



# “A Comparative Study Of English-Speaking Anxiety Among Government And Private Higher Secondary School Students”

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**Abstract** - Proficiency in English language is now-a-days essential worldwide for both academic and professional achievements. Within the educational settings, it serves as a primary medium for instruction, fostering the advancement of knowledge. Understanding the influence of English-speaking anxiety is important especially in the adolescent phase as adolescents with good level of English-speaking proficiency not only experience higher wellbeing and better social connections but also tends to have increased satisfaction in life. Therefore, the present study aims to understand the influence of English-speaking anxiety among government and private higher secondary school students. A sample of 250 government school students and 250 private school students were selected for the present study. The tool used for data collection was Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) by Horwitz et al. (1986). The results of the study revealed that there is a highly significant difference found in all the dimensions of English-speaking anxiety among the government and private higher secondary school students.

**Key words** – English speaking anxiety, foreign language, adolescents, confidence, proficiency.

## INTRODUCTION

Effective communication in English language is nowadays a pre-requisite for academics as well as professional success in many parts of the world. Gaining proficiency in English language as a second language is a complex process that include various cognitive, linguistic, and affective factors. Out of all these factors one of the main factors is self-confidence of an individual. In country like India English is no longer is a foreign language but more of a national language along with the indigenous ones. English play an important role in diverse language landscape. In country with plentiful differently spoken languages, English serves a mean to bridge the gap between languages, contributing to the multi-language environment of the nation.

English speaking anxiety refers to the feeling of nervousness, fear, or worry that many learners experience when they have to speak in English, especially in classrooms or public situations. It is a common problem among students who learn English as a second or foreign language. This anxiety can affect students' confidence, participation, and overall language learning. One of the main causes of English-speaking anxiety is the fear of making mistakes. Many students worry about incorrect grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary while speaking. Because of this fear, they hesitate to speak in front of teachers or classmates. Another reason is the fear of negative evaluation. Students often think that others will laugh at them or judge their speaking ability. Lack of practice and limited exposure to English communication also

increase anxiety levels. English speaking anxiety can have several negative effects on students. It can reduce their willingness to participate in classroom discussions, presentations, or group activities. Students may avoid speaking in English even if they know the answer. This can slow down their language development and reduce their self-confidence. In some cases, high levels of anxiety may also affect academic performance.

Rintaningrum et.al (2021) highlighted that the educational approach to English instruction in school is mainly focused on grammar learning, prioritizing language usage over the practical application of the language. This method is majorly resulting in student rote learning grammatical rules instructed by the teachers only for exam success rather than fostering practical language skills, leading to proficient comprehension but less speaking ability and more English anxiety in students. English speaking anxiety identified by the by Davidson et.al (2012) and Sawyer (2016), as a prevalent fear in society. This anxiety starts from the language classes followed by the rest of the individual's life. So, if this issue is taken into consideration it may lead to lower anxiety in students and higher self-esteem. Also, from one of the studies by Kunttu et al. (2017) reported that one in three students experiences severe difficulties with English speaking and symptoms were identified by Daly et al. in (1997) as anxiety encompasses physical sensations, irrational thoughts, emotional shifts, and avoidance behaviours. This behaviour mainly results in lower self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-perception of an individual. By addressing their anxiety and improving their English language skills, individuals can gradually increase their self-esteem and confidence in English communication.

