



## English As Second Language Learners' Performance Correlates of Social and Academic Anxiety

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**ABSTRACT:** *The study aims to examine the impact of academic and social anxiety on ESL learners' performance. Anxiety is a major type of psychological behavior and emotional disorder. Presently cut-throat atmosphere, anxiety has entrapped students and they have become the victim of apprehension and fretful anxiety. Students suffering from anxiety disorder tend to show a low level of academic achievement. The concept of anxiety and performance was originated from the theory of Catastrophe. This theory highlights the influence of anxiety on an individuals' performance. A cross-sectional study was conducted among a sample of (N=42) students including (n=24) females and (n=18) males of one of the universities in Pakistan. Paper-based questionnaire was used to conduct the survey. The sampling techniques used in the study was Convenience Sampling. The objective of this research is to know the significant relationship of high level of anxiety and low level of ESL learners' academic performance. The hypotheses are based on two independent variable i-e, academic anxiety and social anxiety. The results presented the impact of anxiety on ESL learners' performance and concluded that the anxiety has a serious impact on ESL learners' mental abilities. Socially anxious students are likely to interact less with their peers, instructors and miss a lot of learning opportunities. The previous studies signify a negative correlation between the anxiety and performance. In this research, quantitative approach is used for analyzing the data. This study also provided several recommendations to cope up with the anxiety to perform well and enhance future performance.*

**Keywords:** ESL Learners, academic anxiety, academic achievement, performance, social anxiety

### Introduction

Anxiety is a very common phenomenon in every field of life. Most people face the symptoms of anxiety to some extent in their life. The extreme level of anxiety highly disrupts an individual's life and affects one's day to day activities and social life. Anxiety is one of the major types of behavior and emotional disorder (Rachel & Chidsey, 2005). In today's cut-throat atmosphere, anxiety has entrapped

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students and they have become the victim of a different kind of anxiety, for example, academic anxiety and social anxiety. Students suffering from anxiety disorder show an unreceptive attitude towards their studies such as bad performance in exams, lack of interest in different subjects and procrastination of academic work. The psychological symptoms among students include a sensation of nervousness before class, freaking, going blank while attempting the test, feeling very frustrated and helpless while doing the academic work and an unusual lack of interest in tough courses. However, the physical symptoms include trembling of hands and legs, fast breathing, sweaty hands, and increasing heartbeat. Academic and social anxiety have become a deep-rooted predictor of ESL learners' academic performances. They have a serious impact on ESL learners' academic life, and it is highly important to build coping strategies to enhance future performance (Ruffins, 2007). Cassady (2010) states that students have anxiety while taking math, reading, science, and foreign language classes.

The perception of anxiety and academic performance comes from the theory of Catastrophe focusing on the relationship between performance and anxiety in terms of sport. This theory highlights the greater influence of anxiety or stress upon the performance of an individual. Robb (2005) anticipated that cognitive anxiety has a negative relationship with performance while physiological anxiety has a wavy relationship with performance. Cognitive anxiety is the major reason that highly affects performance. The students of universities have an obligation to perform well in their academia to gain an optimal level. Anxiety can be created by oblivious teaching or lengthy exams syllabus. It is unusual for students to perform well in the situation when they are feeling or experiencing greater pressure with their academic work or when they are suffering from a higher level of anxiety during their study hours (Mayya et al., 2004). Anxiety during studies depends on several sources that include age level, gender, social class, high involvement in other activities and cultural environment. Anxiety will help a lot in evaluating and mobilizing the sources to increase academic performance. Therefore, it is very important to study anxiety and its consequences on students. The anxiety leads to certain reactions that involves blockage of thoughts and memory, lack of concentration and attention and another cognitive interfering Guerrero (1990).

Different researches have observed that learners' academic performance is highly influenced by their individual efforts, management of their time, social interaction, academia environment, facilities that are provided to them, completion of academic tasks, class attendance, group study and the teaching style of the course instructor (Sansgiry et al., 2006). However, it is observed that the students who are completely satisfied and have a low or moderate level of anxiety tend to perform well in their academia. Therefore, anxiety is regarded as one of the deliberating factors affecting learners' performance Carroll and Garavalia (2004).

Alam (2018) concluded that the consequences of high anxiety include vigilant or inflexible thinking, reduction of intellectual or information processing and problem-solving, heightened vulnerability to encouragement and inadequate responsiveness. This study also indicates that anxiety is a major hurdle in the academic performance of students. Other researchers also shared the opinion that the extreme level of academic and social anxiety is highly associated with poor ESL learners' performance and has an inverse relationship. Like this result, (El-Anzi, 2005) also concluded in his research paper that a high degree of academic achievement has a positive relationship with a low degree of anxiety.

Anxiety is basically the sensation of nervousness, fear and worry, typically generalized as a reaction to a condition that seems to be threatening. Academic anxiety is the sensation of being nervous, anxious, fearful, uneasy, and distressed and stressed out because of academic pressure. There are troublemaking thought patterns and physical behaviors and responses that are the result of concern about the probability of unsatisfactory poor performance on an academic exam or anything that is based on academics (Spielberger, 1983, Spielberger, et. al (1995). The defining feature of social anxiety or social anxiety disorder is the strong fear or anxiety of being negatively perceived or judged by other people leading to the sensation of inferiority, inadequacy, disgrace, discomfiture, and self-consciousness (Callahan, 2001).

