A STUDY ON PEER PRESSURE AND ACADEMIC STRESS OF DEGREE STUDENTS IN MUMBAI REGION

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Abstract

This research looks at the connection between academic stress and peer pressure for degree candidates in the Mumbai area. Finding out how much peer pressure contributes to the academic stress that college-bound students experience is the aim of the study. To collect thorough data, a questionnaire method was used.

The findings demonstrate a substantial correlation between academic stress levels and peer pressure, with the majority of respondents reporting that poor time management led to higher stress. The study pinpoints particular peer pressure factors that raise stress levels in students, including academic workload, peer expectations and family expectations.

Additionally, the study examines coping mechanisms that students employ to manage academic stress and mitigate the consequences of peer pressure. It also makes clear how crucial support systems are for reducing the detrimental effects of pressure from peers on academic wellbeing, both within and outside of formal education.
These realizations have consequences for educators, parents, and legislators as they devise plans to establish a nurturing learning environment that acknowledges and tackles the difficulties caused by peer pressure. In the end, the study contributes to the ongoing discussion in the Mumbai region's higher education system about academic success and student welfare.

INTRODUCTION

Students in the fast-paced world of higher education frequently face a wide range of difficulties outside of the classroom. Among these challenges, peer pressure stands out as a potent element that significantly affects degree students' academic experiences. This study explores the complex relationship between academic stress and peer pressure among college students in Mumbai, a busy city.

A diverse student body that navigates the complex balance between academic responsibilities and social dynamics characterizes the city's vibrant educational ecosystem. Peer pressure can take many different forms and affect students' mental health and academic performance because it is a result of a desire for acceptance and conformity within this academic community. It is imperative that educators, parents, and legislators comprehend the subtleties of this relationship if they are to improve students' overall learning environment and support systems.

This research has a variety of goals. First and foremost, it seeks to objectively evaluate the frequency and severity of peer pressure that Mumbai's degree students face. The second goal of the research is to pinpoint the precise peer pressure behaviors that raise academic stress

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levels. The study also makes an effort to investigate the coping strategies that students use in response to these pressures in an effort to provide light on resilience and adaptation strategies.

To achieve these objectives, a mixed-methods strategy comprising qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys has been employed. This dual methodology allows for a complete comprehension of the intricate interplay between academic stress and peer pressure. The study acknowledges the distinct sociocultural context that shapes students' experiences in this urban setting by concentrating on the Mumbai region.

By carrying out this inquiry, the project intends to provide meaningful information to the corpus of knowledge already accessible on the wellbeing of students and provide helpful recommendations for educators, parents, and policymakers. This study aims to pave the way for the creation of focused interventions and support networks that foster the overall development and academic success of degree students in Mumbai by fostering a greater understanding of the difficulties presented by peer pressure.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.Sonali S in her paper "Role of Socio-economic Status in Academic Stress of Senior Secondary Students" states that the primary cause of stress among young children that affects their development both negatively and positively is academic stress. The academic success of their children was correlated with the standard of the home environments that mothers from both higher and lower ethnic groups supplied. Children from households with lower socioeconomic status achieve academically more slowly and at a lower level than kids from families with better socioeconomic status. She also found that due to restricted study resources and personal shortcomings, children from poorer socioeconomic backgrounds suffer higher levels of academic stress.

2. Lin Y and Chen F in their paper "Academic stress inventory of students at universities and colleges of technology" state that during the teaching process, teachers frequently disregard the emotional needs of their students, which can lead to emotional strain and difficulties with learning. Stress by itself is not always harmful; in fact, healthy stress serves as one of the driving forces behind academic improvement for university students. However, stress directly impacts people's physiology, psychology, and sociology as well as their response to stress (behavioral, physiological, and perceptual), which can lead to illnesses.

3. Ramachandiran M and Dhanapal S in their paper "Academic Stress Among University Students: A Quantitative Study of Generation Y and Z's Perception" state that stress can result from the various personal, social, and academic issues that college students face. The transition from childhood to young adulthood—often represented by enrolling in college— was particularly painful. Students frequently experience academic stress due to pressures from their families, requirements for scholarships, financial difficulties, peer competition in the classroom, exams, problems with time management, and stress associated with specific courses.

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OBJECTIVES
1. To study how pressure peer affects academic choices.
2. To research the causes of stress related to school.
3. To comprehend how pressures peer affects academic achievement.

