

# Evaluating Academic Stress and Parental Pressure Among Board Examination Appearing Students

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## ABSTRACT

There is significant and positive correlation exists in between academic stress and parental pressure over the academic concerns of Board Examination appearing students. The purpose of this research is to bring awareness and study the prevailing situation of young students facing stress due to academic pressure. Academic stress can arise from various sources such as heavy workloads, competition among peers, fear of failure, and high expectations from parents and teachers. Parental pressure can further exacerbate this stress, as parents often have high expectations for their children's academic performance and future success. This pressure can manifest in various ways, including demanding academic excellence, changing study habits, and competing with peers. Both academic stress and parental pressure can have negative impacts on students' physical health, self-respect, and overall happiness, potentially leading to anxiety, exhaustion, and academic disinterest. Addressing these issues demands a holistic approach involving support from educators, parents, and mental health professionals to create more balanced academic environments for students appearing for Board Examinations.

**Keywords:** Academic Stress, Parental Pressure, Academic Concerns, Board Examinations, Student Well-being.

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## INTRODUCTION TO ACADEMIC STRESS

Academic stress is a psychological condition that arises due to an imbalance between academic demands and the individual's capacity to meet those demands (Kaplan, 1996). For students preparing for board examinations, the pressure to perform well can be overwhelming, contributing to significant levels of stress (Deb, Strodl & Sun, 2015). Factors such as curriculum complexity, examination pressure, and competitive environments exacerbate this stress (Singh & Jha, 2013).

### Parental Pressure and Its Implications

Parental pressure is defined as the expectations parents place on their children to excel academically. While intended to motivate, excessive parental pressure has been linked to anxiety, reduced self-esteem, and burnout in students (Gandhi, 2014; Kumar & Choudhury, 2021). In highly competitive educational systems, parental expectations are often intensified, leading students to feel constant pressure to meet those standards (Agarwal & Naidu, 2020).

### Interaction between Academic Stress and Parental Pressure

The relationship between academic stress and parental pressure is deeply intertwined. Research indicates that high parental expectations often correlate with increased levels of student anxiety and academic pressure (Luthar & Kumar,

2018). This is particularly evident during board examinations where societal and familial expectations amplify the perceived consequences of failure (Sharma & Bhardwaj, 2019).

### Impact on Student Well-being and Academic Performance

The combined impact of academic stress and parental pressure significantly affects students' mental and emotional well-being. Symptoms such as anxiety, depression, and insomnia are commonly reported (Chakraborty et al., 2021). Additionally, sustained exposure to high-pressure environments can impair cognitive functioning and academic performance (Reddy, Menon & Thattil, 2018).

### Coping Mechanisms and Support Systems

Students employ various coping mechanisms to manage academic stress, including time management, peer support, and relaxation techniques (Kaur, 2017). The involvement of parents, teachers, and mental health professionals has been found to alleviate stress when approached with understanding and support (Pathak & Sahu, 2019).

The findings emerged from the previous studies that academic anxiety is a prevalent issue among students and there are several themes such as sources of anxiety (e.g. exams, performance pressure), consequences (e.g. poor academic performance, psychological distress) and coping strategies (e.g. time management, seeking social support), Bulbul K. & Odaci H. (2023); the study emphasize the negative

impacts of test tension on academic accomplishment, psychological prosperity and friendly functioning in toddlers, Robson D.A. Johnstone S.J., Putwain D.W. & Howard S. (2023); students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds experience greater parental pressure and higher levels of test anxiety, Chen H. (2012).

### Objectives of the Study

- To examine parental pressure among students of Senior Secondary schools of Dehradun city.
- To explore the prevalence of academic stress of adolescent students of Dehradun City.
- To measure the relation between academic stress and parental pressure in high school students of Dehradun city on their academics.
- To examine the ratio of academic stress and parental pressure among Board appearing school students of Dehradun city gender wise.

### Hypothesis of the Study

There is significant and positive correlation exists in between academic stress and parental pressure over the academic concerns of Board Examination appearing students.

### Method and Design

This current study, focusing on the examination of Academic Stress and Parental Pressure of Board Examination appearing Students, employs the descriptive survey method with in qualitative research. Data was gathered through surveys and interviews. Descriptive statistical analyses were employed to depict the characteristics of the sampled population comprehensively. Population for the present study includes board appearing students. Here the students are mostly the age group of 16 to 18 years and to be more specific they belong to Class X and Class XII of Dehradun city, Uttarakhand. In this study, the researcher has chosen the sample by using simple random sampling method. 150 students have been selected as samples that belong to the age group of 16 to 18 years in which 82 are Boys and 68 are girls.

