

OPEN ACCESS

Manuscript ID:
EDU-2026-140311146

Volume: 14

Issue: 3

Month: June

Year: 2026

P-ISSN: 2320-2653

E-ISSN: 2582-1334

Received: 05.03.2026

Accepted: 10.05.2026

Published Online: 01.06.2026

Citation:

Channakeshava,
B., Anandan, K.,
Srinivasacharlu, A. &
Tholappan. (2026). A Study
on Internal Assessment
Anxiety and Academic
Achievement of B.Ed
Students based on their
Demographic Characteristics.
*Shanlax International
Journal of Education*, 14(3),
96–106.

DOI:

[https://doi.org/10.34293/
education.v14i3.11146](https://doi.org/10.34293/education.v14i3.11146)



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A Study on Internal Assessment Anxiety and Academic Achievement of B.Ed Students based on their Demographic Characteristics

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Abstract

The National Council for Teacher Education governs secondary school teacher training programmes in India. They provide curriculum guidelines, and institutions follow them while running their bachelors in education (B.Ed) programmes. Conventionally, the B.Ed programme will have almost 50% of the total marks as internal assessment marks. The present study attempts to investigate B.Ed students' internal assessment anxiety and their academic achievement based on their demographic characteristics such as gender, locality, marital status, subject streams, and type of college. Researchers recruited 598 B.Ed students from Bengaluru, India, using a convenient sampling technique. The study administered an academic anxiety survey questionnaire along with a demographic proforma of the students, including their internal assessment scores. The findings revealed a negative correlation between internal assessment anxiety and academic achievement among all demographic variables. Interestingly, the internal assessment scores of unmarried students are higher than those of married students. Study recommends qualitative inquiry to understand the pattern of internal assessment, academic anxiety, and academic performance of B.Ed students in India.

Keywords: Academic Achievement, Demographic Profile, Internal Assessment Anxiety, Teacher Education, B.Ed. Students, Educational Psychology

Introduction

A teacher's career can be a series of emotional experiences ([Anttila et al., 2016](#)). Studies have shown that during their study period, students experience emotions ranging from excitement to distress ([Timošćuk & Ugaste, 2012](#)). Along with this, the teaching program also provides hands-on experience through internship practice, which is vital for completing teacher education. ([Ahonen et al., 2015](#); [Heikonen et al., 2017](#); [Saariaho et al., 2016](#)). This practice of teaching also provides exposure to the on-site practice of teaching, giving an understanding of the practical aspects involved in teaching, the roles, responsibilities, and others, for which the student teacher provides a final teaching report ([Loc, 2014](#)).

Anxiety is a feeling of tension accompanied by a chain of disturbing thoughts and mental changes, resulting in elevated blood pressure. (APA, n.d.). Anxiety is defined as discomfort in the mind over some anticipation. They are of different types, namely panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD), phobic disorder, separation anxiety, and stress disorders (Hooda & Saini, 2017). Over the years, many researchers have defined anxiety as a feeling of unease or concern (Scovel, 1978). Anxiety is accompanied by a defensive mechanism during situations that are perceived as a threat (Cole, 2014) and includes cognitive, emotional, somatic, and behavioral components (Ahmed et al., 2009). It creates procrastination and reduces motivation for completing coursework (Pekrun et al., 2002).

Review of Related Literature

Earlier research has indicated that the work environment can also trigger anxiety symptoms (Cheng & McCarthy, 2018; Haslam et al., 2005; Linden & Muschalla, 2007; Nagata, 2000). This has been studied along with workplace burnout (Mark & Smith, 2012; Sun et al., 2012). These burnouts experienced by teachers, known as 'teacher burnouts' are linked to anxiety among preservice teachers (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011) and some coping mechanisms are seeking social support, self-talk, time management and relaxation techniques (Richardson et al., 2012).