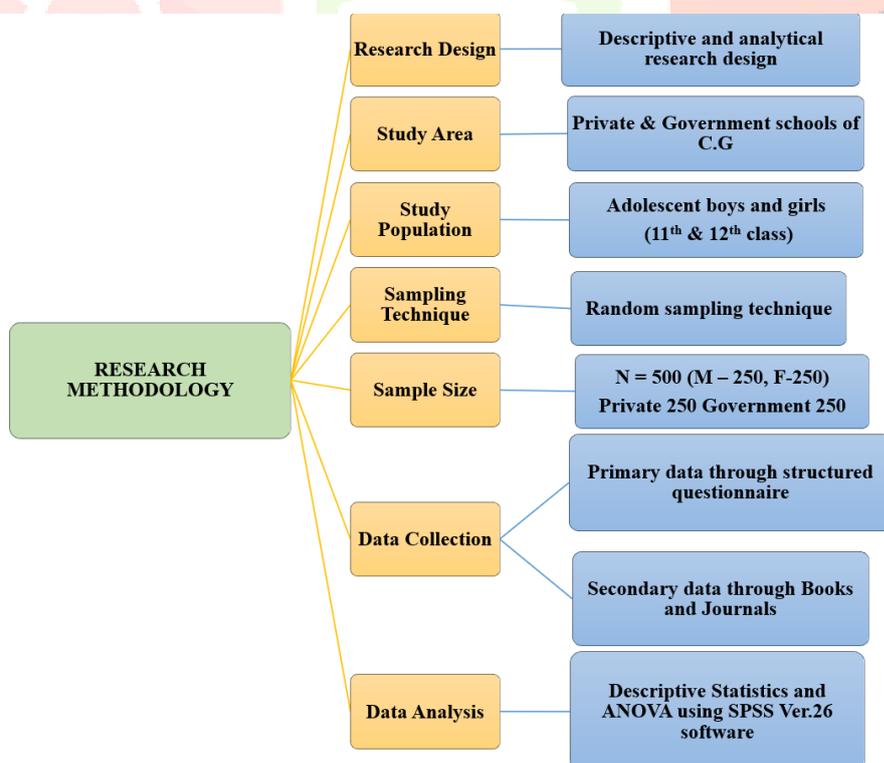
## OBJECTIVES

1. To study the English-speaking Anxiety among Government higher secondary students.
2. To study the English-speaking Anxiety among Private higher secondary students.
3. To study the influence of Parent's Occupation on English speaking anxiety.

## HYPOTHESIS

- Type of school does not affect English-Speaking anxiety among the students.
- Parent's occupation does-not affect English-Speaking anxiety among the students.

## METHODOLOGY



**Tool used: - Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)**

The scale is a 33-item Likert-type instrument developed by Horwitz et al (1986), with five possible responses ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”. It is meant to assess the degree of language speaking anxiety experienced by learners in language classrooms. The items of the self-report scale have four dimensions of English language speaking anxiety such as (a) Communication Apprehension, (b) Fear of Negative Evaluation, (c) Test Anxiety (d) Overall Anxiety in English Speaking.

### Identification Of Sample

To maintain the homogeneity of the sample, a random sampling method was used to collect data.

The data was gathered from different zones of Chhattisgarh encompassing a selection of both private and government schools which were as follows: -

- Government Schools – The four branches (Jagdalpur, Dharampura, Kondagaon, Sukma) of Swami Atmanand English medium government school were selected.
- Private schools –Nirmal Vidyalaya, Deepti Convent School, Vidya Jyoti School, and M.G.M school.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

**TABLE 1: Influence of School Types on the Dimensions of English-Speaking Anxiety**

Dimensions	Type of school		t	P
	Government	Private		
	MEAN $\pm$ SD	MEAN $\pm$ SD		
Communication apprehension	24.29 $\pm$ 3.730	22.92 $\pm$ 4.259	3.832	<0.001**
Test – anxiety	14.83 $\pm$ 2.909	13.59 $\pm$ 2.863	4.804	<0.001**
Fear of negative evaluation	28.40 $\pm$ 5.541	26.72 $\pm$ 6.276	3.173	0.002**
Anxiety of English	33.40 $\pm$ 5.618	30.23 $\pm$ 6.090	6.061	<0.001**
Overall English-Speaking Anxiety	100.93 $\pm$ 14.490	93.44 $\pm$ 16.082	5.472	<0.001**

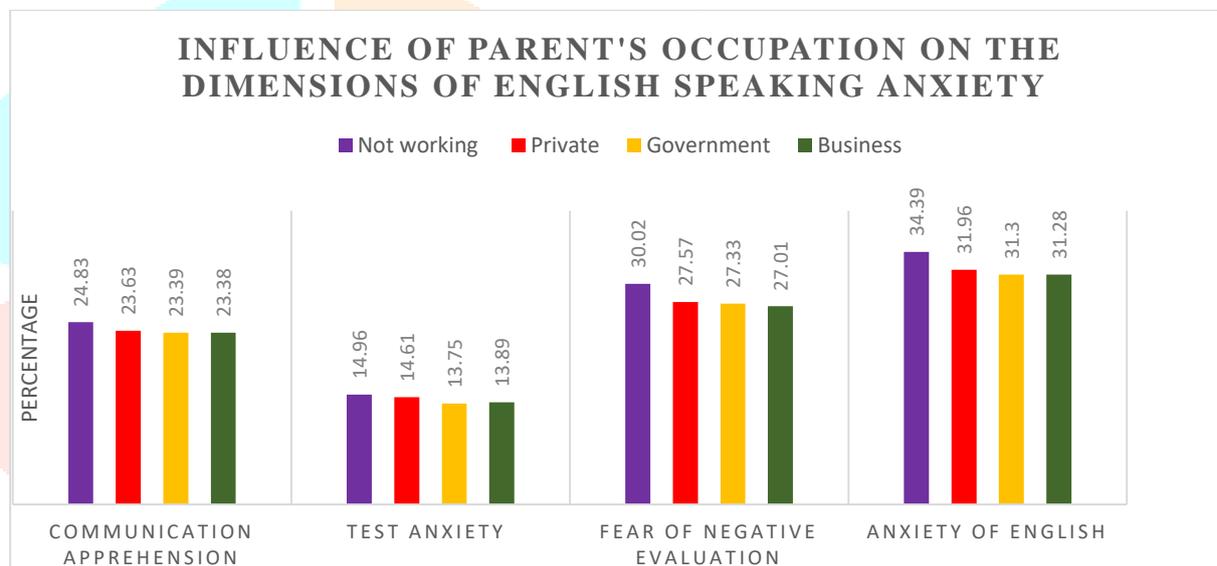
Slightly Significant + (10%), moderately significant \* (5%), highly significant \*\* (1%)