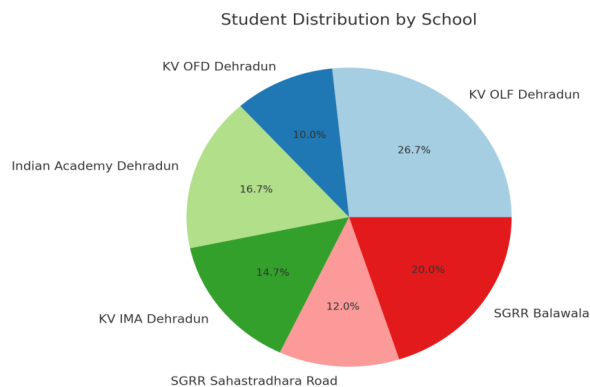


Figure 1

The sample was randomly selected in the researcher's locality on the basis of their availability at the day of data collection.

### Tools and Data Collection

After resolving the accompanying related literature, the investigator certain to process ahead accompanying the self-created standardized tool. Here the data were collected through close-ended questionnaire to make the study as simple as possible with 48 open-ended questions (Yes and No format) for four objectives with free from ambiguity. The test-retest was used to check the reliability of the questionnaire; the being agreeable or assenting allotment of all the articles of the questionnaire range from 90% to 100%, this evidence describes the extreme reliability of the questionnaire. The score was first determined one by one and therefore summed up and from that time forward percentage had calculated.

### Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Table 1: Summary of the relation between academic stress and parental pressure in Board Examination appearing students Boys = 82, Girls = 68, Total N = 150

### Introduction

The phase of preparing for board examinations is often accompanied by intense academic pressure and varying degrees of parental expectations. This research seeks to explore the relationship between academic stress and parental pressure among board examination appearing students. A total of 150 students participated in this study, consisting of 82 boys and 68 girls. This analysis provides insights into how parental pressure influences academic performance, mental well-being, and the perception of self-capability among students.

### Data Analysis & Interpretation

#### Parental Influence on Academic Performance

Data reveals that 58.6% of students believe parental pressure significantly influences their academic performance. Among them, 50 boys and 38 girls expressed agreement, suggesting that male students may feel slightly more impacted by parental expectations than their female counterparts.

#### Parental Support in Managing Academic Stress

The data shows an even split, with 50% of students feeling supported by their parents in managing academic stress, while the other half do not share this sentiment. Interestingly, boys reported less perceived support (36 Yes, 46 No) compared to girls (39 Yes, 29 No), highlighting a gender difference in perceived parental support during exam preparations.

#### Pressure from Parents Regarding Academic Performance

A significant 62.6% of students acknowledged experiencing pressure from their parents concerning their academic



**Table 1:** Summary of the relation between academic stress and parental pressure in Board Examination appearing students Boys = 82, Girls = 68, Total N = 150

S. No.	Interrogative Statements	Total % of Yes	Total % of No	Boys Yes	Boys No	Girls Yes	Girls No
1	Do you think parental pressure influence your academic outcomes?	58.6	41.4	50	32	38	30
2	Do you feel your parents' support manage stress?	50	50	36	46	39	29
3	Do you feel pressure from your parents regarding your academic outcomes?	62.6	37.4	58	24	36	32
4	Do you feel anxious about your results or parental pressure?	45.4	54.6	37	45	31	37
5	Do you have any question about your own capability?	61.4	38.6	48	34	44	24
6	Have you ever experienced depression on your mental or physical health due to parental pressure regarding academics?	50	50	43	39	32	36
7	Does the nature of parental pressure differ with socioeconomic status?	52.6	47.4	38	44	41	27

Sample Size from the Board Examination appearing students of Dehraun City

**Table 2:** Summary of gender wise analysis regarding as academic stress and parental pressure of Board Examination appearing students Boys= 82, Girls=68, Total N= 150

S. No.	Interrogative Statements	Boys Yes	Total % of Yes (Boys)	Boys No	Total % of No (Boys)	Girls Yes	Total % of Yes (Girls)	Girls No	Total % of No (Girls)
1	Do you feel comfortable discussing your academic concern & Board Examination pressure with your parents?	45	54.87	37	45.13	35	51.47	33	48.53
2	Do you experience symptoms of stress (e.g. sleeplessness, headache etc.) related to your academic pressure or parental expectations?	35	42.68	47	57.32	34	50	34	50
3	Do you do any stress relaxing activities (e.g. sports, meditation, music, yoga etc.) other than study?	51	62.20	31	37.80	40	58.8	28	41.2
4	Do you feel you are able to balance your academic responsibilities with Other aspects of your life(e.g. social life, hobbies)	51	62.20	31	37.80	35	51.47	33	48.6
5	Do participating in house chores lead to distraction in your studies?	45	67.30	37	32.69	47	77.08	21	22.91
6	Is parents' happiness more important than your happiness?	45	48.07	37	51.92	43	47.91	25	52.08
7	Do you feel that your parents' expectations regarding your results in Board Examination agree with your own goals and Aspirations?	57	71.15	25	28.84	41	64.58	27	35.71

performance. The response was notably higher among boys (58 Yes) compared to girls (36 Yes), indicating that boys may feel more direct pressure to meet academic expectations.