A study on practicum exposure reported that, it is possible that the student teachers also tend to feel this type of anxiety during their program since they are already burdened with other kinds of anxiety from neurotic anxiety (Sharf, 2015) or normal anxiety from their practicum exposure. Preparing to become an educator can be accompanied by positive and negative emotions (Anttila et al., 2016; Malderez et al., 2007) such as anxiety, shame, jealousy, and anger fall under the negative, which are categorized as deactivating (Linnenbrink, 2007), and emotions in the academic setting keep fluctuating (Timošćuk & Ugaste, 2012).

Furthermore, numerous studies have pointed to the existence of anxiety among student teachers (Poulou, 2007; Timošćuk & Ugaste, 2012). Apart

from this, students in the university experience anxiety in general since they are faced with new scenarios from new cultural exposure, disciples to study, relationships, and others. Recently, there has been an increase in anxiety-related issues among students (Duraku, 2017).

Few earlier studies have shown that anxiety during studies has an impact on academic performance (Cassady & Johnson, 2002; Chapell et al., 2005; Dordi Nejad et al., 2011), making it a vital component of study by many researchers. Anxiety can also impact relationships (Herrero et al., 2006), and other factors such as neuroticism and introversion have an influence on anxiety, showing a positive correlation (Eysenck & Rachman, 2013; Koutsimani et al., 2019; Middeldorp et al., 2006).

Studies pertaining to student teachers discuss that student teachers are expected to have Emotional Regulation ER(skills because of the challenges they face regularly in classrooms and to have healthy regulation of emotional states (Skinner & Beers, 2016) in their lives. Lower ER can result in reduced quality of instruction in the classroom (McLean & Connor, 2015). According to Sonnemans and Frijda (1994), the nature of emotion is such that it can evolve over time, and there are different types of emotions (Butz et al., 2015). Student teachers are also constantly faced with numerous situations that trigger different emotions, which would have an effect based on the particular situation and the individual (Becker et al., 2014). Sharing emotions reduces the duration of an emotional experience (Brans et al., 2013). However, most people share specific types of emotions more than others (Brans et al., 2013). It was also observed that the duration of these emotions varied. A negative experience like sadness is prolonged compared to happiness (Brans et al., 2013; Verduyn et al., 2009). Student teachers are also more likely to share these emotional experiences with their peers, supporting each other throughout their careers (Väisänen et al., 2017). If these student teachers work in groups, they share more negative emotions, such as anxiety or stress. (Litmanen et al., 2012). Instilling positive emotions is important because these positive emotions state good psychological (Fredrickson, 1998; Janssen et al., 2008).

The programs for student teachers are often rigorous and demanding because they bring together a wide array of subjects and their respective pedagogy training. The entire coursework, along with the practicum, can increase the anxiety level of student teachers ([Simon & Thomas, 1983](#); [Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2016](#)), and some studies compare the anxiety levels among B.Ed. ([Mishra, 2018](#)). With the already burdensome workload that these students are faced with ([Bhargava, 2009](#)), and keeping in mind the moderate level of academic anxiety ([Mochahary & Sarmah, 2022](#)) the continuous assessments, pressure to complete their course could not make it easier for the student teachers, and this has been a less explored factor within anxiety among B.Ed. students. Hence, the present study explores the academic anxiety that student teachers face in their B.Ed programme and their performance in the programme.

Research Questions

The study frames following research questions,

Whether the existing relationship between academic anxiety and academic achievement of B.Ed students varies across their demographic variables such as gender, locality, marital status, subject streams, and type of college.

Whether there exist a significant difference in academic anxiety of B.Ed students across their demographic variables such as gender, locality, marital status, subject streams, and type of college.

Whether there exist a significant difference in academic achievement of B.Ed students across their demographic variables such as gender, locality, marital status, subject streams, and type of college.

Method

The present study employed a descriptive survey research design to address the research questions raised.

Participants of the Study

The study included 598 students pursuing a Bachelor of Education degree in Bengaluru, India, through a convenient sampling technique. Table 1 shows the demographic details of the study participants.

