

Parental Pressure and Academic Stress As Perceived By Adolescents

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ABSTRACT: The aspirations and expectations of parents along with constant nagging of their children put a lot of pressure on their children resulting in academic stress among the children. Many studies have shown a direct relationship between parental pressure and academic stress in children. The present study also deals with analyzing the relationship between parental pressure and academic stress among adolescents in Tricity of Chandigarh. The study becomes important as the residents of Chandigarh and nearby areas are quite educated and modern. A sample of 98 adolescents was taken from the target population and data was collected using Google forms. Questionnaires related to parental pressure and academic stress were prepared by investigators themselves and given to sample population for their responses. The data were analyzed and coefficient of correlation value was computed using SPSS software. The results indicated that around 60% of the adolescents perceived parental pressure in their life whereas only 17.4% disagreed to have faced any parental pressure. 61.7% agreed to face academic stress whereas 17.7% disagreed to have faced academic stress. Parental pressure and academic stress are positively/directly correlated with each other.

KEY WORDS: Parental pressure, academic stress, aspirations, expectations, nagging

I. INTRODUCTION

According to the theory developed by Lazarus and Folkman 1984 stress results from the imbalance between perceived external and internal demands and the personal and social resources to deal with them (Berjot & Gillet, 2011). Any event which is personally relevant if perceived as stress leads to the evaluation of resources to deal with it if demands are perceived as exceeding the resources, the stress occurs. If stress occurs in small amounts it is considered normal and can help the individual to be more productive. However, if stress exceeds a normal value or occurs for a long period, it can cause significant mental and physical problems. Academic stress results when academic-related demands exceed the capabilities of the students. There are large number of factors that can induce academic stress among high school students, for example, competitive environment, lack of physical resources such as study material, physical or health issues, and even parental expectations. In the Indian context parental pressure is a prominent source of academic stress among school students. Parents hold high expectations from children in terms of academic outcomes (Moneva & Moncada, 2020). Indian Parents take deep pride in the success of their children and are always ready to make sacrifices in terms of money and time to encourage their children (Fuligni & Pedersen, 2002). As a result, children feel driven to meet their parent's expectations (Chow and Chu 2007). So they feel direct and indirect pressure to achieve academic success. Though parents' involvement influences the achievement positively (Akhtar & Aziz, 2011) but too much pressure leads to anxiety. Especially if the students perceive that their capabilities do not match the parent's expectations they feel stressed. Then they may find it difficult to concentrate on their daily studies and live in constant fear of failure. Pascoe et.al.(2020) found that stress can lower academic performance. Also, the constant stress of not being able to live up to parents' expectations leads to anxiety, depression, and other health issues.

Significance of Study : Academic stress in students leads to many psychological, emotional, and health-related issues. So it is the duty of all stakeholders of education to help the students deal with it. But the first step should be to understand the factors that contribute to it, Parental pressure is one such factor that is less talked about. Parents have great expectations from their children. Every parent wants their child to excel in studies and build a respectable career. They feel proud when their child excels in their studies. But their over concern may be perceived negatively by the child who may feel pressurized to do well all the time. As a result, he/ she starts feeling stressed in their daily academic activities also. The present study is significant in understanding the relationship between parental pressure and academic stress among high school students.

Review of Previous Studies : Akhtar & Aziz (2011) studied the effect of Peer and Parental pressure on the academic achievement of 156 university students. It found that parental pressure influences academic Achievement positively and peer pressure affects it negatively in the case of female students whereas parental

Pressure and peer pressure do not affect academic achievement in the case of male students. Sarma (2014) studied the parental pressure on academic stress in India. The results of the study indicated that parental pressure predicted academic stress. Stress predicted depression and depression predicted suicidal tendency. Parental pressure indirectly predicted suicidal tendency through academic stress and depression. Results were discussed in the context of cultural influences on study findings such as the central role of parents in the family unit, the impact of cultural valuing of education, collectivistic society & the Hindu concept of dharma or duty. Deb, Strodl, and Sun (2015) studied academic-related stress among private secondary school students in India and found that 2/3rd of the sample students reported that there is parental pressure on them for their academic performance. The degree of parental pressure depends upon the educational level of parents, occupation of mothers, number of private tutors, and academic performance. Children with fathers having lower or non-graduate educational levels perceive more pressure for better academic performance. Moreover, academic stress was positively correlated with parental pressure. Suresh Prabu (2015) studied academic stress among higher secondary students. A sample of 250 students of XI was taken for the study. The sample was taken from higher secondary schools situated in the Namakkal district of Tamil Nadu. The results of the study revealed that sample students had a moderate level of academic stress. The academic stress of male students was higher than that of female students. Moreover, the students with parents having literacy-level education have higher academic stress than their counterparts.