### ***Statement of the problem***

Anxiety has become very common among the students. The increasing trends of anxiety in the educational institutions have affected many students which then results in the decline of their academic performance. It is a major area of concern nowadays and has called upon the attention of many writers and researchers. My research paper addresses the issue of academic and social anxiety

and its overall impact on ESL learners' performance. The problem statement, therefore, is: A Study of Academic Performance of the University students in the context of two variables; academic and social anxiety.

The purpose of the study is to determine the consequences of academic and social anxiety on the overall performance of the students. It will focus on exploring the negative relationship between academic anxiety and academic achievement, the effects of anxiety on ESL learners' mental abilities, discovering that the socially anxious students are less likely to have higher GPAs and face hurdles in their professional lives and comparing that the female ESL learners have a higher ratio of anxiety as compared to male ESL learners.

There are two independent variables i.e., academic anxiety and social anxiety and the dependent variable is ESL learners' performance. The factors aforementioned in the conceptual framework indicates that the higher level of academic anxiety leads to a lower level of academic performance in the university students. They are indirectly related to each other and have no positive relationship.

The study aims to find answers to the following research questions:

What is the relationship between academic performance and academic anxiety?

Do male ESL learners have a higher ratio of academic anxiety as compared to female ESL learners?

Do socially anxious students are likely to miss lots of learning opportunities because they usually avoid interaction with people?

Does academic anxiety lead to the procrastination of academic work?

Does a moderate level of academic anxiety motivate a student and incline them to perform well?

### ***Hypotheses***

H1: The higher the academic anxiety, the lower the performance of the students will be.

H2: A moderate level of anxiety helps the students to perform well in their academia and keeps them motivated.

H3: Social anxiety is a key variable that prevents students to be competent enough in their academics which then have a greater impact on their results.

## **Literature Review**

The reason behind this literature review is to provide possible support for the hypothesis which has been made previously. This study reviews the impact of academic and social anxiety on the overall performance of students in their academics.

### ***Academic Achievement***

Crow and Crow (1969) defined it as the ‘degree to which an apprentice is benefitting from directions in an area of learning that is achievement shown by the degree to which skill or knowledge has been conveyed to him’. Good (1977) demarcated it as, ‘knowledge attained, or skills established in the subjects, usually designated by test scores given by teachers. In fact, it has become an index of the future in today’s cut-throat environment. Academic attainment of students is exaggerated by many reasons that may reduce it; academic anxiety is the first and foremost among them. It is experiential that the accomplishment of the high academic anxiety apprentices is quite different from low academic anxiety apprentices. Gaudry and Spielberger (1971) debated that a high level of test anxiety is regarded as one of the main reasons for the low achievement of students at the university level.

### ***Academic Anxiety***

Anxiety is very common in certain circumstances. A minor level of anxiety is of no harm, but high anxiety can be problematic. Academic anxiety can turn out to be more harmful over time. The student’s academic performance highly suffers when the level of anxiety related to different academic tasks increases (Huberty, 2009). Academic anxiety is dominant among many students and works directly in dropping academic performance. To resolve this delinquent, one must ponder over the aspects of academic anxiety, finally, the search on how academic anxiety have a higher effect on the academic performance had interested the researchers to study this delinquent (Alam, 2017).

Kasturva and Deshpande (2014) state that academic anxiety an increasing concern among urban institutions and conclude that slight and severe academic anxiety in students show great pressure for academic performance and consequently

connected to anxiety levels. Faze and Hardy (1988) argue that cognitive anxiety has a constructive connection with performance when physical stimulation is in low-slung. Hamza (2006) demonstrates that student with a complex level of anxiety tends to attain low marks in the final examination of the semester. McCraty (2007) discusses the relationship between anxiety and the impact on academic achievement, a student with high anxiety levels would have lesser academic attainment among high school students.

### ***Social Anxiety***

ESL learners who are socially anxious miss lots of learning opportunities by avoiding teacher and peer-interaction, physiologically and psychologically. Excessive focus on the anxieties disrupts their academic learning and information processing (Clark & Wells, 1995), whereas the ability to modify communication with their colleagues may be slanted by the anxiety of negative evaluation (Rapee & Hiemberg, 1997). When joining a seminar or conducting a presentation, students suffering from social anxiety judge their competency poorly (Austin. 2004). Strahan and Conger (1998) conclude that even with the positive evaluation of viewers, the danger of being negatively perceived still exists in the minds of students regardless of their academic achievement. In all educational surroundings, social anxiety is commonly found, and it has a large influence on ESL learners' academic performance, their ability of retention, their progressive mental health and the skills of competing and coping (Chen & Drummond, 2008; Woody & Adessky, 2002). It is widely seen that in academic contexts when a student suffering from a social anxiety disorder is forced to come in front of the class, they started shivering and stuttering. A high level of anxiety is also closely related to the event when students are encouraged to pair up with the opposite gender. According to other researches, a huge percent of ESL learners are calculated who neither tend to participate in class discussions nor they like working in groups. Such types of students are commonly called introverts. Teachers should identify such apprentices and keep them under observation (Bhamani & Nasreen, 2012). Abbasi, A. M, Samreen, R. A, Farooqui, A, & John, S. (in press) state that 'one factor is involved in speech anxiety that is English language teacher himself/herself whose language proficiency is high, pronunciation level is also high, new students' speech anxiety level increases. Pakistani English language speakers should speak without speech anxiety, though it seems to be a part of human nature being nervous while speaking English as a second language. The students

should learn how to manage speech anxiety by welcoming it and try to overcome it not by mindless imitation but by being natural in English speech’.

