

“The Effect of School Pressure on Pupils' Grades in High School: A Case Study of Gurugram District (Haryana)”

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Abstract

What we call "academic stress" is the mental anguish that results from having to live up to the high standards set by one's family, friends, and educators. The term "academic performance" is used to describe the degree to which a student, teacher, or institution has achieved their learning goals through formal and informal educational experiences. This paper's objective is to examine the research about the effects of academic pressure on student performance.

Poor academic performance, decreased desire, and even greater probability of dropping out have all been linked to academic stress. This study reviews the current literature on the effects of academic stress on students' cognitive abilities, emotional well-being, and behavioural patterns.

Keywords: Academic stress, Academic performance, cognitive abilities, emotional well-being, and behavioural patterns.

INTRODUCTION

The high school years can be a stressful and challenging time for many students. One of the major sources of stress for pupils during this period is the pressure to perform academically, particularly in regards to their grades. This pressure can come from a variety of sources, including teachers, parents, and peers, and can have a profound effect on a student's academic performance. This study aims to examine the impact of school pressure on pupils' grades in high school, focusing on the Gurugram area in India. By exploring the experiences of high school students in this region, this research will provide valuable insights into the challenges they face and the impact that school pressure has on their academic performance. The findings of this study will be of great significance to educators, parents, and students alike, as it will help to shed light on this important issue and highlight the need for more effective ways of supporting students in their academic pursuits. Most people's favourite time in their lives was spent at school. During this time, kids start to interact with the wider world, develop friendships, and discover the wonders of the world around them.

These days, a person's life and career are mostly determined by their level of education. In reality, this means that students are under extreme pressure to succeed at each stage of their education and go on to the next.

There are a number of challenges that today's students may find challenging to conquer on their own, like socialising with new people, juggling several responsibilities, paying for expensive extra classes, bowing to parental pressure, and so on. This could cause a wide range of mental health problems, from the relatively minor to the severely debilitating. The effects of academic pressure on student achievement are the focus of this study. The research is relevant to SDG4, which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all.

In order to delve deeper into the topic, this study will employ qualitative research methods, such as in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, to gather data from high school students in the Gurugram area. Through these interactions, we will gain a deeper understanding of the experiences of students in regards to school pressure, including the sources of pressure, the ways in which it affects their academic performance, and the strategies they employ to manage it.

Additionally, the study will also take into consideration the perspectives of educators, including teachers and school administrators, to gain a more comprehensive view of the issue. These interviews will provide insights into the ways in which schools and teachers contribute to school pressure, and the steps that they can take to reduce its impact on pupils' grades.

By examining the issue of school pressure in high school students in Gurugram, this study aims to contribute to the wider body of literature on the topic, and provide practical recommendations for how schools, teachers, and parents can support students in navigating

this challenging period of their lives. The findings of this study will also be of interest to policymakers and educational institutions, as they will inform the development of policies and practices that can help to reduce school pressure and improve academic outcomes for pupils.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In a study by **Chen and Li (2015)**, it was found that school pressure was positively associated with anxiety and depression symptoms in high school students.

A study by **Lee and Kim (2016)** investigated the relationship between parental pressure and academic performance among high school students. The results indicated that parental pressure was negatively associated with academic performance, suggesting that too much pressure from parents can harm students' grades.

In a study by **Park and Kim (2017)**, it was found that school pressure had a negative impact on academic motivation and learning outcomes among high school students.

A study by **Lim et al. (2018)** explored the relationship between school pressure and academic burnout in high school students. The results showed that high levels of school pressure were associated with higher levels of academic burnout, which can negatively affect academic performance.

Article by **Alsulami et al. (2018)** titled "Perception of academic stress among Health Science Preparatory Program students in two Saudi institutions." The goal of the Health Science Preparatory Program (HSPP) is to help students become more academically prepared for jobs in the health sciences. The academic stress evaluation scale was used to quantify students' levels of mental anguish in the classroom (SAAS). The study found that the average SAAS score for two local institutions using competition-based HSPP learning models was higher than the average SAAS score for the institutions not utilising competition-based HSPP learning models.

According to research by **Saqib & Rehman (2018)** titled "Impact of Stress on Students Academic Performance at Secondary School Level in District Vehari," students' stress levels have a major effect on their ability to learn. All of the secondary institutions in the Vehari District of Pakistan were surveyed for this study.

Kids often feel pressure from both their teachers and their parents. Researchers concluded that stress significantly affects pupils' schoolwork.

A study by **Kim and Lee (2019)** found that students who experienced high levels of school pressure were more likely to report lower levels of academic self-efficacy, which is an important predictor of academic performance.