Delimitation of the study: The study was delimited to adolescents- girls and boys, of Chandigarh Tricity.

Objectives: The present study intended to study the following objectives:

1. To study the parental pressure perceived by adolescents of Chandigarh tricity.
2. To study the academic stress perceived by adolescents of Chandigarh tricity.
3. To study the relationship between Parental Pressure and Academic Stress as perceived by adolescents of Chandigarh tricity.

Hypothesis

- There is no significant relationship between Parental Pressure and Academic Stress as perceived by adolescents of Chandigarh tricity.

II. METHODOLOGY

Sample: The adolescent students of Chandigarh Tricity constituted the population of the study. A representative group of 98 adolescents was drawn out from the population for the research purpose using Google forms.

Tools used

Following tools were used to collect the data.

1. Questionnaire on Parental pressure was constructed by investigators themselves.
2. Questionnaire on Academic Stress was constructed by investigators themselves.

Procedure: Questionnaires related to parental pressure and academic pressure were prepared by the researchers. The data was collected using Google forms. Ensuring random sampling the link was mailed to adolescents of Chandigarh tri-city. The responses were tabulated in the excel sheet. The raw data were subjected to descriptive statistics and the coefficient of correlation between parental pressure and academic pressure perceived by adolescents was calculated using SPSS software. Thereafter results were interpreted and conclusions are drawn out.

Statistical tools used : Descriptive statistics, such as mean, standard deviation, percentage responses, and correlation statistics were employed to analyze the data.

Analysis of the data : The data were analyzed using percentage agreement of the statements and calculating the coefficient of correlation.

I. Percentage agreement of the statements

A. Parental pressure

Table 1: Parental pressure as perceived by adolescents of Chandigarh tri-city

S.No.	Statements	Strongly agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)
1.	My Parents believe that it is my duty to support them when they become old.	35.7	31.6	28.6	2	2
2.	My parents believe that I should be working harder in school.	42.9	43.9	10.2	2	1
3.	My parents always compare me with other children.	17.3	13.3	27.6	22.4	19.4
4.	My parents believe that I should be perfect in everything and get good grades.	19.4	32.7	28.6	13.3	6.1
5.	My parents believe that I should be better than them.	45.9	36.7	11.2	3.1	3.1
6	My parents want me to excel in studies as well as in co-curricular activities.	39.8	34.7	18.4	6.1	1
7	My parents want me to get more grades than my cousins and friends.	20.4	18.4	30.6	18.4	12.2
8	My parents believe that I should tell everything to them before doing anything.	29.6	29.6	28.6	11.2	1
9	My parents want me to be more responsible in life and take care of my family after graduation.	26.5	33.7	29.6	8.2	2
10	My parents keep nagging me for little things.	22.4	14.3	27.6	25.5	10.2
11	I have to keep living on to their expectations so that they do not get disappointed.	27.6	35.7	15.3	14.3	7.1
		29.8	29.5	23.3	11.5	5.9