Gracia (2004) considers introvert students as victims of stress and anxiety because these personal characteristics resulted in a lack of confidence, hesitation and the inability to cope with different situations. Students with social anxiety disorder have trouble in public speaking and they are likely to fail or drop out of their academia due to anxiety (Ameringen & Mancini, 2003). The attention and concentration ability of students may be disrupted by an unnecessary focus on their anxiety (Acarturk, 2009).

### **Research Methodology**

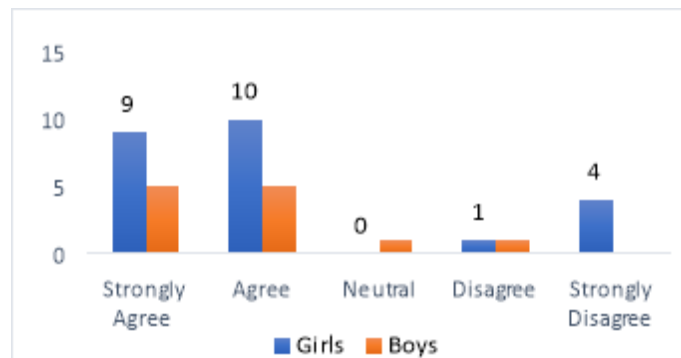
The type of research is descriptive, and the adopted approach is deductive. The time-horizon is cross-sectional and the research method is qualitative. In addition, the research is based on quantitative data and is casual in nature. Quantitative research provides important information that helps in taking integral business decisions. Quantitative data can be used to study for cause and effect relationships. The quantitative research method has been used because of its accurate measurements and its ability to make predictions. The study is based on two sources: Primary Data: Primary data is collected through a paper-based questionnaire. Secondary Data: Secondary data collection has been carried out through different kinds of literature of published articles, books, and the internet. After a thorough study on the problems, important aspects have been put in this study. The input of secondary data has been included in the introduction, literature review, and in a questionnaire. The questionnaire has been enriched by adding several factors of academic anxiety and social anxiety.

The population of the study was SMIU University, Karachi. The sampling technique used in this study is Convenience Sampling. It is a sampling type of non-probability sampling that involves the sample being drawn from that part of the population that is close to hand. This sampling technique was selected because it is fast, inexpensive, and the subjects were readily available. Moreover, it is the most common sampling technique used. The questionnaires were distributed among those who belonged to a set of the target population and were most easy to contact. e data has been collected from 42 students their ages ranged from 18 and 26 years. This included students studying from the first and second semester that are likely to suffer the most with academic and social anxiety.

There are several limitations with this study which are as follows: The data for this research was collected through a self-reported questionnaire. Self-reported data can contain several potential sources of bias like the respondents may not respond truthfully to represent themselves in a good light or they might not understand some vocabulary words that also prevent collecting valid data. The data of the survey paper has been collected from the students of the first and second semesters of one university, in an urban center and consideration of different centers could have brought various outcomes. The trend of academic and social anxiety varies highly from institution to institution based upon the environment and the study does not take this into account. Convenient Sampling was used to collect data thus the sample may not be the representation of the actual population.

### Data Analysis

Academic anxiety is the ultimate result of greater academic pressure on students as compared to their age. Fig 1 illustrates the frequency of the first statement.

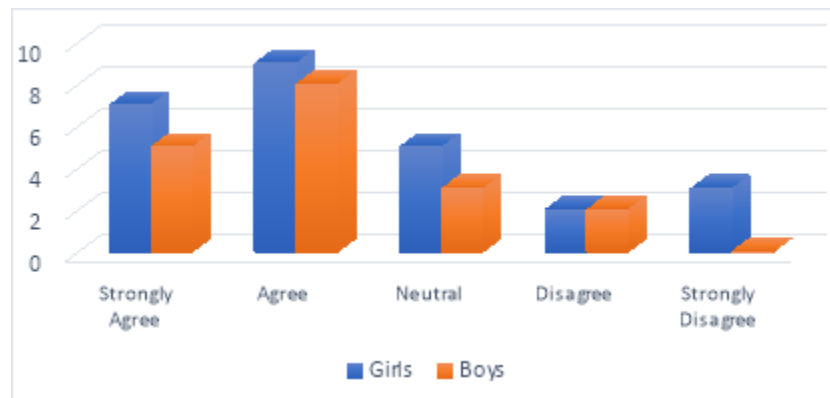


**Figure 1** Academic anxiety is the ultimate result of greater academic pressure

Fig. 1 illustrates that academic anxiety is the ultimate result of greater academic pressure on students as compared to their age. Thirty five percent of people including 10 female ESL learners and 5 male ESL learners are strongly agreed with the statement and 46.34 percent including 9 female ESL learners and 5 male ESL learners are agreed. The female ESL learners who agree with the statement are higher in percent because female ESL learners are likely to take admission to university at early age as compared to male ESL learners. Whereas, 9 percent of people strongly disagree, which means that they might not suffer from academic anxiety and they did

