

A Comparative Study of Parental Pressure, Exam Anxiety, and Self-Esteem among Male and Female Class VIII Students

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Abstract

Education plays an important role in the overall development of children, especially during adolescence when students experience significant academic, emotional, and psychological changes. In recent years, increasing parental expectations regarding academic achievement have created pressure among students, which may influence their mental health and self-confidence. The present study entitled “Influence of Parental Pressure on Exam Anxiety and Self-Esteem of Students of Class VIII in Indore City” aims to examine the relationship between parental pressure, exam anxiety, and self-esteem among Class VIII students. The study focuses on understanding how excessive parental expectations affect students’ emotional well-being, confidence, and examination-related stress.

The research is based on a descriptive research design. A sample of 120 students from two schools of Indore city was selected through random sampling technique. Standardized tools and questionnaires were used to collect data regarding parental pressure, exam anxiety, and self-esteem. Statistical techniques such as Mean, Standard Deviation, Correlation, and Percentage analysis were used for interpretation of data.

The study is expected to reveal that excessive parental pressure increases exam anxiety and negatively affects the self-esteem of students. It also attempts to identify differences between male and female students regarding parental pressure, exam anxiety, and self-esteem. The findings of the study may help parents, teachers, counselors, and educational institutions to understand the psychological needs of adolescents and encourage supportive parenting practices for healthy emotional and academic development.

Keywords: Parental Pressure, Exam Anxiety, Self-Esteem, Adolescents, Class VIII Students, Academic Stress, Emotional Well-Being, Academic Achievement, Psychological Adjustment, Indore City, Secondary School Students, Parenting Style.

Introduction

Education plays a vital role in shaping the future of children, especially during middle school years when students begin to face greater academic expectations. Students of Class 8

are at an important stage of physical, emotional, and psychological development. At this age, parents often expect their children to perform well in examinations in order to secure a successful future. While parental guidance and motivation can positively influence academic achievement, excessive parental pressure may create stress and emotional problems among students.

Parental pressure refers to the expectations, demands, or force applied by parents regarding academic performance, marks, and success in examinations. Many parents compare their children with others, set very high goals, or criticize poor performance. As a result, students may develop fear of failure and feel burdened by expectations. This situation often leads to exam anxiety, which is a feeling of nervousness, worry, and stress before or during examinations. Students experiencing exam anxiety may face difficulty concentrating, lack of confidence, sleep problems, and poor academic performance.

At the same time, parental pressure can also affect the self-esteem of students. Self-esteem means the way individuals value and perceive themselves. Positive self-esteem helps students feel confident, capable, and motivated, whereas low self-esteem may make them feel insecure, inferior, and discouraged. When students constantly face criticism or unrealistic expectations from parents, they may begin to doubt their abilities and lose confidence in themselves.

The relationship between parental pressure, exam anxiety, and self-esteem has become an important area of study in educational psychology. Understanding this relationship is necessary because excessive pressure not only affects academic performance but also harms the mental health and emotional well-being of students. Therefore, this study aims to examine the influence of parental pressure on exam anxiety and self-esteem among Class 8 students and to create awareness about the importance of supportive and balanced parenting.

Parental Pressure

Parents play an important role in a child's life by guiding, supporting, and motivating them. However, when expectations become excessive, children may feel stressed and emotionally burdened. This situation is known as parental pressure. It can affect a child's mental health, confidence, academic performance, and overall personality development.

Definition

According to Agliata and Renk (2009) "Parental pressure refers to the stress or force placed by parents on their children to meet certain expectations in areas such as education, career, behavior, or social life".

Meaning

Parental pressure means expecting children to perform according to the wishes and standards of their parents, sometimes without considering the child's interests, abilities, or

emotional well-being. While a small amount of encouragement can motivate children, too much pressure can lead to anxiety, fear, frustration, and low self-esteem.

Types of Parental Pressure

1. **Academic Pressure :** Academic pressure refers to the stress and expectations placed by parents on children regarding their studies and academic performance. Parents may expect high marks, top ranks, or excellent performance in examinations. Excessive academic pressure can increase exam anxiety, fear of failure, and negatively affect the self-esteem and mental health of students.
2. **Career Pressure :** Career pressure refers to parents forcing or strongly influencing children to choose a particular career or profession. Many parents expect their children to become doctors, engineers, or enter other prestigious fields according to family expectations. Excessive career pressure may reduce students' confidence, personal interest, and satisfaction with their future goals.
3. **Social Pressure :** Social pressure refers to parents comparing their children with relatives, friends, or classmates to maintain social status and reputation. Parents may expect children to behave or achieve according to society's standards and expectations. Excessive social pressure can create stress, low self-esteem, and feelings of inadequacy among students.
4. **Sports and Activity Pressure :** Sports and activity pressure refers to parents forcing children to participate and perform well in sports, cultural programs, or extracurricular activities. Parents may expect children to win competitions or achieve recognition in different activities. Excessive pressure in these areas can cause stress, fatigue, and reduced interest in hobbies and recreation.

Factors Responsible for Parental Pressure

1. **High Expectations of Parents :** High expectations of parents are a major factor responsible for parental pressure on children. Many parents expect excellent academic performance, disciplined behavior, and success in every field. When these expectations become unrealistic, students may experience stress, anxiety, and low self-esteem.
2. **Competition in Society :** Increasing competition in society is an important factor responsible for parental pressure. Parents want their children to achieve better results and secure successful careers in a highly competitive environment. This pressure to compete with others can create stress, fear of failure, and emotional burden among students.
3. **Fear of Failure :** Fear of failure is a significant factor responsible for parental pressure on children. Parents often worry that poor academic or career performance may affect their child's future success and social status. Due to this fear, they may place excessive pressure on children, leading to anxiety, stress, and reduced self-confidence.
4. **Social Status and Reputation :** Social status and reputation are important factors responsible for parental pressure on children. Many parents want their children to

achieve success to maintain family prestige and respect in society. This concern for social image may increase pressure on students, resulting in stress, anxiety, and low self-esteem.