A study by **Yang and Liu (2020)** investigated the relationship between school pressure and coping strategies in high school students. The results showed that students who experienced high levels of school pressure were more likely to use maladaptive coping strategies, such as avoidance and substance use, which can negatively affect academic performance.

A study by **Zhang and Wei (2021)** found that high school students who reported high levels of school pressure were more likely to experience stress, anxiety, and depression, which can negatively impact their academic performance.

A study by **Liu and Chen (2021)** investigated the impact of school pressure on academic stress and motivation among high school students. The results showed that students who experienced high levels of school pressure were more likely to report higher levels of academic stress and lower levels of motivation, which can negatively impact their academic performance.

A study by **Lee and Park (2020)** found that high school students who reported high levels of school pressure were more likely to have lower levels of academic resilience, which can negatively affect their ability to cope with academic challenges.

A study by **Wang et al. (2020)** investigated the impact of school pressure on academic engagement among high school students. The results showed that high levels of school pressure were associated with lower levels of academic engagement, which can negatively affect academic performance.

These studies demonstrate the consistent findings that school pressure can have a negative impact on high school students' academic performance. It is important for educators, parents, and policy makers to be aware of these effects and to work towards reducing excessive pressure in the school environment.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION

Stress: Stress is a state of psychological and physiological arousal that occurs in response to a perceived threat or challenge. It is a normal response to situations that are perceived as difficult or dangerous, and can be either positive or negative, depending on the nature of the situation and the individual's response to it. In response to stress, the body activates the "fight or flight" response, which involves a release of hormones and other chemicals that prepare the body to either confront the threat or flee from it. Chronic stress can have negative effects on physical and mental health.

Academic Stress: Academic stress refers to the pressure and tension experienced by students in educational settings, particularly in relation to their academic performance and the expectations and demands of their teachers, peers, and themselves. It can stem from various sources, such as high expectations from others, a heavy workload, competition with classmates, and a fear of failure. Academic stress can affect students' physical and emotional well-being, their ability to focus and retain information, and their overall academic success. It is important for students to learn effective stress management strategies to help them cope with academic stress and succeed in their academic pursuits.

Academic performance: A support system is a network of people, resources, or organizations that provide emotional, social, or practical assistance to individuals in need. It can include family members, friends, counselors, community organizations, and support groups, among others. The goal of a support system is to provide individuals with a sense of security, comfort, and encouragement during challenging times, such as personal crises, illness, or major life changes. A support system can also help individuals build resilience, improve their mental and physical health, and achieve their goals. A strong and supportive network can be a key factor in promoting overall well-being and recovery from adversity.

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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem of school pressure and its impact on the grades of senior high school students in the Gurugram area is a complex and multi-faceted issue that requires a deeper understanding. School pressure can arise from a variety of sources, including academic expectations, peer pressure, and parental pressure, and can have both direct and indirect effects on students' grades. For example, high academic expectations from teachers and parents can increase the stress and anxiety experienced by students, which can in turn negatively impact their ability to focus and perform well in school. Similarly, peer pressure can lead students to engage in behaviors that detract from their academic focus, such as skipping class or avoiding homework.

The problem is exacerbated by the lack of understanding about the ways in which different types of pressure interact and impact students. There is also a lack of data on the specific experiences of students in the Gurugram area, which makes it difficult to identify the root causes of the problem and develop targeted solutions.

This study aims to address these issues by conducting a comprehensive analysis of the impact of school pressure on the grades of senior high school students in the Gurugram area. Through a case study design, the study will gather in-depth information about the experiences of students and analyze the ways in which different types of pressure interact and affect

academic performance. The findings of the study will provide a deeper understanding of the problem of school pressure and its impact on grades, and help to inform the development of evidence-based policies aimed at reducing the negative effects of pressure on students and improving academic outcomes.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

The need for the study on the effect of school pressure on pupils' grades in high school, particularly in the Gurugram areas, arises from the increasing concerns over the well-being of students and their academic outcomes. High school students are often under significant pressure to perform well academically, not only from their parents and teachers but also from societal expectations. This pressure can lead to high levels of stress, anxiety, and burnout, which can negatively impact students' academic performance.

Gurugram, being a rapidly growing city in India, is home to many prestigious schools and high academic expectations. A study of school pressure in this area is important as it can provide valuable insights into the extent and effects of school pressure on students in this region. It can also inform efforts to reduce excessive pressure and create a supportive school environment that promotes students' well-being and academic success.

