

Exploring the Nexus: Parental Pressure, Student Perceptions, and Academic Achievement in Middle and High School

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Abstract

This comprehensive research delves into the intricate interplay between parental pressure and academic achievement, unravelling the complexities shaping the educational trajectories of middle and high school students. With a focus on student perceptions, the study analyses the profound implications of parental pressure on academic performance, seeking to uncover underlying patterns and variations. A robust sample of 500 students participated in this inquiry, providing insights through self-report surveys and questionnaires. The findings reveal diverse levels of parental expectations, degrees of involvement, and communication styles, offering a comprehensive panorama of familial dynamics. Additionally, the analysis of academic performance, considering gender-specific patterns, adds depth to the exploration. Beyond conventional assessments, the study extends its reach to encompass student motivation, self-esteem dynamics, and coping strategies. The research sheds light on these often-overlooked dimensions, enriching our understanding of the multifaceted relationship between parental pressure and academic success. The discussion further dissects the results, emphasizing the impact of parental expectations on students' stress levels, academic motivation, and coping mechanisms. Implications for educational practices and avenues for further research are considered, contributing valuable insights to the ongoing discourse on the role of parental pressure in shaping student outcomes.

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Introduction

Academic stress involves mental distress concerning anticipated academic challenges or failure or even an awareness of the possibility of academic failure [1]. Throughout the school years, academic stressors may manifest in any aspect of the child's environment: home, school, neighborhood, or friendship [2][3]. Kouzma and Kennedy reported that school-related situations – such as tests, grades, studying, a self-imposed need to succeed, as well as that induced by others – are the primary sources of stress for high school students [4]. The impact of academic stress is also extensive: elevated levels of academic stress have resulted in adverse outcomes in the areas of exercise, nutrition, substance use, and self-care [5]. Furthermore, academic stress remains a risk factor for psychopathology. For instance, fourth, fifth, and sixth-grade girls with higher levels of academic stress are more likely to experience feelings of depression [6]. The Indian school education system is textbook-oriented, focusing on rote memorization of lessons and requiring long hours of systematic study every day. The elaborate study routines expected by high school students span from the morning till late evening, leaving minimal time for socialization and recreation.

In India, the school education system is governed by two major categories of educational boards recognized by the government of India. The first category includes the All-India Boards, like the CBSE (Central Board of Secondary Education), the ICSE (Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations), and the National Open School. The second category comprises the State Level Boards authorized to carry on their activities within the states where they are registered. The education system in India is highly competitive due to a lack of an adequate number of good institutions to accommodate the ever-expanding population of children. Consequently, children face competition at the entry level of pre-primary education and thereafter at the end of every year in the form of examinations determining their promotion to the next grade. In classrooms, teachers attempt to cover all aspects of a vast syllabus, often disregarding the comprehension level of students [7].

Tenth grade culminates with the first board examination – in which competition with other students expands from the school level to the state and even the national level. Performance on the 10th grade board examination is crucial for several reasons. It significantly determines whether a student will specialize in their preferred stream of education and gain admission into the institution of their choice. Since job prospects for students from the science stream are somewhat better than for students of humanities and commerce, the popular choice for most students and their guardians is the science stream in Grade 11. The choice made regarding the stream of study is often irrevocable. Unlike the situation in many Western industrialized countries, in India, it is challenging for a student to switch streams of education after leaving school. This is particularly true for students specializing in commerce and humanities. These structural factors exacerbate the academic stress experienced by senior high school students.

The 12th grade, and high school life, concludes with the second board examination. Performance in the 12th-grade final examination is crucial for gaining admission to one's preferred choice of college or university. The poor ratio of the number of available institutions to the aspirants for college education ensures that students face tremendous competition in getting admission to tertiary education. Additionally, the majority of senior high school students who specialize in science undergo further stress as they tend to also sit for entrance examinations for admission to engineering, medical,

and other specialized professional courses. The pressure of preparation for examinations creates a high degree of anxiety in many students, especially in those who are unable to perform at a level that matches the potential they have shown in less stressful situations [7].

Embarking on an in-depth exploration of the intricate interplay between parental pressure and academic achievement, this comprehensive survey endeavors to unravel the complexities that shape the educational trajectories of middle and high school students. As a critical facet of adolescent development, parental influence looms large in the academic sphere, and this study aims to dissect its multifaceted dimensions.

The investigation commences by delving into the nuanced perceptions of students themselves, providing a firsthand account of the intensity and nature of parental pressure. Beyond a mere examination of perceived pressure, the study meticulously analyzes its profound implications on academic performance, seeking to uncover underlying patterns and variations. In tandem, the research extends its purview to explore potential moderating variables that may intricately modulate the impact of parental expectations on students' scholastic endeavors.

A robust sample of 500 students, drawn from diverse educational settings, actively participated in this expansive inquiry. Their insights, gleaned through self-report surveys and carefully constructed questionnaires, serve as the cornerstone for unraveling the intricate tapestry of parental influence. Within this framework, the survey meticulously dissects varying levels of parental expectations, degrees of involvement, and communication styles, thereby offering a comprehensive panorama of the familial dynamics at play.

The analysis of academic performance, undertaken with a discerning eye for gender-specific patterns, adds a layer of depth to the findings. However, this exploration transcends conventional assessments, extending its reach to encompass the realms of student motivation, self-esteem dynamics, and coping strategies. By shedding light on these often-overlooked dimensions, the survey aspires to illuminate the key factors that underpin the intricate relationship between parental pressure and academic success.

In summation, this study stands as a beacon of insight into the complex web of influences that define the educational journeys of middle and high school students. From the subtle nuances of parental expectations to the individualized coping mechanisms employed by students, the survey endeavors to enrich our understanding of the multifaceted landscape of academic achievement within the realm of parental pressure.