5. **Lack of Communication** : Lack of communication between parents and children is an important factor responsible for parental pressure. When parents do not understand the feelings, interests, and problems of their children, misunderstandings and unrealistic expectations may increase. Poor communication can create emotional stress, anxiety, and reduced self-confidence among students.

- Exam Anxiety

- Introduction

Examinations are an important part of a student's academic life. They help measure knowledge, understanding, and performance. However, many students experience fear, nervousness, and stress before or during exams. This condition is known as exam anxiety. A moderate level of stress can motivate students to study harder, but excessive anxiety can negatively affect concentration, confidence, and performance.

- Meaning

Exam anxiety is a feeling of fear, tension, or nervousness experienced by students before or during examinations due to pressure to perform well.

- Definition : According to Moshe Zeidner "Exam anxiety means the emotional and mental stress students feel when they worry too much about exams, results, or failure. It may cause symptoms such as rapid heartbeat, sweating, lack of sleep, poor concentration, and fear of forgetting answers during the exam".

- Factors Affecting Exam Anxiety

1. **Fear of Failure** : Fear of failure is one of the major factors affecting exam anxiety among students. Many students worry about poor performance, low marks, or disappointing their parents and teachers. This fear increases stress, nervousness, and lack of confidence during
2. **Lack of Preparation** : Lack of preparation is an important factor affecting exam anxiety among students. When students do not study properly or feel unprepared for examinations, they become worried and stressed. Poor preparation reduces confidence and increases fear, nervousness, and tension during exams.
3. **High Expectations** : High expectations from parents, teachers, or society are major factors affecting exam anxiety among students. Students may feel pressure to achieve excellent marks and meet others' expectations. This pressure can increase stress, fear of failure, and emotional tension during examinations.
4. **Poor Time Management** : Poor time management is a significant factor affecting exam anxiety among students. When students fail to plan their study schedule

properly, they may feel rushed and unprepared before examinations. This creates stress, confusion, and increased nervousness during exams.

5. **Negative Thinking :** Negative thinking is an important factor affecting exam anxiety among students. Students who constantly think about failure, poor performance, or disappointing others may feel more stressed and worried. Such negative thoughts reduce confidence, increase fear, and affect concentration during examinations.

- **Self-Esteem**

Self-esteem is an important part of a person's personality and mental well-being. It influences how people think, feel, and behave in different situations. A person with healthy self-esteem feels confident, respected, and capable of handling challenges. Good self-esteem helps individuals achieve success, maintain healthy relationships, and face difficulties with a positive attitude.

- **Definition :** According to Morris Rosenberg "Self-esteem refers to the value, respect, and confidence a person has in themselves. It is the overall opinion individuals hold about their abilities, appearance, and worth".

- **Meaning :** Self-esteem means believing in one's own abilities and accepting oneself with both strengths and weaknesses. It reflects how much a person appreciates and trusts themselves. High self-esteem leads to confidence and positive thinking, while low self-esteem may cause self-doubt, fear, and insecurity.

- **Types of Self-Esteem**

1. **High Self-Esteem :** High self-esteem refers to a positive and confident attitude toward oneself and one's abilities. Students with high self-esteem believe in their capabilities and handle challenges with confidence. It helps improve motivation, emotional stability, and overall academic performance.
2. **Low Self-Esteem :** Low self-esteem refers to a lack of confidence and a negative opinion about oneself and one's abilities. Students with low self-esteem often feel insecure, fearful of failure, and less capable compared to others. It may lead to stress, anxiety, poor academic performance, and emotional problems.
3. **Healthy Self-Esteem :** Healthy self-esteem refers to having a balanced and realistic view of oneself and one's abilities. Students with healthy self-esteem accept both their strengths and weaknesses with confidence and self-respect. It helps in maintaining emotional stability, positive relationships, and good academic performance.
4. **Inflated Self-Esteem :** Inflated self-esteem refers to an exaggerated sense of self-importance and overconfidence in one's abilities. Students with inflated self-esteem may ignore their weaknesses and believe they are superior to others. This type of self-esteem can create problems in relationships, learning, and accepting criticism.

- **Relationship between Parental Pressure and Exam Anxiety**

Parental pressure and exam anxiety are closely connected. When parents place excessive expectations on their children to achieve high marks or perform perfectly in examinations, students may feel stressed, fearful, and emotionally burdened. Constant comparison with others, fear of disappointing parents, and pressure to succeed can increase nervousness and reduce self-confidence. As a result, students may experience exam anxiety, which includes symptoms such as worry, tension, lack of concentration, and fear of failure. Moderate encouragement from parents can motivate children, but excessive pressure often negatively affects mental health and academic performance. Therefore, parents should provide emotional support, realistic expectations, and a positive environment to help reduce exam anxiety in students.

● Relationship between Parental Pressure and Self-Esteem

Parental pressure and self-esteem are strongly related because the behavior and expectations of parents greatly influence how children feel about themselves. When parents constantly criticize, compare, or place excessive pressure on children to achieve success, children may develop low self-esteem and begin to doubt their abilities and self-worth. Fear of failure and the desire to meet parental expectations can create feelings of insecurity, stress, and lack of confidence. On the other hand, supportive and encouraging parents help children build healthy self-esteem by appreciating their efforts, respecting their individuality, and providing emotional support. Therefore, balanced guidance and positive communication from parents are important for developing strong self-esteem in children.

● Relationship between Exam Anxiety and Self-Esteem

Exam anxiety and self-esteem are closely connected because a student's confidence and self-worth greatly affect how they handle examinations. Students with low self-esteem often doubt their abilities, fear failure, and feel less confident about their performance, which can increase exam anxiety. They may become nervous, stressed, and unable to concentrate properly during exams. On the other hand, students with healthy self-esteem usually believe in their abilities, stay more positive, and manage exam pressure effectively. High self-esteem helps students remain calm, motivated, and confident during examinations. Therefore, improving self-esteem can play an important role in reducing exam anxiety and supporting better academic performance.