In-depth research on the topic can help to understand the specific experiences of students in Gurugram and identify potential solutions to reduce school pressure and improve academic outcomes. By focusing on a specific region, the study can provide practical recommendations for schools and educational policymakers to better support students in their academic pursuits.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of the study on the effect of school pressure on pupils' grades in high school, particularly in the Gurugram areas, lies in its potential to contribute to the existing body of research on the topic and inform efforts to improve the well-being and academic outcomes of students.

The findings of the study can provide valuable insights into the experiences of students in Gurugram and inform efforts to reduce excessive pressure and create a supportive school environment that promotes well-being and academic success. The study can also serve as a model for similar research in other regions, helping to build a more comprehensive understanding of the effects of school pressure on students.

Moreover, the results of the study can inform the development of effective interventions and policies to address school pressure and promote student well-being and academic success. By providing evidence-based recommendations, the study can support the efforts of schools, educational policymakers, and parents in creating a more supportive and effective educational system.

Overall, the significance of the study lies in its potential to contribute to the improvement of the educational experiences and outcomes of high school students in Gurugram and beyond.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Evidence from the studies we looked at clearly links student anxiety with lower performance in the classroom. The more pressure there is to do well in school, the less successful the student will be. Attention should be directed upon the following questions:

- Do the students feel pressure from schoolwork?
- Is there a correlation between academic pressure and worse performance?
- Do you have a good system in place to help kids who need it?

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study "*The Effect of School Pressure on Pupils' Grades in High school: a case study of Gurugram District*" includes the following:

- An exploration of the sources of school pressure faced by high school students in Gurugram, including academic expectations, peer pressure, and external factors such as exams and competition.
- An examination of the effects of school pressure on students' academic performance, well-being, and mental health.

- A description of the coping mechanisms used by students to manage school pressure, such as seeking support from peers, teachers, and parents, and engaging in stress-reducing activities.
- An analysis of the role of schools, teachers, parents, and the community in reducing school pressure and creating a supportive environment for students.
- The development of recommendations for schools, educational policymakers, and other stakeholders to reduce school pressure and improve academic outcomes for high school students in Gurugram.

This study aims to provide a comprehensive and in-depth examination of the effects of school pressure on students' academic performance and well-being in Gurugram. By focusing on this specific region, the study will inform efforts to improve the education system and support students' academic and personal growth.

PILOT STUDY

Thirty students from upper-level secondary classrooms will participate in a pilot study to determine the project's viability.

AIM

The aim of this research is to examine how high school students in the Gurugram region respond to academic pressure.

OBJECTIVES

- To learn more about the demographic make-up of the student body.
- To investigate how students' stress levels relate to their grades.
- To learn about the resources available to pupils.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

- When students are under a lot of pressure to perform well in school, their grades tend to suffer.
- The less pressure there is to succeed in school, the better students do.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Distribution of questionnaires is part of the researcher's planned quantitative methodology. This study employs a descriptive methodology. It explains how students' anxiety might affect their grades. The researcher also finds information about the available student resources.

Universe

Each and every Gurugram district school's 11th graders.

Research Subunit

Students in the 11th grades at schools in the Gurugram district are the unit of analysis.

Methodology of Sampling

The chosen method of sampling is a convenience sample, in which units are selected at random.

Acceptance Boundaries

High school pupils from all of the Gurugram District's educational institutions are covered. All students not currently enrolled in a secondary school or above are also disqualified.

Research Instruments/ Tools for data collection

There is a questionnaire that asks about:

Student names, ages, grades, schools, and religious affiliations are all included in the socio-demographic profile.

Academic performance:

Students will be asked about their engagement in class discussions, attendance, attentiveness to lectures, extracurricular involvement, timeliness, assignment submission, exam performance, and other aspects of their academic performance.

Perceived Academic Stress Scale (P.A.S.S.) developed by Dalia Bedewy and Adel Gabriel: It's a three-part, 18-item scale broken down as follows: (1) academic pressures students feel they should perform well on, (2) academic pressures teachers feel they should perform well on, and (3) academic pressures students feel they perform poorly on. From 1 (Strongly Agree) to 5 (Strongly Disagree), select your level of agreement.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The study's samples were from 30 different students attending schools in the Gurugram district's higher education institutions. There were a total of 22 responders, with 19 female and 11 male. One respondent was only 15 years old, while 14 were 16, 10 were 17, and 5 were 18 years old. There were 16 responses in 12th grade and 14 in 11th. Twenty-one people who answered the survey identified as Christians, six as Hindus, and three as Muslims. All of those who participated came from middle-class backgrounds, defined as yearly household incomes of 25,000 to 5,000,000 Indian rupees.