HYPOTHESIS
H0: There is no significant relationship between peer pressure and academic stress among degree students in the Mumbai region.
OR
H1: There is a significant relationship between peer pressure and academic stress among degree students in the Mumbai region.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
First year degree students will make up the study's sample. Data for the study will be gathered via Google Forms. Age group of the students will be between 17-19 years. A sample size of 32 respondents will be selected for the study.

RESEARCH DESIGN
A cross-sectional research design will be used for this investigation. In order to investigate the connection between academic stress and peer pressure among degree students in the Mumbai region, data will be gathered all at once.
Survey Questionnaire: To gather information on coping strategies, academic stress, peer pressure, and demographics, a questionnaire will be created. Open-ended questions and Likert scales will be employed to collect data that is both quantitative and qualitative.
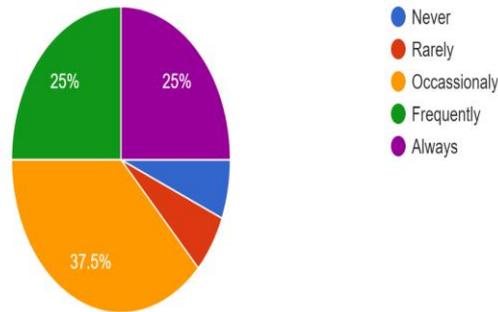
DATA ANALYSIS
Below is the information collected from the sample. A detailed analysis of the data is done below;

Gender
32 responses
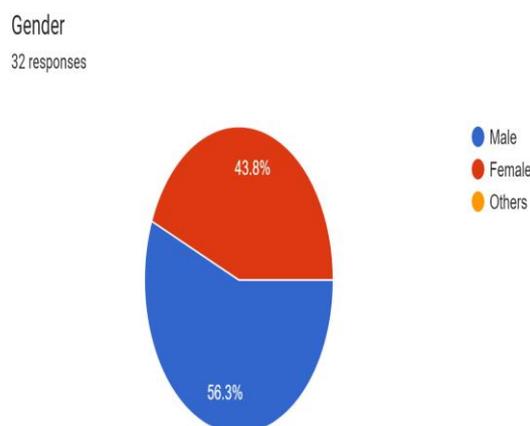
Out of the total sample of the respondents, 43.8 % were female whereas 56.3 % of the respondents were male candidates.

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How often do you feel pressured by your peers regarding academic performance?
32 responses

With respect to academic pressure imposed due to peers, 25% of candidates felt pressured always whereas the rest 25 % felt frequent pressure from their friends. 37.5% candidates occasionally felt pressurized whereas the rest felt rarely or never pressurized.

In what ways do you perceive peer pressure affecting your academic choices? (Multiple choices allowed)
32 responses
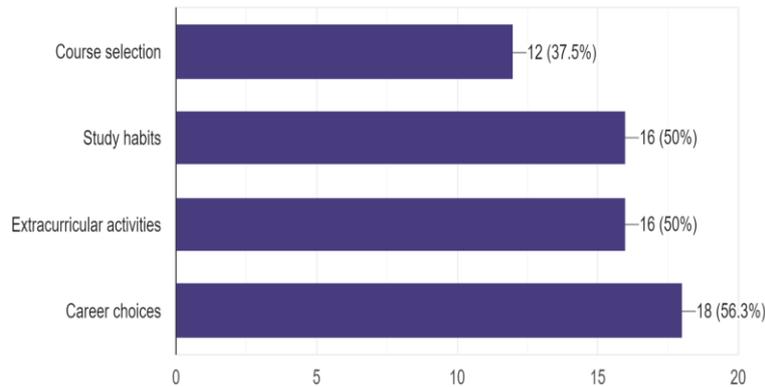
While it comes to selection of career choices, 56.3% were influenced by their peers into selecting their career. 50% of the candidates imitate their study habits from their peers. 50% of the candidates take part in extracurricular activities because their friends are a part of it whereas 37.5% of the candidates select their courses with respect to the trend followed by the crowd.

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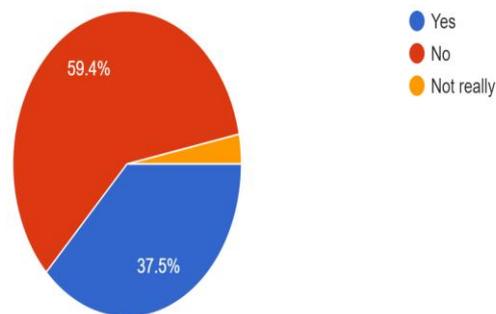Do you think peer pressure has a positive or negative impact on your academic performance?
32 responses
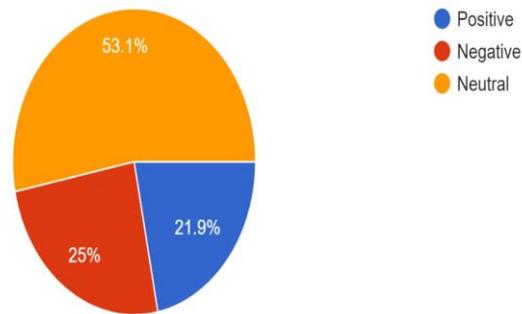
Peer pressure has an impact on applicants' academic performance in three ways: positively for 21.9% of them, negatively for 25% of them, and unfavorably for 56.1% of the candidates.