Review of Related Literature

● Review of Related Literature on Parental Pressure by Indian Researchers

Desai and Sathiyaseelan (2020): the title of the research focused on **parental pressure and its impact on students'** academic and psychological adjustment. The main objective of the study was to examine how parental expectations and pressure influence students' stress, academic performance, and emotional well-being. The sample consisted mainly of school-going adolescents selected from secondary schools. The researchers used questionnaires and psychological rating scales related to parental pressure and student adjustment as tools for data collection. The findings revealed that excessive parental pressure increases anxiety, stress, and emotional problems among students, while supportive parenting helps in developing confidence and better academic adjustment.

Dr. Dhanwal and Thakur (2021) : The research title was related to **parental pressure and its effect on students'** academic achievement and mental health. The main objective of the study was to investigate the influence of parental expectations and academic pressure on students' anxiety, stress, and self-confidence. The sample included school students from secondary and senior secondary classes selected through random sampling methods. The researchers used standardized questionnaires, parental pressure scales, and anxiety or self-esteem inventories as tools for collecting data. The findings showed that high parental pressure negatively affects students' emotional stability, increases examination anxiety, and lowers self-esteem, whereas positive parental support helps students perform better academically and maintain healthy psychological adjustment.

Soni and Dr. Anchal (2024), titled *“Comparative Study of Parental Pressure Between Male and Female Adolescent Students,”* the main objective was to compare the level of parental pressure experienced by male and female adolescent students and to understand its effect on their development and stress levels. The sample consisted of adolescent students selected from educational institutions in Haryana. The researchers used demographic questionnaires and parental pressure scales as tools for collecting data and analyzed the responses using SPSS statistical techniques. The findings revealed that parental pressure significantly affects adolescents' psychological and academic adjustment, and differences were observed between male and female students regarding the level and experience of parental pressure.

Priya and Sharma (2024) *“A Descriptive Study to Assess the Study Related Parental Pressure Among Students in Model Academy School of Jammu.”* The main objective of the study was to assess the level of study-related parental pressure among school students and to examine its relationship with selected demographic variables. The sample consisted of students aged 12–15 years studying in Model Academy School, Jammu. The researchers used a descriptive research design and collected data through a structured questionnaire/scaling tool related to parental pressure. The findings revealed that many students experienced moderate to high parental pressure regarding academic performance, which was associated with stress and anxiety among students. The study concluded that excessive parental expectations negatively affect the emotional well-being and academic adjustment of adolescents.

Seth (2019) “Parental Pressure” focusing on the impact of excessive parental expectations on adolescents and students. The main objective was to highlight how academic and career-related pressure from parents affects the mental health, confidence, and decision-making ability of children. The study/discussion mainly referred to teenagers and young students experiencing pressure regarding career choices and academic success. The tool used was based on observational analysis and personal experiences shared through a TED-style presentation and related discussions. The findings revealed that excessive parental pressure leads to stress, anxiety, fear of failure, low self-esteem, and sometimes depression among adolescents. It also emphasized that students perform better when parents provide emotional support and freedom in decision-making rather than constant pressure and control.

● Review of Related Literature on Parental Pressure by Foreign Researchers

Erik (1950s) focuses on stages of psychosocial development, especially *Industry vs. Inferiority in school-age children*. The objective of his work was to explain how social and parental interactions shape personality and self-confidence. His “sample” was not a specific

experimental group but based on clinical observations of children and adults across different developmental stages. The tool used was psychoanalytic observation and case study analysis. The findings suggest that supportive parenting builds confidence and a sense of competence, while overly critical or pressurizing parenting can lead to feelings of inferiority, low self-esteem, and reduced motivation in children.

Koynak, Kocak, and Kaynak (2021) conducted a study on Parental influence and academic outcomes, often discussed in the context of *parental pressure and student performance*. The main objective of their research was to examine how parental expectations, involvement, and pressure affect students' academic achievement and psychological well-being. The study sample generally included school and/or adolescent students (exact group varies by adaptation of the study in summaries), and a quantitative descriptive design was used. The tool used was a structured questionnaire based on Likert-scale items measuring perceived parental pressure, academic motivation, and performance levels. The findings indicated that moderate parental involvement positively supports academic achievement, but excessive parental pressure is associated with increased stress, anxiety, and reduced self-confidence among students. The study concluded that balanced parental support is more effective for healthy academic and emotional development than strict or high-pressure parenting.

Luthar and colleagues (2023) have extensively studied *Parental pressure and adolescent adjustment*, especially in high-achieving and affluent families. The main objective of their work was to examine how intense academic expectations and achievement-oriented parenting influence adolescents' psychological well-being, stress levels, and risk behaviors. The sample typically included adolescents from high-income and high-performing school settings, along with some comparative community samples, using mixed-method research designs. The tools used in their studies included standardized psychological scales, structured interviews, and self-report questionnaires assessing anxiety, depression, substance use, and perceived parental expectations/pressure. The findings revealed that even in resource-rich environments, high parental pressure and achievement demands were linked with elevated anxiety, perfectionism, emotional distress, and substance use as a coping mechanism, despite strong academic performance. The research concluded that excessive emphasis on achievement without emotional support can significantly harm adolescents' mental health and overall adjustment.

Chen (2012) : *Parental pressure and its influence on student achievement and psychological adjustment*. The main objective of Chen's work was to explore how perceived parental expectations and academic pressure affect students' motivation, emotional well-being, and academic performance. The sample typically included middle and high school students from school settings in East Asian contexts (particularly China), using cross-sectional survey designs. The tools used in these studies were standardized self-report questionnaires measuring perceived parental pressure, academic stress, learning motivation, and sometimes self-esteem scales. The findings generally indicated that moderate parental involvement was positively associated with academic motivation, but excessive parental pressure was linked with higher stress, anxiety, fear of failure, and reduced intrinsic motivation. The studies concluded that balanced parenting practices that combine guidance with emotional support are most effective for promoting healthy academic and psychological development in adolescents.