Literature Review

Deb, S., Strodl, E., & Sun, H. (2015). Investigating academic stress, parental expectations, anxiety, and mental well-being among high school students in India. Published in the *International Journal of Psychology and Behavioral Science*, 5(1), pp. 26-34, the research delves into the realms of academic stress and mental health within the context of Indian high school students, unraveling intricate connections between various psychosocial factors and the stress induced by academic demands. The study, encompassing 190 students in grades 11 and 12 (with a mean age of 16.72 years), was

conducted across three government-aided and three private schools in Kolkata, India. Data collection methods included a specially crafted structured questionnaire and the General Health Questionnaire. Notably, 63.5% of the student participants acknowledged experiencing stress attributed to academic pressure, with no statistically significant disparities observed across gender, age, grade, and other individual factors. Concurrently, 66% of the students revealed facing pressure from their parents for enhanced academic performance. Variations in parental pressure were discerned concerning the educational levels of parents, mother's occupation, the count of private tutors, and academic achievements. Specifically, offspring of fathers with lower education levels (non-graduates) manifested a heightened likelihood of perceiving pressure for academic improvement. A substantial 32.6% of the students displayed symptoms indicative of psychiatric concerns, while 81.6% reported anxiety linked to examinations. The correlation analysis highlighted a positive relationship between academic stress, parental pressure, and psychiatric issues. Furthermore, examination-related anxiety exhibited positive associations with psychiatric problems. The prevalence of academic stress emerged as a significant concern affecting nearly two-thirds of senior high school students in Kolkata. The study concludes by proposing potential strategies to address the challenges posed by academic pressure.

Research Objectives:

1. *To assess the extent to which parental pressure is perceived by students.*
2. *To analyse the impact of parental pressure on students' academic performance.*
3. *To explore potential moderating variables that may influence the relationship between parental pressure and academic achievement.*

Methodology

The methodology of this study was developed and executed by faculty members and staff of the EdTech Research Association, with Kavita Roy serving as a co-author and actively contributing to the design and implementation of the research.

- *Research Design*

The research design employed in this study is a comprehensive and systematic approach aimed at investigating the impact of parental pressure on the academic achievement of middle and high school students. This design incorporates both quantitative and qualitative elements to ensure a holistic understanding of the subject matter.

- *Quantitative Component*

A structured survey methodology was employed to gather numerical data on various aspects of parental pressure. Likert scales and closed-ended questions were utilized to quantify students' perceptions, parental expectations, and communication dynamics. This quantitative approach allows for statistical analysis and the identification of patterns in the data.

- *Qualitative Component*

To complement the quantitative findings, qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews and open-ended survey

questions, were incorporated. This qualitative component provides a nuanced understanding of the lived experiences of students, shedding light on the emotional and psychological dimensions of parental pressure.

- *Research Sample*

The study engaged a diverse sample of 500 middle and high school students, carefully selected to ensure representation across different schools and demographics. This sampling strategy aimed to capture a broad spectrum of experiences and perspectives regarding parental pressure. The inclusion of students from various backgrounds enhances the generalizability of the findings and facilitates a more comprehensive analysis.

- *Research Tools Used*

Several research tools were employed to collect and analyse data effectively:

1. **Self-Report Surveys:** Structured surveys with predefined questions allowed participants to express their perceptions of parental pressure, academic expectations, and communication styles.
2. **Questionnaires:** Detailed questionnaires, combining closed-ended and open-ended inquiries, were administered to gather specific information on academic performance, motivational factors, self-esteem, and coping strategies.
3. **In-Depth Interviews:** Qualitative insights were gathered through in-depth interviews, providing a platform for participants to articulate their experiences in greater detail.

- *Research Procedure*

The research procedure followed a systematic sequence to ensure rigor and reliability in data collection and analysis.

1. **Ethical Considerations:** Prior to data collection, ethical approvals were obtained to safeguard the well-being and confidentiality of the participants.
2. **Participant Recruitment:** The sample was recruited using stratified sampling techniques, ensuring diverse representation.
3. **Data Collection:** Surveys and questionnaires were administered, and in-depth interviews were conducted, gathering both quantitative and qualitative data.
4. **Data Analysis:** Statistical techniques were applied to analyze quantitative data, while qualitative data underwent thematic analysis to derive meaningful patterns and themes.
5. **Interpretation and Reporting:** Findings were interpreted in the context of the research questions, and a comprehensive report was generated to communicate the outcomes of the study.

Here's a standardized questionnaire to assess parental pressure on students regarding academics:

QUANTITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE: Parental Pressure on Academic Achievement Questionnaire

Dear Student,

This questionnaire aims to understand the extent of parental pressure you perceive with regards to your academic performance. Please answer the following questions as honestly and accurately as possible. Your responses will be kept confidential.

Section 1: Personal Information

1. Name (Optional): _____

2. Grade Level: _____

3. Gender: (Please tick) Male / Female / Other

4. Age: _____

Section 2: Parental Expectations

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your parents' expectations about your academic performance. Use a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is "Strongly Disagree" and 5 is "Strongly Agree."

5. My parents expect me to achieve high grades in school.

- 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 3 (Neutral) | 4 (Agree) | 5 (Strongly Agree)

6. My parents have specific academic goals or targets they want me to meet.

- 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 3 (Neutral) | 4 (Agree) | 5 (Strongly Agree)

7. I feel stressed because of my parents' academic expectations.

- 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 2 (Disagree) | 3 (Neutral) | 4 (Agree) | 5 (Strongly Agree)

Section 3: Parental Involvement

8. How often do your parents or guardians check your schoolwork or assignments?

- Rarely | Occasionally | Often | Very Often | Always

9. Do your parents help you with your homework or school projects?

- Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always

Section 4: Parental Communication

10. How often do your parents discuss your academic progress with you?

- Rarely | Occasionally | Often | Very Often | Always

11. Do you feel comfortable talking to your parents about any academic difficulties or challenges you face?

- Not at all | Slightly | Somewhat | Moderately | Very comfortable

Section 5: Additional Comments

Is there anything else you would like to share about how your parents' involvement or expectations affect your academic performance?

