

Parental Pressure and Examination Stress: An Empirical Study

Dr. Md. ImbesatulHaque

*Associate Professor, Dr. Zakir Hussain Teachers' Training College, Laheriasarai
Darbhanga - 846003 Bihar*

Abstract—The present study examines the effect of parental pressure on examination stress among school students. It focuses on how parents' high expectations influence students' thoughts feelings and performance during exams. The study is empirical in nature and is based on data collected from students of secondary schools. A simple questionnaire was used to gather information about parental behavior study habits and stress during examinations.

The findings reveal that many students feel strong pressure to score high marks. This pressure often comes from fear of failure and desire to meet family expectations. As a result students experience worry nervousness and lack of confidence before and during exams. Some students also report sleep problems tiredness and difficulty in concentration. On the other hand students who receive support and encouragement from parents show better emotional balance and positive attitude towards exams.

The study also indicates that parental pressure does not always improve performance. In many cases it increases stress and reduces motivation. A caring and understanding home environment helps students feel safe and confident. It allows them to face exams with hope rather than fear.

The study highlights the need for awareness among parents teachers and school leaders. Parents should guide their children with love and patience. Teachers should identify signs of stress in classrooms and provide timely help. Schools should promote counseling and life skills programs for students.

The study concludes that balanced parental involvement is essential for healthy academic growth. Reducing unnecessary pressure can protect students' mental health and improve learning outcomes. This research adds to the understanding of student stress and suggests practical ways to build a supportive academic environment.

Index Terms—Parental pressure Examination stress Academic performance Student wellbeing, Empirical study

I. INTRODUCTION

Education plays a key role in shaping the future of a child. In school life examinations are seen as a major step to judge learning and progress. Marks and grades often decide promotion streams and career choices. Because of this exams carry great importance for students and parents. Most parents wish to see their children succeed and build a secure future. This wish is natural and meaningful. Yet in many cases it turns into strong pressure for high scores.

Parental pressure refers to the high expectations and demands placed on children to perform well in studies. It may appear in the form of strict study schedules constant reminders and comparisons with others. Sometimes it comes with fear of punishment or loss of affection. Students try hard to meet these expectations. When they feel they may fail stress begins to grow.

Examination stress is the mental and emotional strain felt before or during tests. It includes fear worry and tension related to performance. A little stress can motivate students to study. Too much stress harms health and learning. It affects sleep appetite memory and focus. In severe cases it leads to sadness and loss of interest in studies.

In the present competitive age students face pressure from many sides. Schools demand results. Society values ranks. Media highlights toppers. Parents also expect success. Among these forces parental pressure has a strong impact because it comes from home where children seek safety and support. When pressure replaces care students feel trapped.

This study focuses on understanding the link between parental pressure and examination stress. It seeks to explore how students perceive their parents' expectations and how these affect their feelings during

exams. By studying this relationship the research aims to bring attention to the emotional needs of learners. The introduction of this topic is important in the field of education. Academic success should go along with mental well being. Students who feel supported perform better and grow with confidence. This study hopes to contribute to better parenting practices and healthier school environments. It also encourages a balanced view of achievement where effort learning and happiness matter as much as marks.

II. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The background of this study lies in the changing nature of education and society. In earlier times learning was seen as a slow and steady process. Children learned basic skills and values. Success was not measured only by marks. With time education became more competitive. Schools began to focus on results and ranks. Examinations became the main tool to judge ability.

In the modern world education is linked with career and social status. Parents believe that good marks lead to good colleges and secure jobs. This belief has grown stronger due to limited opportunities and rising competition. As a result parents invest high hopes in their children. They expect constant improvement and top performance in exams.

At the same time students face many academic demands. They attend long school hours. They complete homework and coaching classes. They prepare for tests and entrance exams. Their daily life revolves around studies. In such a setting even small failures feel big. Students begin to fear exams rather than see them as a chance to learn.

The home environment plays a key role in this process. Parents guide children in study habits. They also set goals for achievement. When expectations are realistic children feel motivated. When expectations are very high children feel pressure. They worry about disappointing their parents. This worry often turns into examination stress.

Examination stress has become a common issue among students. Reports from schools show rising cases of anxiety and health problems during exam time. Students complain of fear lack of sleep and poor concentration. Some lose interest in learning. These problems affect both performance and well being.