Table 1 indicates that there is a highly significant difference found in all the dimensions of English-speaking anxiety {communication apprehension (<0.001\*\*), test anxiety (<0.001\*\*), fear of negative evaluation (0.002\*\*), anxiety of English (<0.001\*\*), and overall English-speaking anxiety (<0.001\*\*) }. This indicates that government school students have higher English-speaking anxiety than the private school students.

TABLE 2: Influence of Parent's Occupation on the Dimensions of English-Speaking Anxiety

Dimensions	Parent's occupation				F	p
	Non-workin	Private	Govt.	Business		
	MEAN $\pm$ SD	MEAN $\pm$ SD	MEAN $\pm$ SD	MEAN $\pm$ SD		
<b>Communication Apprehension</b>	24.83 $\pm$ 3.957	23.63 $\pm$ 4.145	23.39 $\pm$ 4.304	23.38 $\pm$ 3.770	1.672	0.172
<b>Test – Anxiety</b>	14.96 $\pm$ 2.357	14.61 $\pm$ 3.002	13.75 $\pm$ 3.277	13.89 $\pm$ 2.710	3.701	0.012*
<b>Fear of Negative Evaluation</b>	30.02 $\pm$ 5.344	27.57 $\pm$ 5.769	27.33 $\pm$ 6.221	27.01 $\pm$ 6.069	3.157	0.025*
<b>Anxiety of English</b>	34.39 $\pm$ 5.298	31.96 $\pm$ 6.096	31.30 $\pm$ 6.197	31.28 $\pm$ 5.995	3.544	0.015*
<b>Overall English-Speaking Anxiety</b>	104.20 $\pm$ 13.20	97.77 $\pm$ 15.702	95.77 $\pm$ 16.824	95.51 $\pm$ 15.202	4.105	0.007**

Slightly Significant + (10%), moderately significant \* (5%), highly significant \*\* (1%)



The results show that **communication apprehension** does not differ significantly based on parents' occupation ( $p = 0.172$ ). However, **test anxiety** ( $p = 0.012$ ), **fear of negative evaluation** ( $p = 0.025$ ), **anxiety of English** ( $p = 0.015$ ), and **overall English-speaking anxiety** ( $p = 0.007$ ) show **significant differences**. In all significant dimensions, students with **non-working parents reported higher anxiety levels** compared to those whose parents work in private, government or business sectors.

The probable reasons for this may be that the type of Parent's occupation affects the level of exposure to English communication skills of the individuals. Some Parent's occupation requires more use of English communication, which positively impacts the overall English-speaking anxiety of an individual.

**Validation of hypothesis –**

S.N	Hypothesis Statements	Test Applied (ANOVA & t- test)	Rejected
Ho1	Type of school does not affect English-Speaking anxiety among the students.	p-value 0.001 (highly significant)	Rejected
Ho2	Parent's occupation does not affect English-Speaking anxiety among the students.	p-value 0.007 (highly significant)	Rejected

**CONCLUSION**

The government school students often are from low socio-economic background and have limited exposure to English communication outside the school, which leads to higher level of English-speaking Anxiety. Exposure to different linguistic environments, based on parents' occupation influence a child's comfort in English speaking. So, there is an influence of different variables on English-speaking anxiety among the higher secondary school students. By addressing their anxiety and improving their English language skills, individuals can gradually increase their self-esteem and confidence in English communication.

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