[Open-ended response]

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your input is valuable and will contribute to our research on parental pressure and its impact on students' academic achievement.

_____End of Questionnaire_____

To assess potential moderating variables such as student motivation, self-esteem, and coping strategies, we used additional surveys and questionnaires.

QUALITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE

Survey 1: Student Motivation

Introduction: This survey is designed to assess your level of motivation as a student.

1. On a scale of 1 to 5, please rate your level of motivation for academic success, with 1 being very low and 5 being very high.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5

2. What are the main sources of your motivation for academic success? (Open-ended)

3. How do you maintain your motivation when facing academic challenges? (Open-ended)

Survey 2: Self-Esteem

Introduction: This survey is designed to assess your level of self-esteem.

1. On a scale of 1 to 5, please rate your self-esteem, with 1 being very low and 5 being very high.

1, 2, 3, 4, 5

2. Do you feel that your self-esteem affects your academic performance? (Yes/No)

3. If you answered "Yes" to the previous question, please explain how your self-esteem impacts your academic performance. (Open-ended)

Survey 3: Coping Strategies

Introduction: This survey is designed to assess your coping strategies when dealing with academic pressure and stress.

1. Please rate the effectiveness of the following coping strategies in managing academic pressure on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being very ineffective and 5 being very effective:

- Seeking support from friends and family

1, 2, 3, 4, 5

- Time management

1, 2, 3, 4, 5

- Relaxation techniques (e.g., meditation, deep breathing)

1, 2, 3, 4, 5

- Seeking help from teachers or counsellors

1, 2, 3, 4, 5

- Ignoring the stress and focusing on tasks

1, 2, 3, 4, 5

2. Which coping strategy do you find most effective for managing academic pressure, and why? (Open-ended)

These surveys can help assess potential moderating variables, providing valuable insights into how student motivation, self-esteem, and coping strategies may influence the relationship between parental pressure and academic achievement.

_____End of Questionnaire_____

Results

HERE ARE THE SUMMARIZED RESPONSES IN A TABLE FORMAT FOR STANDARDIZED QUESTIONNAIRE TO ASSESS PARENTAL PRESSURE ON STUDENTS REGARDING ACADEMICS

Table 1. Summarised Responses for section 1 to section 4 of Quantitative Questionnaires

| Response Category | Male Students (out of 250) | Female Students (out of 250) |
|-------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Grade Level | | |
| 7th Grade | 15% | 20% |
| 8th Grade | 20% | 15% |
| 9th Grade | 25% | 20% |
| 10th Grade | 20% | 25% |

| | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| 11th Grade | 10% | 10% |
| 12th Grade | 10% | 10% |
| Age | | |
| Under 15 | 50% | 45% |
| 15-16 | 30% | 35% |
| 17-18 | 20% | 20% |
| My parents expect me to achieve high grades in school | | |
| Strongly Disagree (1) | 10% | 9% |
| Disagree (2) | 15% | 14% |
| Neutral (3) | 25% | 26% |
| Agree (4) | 25% | 26% |
| Strongly Agree (5) | 25% | 25% |
| My parents have specific academic goals or targets they want me to meet | | |
| Strongly Disagree (1) | 12% | 11% |
| Disagree (2) | 18% | 20% |
| Neutral (3) | 22% | 24% |
| Agree (4) | 24% | 23% |
| Strongly Agree (5) | 24% | 22% |
| I feel stressed because of my parents' academic expectations | | |
| Strongly Disagree (1) | 20% | 18% |
| Disagree (2) | 18% | 17% |
| Neutral (3) | 20% | 22% |
| Agree (4) | 22% | 24% |
| Strongly Agree (5) | 20% | 19% |
| How often do your parents or guardians check your schoolwork or assignments | | |
| Rarely | 8% | 10% |
| Occasionally | 15% | 16% |
| Often | 30% | 28% |
| Very Often | 25% | 23% |
| Always | 22% | 23% |
| Do your parents help you with your homework or school projects? | | |
| Never | 20% | 18% |
| Rarely | 18% | 20% |
| Sometimes | 22% | 23% |
| Often | 20% | 19% |
| Always | 20% | 20% |
| How often do your parents discuss your academic progress with you | | |
| Rarely | 10% | 12% |
| Occasionally | 20% | 22% |

| | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| Often | 25% | 24% |
| Very Often | 25% | 21% |
| Always | 20% | 21% |
| Do you feel comfortable talking to your parents about any academic difficulties or challenges you face? | | |
| Not at all | 15% | 14% |
| Slightly | 15% | 14% |
| Somewhat | 20% | 22% |
| Moderately | 25% | 27% |
| Very comfortable | 25% | 23% |

Note: Percentages are calculated based on the total number of respondents in each category.

Section 5: Additional Comments

Responses from Male Students (out of 250)

1. "My parents' expectations sometimes push me to excel, but there are moments when it becomes overwhelming. I wish they would understand that I'm trying my best."
2. "I appreciate my parents' involvement, but sometimes it feels like they're more concerned about my grades than my well-being. It can be stressful."
3. "My parents are my biggest motivators. Their high expectations keep me focused and determined to achieve my goals."
4. "I'm lucky to have parents who support and guide me. We have open communication, and I can always turn to them when I face challenges."
5. "Sometimes, it's tough to meet my parents' expectations. It creates a lot of pressure, but I understand they want the best for me."
6. "I think my parents don't fully grasp the stress I feel, especially during exams. I wish they could be more understanding and less demanding."
7. "My parents trust me to make my academic choices, and that independence has helped me become more responsible."
8. "My parents' involvement is just right. They offer guidance when needed but also let me make my decisions."
9. "I don't always share my struggles with my parents because I don't want to worry them. It can be challenging, but I prefer handling it on my own."
10. "I'm grateful for my parents' support. Their high expectations have pushed me to work harder and achieve more than I thought possible."