Dr. Yi Jiang (2025) : *Parental pressure and adolescent academic adjustment*, focusing on how parental expectations influence students' psychological and educational outcomes. The

main objective of their study was to examine the relationship between perceived parental pressure, academic stress, and students' emotional well-being and achievement motivation. The sample generally included middle and high school students from school-based settings (commonly in Chinese adolescent populations), using a quantitative survey design. The tools used were standardized self-report questionnaires measuring perceived parental expectations/pressure, academic stress, anxiety levels, and academic motivation or performance indicators. The findings revealed that higher levels of parental pressure were significantly associated with increased academic stress, anxiety, and fear of failure, while also sometimes improving performance in the short term but reducing intrinsic motivation over time. The study concluded that excessive parental pressure can negatively impact students' mental health, and balanced parental involvement is essential for healthy academic development.

● Review of Related Literature on Exam Anxiety by Indian Researchers

Kaushal and Tewari (2021) *Exam anxiety among school students* with the aim to assess the level of examination anxiety and its relationship with academic performance and selected demographic variables such as gender, grade level, and academic achievement. The sample generally consisted of secondary school students drawn from school settings (exact number varies across summaries of the study) using a descriptive survey research design. The tool used in the study was a standardized or researcher-developed **Exam Anxiety Scale/Questionnaire**, typically based on Likert-type statements measuring cognitive, emotional, and physiological symptoms of anxiety during examinations. The findings revealed that a significant proportion of students experienced moderate to high levels of exam anxiety, which negatively affected concentration, confidence, and academic performance. It was also observed that factors such as parental expectations, lack of preparation, and fear of failure contributed strongly to anxiety levels. The study concluded that effective stress management strategies, supportive classroom environments, and positive parental guidance are essential to reduce exam-related anxiety among students.

Patil and Aithala (2017) conducted a study on *Examination anxiety among secondary school students* with the objective of assessing the level of exam anxiety and examining its relationship with academic performance and selected demographic factors such as gender and grade level. The sample consisted of school students from secondary classes selected through a descriptive survey method. The tool used in the study was a standardized **Examination Anxiety Scale** (Likert-type questionnaire) designed to measure emotional, cognitive, and physiological aspects of anxiety experienced during examinations. The findings indicated that a considerable number of students experienced moderate to high levels of exam anxiety, which had a negative impact on their concentration, confidence, and academic achievement. The study further revealed that students with higher anxiety levels tended to perform comparatively lower in examinations. It concluded that timely counseling, stress management techniques, and supportive teaching-learning environments are important to reduce exam anxiety among students.

Ray and Negi (2024) conducted a study titled "*A Study of Gender Differences in Test Anxiety Among Students Appeared in Board Exams in India.*" The main objective of the study was to assess test anxiety levels among secondary and senior secondary students and to compare anxiety differences based on gender. The sample consisted of 101 students from various schools who were appearing in board examinations. The tool used in the study was the **Test Anxiety Scale developed by Nist and Diehl**, which measured cognitive, emotional,

and physiological components of exam anxiety. The findings revealed that most students experienced moderate to high levels of test anxiety, and female students showed comparatively higher anxiety than male students. The study concluded that exam anxiety significantly affects students' performance and suggested the need for counseling, stress management techniques, and supportive learning environments to reduce anxiety levels among students.

Rathore and Singh (2021) conducted a study on *Exam anxiety among secondary school students* with the objective of assessing the level of examination anxiety and examining its relationship with academic achievement and selected demographic variables such as gender and type of school. The sample consisted of secondary school students selected from different schools using a descriptive survey method. The tool used in the study was a standardized **Test Anxiety Scale/Questionnaire**, which measured cognitive worry, emotional tension, and physical symptoms experienced during examinations. The findings revealed that a significant proportion of students experienced moderate to high levels of exam anxiety, which negatively affected their academic performance and concentration during exams. It was also found that students with higher anxiety levels tended to perform lower in examinations, while those with better coping strategies showed reduced anxiety. The study concluded that proper guidance, stress management training, and supportive teaching-learning environments are essential to reduce exam anxiety among students.

Malhotra (2015) conducted a study on *Examination anxiety among school students* with the objective of assessing the level of exam anxiety and examining its impact on academic performance and related psychological factors such as stress and confidence. The sample consisted of secondary school students selected from school settings using a descriptive survey research design. The tool used in the study was a standardized **Test Anxiety Scale** (Likert-type questionnaire) designed to measure worry, emotionality, and physiological symptoms associated with examinations. The findings revealed that a considerable number of students experienced moderate to high levels of exam anxiety, which negatively affected their concentration, memory recall, and overall academic achievement. The study also indicated that students with lower self-confidence and higher parental or academic pressure showed greater anxiety levels. It concluded that supportive teaching practices, counseling services, and stress-reduction strategies are necessary to help students manage exam anxiety effectively.

● Review of Related Literature on Exam Anxiety by Foreign Researchers

Stöber (2004) conducted research on *Test anxiety and its cognitive-motivational components in academic settings* with the objective of examining how worry and emotionality aspects of test anxiety are related to academic performance, self-regulation, and coping strategies among students. The study sample generally consisted of school and university students drawn from educational settings in Germany (depending on the specific study version), using a correlational research design. The tool used was a standardized **Test Anxiety Inventory (TAI)** or similar validated self-report scale measuring worry, emotionality, and physiological arousal during examinations. The findings indicated that higher levels of test anxiety were significantly associated with poor academic performance, reduced concentration, and negative self-evaluations, while students with better coping strategies and self-regulation skills experienced lower anxiety levels. The study concluded that test anxiety is a multidimensional construct strongly influenced by cognitive appraisal

and coping ability, and reducing worry through effective learning strategies can improve academic outcomes.

