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**EFFECT OF PARENTAL PRESSURE ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND MENTAL HEALTH OF ADOLESCENTS, A STUDY AMONG HIGHER SECONDARY STUDENTS**

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Lekhi village, Naharlagun, Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh.****ABSTRACT**

**Context:** High academic expectations and perceived parental pressure are two main stressors for teenagers, although parental support is associated with lower levels of stress.

**Aim:** The objective of the current study was to analyse the connection between parental stress and children's academic achievement of students in higher secondary schools in the district of Kozhikode.

**Methods:** The sample includes 200 higher secondary students, age ranging, 15 to 18 years drawn arbitrarily from schools of Kozhikode district in Kerala. Specially designed questionnaire was administered to the respondents. The academic performance rating scale, the depression, anxiety, and stress scale, as well as Campbell's parental pressure subscale, are also measured in the study.

**Results:** Above 60% of students feel parental pressure across age, gender, grade, and a number of other personal criteria.

**Conclusion:** It has been discovered that parental participation enhances adolescents' emotional and academic functioning. Additionally, parental involvement predicted adolescent academic achievement and mental health indirectly through behavioural and emotional engagement.

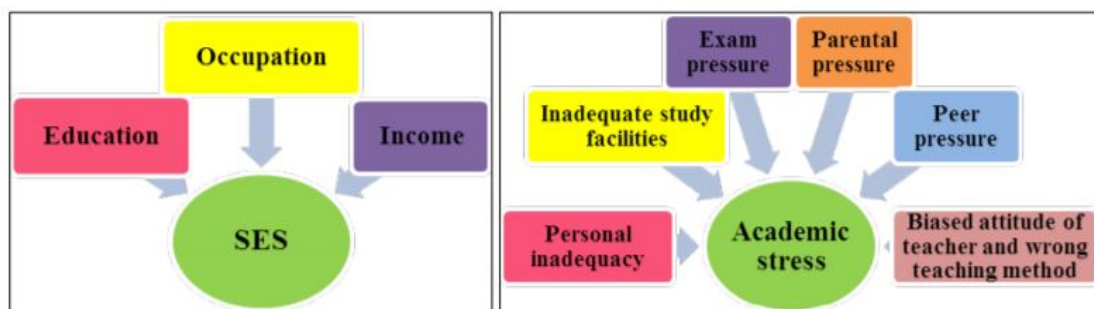
**Recommendations:** Parental pressure and mental issues were highly connected with academic pressure, and nervousness concerning exams was likewise positively related with psychiatric problems. A significant problem that affects over two thirds of students is academic stress. There are several proposed strategies for dealing with the difficulties of academic pressure.



**KEYWORDS:** Academic stress, Mental health, Stress, Depression, Anxiety.

**INTRODUCTION**

Pressure refers to expectations or requests that one act in a particular way. Good attendance and academic performance, a favourable attitude toward school, and inspiration for learning are all benefits of pressure (Mitchell et al., 2019). Lower self-esteem, a higher failure rate, mental consequences like sadness, stress, and substance misuse are some of the negative repercussions. "Behavior regarded by children as expressing expectation of unlikely, even unachievable heights of success" is what is meant by parental pressure. Parents want their children to uphold a certain set of values and social conventions (Maajida et al., 2018).



**Figure 1: Socio economic status (SES) and factors other affecting the students of higher secondary education (image taken from Google scholar)**

### Academic stress

Academic stress is emotional distress triggered by impending academic challenges, failure, or even just the awareness that academic failure may be likely. During the school years, academic pressures might appear in any area of the child's surroundings, including at home, at school, in the neighbourhood, or among friends. Ramachandran et al. (2018) found that situations related to school, such as tests, grades, studying, a self-imposed need to succeed, as well as those brought on by others, are the main causes of stress for high school students. Academic stress has several negative repercussions, including poor performance in the areas of fitness, diet, substance use, and self-care. Academic stress is another risk factor for psychopathology. Numerous researchers, including, have investigated the performance-related aspects of stress and depression and found that they have a detrimental impact on students' academic performance. Contradictory findings were published by Karaman et al (2019), who claimed that stress improves workers' performance under pressure by honing their minds and reflexes.

### Indian education system

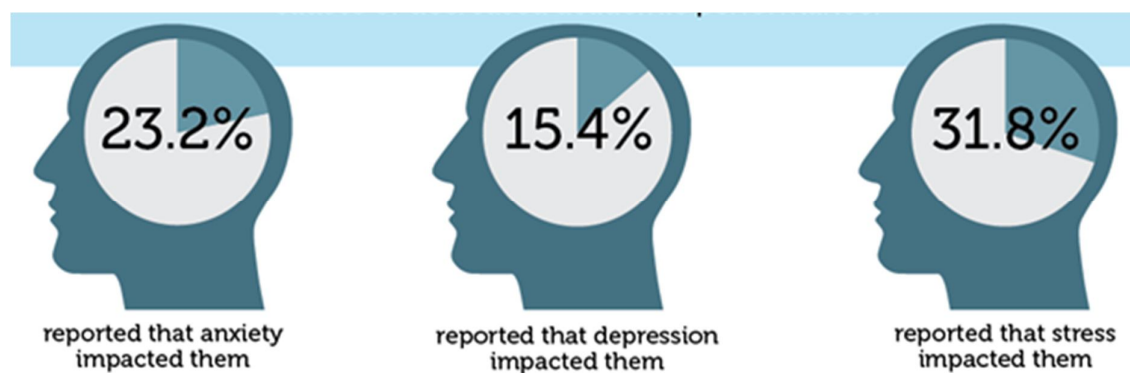
Exam-focused curricula have taken hold in schools, overburdening students with rote information. Students experienced stress over their academic achievement as a result of their own expectations as well as those of their families and lecturers (Joshi et al., 2020). Students who are under academic stress can employ a variety of coping mechanisms.