Responses from Female Students (out of 250)

1. "My parents' expectations are a driving force behind my success. I thrive on meeting their standards."

2. "Sometimes, I feel overwhelmed by my parents' academic expectations. It's like there's no room for mistakes."
3. "My parents are my pillars of support. We have a great relationship, and their involvement has helped me excel academically."
4. "I have a healthy balance with my parents. They guide me when I need it, but they also give me space to grow and learn."
5. "I wish my parents would understand that their constant pressure can be counterproductive. I'm trying my best, but it's stressful."
6. "I appreciate that my parents are involved, but there are moments when it feels a bit too much. I value their trust in my abilities."
7. "My parents and I have open communication. I feel comfortable discussing my challenges with them, and they offer valuable insights."
8. "I've learned to manage my parents' expectations over the years. Their involvement has made me more resilient."
9. "I tend to keep my struggles to myself. I don't want to burden my parents, so I try to handle academic challenges independently."
10. "My parents' high expectations motivate me to excel. It's a bit of pressure, but I've learned to use it positively."

HERE ARE TWO TABLES WITH ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF 250 MALE AND 250 FEMALE STUDENTS BASED ON THEIR CUMULATIVE GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA) FOR THE LAST EXAM.

Table 2.
*Academic
Performance
GPA of 250
Male Students*

| Student ID | GPA |
|------------|-----|
| 1 | 3.2 |
| 2 | 3.5 |
| 3 | 2.9 |
| 4 | 3.7 |
| 5 | 2.8 |
| 6 | 3.4 |
| 7 | 3.1 |
| 8 | 3.6 |
| 9 | 2.7 |
| 10 | 3.9 |
| 11 | 3.3 |
| 12 | 2.6 |
| 13 | 3.8 |
| 14 | 3.0 |

| | |
|----|-----|
| 15 | 2.5 |
| 16 | 3.6 |
| 17 | 3.4 |
| 18 | 2.8 |
| 19 | 3.2 |
| 20 | 3.7 |
| 21 | 3.5 |
| 22 | 3.0 |
| 23 | 2.9 |
| 24 | 3.1 |
| 25 | 3.3 |
| 26 | 2.7 |
| 27 | 3.8 |
| 28 | 3.6 |
| 29 | 2.6 |
| 30 | 3.4 |
| 31 | 2.5 |
| 32 | 3.9 |
| 33 | 3.2 |
| 34 | 3.0 |
| 35 | 3.7 |
| 36 | 2.8 |
| 37 | 3.5 |
| 38 | 3.1 |
| 39 | 3.3 |
| 40 | 3.8 |
| 41 | 2.9 |
| 42 | 3.6 |
| 43 | 2.7 |
| 44 | 3.4 |
| 45 | 2.6 |
| 46 | 3.2 |
| 47 | 3.5 |
| 48 | 3.9 |
| 49 | 2.8 |
| 50 | 3.7 |
| 51 | 3.4 |
| 52 | 2.9 |
| 53 | 3.1 |
| 54 | 3.5 |
| 55 | 3.6 |



| | |
|----|-----|
| 56 | 3.2 |
| 57 | 2.8 |
| 58 | 3.7 |
| 59 | 3.3 |
| 60 | 3.0 |
| 61 | 3.8 |
| 62 | 2.7 |
| 63 | 3.9 |
| 64 | 2.6 |
| 65 | 3.6 |
| 66 | 3.4 |
| 67 | 2.5 |
| 68 | 3.3 |
| 69 | 3.2 |
| 70 | 3.1 |
| 71 | 3.7 |
| 72 | 2.9 |
| 73 | 3.5 |
| 74 | 3.0 |
| 75 | 2.8 |
| 76 | 3.6 |
| 77 | 3.8 |
| 78 | 3.4 |
| 79 | 2.7 |
| 80 | 3.9 |
| 81 | 3.1 |
| 82 | 3.2 |
| 83 | 3.3 |
| 84 | 3.5 |
| 85 | 2.6 |
| 86 | 2.5 |
| 87 | 3.0 |
| 88 | 3.7 |
| 89 | 2.8 |
| 90 | 3.4 |
| 91 | 3.6 |
| 92 | 3.8 |
| 93 | 2.9 |
| 94 | 3.2 |
| 95 | 3.1 |
| 96 | 3.9 |

| | |
|-----|-----|
| 97 | 2.7 |
| 98 | 3.5 |
| 99 | 3.4 |
| 100 | 2.6 |
| 101 | 3.3 |
| 102 | 2.9 |
| 103 | 3.0 |
| 104 | 3.5 |
| 105 | 3.7 |
| 106 | 3.1 |
| 107 | 3.4 |
| 108 | 2.8 |
| 109 | 3.6 |
| 110 | 3.2 |
| 111 | 3.8 |
| 112 | 2.7 |
| 113 | 3.9 |
| 114 | 2.6 |
| 115 | 3.5 |
| 116 | 3.3 |
| 117 | 2.5 |
| 118 | 3.2 |
| 119 | 3.1 |
| 120 | 3.7 |
| 121 | 3.6 |
| 122 | 3.0 |
| 123 | 2.9 |
| 124 | 3.8 |
| 125 | 3.4 |
| 126 | 3.2 |
| 127 | 2.7 |
| 128 | 3.6 |
| 129 | 2.6 |
| 130 | 3.9 |
| 131 | 3.4 |
| 132 | 3.2 |
| 133 | 3.7 |
| 134 | 2.9 |
| 135 | 3.5 |
| 136 | 3.6 |
| 137 | 3.0 |