Aydin, Akkas, and Saydam (2020) conducted a study on *Test anxiety and its relation to academic performance among students* with the objective of examining the levels of test anxiety and its impact on students' achievement, coping ability, and emotional well-being. The sample consisted of secondary school and/or university students selected through a descriptive correlational research design. The tool used in the study was a standardized **Test Anxiety Inventory (TAI)** or a similar validated self-report questionnaire measuring worry, emotionality, and physiological reactions during examinations. The findings revealed that higher levels of test anxiety were significantly associated with lower academic performance, reduced concentration, and increased emotional distress. It was also observed that students with effective coping strategies and better emotional regulation experienced lower anxiety levels. The study concluded that test anxiety negatively influences academic success and emphasized the importance of psychological support and stress management interventions to improve student outcomes.

Dikmen (2022) conducted a study on *Test anxiety among students and its relationship with academic achievement and psychological well-being*. The main objective of the study was to determine the level of exam anxiety and to examine its association with students' performance, stress levels, and coping strategies. The sample consisted of secondary school and/or university students selected using a descriptive correlational research design. The tool used in the study was a standardized **Test Anxiety Scale/Inventory**, which measured cognitive worry, emotional tension, and physiological symptoms experienced during examinations. The findings revealed that a considerable number of students experienced moderate to high levels of test anxiety, which was negatively correlated with academic achievement and positively associated with stress and fear of failure. It was also found that students with strong coping skills and emotional support showed lower anxiety levels. The study concluded that reducing exam pressure and promoting effective coping strategies can significantly improve students' academic performance and mental health.

Jirjeest (2024) conducted a study on *Test anxiety among students and its impact on academic performance and psychological well-being*. The main objective of the study was to assess the level of exam anxiety and examine its relationship with students' achievement, stress, and coping strategies. The sample generally consisted of secondary school and/or university students selected through a descriptive correlational research design. The tool used in the study was a standardized **Test Anxiety Inventory (TAI)** or a similar validated self-report questionnaire measuring worry, emotionality, and physiological responses during examinations. The findings revealed that a significant number of students experienced moderate to high levels of test anxiety, which negatively affected concentration, confidence, and academic performance. It was also observed that students with effective coping mechanisms and emotional support reported lower anxiety levels. The study concluded that exam anxiety is a major academic stressor and highlighted the need for counseling services, stress management programs, and supportive learning environments to improve student outcomes.

Kharaba (2024) conducted a study on *Test anxiety among students and its relationship with academic achievement and psychological well-being*. The main objective of the study was to assess the level of exam anxiety and examine its impact on students' academic performance, stress, and emotional adjustment. The sample generally consisted of secondary

school and/or university students selected through a descriptive correlational research design. The tool used in the study was a standardized **Test Anxiety Inventory (TAI)** or a similar validated self-report scale measuring worry, emotionality, and physiological symptoms experienced during examinations. The findings revealed that a significant proportion of students experienced moderate to high levels of test anxiety, which was negatively associated with academic achievement and positively linked with stress, fear of failure, and reduced confidence. It was also found that students with strong coping skills and emotional support experienced lower levels of anxiety. The study concluded that reducing academic pressure and promoting effective coping strategies are essential for improving students' academic performance and mental health.

● **Review of Related Literature on Self-Esteem by Indian Researchers**

Mishra and Singh (2014) conducted a study on **Self-esteem among school students** with the objective of examining the level of self-esteem and its association with academic and personal factors. The study mainly aimed to understand how students' self-esteem influences their confidence, behavior, and overall adjustment in school settings. A sample of school-going adolescents was selected for the research, and a descriptive survey method was used. For data collection, a standardized self-esteem scale (commonly based on established measures like the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale) was used along with a structured questionnaire. The findings of the study revealed that most students showed moderate levels of self-esteem, while students with higher self-esteem demonstrated better academic engagement, confidence in classroom participation, and stronger emotional adjustment. The study also indicated that low self-esteem was associated with increased anxiety, lack of confidence, and poor academic performance.

Shekhar and Lawrence (2016) conducted a study on **Self-esteem among adolescents** with the objective of assessing the level of self-esteem and examining its relationship with academic achievement and socio-emotional adjustment. The study also aimed to explore how self-esteem influences students' confidence, motivation, and interpersonal relationships in school settings. A sample of secondary school students was selected through random sampling from selected schools, and a descriptive survey method was used. For data collection, the researchers used a standardized self-esteem scale (such as the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale or a similar validated self-esteem inventory) along with a structured questionnaire. The findings revealed that most students possessed a moderate level of self-esteem, while a smaller number showed high and low levels. It was further found that students with higher self-esteem demonstrated better academic performance, stronger classroom participation, and healthier emotional adjustment, whereas students with low self-esteem experienced academic difficulties, lack of confidence, and higher levels of anxiety and social withdrawal.

Sharma and Sharma (2019) conducted a study on **Self-esteem among school students** with the objective of assessing the level of self-esteem and examining its relationship with academic achievement and psychological well-being. The study also aimed to understand how self-esteem influences students' confidence, motivation, and behavior in school settings. A sample of secondary school students was selected using a random sampling technique from different schools. The researchers adopted a descriptive survey method for the study. For data collection, a standardized self-esteem scale (such as the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale) along with a self-structured questionnaire was used. The findings of the study revealed that most students had a moderate level of self-esteem, while some showed high and low levels. It was

further found that students with high self-esteem performed better academically, showed greater confidence in classroom activities, and had better emotional and social adjustment, whereas students with low self-esteem were more prone to anxiety, poor academic performance, and lack of confidence in school activities.