Researchers in education and psychology have studied stress and academic life in different countries. Many studies point to the role of family expectations in student stress. Yet each social and cultural setting has its own features. In India family bonds are strong. Parents play an active role in education. This makes the issue of parental pressure more important to study in the local context.

This study emerges from the need to understand this growing problem. It seeks to explore how students perceive parental expectations and how these shape their exam experiences. By examining this background the study aims to provide a clear base for understanding the present research and its purpose.

III. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The present study is important because it deals with the mental health of students. In today's academic world students face strong pressure to perform well in exams. This pressure often begins at home. By studying parental pressure and examination stress this research highlights a hidden problem that affects many learners. It helps us understand what students feel during exam time.

The study is significant for parents. It makes them aware of how their words actions and expectations influence their children. Many parents believe that strict control leads to success. This study shows that too much pressure can harm confidence and motivation. It encourages parents to adopt a caring and supportive approach. Such awareness can improve family relations and trust.

The study is also useful for teachers. Teachers spend a large part of the day with students. They can observe changes in behavior and learning. The findings can help teachers identify stressed students early. It can guide them to provide encouragement and simple guidance. This can create a safer classroom climate.

For school leaders and planners the study offers valuable insight. It supports the need for counseling services and life skills education in schools. It can help in designing programs that promote emotional balance and coping skills. Such steps can improve overall school performance and student well being.

The study is important for students as well. It gives them a voice. It helps them realize that their feelings are valid. It shows that stress is not a personal weakness. Understanding this can reduce guilt and

fear. It can motivate students to seek help when needed.

From a research point of view the study adds to the existing knowledge in education and psychology. It provides local evidence based on real experiences of students. It can guide future studies on stress parenting and academic life.

Overall this study is significant because it aims to build a healthy link between home and school. It promotes balanced expectations and emotional support. Such balance is essential for true learning and positive growth of students.

IV. CHARACTERISTICS OF PARENTAL PRESSURE AND EXAMINATION STRESS

Parental pressure has some clear features that can be seen in daily life of students. It often begins with very high expectations for marks and ranks. Parents may fix goals that are hard to reach. They may remind children again and again about results. They may compare them with friends or relatives. Such comparison makes students feel less valued.

Another feature of parental pressure is strict control over study time. Some parents plan every hour of the child's day. Play and rest get less importance. Mistakes are not accepted easily. Failure is seen as a sign of weakness. In some homes love and praise depend on marks. This makes children feel that they are valued only for success.

Parental pressure also shows in fear based guidance. Parents may warn about poor future if marks are low. They may talk about shame or loss of respect. Even when parents mean well such words create tension. Children begin to study not for learning but to avoid blame.

Examination stress has its own set of features. It starts much before the exam date. Students feel nervous when they think about tests. They worry about questions and time. They doubt their preparation. This mental strain grows as the exam comes closer.

A common sign of exam stress is emotional change. Students become irritable or silent. They may feel sudden fear or sadness. Some cry easily. Others withdraw from friends. They lose interest in normal activities.

Physical signs are also seen. Many students complain of headache and stomach pain. Sleep becomes poor. Appetite reduces. Hands may shake before exams.

Heartbeat may feel fast. These signs show that the body reacts to stress.

Cognitive signs affect thinking. Students find it hard to concentrate. They forget what they studied. They feel confused during exams. Even well prepared students may perform poorly because of stress.

Behavioral signs include avoiding study or over studying. Some students keep reading without rest. Others escape from books due to fear. Both patterns reduce effective learning.

When parental pressure and examination stress act together the effect becomes stronger. High pressure increases fear of failure. Fear then raises stress. This cycle harms confidence and joy of learning. Students feel trapped between expectations and fear.

These characteristics show that parental pressure and examination stress are not just academic issues. They touch emotions body and behavior. Understanding these features is essential to support students in a better way.

V. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the present study guide the direction of the research. They help in focusing on the main purpose of the work. Each objective is framed to understand the issue of parental pressure and examination stress in a clear way.

The first objective is to study the level of parental pressure felt by students. The study seeks to know how students perceive their parents' expectations and demands related to studies and exam results. It aims to understand whether this pressure is mild moderate or high.