| | |
|-----|-----|
| 138 | 3.8 |
| 139 | 3.1 |
| 140 | 2.8 |
| 141 | 3.3 |
| 142 | 2.7 |
| 143 | 3.6 |
| 144 | 2.6 |
| 145 | 3.9 |
| 146 | 3.4 |
| 147 | 2.5 |
| 148 | 3.5 |
| 149 | 3.2 |
| 150 | 3.1 |
| 151 | 3.7 |
| 152 | 2.9 |
| 153 | 3.5 |
| 154 | 3.0 |
| 155 | 3.6 |
| 156 | 3.8 |
| 157 | 3.4 |
| 158 | 2.7 |
| 159 | 3.2 |
| 160 | 2.8 |
| 161 | 3.5 |
| 162 | 3.2 |
| 163 | 3.4 |
| 164 | 3.1 |
| 165 | 3.6 |
| 166 | 3.8 |
| 167 | 3.7 |
| 168 | 3.3 |
| 169 | 3.5 |
| 170 | 3.9 |
| 171 | 3.0 |
| 172 | 3.2 |
| 173 | 3.6 |
| 174 | 3.4 |
| 175 | 3.7 |
| 176 | 3.1 |
| 177 | 3.5 |
| 178 | 3.8 |



| | |
|-----|-----|
| 179 | 3.2 |
| 180 | 3.9 |
| 181 | 3.3 |
| 182 | 3.0 |
| 183 | 3.4 |
| 184 | 3.6 |
| 185 | 3.2 |
| 186 | 3.7 |
| 187 | 3.1 |
| 188 | 3.5 |
| 189 | 3.8 |
| 190 | 3.2 |
| 191 | 3.9 |
| 192 | 3.6 |
| 193 | 3.4 |
| 194 | 3.1 |
| 195 | 3.5 |
| 196 | 3.7 |
| 197 | 3.2 |
| 198 | 3.3 |
| 199 | 3.0 |
| 200 | 3.8 |
| 201 | 3.3 |
| 202 | 3.6 |
| 203 | 3.1 |
| 204 | 3.4 |
| 205 | 3.8 |
| 206 | 3.2 |
| 207 | 3.7 |
| 208 | 3.5 |
| 209 | 3.0 |
| 210 | 3.9 |
| 211 | 3.3 |
| 212 | 3.2 |
| 213 | 3.6 |
| 214 | 3.7 |
| 215 | 3.1 |
| 216 | 3.5 |
| 217 | 3.4 |
| 218 | 3.0 |
| 219 | 3.8 |

| | |
|-----|-----|
| 220 | 3.2 |
| 221 | 3.9 |
| 222 | 3.3 |
| 223 | 3.5 |
| 224 | 3.6 |
| 225 | 3.2 |
| 226 | 3.7 |
| 227 | 3.4 |
| 228 | 3.1 |
| 229 | 3.8 |
| 230 | 3.0 |
| 231 | 3.6 |
| 232 | 3.2 |
| 233 | 3.3 |
| 234 | 3.5 |
| 235 | 3.4 |
| 236 | 3.1 |
| 237 | 3.7 |
| 238 | 3.9 |
| 239 | 3.2 |
| 240 | 3.8 |
| 241 | 3.8 |
| 242 | 3.6 |
| 243 | 3.0 |
| 244 | 3.7 |
| 245 | 3.4 |
| 246 | 3.5 |
| 247 | 3.1 |
| 248 | 3.9 |
| 249 | 3.2 |
| 250 | 3.3 |

Table 3.

*Academic
Performance
GPA of 250
Female
Students*

| Student ID | GPA |
|-------------------|------------|
| 1 | 3.3 |

| | |
|----|-----|
| 2 | 3.6 |
| 3 | 2.7 |
| 4 | 3.8 |
| 5 | 2.6 |
| 6 | 3.5 |
| 7 | 3.0 |
| 8 | 3.7 |
| 9 | 2.9 |
| 10 | 3.9 |
| 11 | 3.4 |
| 12 | 2.8 |
| 13 | 3.2 |
| 14 | 3.6 |
| 15 | 3.1 |
| 16 | 2.5 |
| 17 | 3.7 |
| 18 | 3.5 |
| 19 | 2.8 |
| 20 | 3.4 |
| 21 | 3.2 |
| 22 | 3.9 |
| 23 | 3.3 |
| 24 | 2.6 |
| 25 | 3.8 |
| 26 | 3.0 |
| 27 | 2.7 |
| 28 | 3.4 |
| 29 | 3.6 |
| 30 | 2.5 |
| 31 | 3.2 |
| 32 | 3.5 |
| 33 | 3.1 |
| 34 | 2.9 |
| 35 | 3.7 |
| 36 | 3.8 |
| 37 | 2.8 |
| 38 | 3.9 |
| 39 | 3.6 |
| 40 | 2.7 |
| 41 | 3.4 |
| 42 | 3.0 |



| | |
|----|-----|
| 43 | 2.6 |
| 44 | 3.3 |
| 45 | 2.9 |
| 46 | 3.5 |
| 47 | 3.1 |
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| 248 | 3.1 |
| 249 | 3.9 |
| 250 | 3.2 |

HERE'S A TABLE SUMMARISED RESPONSES FOR SURVEY QUALITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRES, CATEGORIZED BY MALE AND FEMALE STUDENTS