Table 1 Showing the Participants Demographic Details

Gender		B.Ed subject stream		Locality		Type of college		Marital status	
Male	Female	Science	Arts	Rural	Urban	Private	Govt. & Aided	Single	Married
116	482	296	302	224	374	313	285	293	305

Tools used in the Study

The present study adopted the academic anxiety scale developed by Sathiyagirirajan, and the demographic proforma collected the other details of the participants. The Academic Anxiety Scale consists of 28 items with a 5-point Likert-type rating scale. The rating varied from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The demographic proforma included gender, subject stream, locality, type of college, and marital status of B.Ed. students.

Researchers revalidated the academic anxiety scale ([Parimala, 2015](#)) with the help of a panel of experts and further subjected the scale to a pilot study on a small sample (N=50) to establish reliability. The researcher obtained a Cronbach's alpha internal consistency value of 0.655, which is reliable. Furthermore, the study considered the scores obtained from the administration of the academic achievement scale developed by the researcher as part of his doctoral work.

Data Collection Procedure

The researcher created a tool booklet consisting of items on demographic details, academic anxiety and academic achievement. The researcher visited approximately 24 B.Ed. colleges in Bengaluru and obtained permission for data collection from the heads of the institutions. The researcher then administered the tool booklet in face-to-face mode to more than 650 B.Ed students pursuing their B.Ed across the selected demographics. However, the researcher obtained only 598 successful responses out of 650. The researcher tabulated the data obtained in an Excel sheet and imported the data sheet into SPSS version 24 for statistical analysis.

Ethical Consideration

The study obtained institutional review board ethics committee approval to conduct the present research. The researcher obtained permission from the Principals of each B.Ed. college before collecting the desired data. The survey booklet included an informed consent form at the beginning, seeking participants' willingness to participate in the study. The booklet was administered only to participants who expressed their willingness to participate in the study. Participants had the privilege of withdrawing from the study if they felt uncomfortable. The researchers stored the collected data in a password-encrypted file. It is accessible only to the researchers to ensure data confidentiality and anonymity.

Results

To address the research questions of the study, the researchers present the results of the present study in three sections. Section 1 shows the normal distribution of the data using histograms (see figure 1 and 2). Section 2 presents the correlation results, and Section 3 presents the results from the independent sample t-test.

Section 1

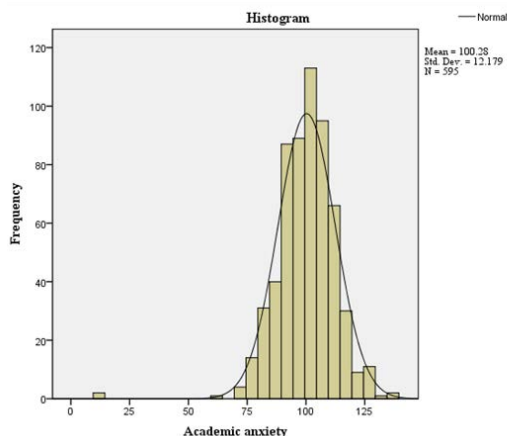


Figure 1 Histogram with Normal Curve on Academic Anxiety Scores

Through visual inspection of Figures 1 and 2, the data on academic anxiety ($N=595$, Mean = 100.28, SD = 12.179) and academic achievement ($N=595$, Mean = 58.29, SD = 4.368) revealed a normal distribution; therefore, the researchers resorted to

parametric inferential statistics for subsequent data analysis.

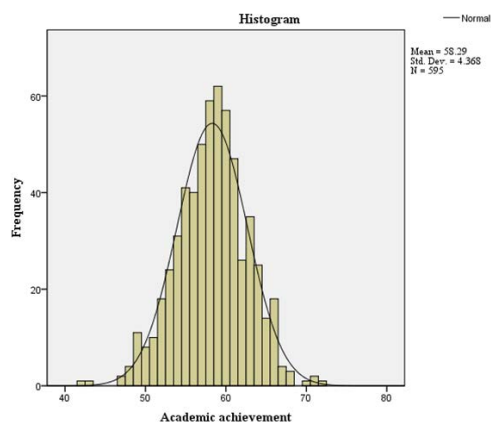


Figure 2 Histogram with Normal Curve on Academic Achievement Scores

Section 2

Presents the correlation analysis of the academic anxiety and academic achievement of B.Ed students across their demographic variables such as gender, locality, marital status, subject streams, and type of college.