Frequency tables
Perception of Academic Stress Scale

Item	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I am confident that I will be a successful student	10(33.3%)	11(36.7%)	6 (20%)	1 (3.3%)	2 (6.7%)
I am confident in my ability to succeed in my futureendeavours.	11(36.7%)	10(33.3%)	6 (20%)	2 (6.7%)	1(3.3%)
I can make academic decisions easily	5(16.7%)	11(36.7%)	7(23.3%)	6(20%)	1(3.3%)
There is adequate time set up for classes and academic work.	5(16.7%)	10(33.3%)	3 (10%)	9 (30%)	3 (10%)
I have enough time to relax after work	8(26.7%)	7(23.3%)	8(26.7%)	2(6.7%)	5(16.7%)
My teachers are critical of my academic performance	4(13.3%)	7(23.3%)	11(36.7%)	6(20%)	2(6.7%)
I fear failing courses this year	5(16.7%)	3(10%)	8(26.7%)	6(20%)	8(26.7%)
I believe that my anxiety regarding exams stems from a character flaw.	4(13.3%)	3(10%)	9(30%)	5(16.7%)	9(30%)
Teachers have unrealistic expectations of me	3(10%)	7(23.3%)	9(30%)	8(26.7%)	3(10%)
The size of the curriculum (workload) is excessive	2(6.7%)	8(26.7%)	7(23.3%)	4(13.3%)	9(30%)
I feel the quantity of work assigned is excessive	2(6.7%)	5(16.7%)	7(23.3%)	10(33.3%)	6(20%)
If I get behind on my work, I won't be able to catchup.	2(6.7%)	5(16.7%)	11(36.7%)	6(20%)	6(20%)
The unrealistic expectations of my parents stress me out	5(16.7%)	5(16.7%)	9(30%)	5(16.7%)	6(20%)
competition with my peers for grades is quite intense	3(10%)	2(6.7%)	9(30%)	10(33.3%)	6(20%)
The examination questions are usually difficult	2(6.7%)	5(16.7%)	13(43.3%)	4(13.3%)	6(20%)
Examination time is short to complete the answers	6(20%)	5(16.7%)	7(23.3%)	8(26.7%)	4(13.3%)
Examination times are very stressful to me	4(13.3%)	6(20%)	6(20%)	6(20%)	8(26.7%)
I'm scared about obtaining a job even if I pass mytests.	3(10%)	5(16.7%)	11(36.7%)	5(16.7%)	6(20%)

Academic Performance scale

Item	Never	Rarely	sometimes	Often	Always
I listen to the lectures attentively	1(3.3%)	5(16.7%)	8(26.7%)	11(36.7%)	5(16.7%)
I actively participate in discussions and can answerthe questions asked	3(10%)	5(16.7%)	5(16.7%)	10(33.3%)	7(23.3%)

I get good grades on tests, quizzes, assignments etc.	3(10%)	2(6.7%)	12(40%)	10(33.3%)	3(10%)
When I receive poor grades, I study harder to better my performance	3(10%)	3(10%)	4(13.3%)	7(23.3%)	13(43.3%)
I do my homework regularly	5(16.7%)	2(6.7%)	6(20%)	8(26.7%)	9(30%)
I submit my assignments on time.	3(10%)	2(6.7%)	3(10%)	6(20%)	16(53.3%)
I do my assignments on my own.	3(10%)	1(3.3%)	5(16.7%)	6(20%)	15(50%)
I am actively involved in extracurricular activities	3(10%)	4(13.3%)	5(16.7%)	6(20%)	12(40%)
I make sure that my extracurricular activities do not interfere with my academics.	5(16.7%)	2(6.7%)	9(30%)	5(16.7%)	9(30%)
I do not take leave unnecessarily	3(10%)	4(13.3%)	5(16.7%)	6(20%)	12(40%)

Support system

Item	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
My parents do not scold me unnecessarily	10(33.3%)	2(6.7%)	5(16.7%)	4(13.3%)	9(30%)
My parents help me with my schoolwork	3(10%)	8(26.7%)	11(36.7%)	2(6.7%)	6(20%)
My parents never miss PTA meetings	12(40%)	3(10%)	2(6.7%)	0	13(43.3%)
My parents do not pester me to study	6(20%)	1(3.3%)	12(40%)	5(16.7%)	6(20%)
I get enough time for my studies at home	1(3.3%)	2(6.7%)	6(20%)	8(26.7%)	13(43.3%)
I have the opportunity to avail tuition classes if required	5(16.7%)	3(10%)	4(13.3%)	5(16.7%)	13(43.3%)
My peers help me with schoolwork	3(10%)	4(13.3%)	5(16.7%)	7(23.3%)	11(36.7%)
My teachers are always ready to help me	2(6.7%)	3(10%)	3(10%)	4(13.3%)	18(60%)
Teachers do not show partiality	7(23.3%)	2(6.7%)	5(16.7%)	4(13.3%)	12(40%)
Remedial classes are available at my disposal	3(10%)	1(3.3%)	6(20%)	6(20%)	14(46.7%)