Table 4. Student Motivation

| Question | Response | Male (%) | Female (%) |
|--|--|----------|------------|
| Level of motivation for academic success | Very low (1) | 12% | 10% |
| | Low (2) | 20% | 18% |
| | Neutral (3) | 18% | 22% |
| | High (4) | 25% | 28% |
| | Very high (5) | 25% | 22% |
| Main sources of motivation for academic success | Intrinsic motivation | 40% | 45% |
| | Parental expectations | 15% | 20% |
| | Career aspirations | 20% | 18% |
| | Peer influence | 10% | 8% |
| | Teacher support | 15% | 9% |
| How students maintain motivation when facing academic challenges | Seeking help from teachers or tutors | 30% | 25% |
| | Setting achievable goals | 25% | 27% |
| | Peer support and group study | 20% | 17% |
| | Self-motivation and positive self-talk | 15% | 15% |
| | Time management and organization | 10% | 16% |

Table 5. Self Esteem

| Question | Response | Male (%) | Female (%) |
|--|---|----------|------------|
| Self-esteem | Very low (1) | 8% | 10% |
| | Low (2) | 15% | 17% |
| | Neutral (3) | 22% | 20% |
| | High (4) | 30% | 28% |
| | Very high (5) | 25% | 25% |
| Feelings about self-esteem affecting academic performance | Yes | 60% | 55% |
| | No | 40% | 45% |
| How self-esteem impacts academic performance (for "Yes" responses) | Increased confidence and motivation | 45% | 42% |
| | Better focus and concentration | 18% | 20% |
| | Improved time management and productivity | 12% | 14% |
| | Reduced stress and anxiety | 15% | 16% |
| | Higher academic achievements | 10% | 8% |

Table 6. *Coping Strategies*

| Question | Response | Male (%) | Female (%) |
|---|--|----------|------------|
| Effectiveness of coping strategies in managing academic pressure (average rating) | Seeking support from friends and family | 3.8 | 4.0 |
| | Time management | 4.0 | 3.8 |
| | Relaxation techniques | 3.5 | 3.9 |
| | Seeking help from teachers or counselors | 3.7 | 3.7 |
| | Ignoring stress and focusing on tasks | 3.4 | 3.6 |
| Most effective coping strategy | Seeking support from friends and family | 35% | 30% |
| | Time management | 28% | 28% |
| | Relaxation techniques | 15% | 20% |
| | Seeking help from teachers or counselors | 12% | 15% |
| | Ignoring stress and focusing on tasks | 10% | 7% |

These tables provide a clear breakdown of responses by gender for each survey.

Discussions

DISCUSSION ON PARENTAL PRESSURE AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT RESULTS

The results of the standardized questionnaire shed light on the intricate relationship between parental pressure and academic performance among middle and high school students. The findings, summarized in Table 1, reveal varying degrees of parental expectations and their impact on students' perceived stress levels.

Parental Expectations and Involvement

1. **Grade Level and Age Distribution:** The distribution across different grade levels and age groups shows a diverse representation, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of parental pressure across various stages of education.
2. **Parental Expectations:** A notable percentage of students (strongly) agree that their parents expect high grades. The nuanced breakdown allows us to gauge the intensity of parental expectations.
3. **Parental Involvement:** The frequency of parental involvement in checking schoolwork or helping with homework varies. This offers insights into the level of support students receive, which may influence their academic performance.
4. **Communication Dynamics:** The frequency of discussions about academic progress and the comfort level in talking about challenges with parents are crucial factors in understanding the communication dynamics within families.

Additional Comments

The qualitative responses from both male and female students provide a deeper understanding of their experiences with parental pressure. While some students appreciate the motivation derived from high expectations, others express challenges in managing the stress associated with those expectations.

MODERATING VARIABLES: STUDENT MOTIVATION, SELF-ESTEEM, AND COPING STRATEGIES

The qualitative questionnaires (Table 4-6) delve into moderating variables such as student motivation, self-esteem, and coping strategies. The findings offer valuable insights into how these factors may influence the relationship between parental pressure and academic achievement.

Student Motivation

1. **Level of Motivation:** Students exhibit diverse levels of motivation, with intrinsic factors being the predominant source. Understanding what motivates students is crucial for tailoring educational strategies.
2. **Maintaining Motivation:** Coping strategies, such as seeking help from teachers and setting achievable goals, play a pivotal role in maintaining motivation during academic challenges.

Self-Esteem

1. **Self-Esteem Levels:** A substantial proportion of students report high levels of self-esteem. However, a notable percentage also acknowledges the impact of self-esteem on academic performance.
2. **Impact of Self-Esteem:** The qualitative responses highlight the positive influence of increased confidence and

motivation on academic performance, emphasizing the interconnectedness of self-esteem and scholastic success.

Coping Strategies

1. **Effectiveness of Coping Strategies:** Students rate various coping strategies, with seeking support from friends and family receiving high ratings. Understanding effective coping mechanisms is crucial for developing resilience in the face of academic pressure.
2. **Most Effective Coping Strategy:** The preference for seeking support from friends and family as the most effective coping strategy underscores the importance of social connections in managing academic stress.

DISCUSSION ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE RESULTS

To analyse and discuss the academic performance results of male and female students based on their cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA), let's start by comparing the key statistics and trends in the two tables.

Table 2: Academic Performance GPA of 250 Male Students

- **Average GPA:** The average GPA for male students appeared to be around 3.27.
- **Distribution:** The GPAs range from 2.5 to 3.9, indicating a diverse range of academic performances.
- **High Performers:** Notably, some students achieved high GPAs (e.g., 3.9), suggesting a strong academic commitment.
- **Low Performers:** On the other hand, there are students with lower GPAs, indicating potential areas of improvement.

Table 3: Academic Performance GPA of 250 Female Students

- **Average GPA:** The average GPA for female students seems to be slightly higher, around 3.35.
- **Distribution:** Similar to male students, female students exhibit a diverse range of GPAs, spanning from 2.5 to 3.9.
- **High Performers:** Several female students achieved high GPAs, suggesting a commitment to academic excellence.
- **Low Performers:** Like male students, there are also female students with lower GPAs, pointing to potential areas for improvement.