#### *Anxiety Due to Academic or Parental Pressure*

About 45.4% of students reported feeling anxious due to academic or parental pressure, whereas 54.6% did not. Boys

showed slightly higher anxiety levels (37 Yes) than girls (31 Yes), possibly due to higher perceived academic expectations.

#### *Self-Doubt about Capabilities*

Approximately 61.4% of students reported doubting their own capabilities under academic and parental pressure. This self-doubt was observed in 48 boys and 44 girls, indicating a

widespread lack of confidence that may stem from elevated expectations.

### *Negative Effects on Mental or Physical Health Due to Parental Pressure*

Half of the respondents experienced negative mental or physical health impacts attributed to parental pressure. Boys were slightly more affected (43 Yes) than girls (32 Yes), which may reflect the heavier academic expectations perceived by male students.

### *Variation of Parental Pressure with Socioeconomic Status*

Around 52.6% of students felt that parental pressure varies according to socioeconomic status, with 38 boys and 41 girls agreeing. This points towards a belief that financial and social standing may influence the level and nature of academic expectations from parents.

### *Discussion of Key Findings*

The analysis highlights a strong correlation between parental pressure and academic stress among students preparing for board examinations. Boys reported slightly higher levels of pressure and anxiety compared to girls, suggesting potential gender-based differences in parental expectations. Additionally, self-doubt was prevalent across both genders, indicating that the constant pressure may lead to lowered self-confidence. The observation that socioeconomic status may affect parental expectations also suggests that societal and financial conditions could intensify academic stress.

Parental support was observed to be evenly split, highlighting a gap where students do not feel adequately backed in handling academic pressure. This lack of support, combined with heightened expectations, could contribute to adverse mental and physical health impacts.

### **Implications and Recommendations**

To mitigate academic stress caused by parental pressure, it is essential for parents to adopt supportive communication styles that prioritize understanding over expectation. Schools can also play a role by organizing awareness programs that educate parents on the psychological impacts of excessive pressure. Additionally, implementing stress-management workshops for students could help alleviate anxiety and build resilience.

It is crucial for educational institutions and policymakers to recognize the influence of socioeconomic status and provide targeted support for underprivileged students who may face heightened expectations due to financial constraints.

## **CONCLUSION**

The findings indicate that parental pressure significantly affects academic performance, mental well-being, and self-confidence among board examination students. Boys reported slightly higher levels of anxiety and

pressure, suggesting gender-based differences in parental expectations. Furthermore, socioeconomic status appears to influence the nature and intensity of parental pressure. Addressing these issues through supportive parental involvement, school-based interventions, and policy-driven support mechanisms can potentially alleviate academic stress and promote healthier student well-being.

### **Comfort Discussing Academic Concerns with Parents**

- **Boys:** 54.87% feel comfortable, 45.13% do not.
- **Girls:** 51.47% feel comfortable, 48.53% do not.
- **Observation:** Slightly more boys than girls feel comfortable discussing academic pressure with parents.

### **Experience of Stress Symptoms (e.g., sleeplessness, headache)**

- **Boys:** 42.68% experience symptoms, 57.32% do not.
- **Girls:** 50% experience symptoms, 50% do not.
- **Observation:** Girls report more stress symptoms than boys.

### **Involvement in Stress-Relieving Activities (e.g., sports, music, yoga)**

- **Boys:** 62.20% participate, 37.80% do not.
- **Girls:** 58.8% participate, 41.2% do not.
- **Observation:** A slightly higher percentage of boys engage in stress-relieving activities.

### **Ability to Balance Academics with Other Life Aspects**

- **Boys:** 62.20% feel balanced, 37.80% do not.
- **Girls:** 51.47% feel balanced, 48.6% do not.
- **Observation:** Boys report better balance between academics and personal life than girls.

### **House Chores as a Distraction**

- **Boys:** 67.30% feel chores are distracting, 32.69% do not.
- **Girls:** 77.08% feel chores are distracting, 22.91% do not.
- **Observation:** A significantly higher percentage of girls see house chores as a distraction to their studies.

### **Parents' Happiness vs. Own Happiness**

- **Boys:** 48.07% prioritize parents' happiness, 51.92% do not.
- **Girls:** 47.91% prioritize parents' happiness, 52.08% do not.
- **Observation:** Similar proportions for both genders; over half of both boys and girls value their own happiness slightly more.