Table 2 Showing the Pearson Correlation Test Results Across Demographics

B.Ed students with varied demographic profile	Academic anxiety * academic achievement (r, p < 0.05)	Interpretation
Gender = Male, Locality = Urban, Marital status = Married, Subject stream = Science, College type = Private colleges	-0.100	Weak negative
Gender = Male, Locality = Urban, Marital status = Single, Subject stream = Science, College type = Aided colleges	-0.585	Moderate negative

Gender = Male, Locality = Urban, Marital status = Single, Subject stream = Science, College type = Private colleges	-0.238	Weak negative
Gender = Male, Locality = Urban, Marital status = Single, Subject stream = Arts, College type = Private colleges	-0.648	Strong negative
Gender = Male, Locality = Rural, Marital status = Married, Subject stream = Science, College type = Private colleges	-0.999	Strong negative
Gender = Male, Locality = Rural, Marital status = Married, Subject stream = Arts, College type = Aided colleges	-0.100	Weak negative
Gender = Female, Locality = Rural, Marital status = Single, Subject stream = Science, College type = Aided colleges	-0.253	Weak negative

Table 2 above reveals that there exist a weak negative correlation ($r = -0.100$) between academic anxiety and academic achievement score of B.Ed students with demographic details male, urban, married, science, private colleges. There exist a moderate negative correlation ($r = -0.585$) between academic anxiety and academic achievement score of B.Ed students with demographic details male, urban, single, science, government or aided colleges. There exist a weak negative correlation ($r = -0.238$) between academic anxiety and academic achievement score

of B.Ed students with demographic details male, urban, single, science, private colleges. There exist a strong negative correlation ($r = -0.648$) between academic anxiety and academic achievement score of B.Ed students with demographic details male, urban, single, arts, private colleges. There exist a strong negative correlation ($r = -0.999$) between academic anxiety and academic achievement score of B.Ed students with demographic details male, rural, married, science, private colleges. There exist a weak negative correlation ($r = -0.100$) between academic anxiety and academic achievement score of B.Ed students with demographic details male, rural, married, arts, government or aided colleges. There exist a weak negative correlation ($r = -0.253$) between academic anxiety and academic achievement score of B.Ed students with demographic details female, rural, single, science, government or aided colleges.

Section 3

Tables 3, 4, 5, and 6 present the results of the independent sample t-tests. Table 3, presents group statistics for academic anxiety and table 4 presents independent sample t-test result for the significant differences in the mean scores of academic anxiety over internal assessment of B.Ed students across their demographic variables such as gender, locality, marital status, subject streams, and type of college.

Table 3 Group Statistics of Academic Anxiety Across Demographic Variables

	Marital status	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Academic anxiety	Male	113	98.83	13.472	1.267
	Female	482	100.62	11.845	.540
Academic anxiety	Urban	374	100.27	11.607	.600
	Rural	221	100.29	13.117	.882
Academic anxiety	Married	293	100.32	12.190	.712
	Single	302	100.24	12.189	.701
Academic anxiety	Science	296	99.77	13.210	.768
	Arts	299	100.78	11.064	.640
Academic anxiety	Private	285	100.61	12.542	.743
	Govt./ Aided	310	99.97	11.848	.673

Table 4 Independent Sample t-test for Academic Anxiety Across Demographic Variables

Academic anxiety		Levene's Test (Equality of Variances)		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% CI	
									Lower	Upper
Gender	Equal variances assumed	.092	.762	-1.405	593	.161	-1.786	1.272	-4.284	.712
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.297	155.088	.197	-1.786	1.377	-4.507	.935
Locality	Equal variances assumed	2.746	.098	-.023	593	.981	-.024	1.034	-2.055	2.007
	Equal variances not assumed			-.023	417.922	.982	-.024	1.067	-2.122	2.074
Marital status	Equal variances assumed	.103	.748	.076	593	.940	.076	1.000	-1.887	2.039
	Equal variances not assumed			.076	592.453	.940	.076	1.000	-1.887	2.039
Subject stream	Equal variances assumed	1.363	.243	-1.014	593	.311	-1.012	.999	-2.973	.949
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.013	573.296	.312	-1.012	.999	-2.975	.951
Type of college	Equal variances assumed	.211	.646	.636	593	.525	.636	1.000	-1.328	2.600
	Equal variances not assumed			.635	581.452	.526	.636	1.002	-1.332	2.605