Jain and Mahienoor (2022) conducted a study on **Self-esteem among adolescents** with the objective of assessing the level of self-esteem and examining its relationship with academic stress, emotional well-being, and social adjustment. The study also aimed to explore gender differences in self-esteem among school students. A sample of secondary school students was selected using a stratified random sampling technique from selected schools. The researchers used a descriptive survey research design for the study. For data collection, a standardized self-esteem scale such as the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale was used along with a structured questionnaire to gather relevant background information. The findings of the study revealed that most students exhibited a moderate level of self-esteem, while a smaller proportion showed high and low levels. It was further found that students with higher self-esteem had better emotional stability, lower academic stress, and stronger social relationships, whereas students with low self-esteem experienced higher anxiety, poor adjustment, and reduced academic confidence. The study also indicated significant differences in self-esteem based on gender in some cases.

Suraj and Lohi (2024) conducted a study on **Self-esteem among school-going adolescents** with the objective of assessing the level of self-esteem and examining its relationship with academic performance, mental health, and social adjustment. The study also aimed to identify the influence of demographic variables such as gender and socio-economic status on self-esteem. A sample of secondary school students was selected through a random sampling technique from different educational institutions. The researchers used a descriptive survey research design for the study. For data collection, a standardized self-esteem scale (such as the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale) along with a structured questionnaire was administered to the participants. The findings of the study revealed that most students had a moderate level of self-esteem, while a smaller proportion showed high and low levels. It was further observed that students with higher self-esteem demonstrated better academic achievement, positive mental health, and strong social relationships, whereas low self-esteem was associated with academic difficulties, anxiety, and poor social adjustment.

● **Review of Related Literature on Self-Esteem by Foreign Researchers**

Rosenberg (1965) developed a landmark study on **Society and the adolescent Self-image** Self-esteem through the construction of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), with the objective of measuring global self-worth among adolescents and adults. The primary aim was to create a simple, reliable, and valid instrument to assess individuals' overall evaluation of themselves in terms of positive and negative feelings. The study did not focus on a traditional sample in the survey sense; instead, the scale was developed and validated using large samples of high school students from different backgrounds in the United States. The main tool used was the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, a 10-item Likert-type questionnaire designed to measure global self-esteem. The findings of Rosenberg's work established that the scale had high reliability and validity and effectively measured a single dimension of self-esteem. It also showed that self-esteem is strongly associated with psychological well-being, social adjustment, and confidence, and that individuals with higher self-esteem tend to have more positive self-perception and better mental health outcomes compared to those with low self-esteem.

Neff (USA) (2003) conducted extensive research related to **Compare self compassion to Self-Esteem**. Self-Esteem with the broader objective of examining self-compassion as an alternative and healthier construct linked to self-esteem, focusing on how individuals evaluate themselves and cope with failure, criticism, and personal shortcomings. The main objective of her work was to understand the limitations of global self-esteem and to explore how self-compassion contributes to psychological well-being, emotional resilience, and reduced self-criticism. Her research typically used diverse samples including university students and adults from the general population in the United States. Standardized tools such as the Self-Compassion Scale (SCS) developed by Neff, along with self-esteem measures like the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, were commonly used. The findings of her studies revealed that while self-esteem is associated with positive outcomes, self-compassion is a more stable and healthier predictor of mental well-being. It was found that individuals with higher self-compassion experience lower anxiety, reduced depression, and greater emotional resilience, even when their self-esteem fluctuates. Her work also emphasized that self-compassion supports stable self-worth without the need for external validation, making it a more adaptive psychological construct than traditional self-esteem alone.

Harter (1999) conducted research on **The Development of Self-Esteem**. Self-esteem with the broader objective of understanding the development of self-worth in children and adolescents and examining how perceived competence in different domains (such as academic, social, and physical appearance) contributes to global self-esteem. The study aimed to explore how self-esteem is shaped by self-perceptions and social feedback during developmental stages. The sample generally included children and adolescents from school settings, drawn from diverse backgrounds to assess developmental differences in self-evaluation. The main tools used in Harter's work were standardized self-perception and self-esteem instruments, particularly the *Self-Perception Profile for Children* and *Self-Perception Profile for Adolescents*, which measure domain-specific competence alongside global self-worth. The findings indicated that self-esteem is multidimensional and strongly influenced by perceived competence in valued areas of life, especially peer acceptance and academic ability. It was also found that children with higher perceived competence in important domains tend to show higher global self-esteem, better emotional adjustment, and greater motivation, while those with low perceived competence are more vulnerable to anxiety, low confidence, and social withdrawal.

Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, and Vohs (2003) conducted a comprehensive review study on **"Does High Self-Esteem Cause Better Performance, Interpersonal Success, Happiness and Healthier Lifestyle."** Self-esteem with the objective of critically examining the relationship between self-esteem and various life outcomes such as academic achievement, interpersonal success, mental health, and behavioral patterns. The main aim of the study was to evaluate whether high self-esteem consistently leads to better performance and psychological well-being or whether its effects are more complex and sometimes overstated. As a review-based research, it did not involve a single sample; instead, it analyzed findings from multiple empirical studies involving diverse populations including adolescents, college students, and adults. The tools considered across the reviewed studies primarily included standardized self-esteem measures such as the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and related self-report questionnaires. The findings revealed that self-esteem is moderately associated with happiness and reduced levels of depression and anxiety, but it has weak and inconsistent links with academic and job performance. The study also highlighted that high self-esteem does not necessarily cause better outcomes and, in some cases, may be associated with overconfidence or aggressive responses when self-image is threatened.

Robins (2022) conducted research on **Self Concept in Kinder Garden in First Grade Children** Self-esteem with the objective of examining its development, stability, and role in psychological adjustment across the lifespan. The study also aimed to understand how self-esteem is shaped by personality traits, life experiences, and social influences, and how it relates to mental health outcomes such as well-being, anxiety, and depression. The research typically involved large and diverse samples, including adolescents, young adults, and older populations, often drawn from longitudinal and cross-sectional datasets in psychological studies. Standardized instruments such as the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, along with personality and well-being questionnaires, were commonly used as tools for assessment. The findings indicated that self-esteem is relatively stable over time but can change due to significant life events and social experiences. It was also found that higher self-esteem is associated with better psychological well-being, greater life satisfaction, and lower levels of anxiety and depression, while low self-esteem is linked to emotional vulnerability and poor adjustment. The study further emphasized that self-esteem interacts closely with personality traits like neuroticism and extraversion in shaping individuals' overall mental health.

