teachers

Objective 1: To find out examination anxiety level of prospective secondary school teachers in Aizawl district.

In the present study the investigators analyzed the examination anxiety level of prospective secondary school teachers.

Table-1: Examination anxiety level of prospective secondary school teachers

Examination Anxiety Level	No. of students	Percentage
Extremely High	4	1.33%
High	34	11.33%
Above Average	63	21.00%
Average	96	32.00%
Below Average	67	22.33%
Low	36	12.00%
Extremely Low	0	0.00%
TOTAL	300	100%

Table 1 showed that the majority of prospective secondary school teachers have moderate level of examination anxiety level comprising 32% of respondents.

2. Examination anxiety level of prospective secondary school teachers with respect to gender

Objective 2: To compare examination anxiety level of prospective secondary school teachers in Aizawl district with respect to gender.

In the present study, the examination anxiety level of prospective secondary school teachers was examined to determine whether gender has influenced on examination anxiety level.

The mean difference was tested for significance using an independent t-test. The result is presented in table-2.

Table-2: Comparison of male and female prospective secondary school teachers

Gender	No. of Students	Mean	SD	df	t-value	Critical Value at 0.05	Significant Level
Male	133	37.40	20.687	298	4.966	1.984	significant
Female	167	49.43	20.956				

The table shows the mean score of females is 49.43, which is higher than that of males, which is 37.40, indicating that female students show higher level of examination anxiety. As seen from the table, the difference between mean score is statistically significant with a t-value of 4.966. Therefore, the null hypothesis indicating no significant difference in examination anxiety level of prospective secondary school teachers in Aizawl district with respect to gender was rejected.

3. Examination anxiety level of prospective secondary school teachers with respect to locale.

Objective 3: To compare examination anxiety level among prospective secondary school teachers with respect to locale.

The mean difference was tested for significance using an independent t-test. The result is presented in table-3.

Table-3: Comparison between urban and local prospective secondary school teachers

Locale	No. of students	Mean	SD	t-value	df	Critical Value at 0.05	Significant level
Urban	196	43.44	21.911	0.718	298	1.984	Not significant
Rural	104	45.33	21.188				

The above table shows that mean score of rural students is 45.33 which is slightly higher than that of urban students with mean 43.44, indicating that rural students show a slightly higher level of anxiety. However, the t-value of 0.718 is statistically not significant to reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, the hypothesis which shows that there is no significant difference in examination anxiety level of prospective secondary school teachers with respect to locale was accepted.

4. Examination anxiety level of prospective secondary school teachers with respect to year of study.

Objective 4: To compare examination anxiety level between first year and second year prospective secondary school teachers of Aizawl district

Difference in examination anxiety level between first year and second year of prospective secondary school teachers was examined using statistical technique of t-test. The result is presented in table-4.

Table-4: Comparison of 1st year and 2nd year prospective secondary school teachers

Year	No. of Students	Mean	SD	t-value	df	critical value at 0.05	significant level
1st year	178	46.58	20.804	2.422	298	1.984	significant
2nd year	122	40.47	22.414				

The table shows that mean score of 1st year students is 46.58, which is higher than that of 2nd year students with mean 40.47, indicating that 1st year students experience a higher level of examination anxiety. The t-value of 2.422 is statistically significant at 0.05 critical value. Therefore, the null hypothesis indicating that there is no significant difference in examination anxiety level between first year and second year prospective secondary school teachers in Aizawl district was rejected.

5. Examination anxiety level of prospective secondary school teachers of different institutions.

Objective 5: To compare examination anxiety level among prospective secondary school teachers of different institutions.

In the present study, examination anxiety level of prospective secondary school teachers of different institutions were examined using statistical technique of one-way ANOVA. The result is presented in table-5.

Table-5: Comparison of different institutions on examination anxiety

Institution	No. of Student	Mean	SD	df	F	Significant Level
IASE	153	46.15	20.025	2	1.711	No Significant
MZU	76	40.63	24.813	297		
DIET	71	43.37	21.172			

The table shows that IASE (Institute of Advanced Studies in Education) has the highest mean score of 46.15 followed by DIET (District Institute of Education and Training) with mean score of 43.37 and then MZU (Mizoram University) with mean score of 40.63. the difference among the three institutions was tested with ANOVA, and the result showed F - value of 1.711. Although there is a slightly differences between means but their difference is not statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis indicating no significant difference in examination anxiety level among prospective secondary school teachers of different institutions needs to be accepted.

6. Major Findings

- A statistically significant difference was found between gender. Female students tend to show higher mean anxiety scores compared to their male students,
- Although rural students showed a slightly higher mean score than urban students, but no statistically significant difference were found between rural and urban students.

- A significant difference was observed between first-year and second-year students in terms of examination anxiety. First-year students exhibited higher levels of examination anxiety compared to second-year students.
- No significant difference was found among prospective secondary school teachers of different institutions.

7. Conclusion

The present study was conducted to examine the level of examination anxiety among prospective secondary school teachers and to identify differences based on variables such as gender, age, locality, year of study, and institution. The findings of the study revealed that the majority of prospective secondary school teachers experience a moderate level of examination anxiety, indicating that examination-related stress is a common issue among prospective secondary school teachers. The study found significant differences in examination anxiety based on gender and year of study. This indicates that examination anxiety is a widespread issue that affects students similarly regardless of their background or institution. Overall, the study highlights the importance of providing emotional and academic support to prospective teachers in order to reduce examination anxiety and promote better mental well-being and academic performance.

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