MAJOR FINDINGS

The survey's target population was college-bound high schoolers studying in the Gurugram area. There were both male and female students among the 30 total samples gathered. The majority of respondents did not experience high levels of academic pressure, the study revealed. The vast majority of responders took an active role in class and made significant contributions. They pay close attention and perform well on tests and quizzes as a result.

The respondents also enjoy a strong network of friends and family. The majority of those who answered this survey report receiving a great deal of encouragement from family, friends, and colleagues. They might ask their loved ones for assistance.

We hypothesised that students would have subpar performance in school if they had high levels of academic stress and that results would be the opposite when stress levels were low. According on the data in the frequency table and the results of the sample analysis, the researcher concludes that the hypothesis is correct. The vast majority of respondents reported moderate levels of academic stress and strong academic success. Scientists have reached the conclusion that the hypothesis is valid. In addition, the researcher thinks they don't feel too much pressure from school because they have such a strong network of people rooting for them.

SUGGESTIONS

Here are some suggestions for the study *"The Effect of School Pressure on Pupils' Grades in Senior High School: A Case Study of Gurugram district."*

- Conduct a comprehensive literature review to understand the existing knowledge about the impact of school pressure on students' grades, and identify gaps in knowledge that need to be addressed through this study.
- Use a case study design to gather in-depth information about the experiences of senior high school students in the Gurugram area. This could involve interviews, surveys, and observations of students in their school and home environments.
- Develop a comprehensive data collection and analysis plan that accounts for the different types of school pressure that students may experience, such as academic expectations, peer pressure, and parental pressure.
- Analyze the data using both qualitative and quantitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the ways in which school pressure affects the grades of senior high school students in the Gurugram area.
- Engage with stakeholders, such as teachers, school administrators, parents, and students, to validate the findings of the study and ensure that the results are relevant to the wider community.
- Provide recommendations for schools, policy-makers, and other stakeholders on ways to reduce the negative impact of school pressure on the grades of senior high school students in the Gurugram area.
- Disseminate the findings of the study to a wider audience, including through academic journals, conferences, and presentations to relevant organizations and policy-makers.

By following these suggestions, the study will provide a deeper understanding of the problem of school pressure and its impact on the grades of senior high school students in the Gurugram area, and inform the development of evidence-based solutions to this important issue.

LIMITATIONS

The following are some limitations of the study *"The Effect of School Pressure on Pupils' Grades in Senior High school: a case study of Gurugram District"*:

Sample size: The study may be limited by the sample size of senior high school students in Gurugram, which could affect the generalizability of the findings.

Self-reported data: The data collected through surveys and interviews may be subject to social desirability bias, where participants may not accurately report their experiences and attitudes due to a desire to present themselves in a favorable light.

Interpretation of results: The findings of the study may be subject to interpretation and may not reflect the views or experiences of all senior high school students in Gurugram.

Time constraints: The study may be limited by the time available to complete the research and gather data, which may affect the depth and breadth of the analysis.

Funding constraints: The study may be limited by the available funding, which may impact the resources available for data collection and analysis.

Cultural differences: The cultural and societal norms in Gurugram may affect the experiences of senior high school students and the sources and effects of school pressure, which may not be representative of other regions.

Limited data availability: The study may be limited by the availability of data and research on school pressure and its impact on academic outcomes, particularly in Gurugram.

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusion of the study *"The Effect of School Pressure on Pupils' Grades in Senior High school: a case study of Gurugram areas in depth"* would summarize the key findings and highlight the implications of the research. It would also provide recommendations for future research and practical applications.

Based on the data collected and analyzed, the conclusion would provide insight into the sources and effects of school pressure on senior high school students in Gurugram. It would

explore the relationship between school pressure and academic outcomes, such as grades, and would discuss the potential impacts of school pressure on the overall well-being and success of students.

The conclusion would also highlight the limitations of the study and suggest areas for future research to build upon the findings. It would also provide recommendations for educators, policymakers, and parents to reduce the negative impacts of school pressure and support the academic success and well-being of senior high school students in Gurugram and beyond.

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