### **Alignment of Parents' Expectations with Own Goals**

- **Boys:** 71.15% feel alignment, 28.84% do not.
- **Girls:** 64.58% feel alignment, 35.71% do not.
- **Observation:** Boys more often feel that parental expectations match their personal goals.





## Overall Summary

- **Stress & Pressure:** Girls show slightly higher stress symptoms and greater distraction from house chores.
  - **Communication & Alignment:** Boys slightly more comfortable discussing pressure and feel more aligned with parental expectations.
  - **Coping Mechanisms:** Both genders participate in stress-relieving activities, though boys slightly more.
  - **Balance & Priorities:** Boys report better balance; both genders show a nuanced view of prioritizing happiness.
- Here is a comprehensive analysis of the data regarding academic stress and parental pressure among Board Examination appearing students, categorized by gender:

## Gender-wise Analysis of Academic Stress and Parental Pressure

### Sample Details

- **Total Students:** 150
- **Boys:** 82
- **Girls:** 68

### 1. Comfort in Discussing Academic Concerns with Parents

- **Boys:** 54.87% comfortable, 45.13% not comfortable
- **Girls:** 51.47% comfortable, 48.53% not comfortable
- **Analysis:** Slightly more boys feel comfortable discussing academic pressure with parents compared to girls. This indicates that both genders face moderate difficulty in open communication about academic stress with their families.

### Experience of Academic Stress Symptoms (e.g., sleeplessness, headache)

- **Boys:** 42.68% report symptoms, 57.32% do not
- **Girls:** 50% report symptoms, 50% do not
- **Analysis:** Girls report a higher incidence of stress-related symptoms than boys. This suggests that girls may be more affected emotionally or physically by academic and parental pressures, or they may be more open in acknowledging such issues.

### Engagement in Stress-Relieving Activities

- **Boys:** 62.20% participate, 37.80% do not
- **Girls:** 58.8% participate, 41.2% do not
- **Analysis:** A good proportion of both boys and girls engage in stress-relieving activities like sports, music, or meditation. However, boys slightly lead in this, which may contribute to their lower stress symptom levels.

### Ability to Balance Academics with Other Life Aspects

- **Boys:** 62.20% manage balance, 37.80% do not
- **Girls:** 51.47% manage balance, 48.6% do not
- **Analysis:** More boys report being able to balance

academics with hobbies and social life compared to girls. The lower balance among girls might be a factor contributing to their higher stress levels.

## Impact of House Chores on Studies

- **Boys:** 67.30% feel chores distract them, 32.69% do not
- **Girls:** 77.08% feel chores distract them, 22.91% do not
- **Analysis:** A significantly larger percentage of girls report that house chores interfere with their studies, possibly indicating a gendered division of responsibilities at home. This added pressure may contribute to the stress and reduced academic-life balance in girls.

## Priority between Parents' Happiness and Own Happiness

- **Boys:** 48.07% prioritize parents' happiness, 51.92% do not
- **Girls:** 47.91% prioritize parents' happiness, 52.08% do not
- **Analysis:** Both boys and girls show nearly equal trends. A balanced split reflects a conflict between personal aspirations and the desire to fulfill parental expectations.

## Alignment of Parental Expectations with Personal Goals

- **Boys:** 71.15% agree expectations match, 28.84% do not
- **Girls:** 64.58% agree expectations match, 35.71% do not
- **Analysis:** More boys feel that their goals align with their parents' expectations. A higher mismatch reported by girls could lead to increased internal conflict, contributing to stress and pressure.

## Key Insights

- Stress is prevalent, with girls showing slightly higher levels of psychological and domestic stress.
- Parental expectation alignment is stronger in boys, possibly giving them more motivation or confidence.
- Communication gaps exist in both genders, suggesting the need for better parent-child dialogue.
- Household responsibilities disproportionately affect girls, which could impact their study time and mental well-being.

## Recommendations

- **Parental Counseling Programs:** Educate parents to align expectations with their children's aspirations and foster open dialogue.
- **Stress Management Workshops:** Teach relaxation techniques and promote participation in extracurricular.
- **Gender-Sensitive Study Environment:** Recognize and reduce household workload on girls.
- **School-Based Mental Health Support:** Provide access to counselors or psychologists.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study underscores the profound impact of both academic stress and parental pressure on the well-being

and academic performance of board examination students. The findings suggest that while academic expectations are necessary, an excessive focus on performance driven by parental expectations can lead to significant psychological strain. Effective communication between parents and children, alongside supportive academic environments, can play a critical role in alleviating this stress. Schools and mental health professionals should collaborate to create interventions that promote healthy academic practices and emotional well-being.

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