Have you ever succumbed to peer pressure in making academic decisions?
32 responses

While 37.5% of the students acknowledge that they have been influenced by peer pressure, 59.4% of the students disagree. Peer pressure does not always get the better of the others.

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On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate your overall academic stress level? (1 being very low, 5 being very high)
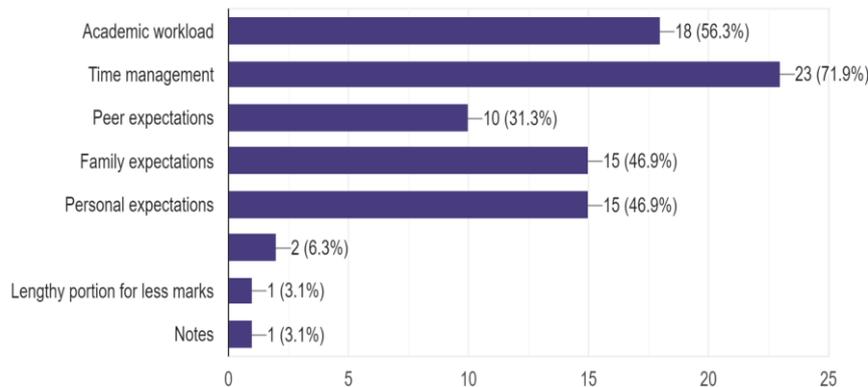
32 responses
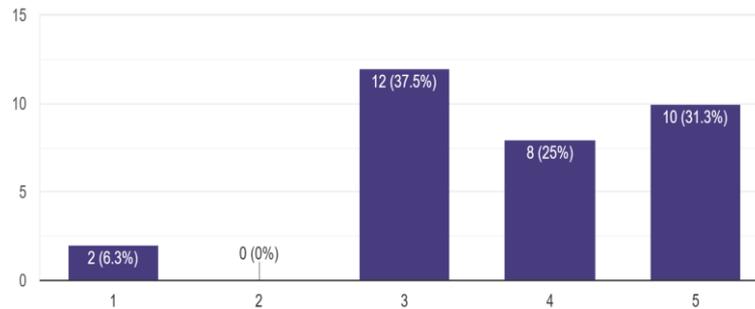
Academic stress level on Rensis Likert Scale was observed, 1 being very low and 5 being very high. 37.5% of the students were neutral about their stress level. 6.3% students felt that their stress levels were very low while the rest felt their levels of academic stress were very high.

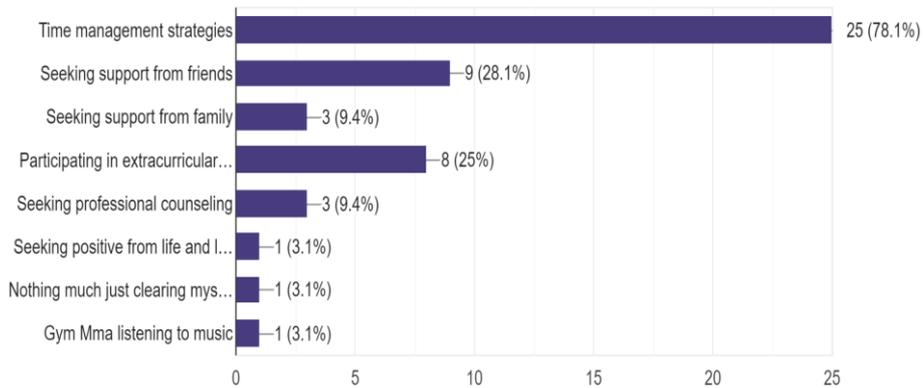What factors contribute most to your academic stress?

32 responses

Around 71.9% of the students feel that managing time is a factor which contributes to their academic stress level. Academic workload contributes as a stress factor for around 56.3% of the sample. Around 46.9% of the learners feel that family expectations and personal expectations lead to academic stress. 31.3% succumb to peer pressure whereas the rest feel that lengthy portions and notes are a factor contributing to their stress levels.