From the table 4 above, the independent sample t-test results reveals no significant difference in the mean scores of academic anxiety over internal assessment of B.Ed students across their demographic variables. Gender ($t = -1.405$, $p = 0.161$), locality ($t = -0.023$, $p = 0.981$), marital status ($t = 0.076$, $p = 0.940$), subject streams ($t = -1.014$, $p = 0.311$), and type of college ($t = 0.636$, $p = 0.525$).

Table 5, presents group statistics for academic achievement and table 6 presents independent sample t-test result for the significant differences in the mean scores of academic achievement of B.Ed students across their demographic variables such as gender, locality, marital status, subject streams, and type of college.

Table 5 Group Statistics of Academic Achievement Across Demographic Variables

	Marital status	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Academic anxiety	Male	113	98.83	13.472	1.267
	Female	482	100.62	11.845	.540
Academic anxiety	Urban	374	100.27	11.607	.600
	Rural	221	100.29	13.117	.882
Academic anxiety	Married	293	100.32	12.190	.712
	Single	302	100.24	12.189	.701
Academic anxiety	Science	296	99.77	13.210	.768
	Arts	299	100.78	11.064	.640
Academic anxiety	Private	285	100.61	12.542	.743
	Govt./Aided	310	99.97	11.848	.673

Table 6 Independent Sample t-test Result for Academic Achievement across Demographic Variables

Academic anxiety		Levene's Test (Equality of Variances)		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% CI	
									Lower	Upper
Gender	Equal variances assumed	2.218	.137	.377	593	.706	.172	.457	-.725	1.069
	Equal variances not assumed			.417	191.877	.677	.172	.413	-.642	.987
Locality	Equal variances assumed	3.388	.066	-.971	593	.332	-.360	.371	-1.088	.368
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.000	503.702	.318	-.360	.360	-1.067	.347
Marital status	Equal variances assumed	4.751	.030	-2.169	593	.030	-.774	.357	-1.476	-.073
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.165	576.485	.031	-.774	.358	-1.477	-.072
Subject stream	Equal variances assumed	5.155	.024	-.808	593	.419	-.289	.358	-.993	.414
	Equal variances not assumed			-.808	581.191	.420	-.289	.358	-.994	.415
Type of college	Equal variances assumed	2.134	.145	.811	593	.418	.291	.359	-.413	.995
	Equal variances not assumed			.809	581.410	.419	.291	.359	-.415	.997

From the table 6 above, the independent sample t-test results reveals no significant difference in the mean scores of academic achievement of B.Ed students across their demographic variables. Gender ($t = 0.377$, $p = 0.706$), locality ($t = -0.971$, $p = 0.332$), subject streams ($t = -0.808$, $p = 0.420$), and type of college ($t = 0.811$, $p = 0.418$). However, there exist a significant difference in the mean scores of academic achievement between married and unmarried group of B.Ed students ($t = -2.165$, $p = 0.031$). The study further reveals that, singles or unmarried group ($M = 58.68$) outperformed the married group ($M = 57.90$) of B.Ed students in academic achievement. This is in alignment with the academic anxiety mean scores from Table 3, revealing that the unmarried group ($M = 100.24$) had a lower average anxiety level than the married group ($M = 100.32$), though this difference was not significant.