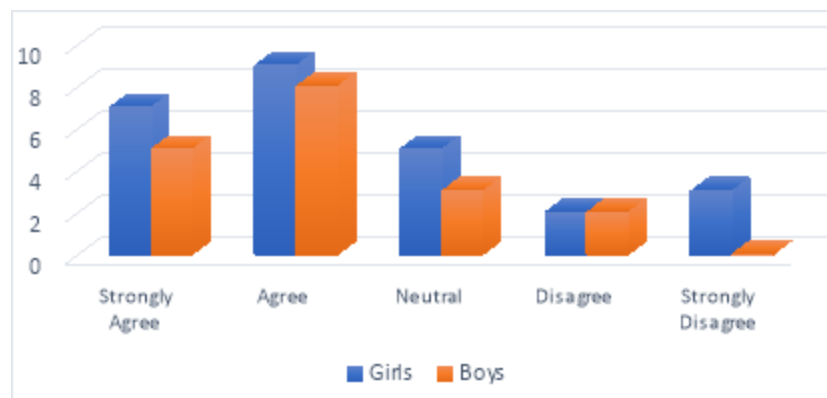


not agree with the statement that academic anxiety is the result of academic pressure. Academic anxiety is inversely related to academic performance. Fig. 2 illustrates the percentage and frequency.



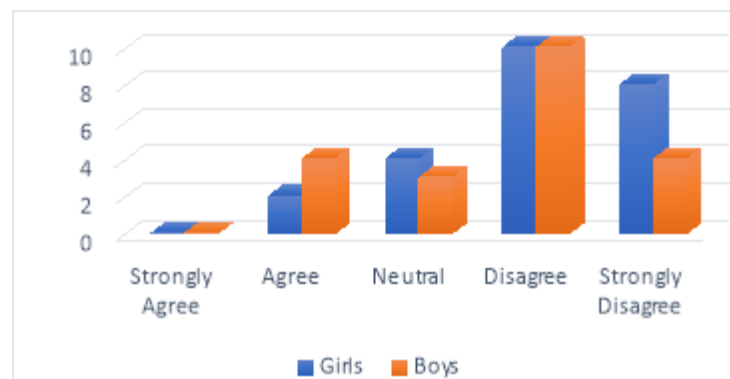
**Figure 2.** Academic anxiety is inversely related to academic performance

As the results show in Fig. 2 that the academic anxiety and academic performance have no significant relationship. Around 43 percent students including 6 females and 10 males are agreed and 29 percent including 7 females and 1 male is strongly agreed with this statement. According to the findings, it is proved that people admit that anxiety is not in any way beneficial for the students and have a greater negative impact on their results and performance. However, 16 percent are neutral which means that the students consider academic anxiety as negatively related in some cases. According to them, anxiety may be a hurdle for students to perform well in their academia, but it is not necessary in all circumstances. Academic achievement is highly affected by academic anxiety as third statement shows. Fig. 3 illustrates frequency as follows:



**Figure 3.** Academic achievement is highly affected by academic anxiety.

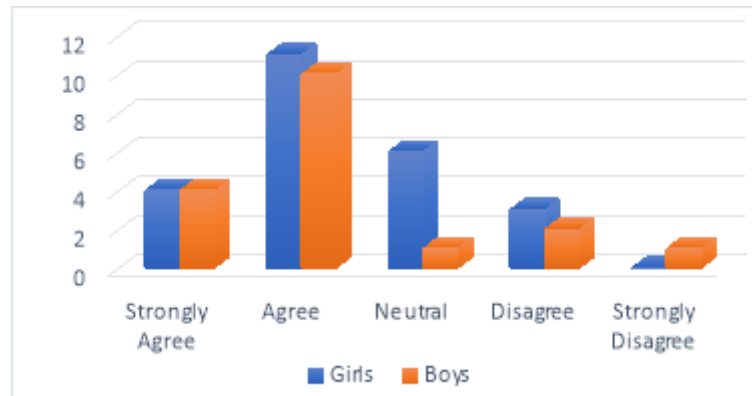
According to the research findings as illustrated in Fig. 3, 40 percent of students including 9 females and 8 males are agreed and 29 percent including 7 females and 5 males are strongly agreed with the statement, which means that academic anxiety will result in low academic achievement because the student will not be able to concentrate well on academic accomplishment. Academic achievement is the degree to which students can accomplish their educational goals. Academic achievement considers the cumulative grade point average and other benchmarks including diplomas and bachelor's degrees. Anxiety is, therefore, a great hurdle in accomplishing these goals. While 19 percent of students are neutral, and they might think that it depends on the intensity of anxiety a student is going through. Male ESL learners have a higher ratio of academic anxiety as compared to female ESL learners. Figure 4 illustrates frequency as follows:



**Figure 2.** Boys have a higher ratio of academic anxiety as compared to girls

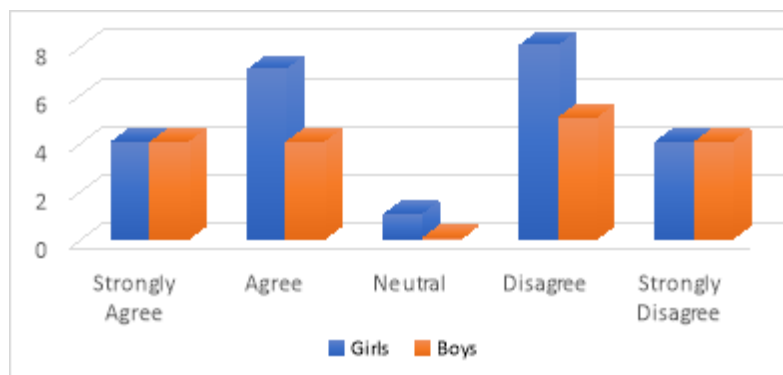
The research findings as illustrated in Fig. 4 that the female ESL learners are likely suffering the most from academic anxiety as compared to male ESL learners. 47 percent students including 10 males and 10 females disagreed and 29 percent including 8 females and 4 males are strongly disagreed with the statement that male ESL learners have a higher ratio of academic anxiety as compared to female ESL learners. Female ESL learners tend to suffer more from academic and social anxiety according to different researches. Whereas, 16 percent are neutral, which means that the males maybe or maybe not have a higher ratio depending upon the environment

of their academia or other social and psychological factors. A moderate stage of academic anxiety keeps students motivated and inclined them to perform better. Fig. 5 illustrates the percentage and frequency as follows:



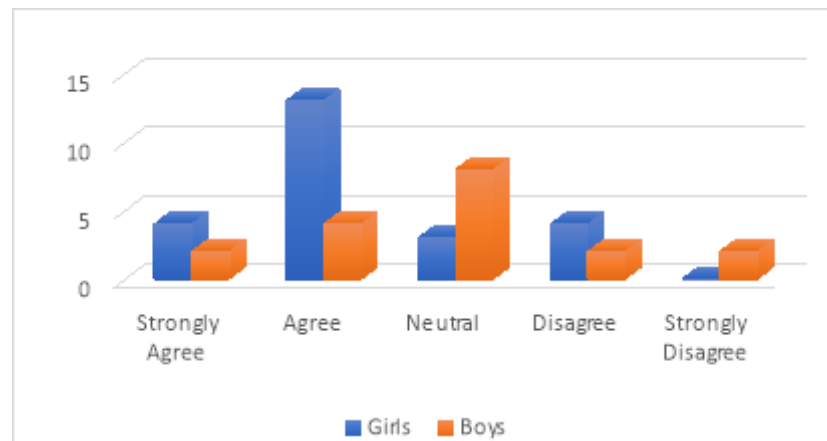
**Figure 3.** Moderate stage of academic anxiety keeps students motivated

According to the research findings as illustrated in Fig. 5, it is concluded that moderate level of anxiety keeps students focused and they are likely to complete their tasks on time. 50 percent students including 11 females and 10 males are agreed with this statement while 19 percent of students including 4 males and 4 females are strongly agreed with the above statement. A moderate amount of anxiety makes students perform well in their exams and other curricular activities but when it turns into an extreme level it will ultimately destroy their skills and abilities which then have a negative impact on their performance. Academic anxiety does not have any serious impact on ESL learners' ability to concentrate and memorize. Fig. 6 illustrates frequency as follows:



**Figure 4.** Academic anxiety does not have any serious impact

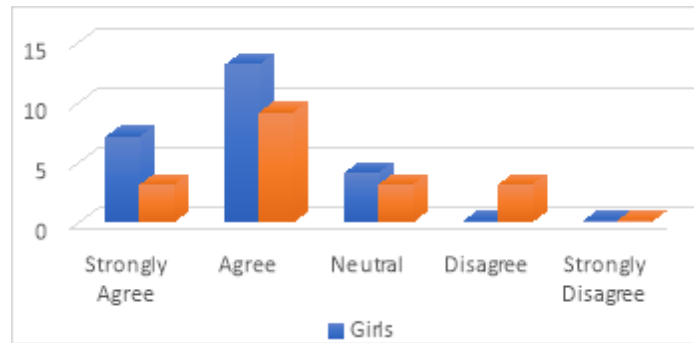
According to the research finding, 30 percent students including 8 females and 5 males are disagree with the statement, which means that they regard concentration and memorization as a separate factor that has no relation with the anxiety while 26 percent of students are agreed with which means that the anxiety greatly affects the ability to concentrate and memorize and has a long-lasting effect on their academic performance. Academic anxiety is the result of procrastination of academic work. Fig. 7 illustrates frequency as follows:



**Figure 5.** Academic anxiety is the result of procrastination of academic work.

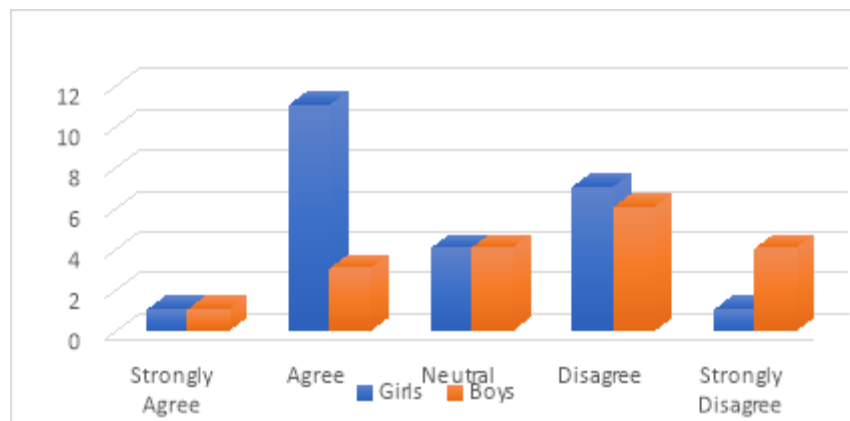
According to the research, it is concluded that academic anxiety is the result of procrastination of academic work because students usually do not do their work on time and kept it for the last moment. When the deadlines arrive, they become anxious about their progress that ultimately results in academic anxiety. Forty percent of the students including 13 females and 4 males are agreed with the statement while 23 percent are neutral. According to them, academic anxiety may occur from other factors as well and they regarded the procrastination of academic

work as one of those factors. High levels of academic anxiety can block thoughts, create negativity in mind, and the potential of low academic performance. Figure 8 illustrates frequency as follows:



**Figure 6.** High level of academic anxiety can block thoughts, create negativity in mind

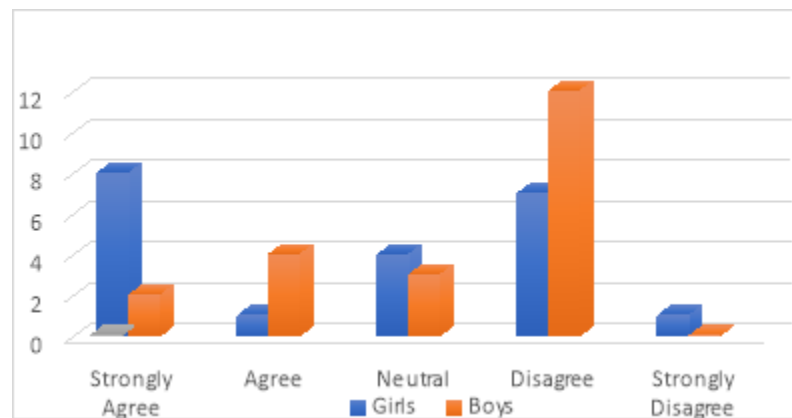
Fifty two percent of people agree including 13 females and 9 males while 23 percent are strongly agreed with the above statement that a high level of anxiety block thoughts, creates negativity that resulted in low performance. According to the previous research findings, it is concluded that anxiety results into a procrastination of academic work. The students start panicking at the eleventh hour due to which they suffer from the blockage of their thoughts and create negativity that they cannot accomplish their objectives and goals which impact their overall performance. Academic anxiety does not in any way affect the reading, writing, speaking and listening skills of the students. Fig. 9 illustrates the frequency as follows:



**Figure 7.** Academic anxiety does not in any way affect the reading, writing, speaking and listening skills of the students

According to the research findings, 33 percent of students including 11 females and 3 males are agreed with the statement that academic anxiety does not have any effect on ESL learners' reading, writing, and listening skills. The performance of the students is highly dependent on their ability to read, write and listen. According to them, the performance which includes the reading and writing abilities are not affected by academic anxiety. While 30 percent of students responded that their reading, writing and listening skills get affected due to academic anxiety and as a result, their performance declines because reading, writing and listening skills of the students play a crucial role in academic performance. Being competent in academic activities, builds up ESL learners' interest and helps them to cope up with academic anxiety.

As per findings, 28 percent of students agree while 23 percent were strongly agreed and neutral with the above statement. The students who believe in themselves and have positive self-concept make them competent enough to perform academic tasks. It builds their interest in different tasks and they are less likely to take the pressure of the academic work because they have the self-concept that they are knowledgeable and experienced and can accomplish their goals in a short span of time due to their competency. Without academic anxiety, most of the students would lack the motivation to do their daily homework, study for exams or write their researches and reports. The table and figure 11 illustrate the frequency and percent: 35 percent of people including 10 females and 5 males are agreed with the above statement while 28 percent neutral. It is a fact that if academic anxiety or pressure will not be there, students will not get motivated to complete their tasks on time. Severe anxiety will disrupt student's motivation, but a moderate level of anxiety will help to make students motivated and encourage them to complete their academic assignments or tasks on time to accomplish the goals of academic achievement. While 26 percent of respondents disagreed with the statement that anxiety can never make apprentices motivated and without anxiety, students can easily accomplish their objectives. Socially anxious students miss lots of learning opportunities because they usually avoid interaction with people. Fig. 10 illustrates frequency as follows:



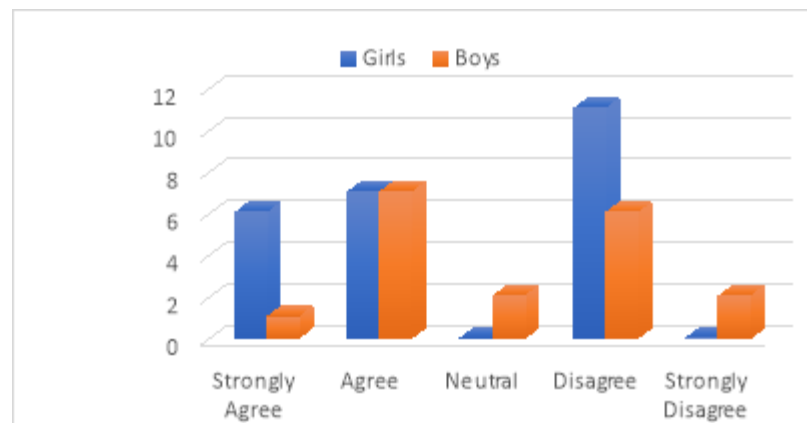
**Figure 8.** Socially anxious students miss lots of learning opportunities because they usually avoid interaction with people