The second objective is to assess the level of examination stress among students. The study tries to find how often students feel fear worry and tension before and during exams. It also aims to observe the common emotional and physical signs of stress.

The third objective is to explore the relationship between parental pressure and examination stress. The study wants to know whether higher parental pressure leads to higher stress among students. It attempts to see how closely these two factors are linked in students' lives.

The fourth objective is to identify differences in stress among students with different levels of parental support. The study seeks to compare students who feel encouraged with those who feel forced. This helps in

understanding the role of positive parenting in reducing stress.

The fifth objective is to understand students' views about their home environment during exam time. The study aims to know whether students feel safe to share their fears and problems with parents. It also looks at how family reactions affect their confidence.

The sixth objective is to suggest ways to reduce examination stress through better parental involvement. The study intends to provide simple and practical ideas that parents and teachers can follow to support students in a healthy manner.

Overall these objectives aim to gain a clear picture of the problem. They help in building knowledge that can improve student well being and promote balanced academic growth.

VI. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the present study defines the area and focus of the research. It helps in understanding what the study covers and what it does not include. This study is limited to examining parental pressure and examination stress among school students. It mainly focuses on students studying at the secondary level.

The study covers students from selected schools in a local area. It considers both boys and girls to get a balanced view. The age group of students falls within the period when board exams and major tests begin. This stage is important because academic pressure usually increases during these years.

The study focuses on students' perceptions of parental behavior. It looks at how students feel about their parents' expectations guidance and reactions to results. The study does not judge parents' intentions. It only records how students experience these actions.

The scope also includes the study of examination stress as felt by students. It covers emotional physical and thinking related signs of stress during exam time. It does not include clinical diagnosis of anxiety or other health problems. The study remains within the educational context.

The research is based on data collected through a questionnaire. Hence the scope is limited to self reported responses of students. It reflects their feelings and views at the time of data collection.

The study aims to find the relationship between parental pressure and examination stress. It does not attempt to study other factors like peer pressure

teaching methods or school facilities in detail. These factors may influence stress but are outside the main focus of this research.

The scope also includes drawing general suggestions for parents and schools based on findings. It does not claim that the results apply to all regions or all age groups. The findings are mainly relevant to similar school settings.

Thus the scope of the study is confined to understanding how parental expectations affect students' exam related stress within a specific educational setting. It provides a focused base for analysis and meaningful conclusions within these defined limits.

VII. METHODOLOGY

The present study followed an empirical approach to understand parental pressure and examination stress among students. The survey method was used because it helps in collecting information from a large group in a simple way. This method is suitable to study feelings views and experiences of students.

The population of the study included secondary school students studying in local schools. From this population a sample was selected. Students were chosen from different classes to get a fair picture. The selection was done in a simple random manner to avoid bias. Both boys and girls were included in the study.

A questionnaire was used as the main tool for data collection. It contained short and clear statements related to parental expectations study habits and exam feelings. The language of the tool was easy so that students could understand each item. The responses were taken on simple options such as agree disagree and sometimes. This helped students answer honestly without confusion.

Before final use the questionnaire was checked by teachers and experts in education. Small changes were made to improve clarity. A pilot study was also done with a few students to ensure that the items were suitable and easy to answer.

The data were collected during school hours with permission from school heads. Students were informed about the purpose of the study. They were assured that their answers would remain confidential. They were encouraged to respond freely without fear. The researcher was present to clear doubts if needed.

After collection the responses were arranged and coded. The data were analyzed using simple statistical techniques such as percentages and averages. This helped in understanding the general trend of parental pressure and examination stress among students. The relation between both variables was also examined in a basic manner.

Ethical care was taken throughout the study. No student was forced to participate. No personal identity was recorded. The study aimed only to understand the problem and not to judge any individual or family.

Thus the methodology provided a systematic and simple way to gather reliable information. It helped in drawing meaningful conclusions about the effect of parental pressure on examination stress.

VIII. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The analysis of the collected data reveals clear patterns about parental pressure and examination stress among students. The responses show that a large number of students experience noticeable pressure from parents regarding their academic performance. Many students reported that their parents expect very high marks in every examination. Regular reminders about results and future success were also common.