Discussion

The present study found its results as intended for all the research questions raised in the study. Accordingly, study was intending to find the relationship between academic anxiety and academic achievement of B.Ed students across their demographic characteristics such as gender, locality, marital status, subject streams, and type of college. The study clearly demonstrated the existence of significant negative relationship between anxieties over internal assessment marks of B.Ed students and their academic achievement. A recent study also agrees with this result ([Mochahary & Sarmah, 2022](#)). As the felt anxiety over internal assessment increases in the B.Ed programme, there is a corresponding decrease in the academic achievement of B.Ed students. This negative relationship was strong among married male students attending private B.Ed

colleges in both rural and urban set-ups and in both science and arts subject streams. Similarly, a weak negative relationship existed among unmarried boy and girl students of the science stream attending both aided and private B.Ed colleges from rural and urban setups. However, a moderate negative relationship was observed among unmarried boys from urban aided colleges in the science stream. Thus, teacher education stakeholders must work towards reducing B.Ed students' anxiety over internal assessment affecting their academic performance in B.Ed colleges. A recent study revealed a negative correlation between teacher trainees' anxiety and their teaching practice achievement scores ([Kamonjo and Nyambura, 2023](#)). Learner autonomy and objective assessment methods can replace the intimidating learning atmosphere.

The study further attempted to find the differences in academic anxiety over internal assessment of B.Ed students across their demographic characteristics such as gender, locality, marital status, subject streams, and type of colleges. A recent study is also in agreement with this result ([Mochahary & Sarmah, 2022](#)). Although there was a difference in the mean scores (see Table 3), these differences were not statistically significant.

Nevertheless, the study further attempted to find the differences in academic achievement of B.Ed students across their demographic characteristics such as gender, locality, marital status, subject streams, and type of colleges. Although there was a difference in the mean scores (see Table 5), these differences were not statistically significant, except in the case of marital status. However, a recent study also showed differences in the academic achievements of teacher trainees ([Karabiyik, 2022](#)). The unmarried B.Ed students group outperformed the married group of B.Ed students in academic achievement. This is further evident from their low anxiety scores compared to the married group, although this difference was not significant.

Overall, the academic anxiety of B.Ed students over their internal assessment marks did not differ among various demographic characteristics, however the anxiety per se exist. Similarly, academic achievement of B.Ed students amidst the presence of academic anxiety did not differ among various

demographic characteristics. However, it did differ between married and unmarried B.Ed. students. In India, more girl students join the B.Ed. program than boys. Additionally, more married girls join the B.Ed program than married boys. Therefore, reducing academic anxiety and encouraging a free and fair atmosphere must replace intimidating classroom experiences.

Conclusion

The present study explored a unique area of measuring academic anxiety of B.Ed college students over their internal assessment and its effect on their academic achievement. Accordingly, study found the intended result that, there is a strong negative correlation between academic anxiety and academic achievement of B.Ed students. However, study did not show any major differences in academic anxiety and academic achievement among various demographic characteristics B.Ed students. As there was a strong negative correlation, there is a need for a deeper understanding of this relationship and the specific causes accounting for this relationship. The present study could have been exploratory in nature finding the causes unlike finding the variation in academic anxiety and academic achievement of B.Ed students based on few selected demographic characteristics. Every study has its limitations. Similarly, the present study included only 598 B.Ed. college students, and demographic characteristics were limited to gender, locality, marital status, subject streams, and type of college. The study limits itself to analyse the relationship between academic anxiety and academic achievement of B.Ed college students. The study further limits itself to measure the differences in the level of academic anxiety and academic achievement of B.Ed students in the selected demographic characteristics. Study recommends future researchers to explore the academic anxiety faced by B.Ed college students due to their internal assessments through qualitative research paradigms. Investigators strongly felt the need for longitudinal studies, they may provide greater details and evidences on the internal assessment and its relation with academic achievement of B.Ed students. Furthermore, researchers must explore the rate of successful completion of the B.Ed. programme and

conduct an objective analysis of the results affecting the quality of the B.Ed. programme in the country.

Acknowledgment

Researcher sincerely thank all the study participants, B.Ed college principals, subject experts, and supervisors for their valuable time and energy.

Conflict of Interest

Authors have no competing interest. This manuscript emerged out of a PhD work. Supervisors supported the research scholar in bringing out this manuscript.

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