### Parental stress And Academic Performance

According to several studies, parent-child conflict can moderate the impact of academic pressure and teenage behavioural deviance. In addition, a number of studies have found that parental conflict may be a way that academic pressure affects adolescents' problem behaviour (Muller et al., 2018). Another type of academic pressure teens experience comes from their parents. Parent-child conflict that results from academic performance falling short of parents' expectations will affect family relations and may encourage problem behaviour in teenagers. To ascertain how parent-child conflict affects the relationship between academic pressure and problematic behaviour in teenagers, more study is required (Wong et al., 2018)

Psychiatrists are concerned that the high suicide death rate among school-age children is partly due to the fact that school is becoming a substantial source of stress for these kids (Boonk et al., 2018). Hospital psychiatric clinics in India receive many referrals for teenagers who are under scholastic stress and exhibiting signs of high anxiety, weeping fits, depression, frequent school refusal, physical problems, phobia, irritability, and decreased interest in schoolwork. Children's fear of academic failure is fostered by both parents and teachers, which lowers their interest in learning. Similarly, academic anxiety has developed as a result of a number of reasons, including parental expectations and family educational background, which put pressure on students to perform well in both academic and

extracurricular activities. Tus (2021) defines academic stress as anything that increases a person's ability to cope with expectations. The majority of students encounter academic stress while they are in school. The teacher is hoping the in-service students will complete it on time. The time needed to finish writing and reading assignments, as well as to print copies of assignments, may be underestimated by students. For those in many professions and institutions, academic pressure and its side effects including sadness, tension, weariness, and anxiety have always been a prevalent topic.



**Figure 2: Effect of mental health on academic performance (image retrieved from pubmed)**

In order to find out how parental concern and academic pressure affected high school pupils' academic performance, Otero et al (2021) conducted a survey. The study's findings demonstrate that parents who worry about their kids starting school are academically successful. Students' academic achievement is also hampered by academic pressure. Students' interactions with environmental stressors, assessments of students' cognitive abilities, the control of learning stressors, and psychological or physiological reactions to stressors can all be considered as sources of school stress. School stress is a problem that affects all nations, cultures, and individuals, and it must be understood in its wider context. Every student strives for academic excellence in order to gain respect, parental pride, and social mobility.

This has resulted in extremely high academic standards and added pressure on students, particularly young people. Students cannot enjoy their academic life because of the pressure and obligation to pass tests, which makes it unimportant and burdensome for them. Students can display a range of emotional responses that can hinder testing and affect test results. Anxiety is the term used to describe this unpleasant emotional reaction. Prior to the exam, the person's physiology and behaviour will change as a result of this unpleasant emotional response to external cues that the subject perceives as threatening (Panaoura et al., 2021).

There has never been a research done in Kozhikode, Kerala on how pupils perceive parental and teacher pressure. On the subject of the connection between stress and performance, the present literature offers contradictory findings. Therefore, this study was conducted among teenagers to evaluate their impressions of the pressure from their parents and teachers on their academic performance, their coping mechanisms, and the relationship between pressure and academic performance and socio-demographic factors.

## METHODOLOGY

This cross-sectional survey was carried out from February 2022 to September 2022 among higher secondary students (N=200; 100 females and 100 males) from ten randomly chosen schools in Kerala's Kozhikode district. A structured questionnaire that was specifically created as well as the General Health Questionnaire were used to collect the data. The academic performance rating scale, the depression, anxiety, and stress scale, as well as Campbell's parental pressure subscale, are also measured in the study.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The goal of the current study was to determine how parental stress affected students' academic performance and mental health. Academic stress has a negative impact on students' emotional and physical health, as well as a number of academic challenges, in secondary and higher education. In light of the fact that adolescence and early adulthood are formative years for many long-term health-related behaviours and patterns, both negative and positive, practising effective stress-management techniques can be beneficial to young people on an ongoing basis throughout their lives (Salvatierra et al., 2022). In light of how difficult and critical this time is for young people's development, it is necessary to provide them with opportunity to strengthen their academic stress-related coping mechanisms.