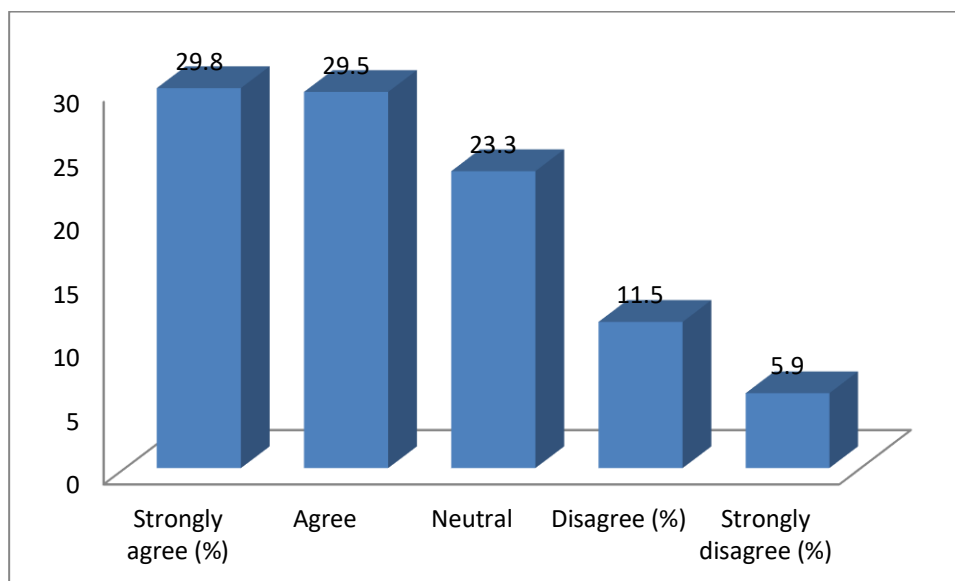


Figure 1: Perceived Parental Pressure among adolescents

Table 1 shows that 59.3% (29.8+29.5) of the students agreed on experiencing parental pressure in their life. Only 17.4% of students were of the view that they did not experience any parental pressure in their life. 67.3% (35.7+31.6) agreed on having pressure from their parents to support them when they will be old and also to be responsible in life and take care of the family after graduation. 86.8% (42.9+43.9) feel that their parents expect them to work harder in their school. Around 30% feel that their parents compare them with other children. 52% of students felt the pressure, of scoring good grades and being perfect in everything, from their parents. The majority of the students (82.6%- 45.9+36.7) also experience the pressure of being better than their parents. Again 74.5% (39.8+34.7) agreed that their parents wanted them to excel in studies as well as in co-curricular activities. Even 59.2% (29.6+29.6) experienced pressure from parents because their parents expected to remain informed about everything. 36.7% (22.4+14.3) agreed that their parents keep on nagging them for little things and an equal number of students denied this. 63.3 % (27.6+35.7) experienced pressure for living to the expectation of their parents and 23.3% were undecided about this.

B. Academic stress

Table 2: Academic Stress as perceived by adolescents of Chandigarh tri-city

S.No.	Statements	Strongly agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral/ undecided (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)
1.	It is difficult for me to concentrate during online classes.	29.6	32.7	20.4	9.2	8.2
2.	There is too much homework.	21.4	18.4	36.7	16.3	7.1
3.	I feel there are too many tests and exams.	27.6	29.6	28.6	10.2	4.1
4.	Competition among classmates brings lot of academic pressure on me.	26.5	33.7	24.5	8.2	7.1
5.	I feel stress due to work related to daily study.	29.6	32.7	22.4	11.2	4.1

6	I feel academic results are very important for my future.	41.8	40.8	13.3	2	2
7	I am dissatisfied with my current grades.	33.7	31.6	16.3	13.3	5.1
8	My parents care about my academic result too much, it gives me stress.	20.4	18.4	30.6	21.4	9.2
9	I feel stressed when I fail to live up to my expectations.	52	34.7	8.2	4.1	1
10	I cannot sleep because of worry that I will not be able to meet goals I have set for myself.	31.6	21.4	21.4	16.3	9.2
11	I feel stressed when my assignments are not completed on time.	30.6	43.9	15.3	7.1	3.1
12	I feel I lack time to complete all the activities I am required to do.	31.6	33.7	17.3	12.2	5.1
13	Discussion and conflicts in the family related to my study gives me stress.	24.5	27.6	16.3	15.3	16.3
14	I feel nervous before any exam.	50	29.6	16.3	1	3.1
15	My classmates getting more marks than me gives me stress.	21.4	24.5	22.4	23.5	8.2
16	I fear that I will forget the content during the exams.	39.8	22.4	19.4	9.2	9.2
	Average	32	29.7	20.6	11.3	6.4