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How do you cope with academic stress?
32 responses

While academic stress can be difficult to handle, 78.1% of the students say time management strategies help them to cope with academic stress. 28.1% of the students seek help from friends whereas 25% participate in extracurricular activities. 9.4% of the students seek help from family and professional counseling whereas 3.1% indulge into self care activities like gym and listening to music.

Do you think the academic environment in your institution contributes to academic stress?
32 responses
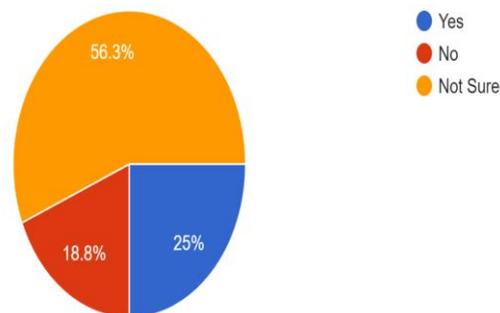
25% of the students feel that the academic environment in their institution contributes to academic stress. 18.5 % of the students think otherwise. The rest aren't sure of the above statement.

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To what extent do you feel the need to maintain a certain academic standard due to societal expectations?

32 responses

- Not at all
- To a small extent
- To a moderate extent
- To a large extent
- To an extreme extent
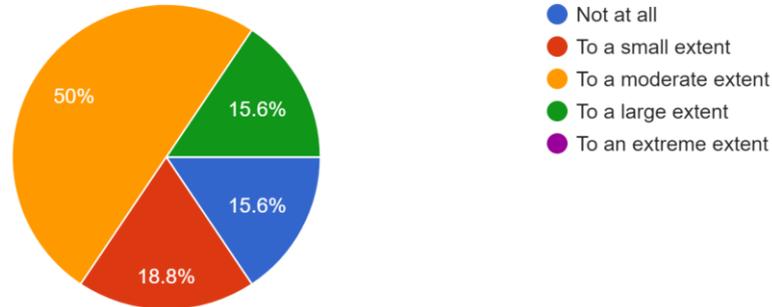
Because of societal expectations, half of the students feel that they must maintain a particular academic standard. While 15.6% say that maintaining a particular academic standard is necessary to a great amount, 18.8% feel that it is necessary to a lesser extent.Fifteen percent do not feel any pressure to live up to social norms.

How would you describe the balance between your academic and personal life?

32 responses

- Well-balanced
- Slightly imbalanced
- Moderately imbalanced
- Highly imbalanced
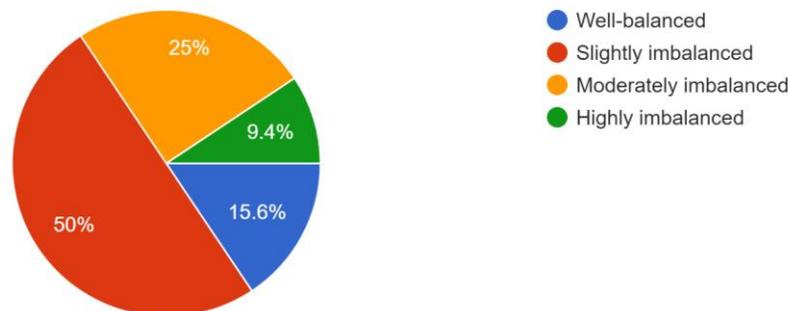
While maintaining a balance between academic and personal life, 9.4% feel it`s highly imbalanced, 25% feel it`s moderately imbalanced, 50 % feel it`s slightly imbalanced whereas 15.6% of the students feel their academic and personal life is well-balanced.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Student mentoring programmes to reduce stress in both their personal and academic lives.
2. Encouraging pupils to engage in outdoor leisure pursuits rather than using social media.
3. Seminars on efficient time management techniques.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

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It is important to recognize the limitations of this study despite the valuable information it provided. Furthermore, the study's focus on Mumbai may have limited its ability to capture the variety of experiences found in various cultural and educational contexts. Further investigation may examine these dynamics within a more expansive national or global framework.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, this study sheds light on the complex relationship that exists between academic stress and peer pressure for degree students in the Mumbai area. Prioritizing students' holistic well-being as educational institutions change is essential, as is identifying and resolving the complex issues they face. The knowledge acquired from this study provides a basis for practical interventions and more research projects that will support the development of resilient and thriving student communities.

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