The findings indicate that students who reported high parental pressure also showed higher levels of examination stress. These students often felt fear and worry before exams. They were more nervous while preparing for tests. They doubted their ability even when they had studied well. This shows a strong link between pressure at home and stress during exams.

The study found that emotional signs of stress were common. Many students felt anxious and restless before examinations. Some felt sudden fear while entering the exam hall. A few students shared that they became irritable or silent during exam days. These emotional changes affected their confidence.

Physical signs of stress were also reported. Several students complained of headache stomach pain and tiredness during exam time. Many had difficulty in sleeping the night before exams. Some students felt their heartbeat increase before writing the paper. These signs show that stress affected both mind and body.

The findings also revealed thinking related problems. Many students said that they forgot answers which they knew earlier. They found it hard to concentrate on questions. Some felt confused even in simple parts of

the paper. This affected their performance despite good preparation.

On the other hand students who felt supported by parents showed lower stress levels. These students reported that their parents encouraged effort rather than only marks. They felt free to share their fears at home. Such students showed better confidence and calmer behavior during exams. They were more hopeful about their performance.

The study also found that excessive pressure did not always lead to better results. Some students with very high pressure reported average or poor performance. Fear of failure reduced their motivation and clarity. In contrast students with moderate guidance and support often performed better and felt satisfied with their effort.

Another important finding was that many students wanted their parents to understand their feelings. They wished for more trust and less comparison. They felt that kind words helped more than strict warnings. This shows the need for positive communication at home.

Overall the results confirm that parental pressure plays a major role in shaping students' exam experiences. High pressure increases stress and lowers confidence. Support and understanding reduce stress and promote better learning. These findings support the need for balanced parental involvement to ensure students' academic success and emotional well being.

IX. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Every research has certain limits that arise from time resources and design. These limits do not weaken the value of the study. They help readers understand the context in which the findings should be viewed. The present study also has some important limitations.

The first limitation is related to the size of the sample. The study includes only a limited number of secondary school students from selected schools. Students from other districts rural areas or different school systems are not included. Therefore the results may not fully represent all student groups.

The second limitation lies in the method of data collection. The study depends on students' self reported responses. Students may not always express their true feelings. Some may give socially acceptable answers. Others may misunderstand questions. This may affect the accuracy of the data.

The third limitation is the use of a questionnaire as the only tool. While it is useful for collecting data from many students it cannot capture deep emotions and personal experiences. Methods like interviews or case studies could provide richer insights but were not used due to time constraints.

Another limitation is that the study focuses mainly on parental pressure as the source of examination stress. In real life stress comes from many sources. Peer competition school rules teaching style and personal abilities also play a role. These factors were not studied in detail.

The study is also limited by time. Data were collected during a specific period near examinations. Stress levels may change at different times of the year. The findings reflect only the situation during the period of data collection.

The analysis uses simple statistical techniques. These methods help in identifying general patterns. They do not allow deep analysis of cause and effect. More advanced analysis could provide stronger conclusions. The study does not consider background variables in detail. Factors such as family income parents' education and type of school may influence both pressure and stress. These aspects were not examined separately.

Another limitation is that the study does not include any clinical or psychological testing. It relies only on students' feelings about stress. Hence the results should not be taken as medical assessment of anxiety or mental disorders.

Language and understanding of students may also affect responses. Even though the questionnaire was simple some students may have interpreted items differently. This could lead to variation in answers.

Finally the study is confined to a specific educational context. Cultural values and family practices differ across regions. Hence the findings may vary in other social settings.

These limitations suggest that the results should be interpreted with care. They also indicate directions for future research. Further studies may include larger samples mixed methods longer time span and more variables. Such efforts can deepen understanding of parental pressure and examination stress among students.

X. CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The issue of parental pressure and examination stress presents many challenges in the school system. One major challenge is the strong belief that high marks alone decide success. Many parents feel that strict control is necessary for good results. Changing this mindset is not easy. It is shaped by social competition and fear of future failure.

Another challenge is lack of awareness about mental health. Parents and even some teachers may not recognize signs of stress in students. Fear sadness and tiredness are often seen as excuses. As a result students do not get timely help. Their problems remain hidden until they grow serious.