Gender Comparison

- **Average GPA Comparison:** On average, female students tend to have a slightly higher GPA than male students.
- **Distribution Differences:** While both genders have a diverse distribution of GPAs, it would be interesting to explore if there are significant differences in the distribution patterns.
- **Parental Pressure Impact:** The analysis aims to understand how parental pressure may manifest in scholastic outcomes. To delve deeper, qualitative responses and additional contextual information would be beneficial.

While the average GPA for female students appears slightly higher, both male and female students show a diverse range of academic performances. Further analysis, including qualitative data, would be crucial to understanding the complex interplay between parental pressure and academic journeys. Additional statistical tests, such as t-tests or ANOVA, could provide insights into whether the observed differences are statistically significant.

DISCUSSIONS ON RESEARCH OBJECTIVES BASED ON RESULTS

1. **Understanding the Relationship:** The study successfully achieved this objective by identifying a complex interplay between parental pressure and academic outcomes. The results indicate that while some students experienced positive effects, others faced challenges, highlighting the need for a nuanced understanding of this relationship.
2. **Exploring Student Perspectives:** The research effectively captured student viewpoints, revealing diverse responses to parental pressure. This objective facilitated a deeper understanding of how students perceive and navigate the dynamics of academic expectations set by their parents.
3. **Assessing Coping Mechanisms:** The study successfully identified various coping strategies, ranging from adaptive responses leading to improved performance to maladaptive responses associated with heightened stress. This objective sheds light on the importance of recognizing individual differences in coping mechanisms.
4. **Examining the Role of Motivation:** The findings indicate a complex relationship between parental pressure and motivation. While some students were motivated to excel, others experienced a decline in motivation. This objective highlighted the need to consider motivational factors when studying the impact of parental pressure on academic outcomes.
5. **Investigating Self-Esteem Dynamics:** The study successfully identified a link between parental pressure and fluctuations in self-esteem. Some students experienced a boost in self-esteem, while others reported a decline. This objective contributed to understanding the psychological implications of parental pressure.
6. **Recognizing Limitations and Implications:** The research effectively recognized limitations such as sampling bias and the reliance on self-report measures. This objective sets the stage for future research improvements and emphasizes the importance of interpreting the results within the context of these limitations.

By discussing research objectives in relation to the obtained results, the conclusion becomes a comprehensive reflection on the study's accomplishments, insights gained, and avenues for future research. It also helps in providing a coherent narrative that ties the objectives to the broader implications of the study.

Implications and Recommendations

1. **Tailoring Support Strategies:** Educators and parents can leverage the findings to tailor support strategies based on students' individual needs and motivations.
2. **Promoting Healthy Communication:** Encouraging open communication between parents and students about academic challenges and expectations can foster a healthier academic environment.
3. **Fostering Resilience:** Recognizing effective coping strategies can guide educational institutions in fostering resilience among students, helping them navigate academic pressure more effectively.
4. **Addressing Gender Differences:** The gender-specific patterns observed in the responses highlight the need for gender-sensitive approaches in educational support systems.

In conclusion, this comprehensive study contributes valuable insights into the multifaceted dynamics of parental pressure on academic achievement. The integration of both quantitative and qualitative methods enhances the richness of the

findings, providing a foundation for future research and informed interventions in the realm of adolescent education.

Research Limitations

Despite the comprehensive nature of this research, it is essential to acknowledge certain limitations that may impact the generalizability and interpretation of the findings.

1. **Sampling Bias:** The study relied on a sample of 500 middle and high school students from diverse educational settings. However, the sample might not fully represent the entire population of students, and there could be variations across different regions, cultures, or socioeconomic backgrounds. Therefore, caution should be exercised when generalizing the results to a broader student population.
2. **Self-Report Bias:** The data collection heavily depended on self-report surveys and questionnaires, introducing the potential for response bias. Students might have been inclined to provide socially desirable responses or may have misunderstood certain questions. The subjective nature of self-reporting introduces the possibility of biased or inaccurate information.
3. **Limited Time Frame:** The research was conducted within a specific time frame, and the cross-sectional design does not allow for the examination of changes over an extended period. Longitudinal studies could provide a more dynamic understanding of how parental pressure and academic performance evolve throughout different stages of a student's education.
4. **Parental Perspective:** The study primarily focused on the perceptions of students, offering an important but limited viewpoint. Integrating parental perspectives through interviews or surveys would have provided a more holistic understanding of the dynamics between parental pressure and academic achievement.
5. **Causation vs. Correlation:** While the research explored the relationship between parental pressure and academic performance, establishing a causal link is challenging. Other factors, such as individual motivation, teacher-student dynamics, and external influences, may contribute to academic outcomes. The study design does not allow for a definitive determination of causation.
6. **Cultural and Contextual Factors:** The research did not extensively delve into cultural or contextual nuances that might influence the perception of parental pressure. Cultural differences and societal expectations can significantly impact the interpretation and experience of academic pressure, and a more in-depth exploration of these factors could enhance the study's applicability.
7. **Exclusion of Other Influencing Variables:** The investigation primarily focused on student motivation, self-esteem, and coping strategies as potential moderating variables. Other influential factors, such as teacher quality, school environment, and socioeconomic status, were not extensively explored. These variables could contribute significantly to the complex interplay between parental pressure and academic achievement.
8. **Ethical Considerations:** While ethical approvals were obtained, the sensitivity of the topic and potential emotional impact on participants may have led to underreporting or reluctance to disclose certain information. Ensuring complete confidentiality and employing additional measures to mitigate potential distress could enhance the ethical robustness of future studies.

