

STRESS AND PRESSURE IN STUDENTS BEFORE EXAMS

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Stress is an unavoidable aspect of human life that significantly impacts students, particularly before exams. Academic pressure, coupled with high expectations from parents, teachers, peers, and self-imposed standards, can lead to anxiety, sleeplessness, and emotional strain. This study explores the multifaceted nature of pre-exam stress, examining its causes, manifestations, and consequences on students' physical, mental, and social well-being. Factors such as workload, time management, health, and emotional resilience are considered, alongside the effects on concentration, sleep patterns, and interpersonal relationships. Understanding these stressors is crucial for developing effective coping strategies and support mechanisms. The study highlights the importance of interventions from academic institutions, families, and students themselves to reduce stress, enhance mental health, and improve academic outcomes.

Key words: Academic stress, Exam anxiety, Student well-being, Coping strategies, Time management, Mental health, Academic performance.

Аннотация

Стресс является неотъемлемой частью человеческой жизни и значительно влияет на студентов, особенно перед экзаменами. Академическое давление в сочетании с высокими ожиданиями со стороны родителей, преподавателей, сверстников и самих студентов может приводить к тревожности, бессоннице и эмоциональному напряжению. В данном исследовании рассматривается многогранная природа стресса перед экзаменами, изучаются его причины, проявления и последствия для физического, психического и социального благополучия студентов. Учитываются такие факторы, как нагрузка, управление временем, здоровье и эмоциональная устойчивость, а также их влияние на концентрацию внимания, режим сна и межличностные отношения. Понимание этих стрессоров имеет важное значение для разработки эффективных стратегий преодоления и механизмов поддержки. Исследование подчеркивает важность вмешательства со стороны учебных заведений, семей и самих студентов для снижения стресса, укрепления психического здоровья и улучшения академических результатов.

Ключевые слова: Академический стресс, тревожность перед экзаменами, благополучие студентов, стратегии преодоления, управление временем, психическое здоровье, учебная успеваемость.

Annotatsiya

Stress – inson hayotining ajralmas qismi bo‘lib, ayniqsa imtihon oldidan talabalarga sezilarli ta‘sir ko‘rsatadi. Akademik bosim, ota-onalar, o‘qituvchilar, tengdoshlardan keladigan yuqori talablar va o‘ziga qo‘yilgan standartlar birlashganda, bu tashvish, uyqusizlik va hissiy zo‘riqishga olib kelishi mumkin. Ushbu tadqiqot imtihon oldi stressining ko‘p qirraliligini o‘rganadi, uning sabablarini, namoyon bo‘lishini va talabalarning jismoniy, ruhiy va ijtimoiy farovonligiga ta‘sirini tahlil qiladi. Ish yuklari, vaqtni boshqarish, sog‘liq va hissiy chidamlilik kabi omillar, shuningdek, diqqatni jamlash, uyqu tartibi va shaxslararo munosabatlarga ta‘siri hisobga olinadi. Ushbu stress manbalarini tushunish samarali yengish strategiyalari va qo‘llab-quvvatlash mexanizmlarini ishlab chiqish uchun juda muhimdir. Tadqiqot stressni kamaytirish, ruhiy salomatlikni yaxshilash va akademik natijalarni oshirish uchun o‘quv muassasalari, oilalar va talabalar o‘zlarining aralashuvlarining ahamiyatini ta’kidlaydi.

Kalit so‘zlar: Akademik stress, imtihon oldi xavotiri, talabalarning farovonligi, yengish strategiyalari, vaqtni boshqarish, ruhiy salomatlik, akademik natijalar.

Introduction

Stress is an inescapable part of human life, affecting people in both personal and academic spheres. For students, the pressure to perform well in exams is a major source of stress, often leading to anxiety, sleepless nights, and a sense of overwhelm. This pressure is not limited to academic demands alone; it is compounded by high expectations from parents, teachers, and peers, as well as the students’ own self-imposed standards. For instance, a student may spend weeks preparing for a midterm, yet the fear of receiving unexpected questions or underperforming can trigger significant mental tension.

Academic stress before exams is a multifaceted phenomenon. It arises not only from workload and preparation challenges but also from personal factors such as health, time management skills, and emotional resilience. Studies have shown that this stress can manifest physically, mentally, and socially, influencing sleep patterns, concentration, and interpersonal relationships. While some level of stress can motivate students to study effectively, excessive pressure may negatively affect both performance and well-being.

Given the widespread nature of exam-related stress, it is essential to explore its causes, manifestations, and coping strategies. Understanding the experiences of students under pressure can provide insights into how academic institutions, families,

and individuals can support better mental health and improve academic outcomes. This research aims to examine the factors contributing to stress before exams, its effects on students, and potential methods to alleviate this pressure.