Forty five percent of students disagree including 12 males and 7 females with the statement that students miss lots of learning opportunities because they usually interact less with their peers and instructors. While 23 percent of people are strongly agreed, 16percent are neutral. Learning can be done in several ways depending upon the opportunities a student can avail. Some students can learn well through observing they don't need to interact to learn different things as their focus is on nonverbal communication, they are likely to learn more. Interaction is not the only source of learning, there are other things as well that makes students learn many things. The students agreeing with the statement think that students lose the opportunities by limiting themselves and living in isolation. The results revealed that social anxiety was considered into the complete destruction of hidden talents, abilities and opinions regarding the different subject matter. Fifty nine percent of students including 13 females and 12 males are agreed with this statement including 13 females and 12 males while 26 percent are strongly agreed. Socially anxious students are incompetent to build their network with people, therefore unable to show their skills and abilities to the people which leads to the destruction of their talents. They are unable to share their thoughts and opinions regarding different subject-matters as a result of their critical and intellectual thinking are highly affected and begin to fade away. The higher percentage of females are agreed with this statement because females are likely to have critical thinking according to different researchers, if they are socially anxious, they wouldn't be able to share their points of view with people. Students with social anxiety believe that their anxiety is totally irrational and does not make any sense. Almost 45 percent of students including 13 males and 5 females are agreed and 16 percent are strongly agreed with the above statement that their anxiety is totally irrational and does not make sense. Socially anxious students are familiar with the concept that the fear, anxiety and irrational thoughts they are holding are meaningless. They are familiar with the fact that they will be praised when they interact more with people, perform well in their academic seminars and presentations, participate in different activities and have an immense social circle. But still, when they try to indulge themselves in these events, they feel an invisible hand around their throat. Social anxiety occurs when students want to become a favorable image but doubt their skills and abilities. Fifty percent of students including 12 males and 9 females are agreed with the statement that students want to become socially acceptable and failing to do so results in severe anxiety. One and all want to become a socially acceptable image but some of them



have distrust in their knowledge, skills, and abilities due to which they have the feeling of being judged and poorly evaluated by others. Thirty three percent people are neutral with the statement, which means that they think the above statement depends on a student that either he wants to expose himself in public or not because some students don't want to become a public image that is the reason, they become socially anxious. Social anxiety resulted in learning problems and attention difficulties which may impact the overall performance of the students.

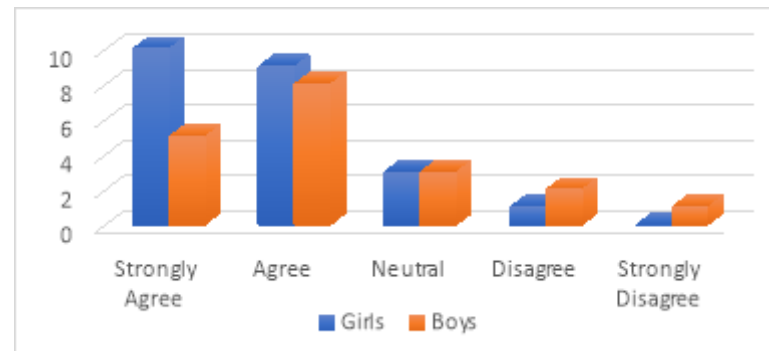
According to research findings, 43 percent of students including 11 females and 7 males are agreed with the above statement. They believe social anxiety results in learning problems and attention difficulties while 21 percent of students comprising of 8 males and 8 females are neutral. Socially anxious students are self-obsessed, and they usually think of themselves all the time due to which they have a great deal of difficulty in paying attention which gives rise to learning difficulties. Social anxiety is the only reason for poor academic performance. Fig. 11 illustrates frequency as follows:



**Figure 9.** Social anxiety is the only reason of poor academic performance.

According to the research, it is concluded that the increasing trends of social anxiety is the only reason for poor academic performance. 40percent students including 11 females and 6 males are agreed with the statement. As the research has been done with the students of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> semester and they are likely to suffer from social anxiety, so they regarded social anxiety as the only reason for their poor performance. While 24 percent disagree with the statement because they might be suffering from other factors that serve as the reason of poor academic

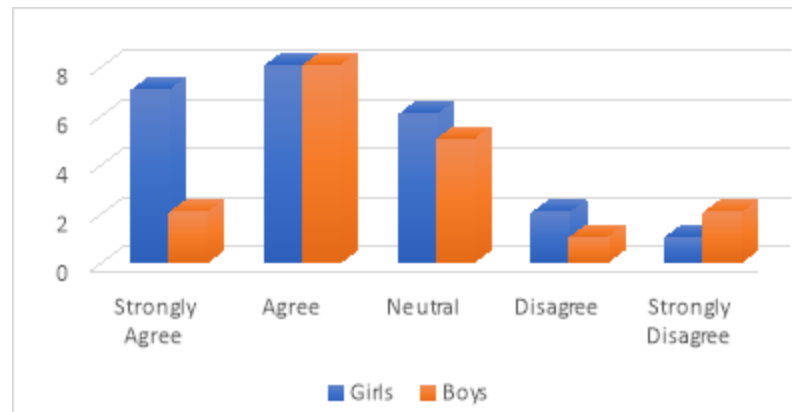
performance. In academic life, students suffering from social anxiety disorder face great difficulty in giving presentations, which is the necessity of academic criteria. Fig. 12 illustrates the frequency as follows:



**Figure 10.** Students with social anxiety disorder faces difficulty in giving presentations

According to the research findings, 40 percent of students are agreed with the statement while 35 percent are strongly agreed, which means students face great difficulty in giving presentations. Nowadays, presentations are the necessity of academic criteria and have an important relationship with the academic performance of students. Students with social anxiety disorder suffer from psychological and physiological symptoms of anxiety while giving the presentation which then ultimately results in low grading and less GPA. Due to social anxiety, students are unable to solve their queries by discussing them with the course instructor which may result in the vagueness of different concepts. The percent of students agreeing with this statement is 45percent comprising of 10 males and 9 females while 23 percent students comprising of 7 females and 9 males are strongly agreed. When students experience any difficulty in learning new concepts, they do not discuss it because of their less interaction with the course instructor due to Social Anxiety Disorder (SAD). This results in the vagueness and un-clarity of different concepts that can also have a bad and long-lasting impact on their professional lives. Students with social anxiety become afraid of making friends circle, public speaking and negative perceptions of others about them. According to research findings, 45percent students including 11 females and 2 males agreed while 23 percent students strongly agreed with this statement. Socially anxious students are less likely to have an immense social circle. They avoid public speaking because they are very worried about the perceptions of others about them. The fear of being negatively

judged, embarrassed and humiliated makes them self-conscious and they avoid expanding their social circle and interact more with people. Teachers' cooperation and willingness to work with the students to repair their confidence level and low performance have a positive effect on the elimination of academic and social anxiety. Fig. 13 illustrates frequency as follows:



**Figure 11.** Teachers' cooperation and willingness to work with the students

Thirty eight percent of students are agreed while 21 percent strongly agreed with the statement that teachers can help students to get rid of their academic and social anxiety. Teachers should build up the confidence of students by conducting activities and encouraging them to participate in it as well. Teachers should impose a moderate amount of pressure on students which they can fluently bear. Teachers' willingness and cooperation also effects on ESL learners' academic performances. The students have a positive self-concept is more expected to manage negative emotions such as academic stress and social anxiety. The table and Fig. 22 illustrate the frequency and percent: According to research findings, 52 percent respondents comprising of 12 males and 10- females agreed; 21 percent respondents comprising of 8 females and 1 male are neutral and 19 percent strongly agreed with the statement that students who have a positive self-image suffer more from negative emotions like stress and anxiety because they have the fear of being negatively judged and perceived by others. While 5 percent are disagreed and 2 percent strongly disagreed.

Due to academic and social anxiety, students may also face obstacles when they step into their professional lives. With the above statement, 43 percent of respondents (9 females and 9 males), agree, 23 percent of respondents (7 females and 3 males) strongly agree. According to them, students suffering from academic and

social anxiety are likely to face obstacles in their professional lives due to their low performance and academic achievement. Moreover, socially anxious students are likely to suffer the most because they usually avoid interaction with people. In professional lives, people must deal with day to day matters which required time to time interaction with peers, bosses, and colleagues. Students that are socially anxious, therefore, face many hurdles when they step into their professional lives.

## **Findings**

Three hypotheses have been proven that H1: The higher the academic anxiety, the lower the performance of the ESL learners will be. H2: A moderate level of anxiety helps the ESL learners to perform well in their academics and keeps them motivated. H3: Social anxiety is a key variable that prevents ESL learners to be competent enough in their academics which then has a greater impact on their results.

## **Conclusion**

It is concluded that the two variables academic and social anxiety have directly affected on ESL learners' academic performance and disrupts their thinking abilities. As the twenty-first century is the century of competition, students are also competing in their academics to achieve more quality results and greater performance. This sometimes leads to anxiety which highly affects them. The desire to succeed and the fear of failure co-exist amongst many students. According to this research, students wish to become socially acceptable images but failing to do so it becomes a major reason for anxiety. To conclude that there are two-independent variables i-e, academic and social anxiety which are inversely related to the ESL learners' academic performance. Increasing trends of anxiety have called upon the attention of many writers and researchers and opened the vast area of further researches related to it. A major area of concern these days is to perform well in their academics and in professional lives. Following are recommendations that may serve the purpose of coping strategies which will help students to overcome their anxiety and perform well.

The role of academic anxiety is extremely important for the students to prioritize their schedules to keep first things first. They should organize their weekly academic goals and assign each day of the week a single priority. This will help to reduce a greater amount of academic pressure from them. In today's environment of

heavy academic loads, time management skills are extremely important as they can be used as a tool against anxiety. With time management, students should try to do something daily instead of cramming at the eleventh hour. Parents do not realize that they are making the academic stress of their children worsen by pressurizing their children to perform well and get higher grades. Parents should keep this in mind that the lower grades of their children will not ruin their life-long plans. Students should keep balance during their exams period. They should take breaks, get enough sleep and take some time to relax. It will help them to reduce stress and anxiety and enable them to work more efficiently and effectively. Anxiety pikes when a person wants to accomplish but unable to do so. Students should not make higher goals that are unable to achieve. This will result in stress and depression. Students should focus on short term goals and they will be able to achieve more in the short span of time. A student's focus should not be to obtain top position rather it should focus on the performance that satisfies himself.

The role of social anxiety cannot be ignored. In academia, there are several numbers of like-minded people, try to build a network with those people and open up with them about their social anxiety disorder so that they can help you to overcome them. Also, try to throw away your own damaging triggers. Some things are worth doing in your academic life even if you feel anxious or stressed to perform well and secure a good GPA. You will feel very pleasant after doing it despite several unpleasant feelings. You should go ahead and do what you value the most. Facing fears is the initial step that helps you to work towards challenging situations. Try to make social circles and do not try to avoid social situations. Saying no, will give you the same results all the time but saying yes, will frighten you at that moment but will ultimately help you in the long run. It is quite easy to forget that nobody is perfect in this world where everything aspires them to achieve perfection. It is a fact that everyone will not like them, and they do not need to. Socially anxious students should accept reality; it is completely alright to make mistakes as they all are human beings. These mistakes will cease to exist with the passage of time.

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