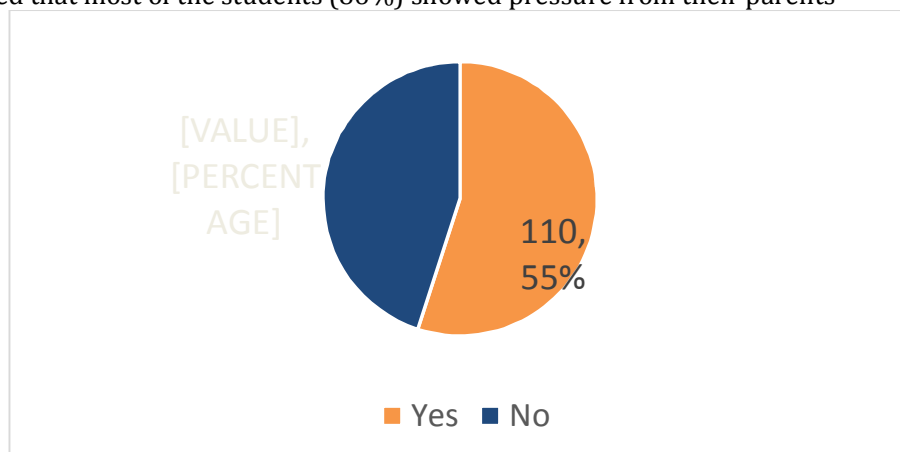
**Table 1: Sociodemographic profile of respondents**

<b>Gender</b>	Male (50%)	Female (50%)
<b>Parental pressure</b>	Yes (65%); Male 25%, female 40%)	No (35%)
<b>Fear of exam</b>	Yes (80%); male 10%, female 70%	No (20%)
<b>Stress</b>	Yes (70%); female 40%, male 30%	No (30%)
<b>Depression</b>	Yes (35%); male 10%, female 15%	No(65%)
<b>Residents</b>	Urban (60%)	Rural (40%)
<b>Type of family</b>	Joint: 18% Nuclear: 82%	
<b>Fathers education</b>	Upto 10 <sup>th</sup> : 30% Upto +2: 50% Graduation and above: 20%	

**Table 2: Students response to whom you feel the pressure most**

Source	Frequency	Percentage
Teachers	80	40
Parents	172	86
Students (co or seniors)	34	17
All of the above	38	19
Others	6	3

Table depicted that most of the students (86%) showed pressure from their parents



**Figure 3: The response of participants to "Do you feel pressure to perform well in studies?" (N=200)**

**Table 3: Reason for pressure**

	Frequency	Percentage
Comparison with other students to perform better	118	59
To increase the duration of study	68	34
Lack of sleep	76	38
No entertainment	84	42
Too much tuitions	90	45
No freedom to choose the life vision	42	21
Mental torture from parents	28	14
Others	6	3

Young people obtain many of the emotional and social skills necessary to be resilient and prosper in educational environments, according to the OECD (Froiland, 2021) Therefore, by offering programmes that have been demonstrated to reduce stress and improve coping mechanisms and stress management, educational environments can help to improve student academic-related stress. The effectiveness of particular school-based stress management programmes for supporting students in learning how to manage stress is not covered by the existing research. It's crucial to keep in mind, however, that studies have shown that educational programmes that improve children's stress-management skills have a direct, positive influence on academic attainment and reduce health risks.

Numerous studies have been conducted to examine how academic stress affects mental health. Academic stress, according to study, lowers wellbeing and raises the possibility of developing anxiety or depression. Students who experience academic stress also frequently perform poorly in school. Depression affects one's energy levels, ability to think clearly, focus, and ability to make judgments on one's career (Jabar, 2021). The foundation of a future educated society will be students. Academic success is a major life objective for them, and it can be badly impacted if pupils succumb to depression (Berkowitz et al., 2021).

**Figure 4: Strategies of managing stress among students (source: pubmed article)**



There may be a number of causes for this, including personal problems, exposure to a novel way of life in colleges and universities, subpar academic performance, teacher favouritism, etc. One of the main causes of student depression can also be unrelenting stress or academic pressure. Depression is common in developing nations, and a lack of mental health literacy has been recognised as one among the main factors contributing to the rise in the prevalence of mental illness (Latipah et al., 2021).

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Almost three out of five children reported feeling pressured to perform well in their academic endeavours, and of those who did, more than four out of five blamed their parents. More than one-fifth of the students said they felt melancholy because of the pressure, and more than one-fourth reported getting less sleep. More than 1 in 5 students find ways to handle pressure by being obedient to their parents and professors, as well as participating in activities like music, meditation, yoga, etc. Female students experienced pressure more frequently than male students, and this conclusion was statistically significant. Due to the increasing incidence of pressure among high school students, school administrators should regularly start School-based Counselling sessions for both parents and teachers to provide them advice on how to connect positively with the children. Students should receive training on how to manage stress and anxiety, and well-trained counsellors should be made available in schools. Parents of teenagers should be encouraged to learn more about mental health issues and academic stress, and they should be given advice on how to help their kids develop better coping mechanisms and resilience. Parents and instructors should schedule time for the students' enjoyment. Acknowledgement. The study participants' tremendous assistance and time are much appreciated by the author, who also thank the school administration.

**Conflict of interest:** The author of the study declare no conflict of interest

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