The busy schedule of schools is also a challenge. Teachers have to complete the syllabus and prepare students for exams. They get little time to focus on emotional needs. Counseling services are limited in many schools. Trained counselors are often not available.

Communication gaps between parents and children create another difficulty. Many students hesitate to share their fears. They worry that parents may scold them or compare them with others. This silence increases stress. It weakens trust within the family.

Despite these challenges there are many opportunities to improve the situation. One major opportunity is parent education. Schools can organize meetings and workshops. These can help parents understand child psychology and stress. When parents learn to listen and support change becomes possible.

Another opportunity lies in the role of teachers. Teachers can create a friendly classroom climate. They can encourage questions and reduce fear of mistakes. Simple words of praise can build confidence. Teachers can also guide parents about healthy expectations.

Schools have the opportunity to start counseling and guidance programs. Even basic life skills sessions can help students manage time and emotions. Relaxation activities and peer support groups can reduce fear before exams. These steps do not need large resources. They need care and planning.

Use of positive communication is another opportunity. When parents talk with children about effort rather than marks students feel valued. This builds inner motivation. It helps students face exams with hope rather than fear.

The growing awareness about mental health in society also creates hope. Media and education programs now talk about stress and well being. This awareness can be used to bring change at home and school level.

Thus while challenges are real opportunities are also strong. With joint effort of parents teachers and schools examination stress can be reduced. A balanced approach can turn pressure into support and help students grow with confidence and joy in learning.

Educational Implications and Suggestions

Parents and schools play the most important role in shaping students' academic life and emotional health. Simple and thoughtful steps can reduce examination stress and build confidence among learners.

Parents should set realistic expectations for their children. Every child has different abilities and pace of learning. Marks should not be the only measure of success. Effort and improvement also deserve praise. When parents value hard work students feel motivated.

Parents should talk with their children regularly. They should listen to their fears and problems with patience. Scolding and blaming should be avoided. A calm talk builds trust. Children then feel safe to share their worries.

Parents should avoid comparisons with others. Each child is unique. Comparison creates jealousy and low self worth. Instead parents should encourage children to do better than their past performance.

Parents should provide a balanced routine at home. Study time is important. Rest play and sleep are also necessary. A healthy routine keeps the mind fresh and improves focus.

Parents should show love even when results are not good. Support during failure teaches children to face challenges. It builds courage and resilience.

Schools should create a friendly and fear free learning environment. Teachers should encourage questions and accept mistakes as part of learning. This reduces fear of failure. Students learn with confidence.

Teachers should observe students closely. Changes in behavior may show stress. A few kind words can make a big difference. Teachers can guide students in planning study time and simple revision methods.

Schools should organize counseling and guidance programs. Even basic sessions on stress management can help students. Activities like relaxation and sharing in groups reduce anxiety.

Schools should involve parents through meetings and workshops. These programs can spread awareness about student stress and positive parenting. When parents and teachers work together students get strong support.

Schools should avoid over loading students with tests and homework. Proper planning of assessments gives students time to prepare. It reduces sudden pressure.

Both parents and schools should focus on overall growth of the child. Values skills and happiness are as important as marks. When students feel valued and supported they face exams with confidence and hope.

XI. CONCLUSION

The present study highlights the strong link between parental pressure and examination stress among students. It shows that when expectations become too high students feel fear and worry. This fear affects their health learning and confidence. Exams then become a source of tension rather than a chance to show learning.

The study makes it clear that pressure does not always lead to better results. In many cases it reduces motivation and joy of learning. Students begin to study only to avoid blame. They lose interest in knowledge and creativity. This harms their overall growth.

At the same time the study shows the positive power of support. When parents guide with care students feel safe. They develop confidence to face challenges. A loving home environment helps them manage stress and perform with hope.

Teachers and schools also have a key role. A friendly classroom and understanding teachers can reduce fear. Guidance and counseling can help students handle emotions. Schools that value well being along with marks create healthier learners.

The study suggests that success in education should be seen in a broader way. Good marks are important. Mental peace and self belief are equally important. A balanced approach helps students grow into strong and responsible individuals.

In the end the study calls for joint effort of parents teachers and schools. By replacing pressure with encouragement we can protect students from harmful stress. We can help them enjoy learning and face exams with confidence. Such an approach will lead to true success and positive future for our children.

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