Orth (2011) conducted research on “**Self-Esteem Development from Age 14 to 30 years : A longitudinal study**” Self-esteem with the objective of examining the development, stability, and long-term consequences of self-esteem across the lifespan, particularly focusing on how self-esteem changes from adolescence into adulthood. The study also aimed to investigate how self-esteem is influenced by social, academic, and life experiences and how it predicts psychological well-being. The research typically used large longitudinal and cross-sectional samples, including adolescents and adults from diverse backgrounds, often drawn from national or cohort-based studies. Standardized measures such as the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale were primarily used as the tool for assessing global self-esteem. The findings revealed that self-esteem shows moderate stability over time but is still open to change due to major life events, social feedback, and personal achievements. It was further found that higher self-esteem is strongly associated with greater life satisfaction, better mental health, and lower levels of depression and anxiety, while low self-esteem predicts emotional difficulties and poor psychological adjustment over time. The study also highlighted that self-esteem tends to increase gradually from adolescence to middle adulthood before stabilizing in later life.

Rationale

Studies conducted by **Desai and Sathiyaseelan (2020)**, **Dr. Dhanwal and Thakur (2021)**, **Soni and Dr. Anchal (2024)**, **Priya and Sharma (2024)**, **Seth (2019)**. Indian researchers on parental pressure commonly reveal that excessive parental expectations regarding academic achievement create psychological stress among students. Most findings indicate that parents often compare children with peers, demand high marks, and place strong emphasis on career success, which increases anxiety, fear of failure, low confidence, and emotional tension among adolescents. Researchers also found that continuous pressure from parents negatively affects students' mental health, self-esteem, academic adjustment, and overall well-being. At the same time, moderate parental involvement and supportive guidance

were reported to have positive effects on motivation and performance. Therefore, Indian studies generally conclude that overly controlling or demanding parenting styles can adversely influence students' emotional and academic development.

Studies conducted by **Erik (1950s), Koynak, Kocak, and Kaynak (2021), Luthar and colleagues (2023), Chen (2012), Dr. Yi Jiang (2025)** foreign researchers commonly found that parental pressure significantly influences the emotional, psychological, and academic life of children and adolescents. Most international studies report that excessive expectations from parents regarding academic success, discipline, and career achievement increase stress, anxiety, depression, and fear of failure among students. Researchers also observed that constant criticism, comparison, and controlling parenting styles reduce self-esteem, motivation, and life satisfaction. In contrast, supportive and encouraging parental involvement was associated with better academic performance, confidence, emotional stability, and healthy personality development. Overall, abroad research findings suggest that balanced parental guidance is beneficial, whereas excessive pressure can negatively affect students' mental health and overall adjustment.

Studies conducted by **Koushal and Tewari (2021), Patil, Aithala (2017), Ray and Negi (2024), Rathore and Singh (2021), Malhotra (2015)**. Indian researchers commonly found that exam anxiety is a major psychological problem among students, especially during board examinations and competitive tests. Most findings indicate that high academic expectations, parental pressure, fear of failure, heavy syllabus, lack of preparation, and competition among peers are the main causes of exam anxiety. Researchers observed that students with high exam anxiety often experience stress, nervousness, poor concentration, low confidence, sleep disturbances, and reduced academic performance. Indian studies also reported that exam anxiety negatively affects students' mental health, emotional stability, and self-esteem. However, proper time management, parental support, counseling, relaxation techniques, and positive study habits were found to help in reducing exam anxiety among students.

Studies conducted by **Stober (2004), Aydin, Akkas and Saydam (2022), Dikmen (2022), Jirjeest (2024), Kharaba (2024)** foreign researchers commonly found that exam anxiety has a significant negative impact on students' academic performance and psychological well-being. Most international studies report that factors such as fear of failure, high parental and teacher expectations, competitive educational environments, and lack of confidence contribute to increased exam anxiety among students. Researchers observed that students with high levels of exam anxiety often experience stress, tension, nervousness, poor concentration, memory problems, and low academic achievement. Abroad studies also found that prolonged exam anxiety can lead to emotional problems such as depression, low self-esteem, and reduced motivation. At the same time, supportive teaching methods, counseling, relaxation exercises, effective study strategies, and positive family support were reported to help students manage and reduce exam anxiety effectively.

Studies conducted by **Mishra and Singh (2014), Sekhar and Lawrence (2016), Sharma and Sharma (2019), Jain and Mahienoor (2022), Suraj and Lohi (2024)** Indian

researchers commonly found that self-esteem plays an important role in the overall personality development, mental health, and academic achievement of students. Most findings indicate that students with high self-esteem show greater confidence, better social adjustment, emotional stability, positive thinking, and higher academic performance. In contrast, low self-esteem was associated with anxiety, stress, depression, poor academic achievement, and lack of self-confidence. Indian researchers also observed that factors such as parental support, family environment, peer relationships, socio-economic status, and school atmosphere significantly influence the development of self-esteem among adolescents. Overall, Indian studies conclude that healthy self-esteem contributes positively to students' psychological well-being and successful adjustment in personal, social, and academic life.