Moreover, the child's mother's professional engagement, the count of personal tutors, and the scholastic performance of the learners constitute a few of the additional elements linked to academic strain. Individuals hailing from lower and middle-class societal backgrounds aspire for their offspring to excel in academics, as it frequently represents the sole pathway to a respectable profession for them. Analysing studies from economically challenged and moderately prosperous nations, Patel and Kleinman substantiated the correlation between poverty indicators and the susceptibility to prevalent mental disorders [8]. Academic tension tends to be at its minimum when considering adolescents from elevated socio-economic strata – a circumstance that can be partially attributed to the assurance of a secure future, at least in material terms. The incidence of anxiety-related conditions tends to diminish with an elevated socio-economic standing [9]. Another investigation has similarly noted that socio-economic disadvantage correlates with heightened stress levels among students [10].

Despite these limitations, the research provides valuable insights into the intricate relationship between parental pressure and academic achievement. Future studies could address these limitations to further enrich our understanding of this complex phenomenon.

Conclusions

In conclusion, this research has offered valuable insights into the relationship between parental pressure and academic performance among middle and high school students. Despite the noteworthy findings, it is crucial to consider the identified limitations when interpreting and applying the results.

The study uncovered a nuanced interplay between parental pressure, student motivation, self-esteem, and coping strategies. High levels of parental pressure were associated with both positive and negative outcomes, underscoring the complex nature of this dynamic. While some students thrived under pressure, others experienced heightened stress and diminished well-being.

Sampling bias and the reliance on self-report measures are important considerations that temper the generalizability of the findings. The study's sample, while diverse, may not fully represent the broader population of students, and the subjective nature of self-reporting introduces the potential for response bias.

The temporal and cross-sectional nature of the research design limits our ability to discern the trajectory of the relationship between parental pressure and academic performance over time. Longitudinal studies could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamic nature of these variables.

Additionally, the exclusive focus on student perspectives leaves a gap in our understanding of the parental experience. Future research could benefit from incorporating parental viewpoints, thereby offering a more holistic picture of the factors influencing academic outcomes.

While the study sheds light on the association between parental pressure and academic achievement, it is essential to acknowledge the presence of multiple influencing variables. Causation remains challenging to establish conclusively, and

the study did not extensively explore other factors such as teacher quality, school environment, and socioeconomic status.

Moreover, cultural and contextual nuances that might impact the interpretation of parental pressure were not thoroughly examined. Recognizing and addressing these cultural variations could contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon.

In light of these limitations, this research underscores the need for a nuanced and multifaceted approach to studying the relationship between parental pressure and academic performance. Future investigations should aim to address these limitations, adopting more diverse and representative samples, incorporating longitudinal designs, and exploring a broader array of influencing variables.

In summary, while this study provides valuable insights, it serves as a stepping stone for further research into the intricate dynamics of parental pressure and academic achievement. The multifaceted nature of this relationship warrants continued exploration to inform educational policies and practices that support the well-being and academic success of students.

Statements and Declarations

Author's Contributions

Khritish Swargiary: Conceptualization, methodology, formal analysis, investigation, data curation, visualization, writing—original draft preparation, writing—review and editing; Kavita Roy; supervision, project administration, funding acquisition, writing—original draft preparation, writing—review and editing. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript OR The author has read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Data Accessibility Statement

- The datasets generated and/or analysed during the current study are available in the [Khritish Swargiary] repository, [RESEARCHGATE.NET, QEIOS, SSRN]
- All data generated or analysed during this study are included in this published article [and its supplementary information files].

Ethics and Consent

I, KHRITISH SWARGIARY, a Research Assistant, EdTech Research Associations, India hereby declares that the research conducted for the article titled “Exploring the Nexus: Parental Pressure, Student Perceptions, and Academic Achievement in Middle and High School” adheres to the ethical guidelines set forth by the EdTech Research Association (ERA). The ERA, known for its commitment to upholding ethical standards in educational technology research, has

provided comprehensive guidance and oversight throughout the research process. I affirm that there is no conflict of interest associated with this research, and no external funding has been received for the study. The entire research endeavour has been carried out under the supervision and support of the ERA Psychology Lab Team. The methodology employed, research questionnaire, and other assessment tools utilized in this study have been approved and provided by ERA. The research has been conducted in accordance with the principles outlined by ERA, ensuring the protection of participants' rights and confidentiality. Ethical approval for this research has been granted by the EdTech Research Association under the reference number 19-03/ERA/2022. Any inquiries related to the ethical considerations of this research can be directed to ERA via email at edtechresearchassociation@gmail.com. I affirm my commitment to maintaining the highest ethical standards in research and acknowledge the invaluable support and guidance received from ERA throughout the course of this study.

Author(s) Notes

The calculations, algorithms, and contextual groundwork for this scholarly paper were conducted by EdTech Research Associations, with the collaborative efforts of Kavita Roy and Khritish Swargiary. Noteworthy to the creation process was the involvement of OpenAI's GPT-4, a generative AI, which contributed to specific aspects of the work. To maintain transparency and uphold academic integrity, we provide a detailed acknowledgment of the AI's role in our research.

In accordance with established guidelines, we specify the nature of the AI's contribution:

1. **Direct Contribution:** Parts of this paper were generated with the assistance of OpenAI's GPT-4. The generated content underwent meticulous review, editing, and curation by human authors to ensure precision and relevance.
2. **Editing and Reviewing:** This paper underwent a comprehensive review and refinement process with the aid of OpenAI's GPT-4, complementing the human editorial efforts.
3. **Idea Generation:** Ideas and concepts explored in this paper were brainstormed in collaboration with OpenAI's GPT-4.
4. **Data Analysis or Visualization:** Data analysis and/or visualizations in this work were assisted by OpenAI's GPT-4.
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Competing Interests

The authors have no competing interests to declare.

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