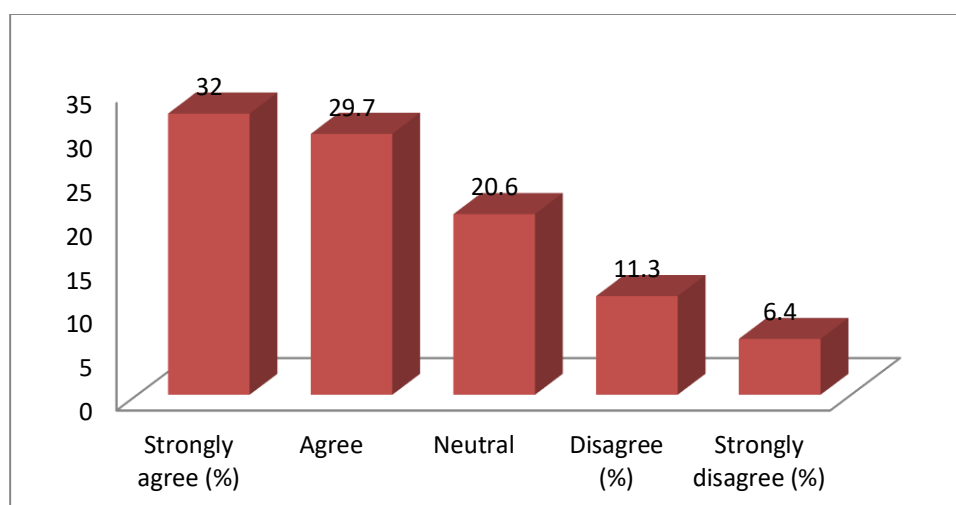


Figure 2: Perceived Academic stress among adolescents

Table 2 shows that 61.7% (32+29.7) of students agreed to have experienced academic stress whereas 17.7% (11.3+6.4) disagreed with having experienced academic stress, 20.6% were not able to decide whether they experience academic stress or not. Further going into detail it was found that 62.3% of students (29.6+32.7) were not able to concentrate during online classes whereas only 17.4% agreed to concentrate. 39.8% (21.4+18.4) agreed to have too much homework whereas 36.7% were not able to decide whether the homework given to them was too large or not. The rest of them disagreed on this point. 57.2% (27.6+29.6) agreed to have too many exams. Again 28.6% were undecided on this point. 60.2% (26.5+33.7) agreed to experience a lot of academic pressure due to competition among classmates, 24.5% were neutral about this and only 15.3% disagreed to have to experience any academic stress due to competition among classmates. 62.3% (29.6+32.7) agreed to face stress due to work-related daily study. 82.6% (41.8+40.8) felt that academic results are very important for the future. 65.3% (33.7+31.6) agreed to be dissatisfied with their current grades. 38.8% (20.4+18.4) agreed that since their parents care about their academic results too much, they get stressed whereas 30.6% denied this and again 30.6% were neutral about this aspect. 82.6% agreed to get stressed when they failed to live up to their expectations. 63% agreed that they could not sleep because of worry that they would not be able to meet goals they had set for themselves. 74.5% (30.6+43.9) agreed that they feel stressed when their assignments were not completed on time. 65.3% (31.6+33.7) agreed that they felt a lack of time to complete all the activities they were required to do. 17.3% showed a neutral view towards this issue and an equal number of students disagreed with this perception. 52% (24.5+27.6) agreed that discussion and conflicts in the family related to their study give them stress whereas 31.6% (16.3+15.3) disagreed with it. 79.6% (50+29.6) of the students experienced nervousness before any exam. 45.9% (21.4+24.5) agreed that when their classmates get more marks than them they get stressed whereas 31.7% were of the opposite view. 62.2% feared that they would forget the content during the exams.

Table 3: Coefficient of correlation between parental pressure and academic stress

Variables	N	M	SD	R	Level of significance
Parental pressure	98	40.22	8.211	.859	.01
Academic Stress	98	99.38	18.75		

Table 3 shows the coefficient of correlation value for the mean scores of parental pressure and academic stress. The correlation was conducted on the sample of 98 participants with mean scores of 40.22 and 99.38 respectively for parental pressure and academic stress experienced by adolescents of Chandigarh tri-city. The coefficient of the correlation value has been found to be .859, which is significant at 0.01 levels. Hence, the hypothesis, “There is no significant relationship between parental pressure and academic stress as perceived by adolescents of Chandigarh tri-city”, may not be accepted. Alternatively, it has been found that parental pressure and academic stress are positively/directly correlated with each other. More the parental pressure more will be the academic stress. The result is supported by the previous studies (Sarma, 2014, Deb, Strodl, and Sun, 2015, & Suresh Prabu, 2015).

III. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

1. Around 60% of the adolescents perceived parental pressure in their life whereas 17.4% disagreed to have faced any parental pressure.
2. 61.7% agreed to face academic stress whereas 17.7% disagreed to have faced academic stress.
3. Parental pressure and academic stress are positively/directly correlated with each other. More the parental pressure more will be the academic stress.

IV. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

As the analysis above shows that around 60% of students face parental pressure and almost the same number (61.7%) face academic stress. Also, parental pressure and academic stress are found to be positively correlated. The results are in sink with the results of Deb, Strodl, and Sun (2015). The results can be seen as a red signal for the parents who keep nagging their children for little things and pressurize them directly or through their behavior for high academic achievements. They treat their children as super humans who can excel in all fields whether academic or extracurricular. They compare them with their peers and friends. Such children are under the constant stress of not living up to their parents’ expectations. They lose their self-confidence and feel stress in daily academic activities (Suresh Prabu, 2015). Homework, tests, and assignments appear to burden them. They always remain dissatisfied with their academic grades (65.3%) and live in constant fear of failure.

V. CONCLUSION

The results of the present study have clearly indicated a positive and direct relationship between parental pressure and academic stress among adolescents. And also, more than half of the adolescents perceived parental pressure and also academic stress. This clearly indicates that parents' aspirations, expectations, and constant nagging acts as detrimental to the academics of the adolescents. Adolescents are already stressed due to academic assignments and competition from their peer group. This increases their nervousness and they are not able to concentrate. The pressures from the parents further aggravate the situation resulting in a lot of academic stress perceived by the adolescents.

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