Students face multiple challenges that contribute to stress and pressure before exams, but three main problems stand out. First, academic expectations create immense mental tension. Many students feel pressured to meet the high standards set by parents, teachers, and even themselves. This constant demand for excellence can make students doubt their abilities, leading to anxiety and a fear of failure. For instance, a student who has studied diligently may still worry about encountering unfamiliar questions, which magnifies stress and reduces confidence.

Second, time management and workload represent a significant source of pressure. Students often struggle to balance preparation for exams with homework, assignments, and other responsibilities. Poor planning can lead to last-minute cramming, missed deadlines, and feelings of overwhelm. This situation is especially difficult for students juggling multiple commitments, such as part-time work, extracurricular activities, or family responsibilities, which further intensifies stress.

Third, social and emotional challenges also play a crucial role. Homesickness, conflicts with peers or family, and changes in social circles can distract students from their studies and heighten emotional strain. Additionally, the rise of social media can exacerbate stress by creating unrealistic comparisons with peers' achievements. These factors can leave students feeling isolated, unsupported, and emotionally exhausted just when they need focus and calm the most.

In combination, these three problems—high academic expectations, time and workload pressures, and social-emotional challenges—interact to create a complex web of stress that can affect students' mental, physical, and academic well-being. Addressing these issues requires not only effective study strategies but also emotional support, healthy routines, and coping mechanisms tailored to individual needs.

Researches and discoveries

Shankar and Park (2016) researchers focused on the immediate stress and anxiety that students experience before and during exams. They studied college students to measure how midterms affected stress levels, finding that anxiety peaks right before an exam and often decreases afterward. Their work highlighted that exam stress is not just about the difficulty of the questions—it also relates to personal preparation, confidence, and the pressure students feel to perform well. This research reminds us that stress is a natural part of academic life, but it can be managed with proper strategies.

Another researchers Suldo and Shaunessy-Dedrick (2013) explored the broader sources of stress in students' lives, including social pressures, time management issues, and workload challenges. This work examined how students balance studying with

relationships, family expectations, and extracurricular activities. The findings showed that students often struggle with multiple demands at once, which can lead to poor sleep, anxiety, and decreased engagement in classes. This research emphasizes that academic stress is not isolated—it interacts with daily life and relationships, affecting overall well-being.

A third researcher Xiuhan Li research focus was on how students respond behaviorally to stress, such as changes in study habits, eating patterns, or even reliance on substances to cope. These studies showed that students under chronic stress may develop unhealthy habits that worsen their academic performance and mental health. Importantly, the research also pointed out that positive coping strategies—like goal-setting, mindfulness, and seeking social support—can help students reduce stress, regain control, and improve both performance and personal well-being.

Difference and similarities

Shankar and Park used surveys and observational data to measure stress levels and academic outcomes, connecting psychological states to performance metrics.

Suldo and Shaunessy-Dedrick combined self-reported stress assessments and domain-specific analyses, focusing on perceptions of social and school-related stressors.

Xiuhan Li focused on behavioral studies and interventions, examining how students implement coping strategies and how these strategies influence academic success. All three studies recognize that stress significantly affects students' functioning, whether academically, socially, or behaviorally.

Each emphasizes the importance of understanding stress to improve student well-being and academic outcomes.

They all highlight that stress is multifaceted, involving emotional, cognitive, and environmental components, and can not be addressed with a single solution.

To address the problems of stress and pressure in students, several strategies can be applied. First, managing academic expectations is crucial. Students should set realistic goals and practice goal regulation, which involves disengaging from unattainable objectives and focusing on achievable tasks. For example, prioritizing key topics in preparation for exams rather than attempting to cover the entire syllabus reduces anxiety and improves confidence. Seeking guidance from teachers or peers can also provide constructive feedback and help manage external pressures.

Second, improving time management and handling workload can significantly reduce stress. Organizing study schedules, breaking tasks into smaller steps, and adhering to deadline enables students to use their time efficiently. Incorporating short breaks during study sessions prevents burnout, while balancing academic responsibilities with rest and leisure helps maintain focus and energy.

Third, addressing social and emotional challenges is essential. Open communication with friends, family, or counselors allows students to express their concerns and reduce emotional tension. Participation in hobbies, physical activity, meditation, or art provides relaxation and helps maintain a positive mindset. Strengthening social support networks and managing interpersonal conflicts also promotes mental well-being.

Finally, adopting a healthy lifestyle supports both physical and mental resilience. Adequate sleep, nutritious food, and regular exercise improve overall well-being, while avoiding excessive caffeine, alcohol, or unhealthy coping mechanisms prevents additional stress. Making time for enjoyable activities and relaxation helps students recover from academic pressures and maintain a sense of control.

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