Studies conducted by **Rosenberg (1965)**, **Neff (USA) (2003)**, **Harter (1999)**, **Roy, Campbell and Krueger (2003)**, **Robins (2022)**, **Orth (2011)**, foreign researchers commonly found that self-esteem is closely related to an individual's mental health, emotional well-being, social relationships, and academic success. Most international studies report that individuals with high self-esteem tend to show greater confidence, motivation, positive behavior, better decision-making ability, and healthy social adjustment. In contrast, low self-esteem was associated with anxiety, depression, stress, poor academic performance, loneliness, and behavioral problems. Researchers also found that supportive family relationships, positive peer interactions, encouragement from teachers, and a healthy social environment contribute significantly to the development of self-esteem. Overall, abroad research findings suggest that strong self-esteem is essential for healthy personality development and successful adjustment in different areas of life.

The study of parental pressure, exam anxiety, and self-esteem is highly important in today's scenario because students are facing increasing academic competition, high expectations, and psychological stress in modern society. Rapid changes in the education system, pressure to achieve high marks, career insecurity, and comparison through social media have greatly affected the mental health and emotional well-being of adolescents. Excessive parental pressure often creates exam anxiety and lowers students' self-esteem, which can negatively influence their academic performance, confidence, personality development, and social adjustment. Understanding these factors is essential for promoting a healthy educational environment, reducing stress among students, and encouraging positive parenting practices. This topic is therefore significant for parents, teachers, counselors, and society to help students achieve balanced mental health, emotional stability, and overall development.

The present study differs from previous research studies in terms of variables, sample group, and area of investigation. While many earlier researchers mainly focused on only one or two variables such as parental pressure, exam anxiety, or self-esteem separately, the present study attempts to examine the relationship among all three variables together. In addition, previous studies were often conducted on different classes, age groups, or college students, whereas the present research focuses specifically on students of a particular class or educational level. Furthermore, many earlier studies were carried out in metropolitan or

different regional cities, but the present study is conducted in a different city or local area, which provides a new social and educational context. Therefore, the study contributes new findings and understanding regarding parental pressure, exam anxiety, and self-esteem among students in the selected population and area.

Statement of the problem

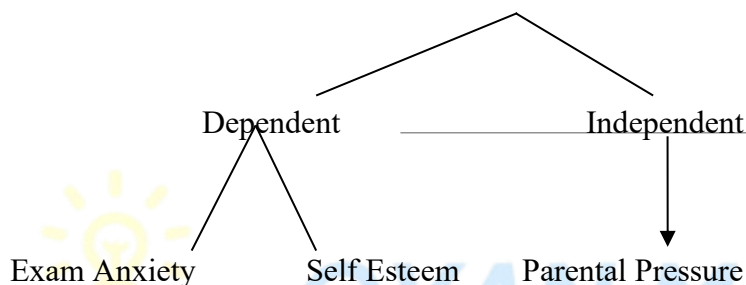
Influence of the Parental Pressure on Exam

Anxiety and Self Esteem of student of

Class VIII Indore City

Operational definition of variable

Variables under study



Parental Pressure Definition

According to G. C. Kohn, “parental pressure refers to the force or influence exerted by parents on children to achieve high standards in academics, behavior, or career goals. It involves expectations and demands that may affect a child’s emotional and psychological well-being”.

Exam Anxiety Definition

According to Charles D. Spielberger, “exam anxiety is a feeling of tension, worry, nervousness, and fear that occurs before or during examinations and affects a student’s performance and concentration”.

Self Esteem Definition

According to Morris Rosenberg, “self-esteem is an individual’s overall evaluation of his or her own worth, value, and importance. It reflects a person’s positive or negative attitude toward oneself”.

Objectives

Objectives of the study on parental pressure, exam anxiety, and self-esteem among Class VIII students:

1. To compare the adjusted mean scores of Parental Pressure along male and female students of Class VIII of Indore city.
2. To compare the adjusted mean scores of Exam Anxiety along male and female students of Class VIII of Indore city.
3. To compare the adjusted mean scores of Self-Esteem along male and female students of Class VIII of Indore city.
4. To the correlation between parental pressure and self-esteem of students of Class VIII of Indore city.
5. To the correlation between parental pressure and Exam Anxiety of students of Class VIII of Indore city.

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference in the adjusted mean scores of parental pressure among male and female students of Class VIII of Indore city.
2. There is no significant difference in the adjusted mean scores of self-esteem among male and female students of Class VIII of Indore city.
3. There is no significant difference in the adjusted mean scores of exam anxiety among male and female students of Class VIII of Indore city.
4. There is no significant correlation between parental pressure and self-esteem of students of Class VIII of Indore city.
5. There is no significant correlation between parental pressure and exam anxiety of students of Class VIII of Indore city.

Methodology

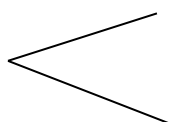
The present study entitled “*Influence of Parental Pressure on Exam Anxiety and Self-Esteem of Students of Class VIII in Indore City*” will be conducted to examine the relationship between parental pressure, exam anxiety, and self-esteem among school students studying in Class VIII of Indore city.

Sample and Sampling Technique

For the present study, a sample of 120 students of Class VIII was selected from two schools of Indore city. The students will be selected through Random Sampling Technique to provide equal opportunity to all participants for inclusion in the study.

Sample – 2 Schools

60 students



60 students

2 schools will be selected from Indore city random method and 60 students from each school will be selected by random sampling technique.

Tools

S.No.	Tool	Developer
1	Parental Pressures	By Researcher
2	Exam Anxiety	Varsha Agrawal
3	Self Esteem	M.S. Prasad & G.P. Thakur

Research Design – Descriptive Research Design

Procedure of Data Collection

Letter for permission from School will be obtained from Principal of Arihant College, Indore. Then Permission will be obtained from the Principals of selected schools before collecting the data. The students will be informed about the purpose of the study and proper instructions will be given for filling the questionnaires and tools. The investigator will personally administer the tools questionnaire to the students in classroom settings and will collect the responses carefully.

Statistical Techniques Used

After collecting the data, scoring will be done according to the manuals of the respective tools. The obtained data will be analyzed by using Statistical Techniques such as Mean, Standard Deviation, Correlation, and Percentage analysis to interpret the results of the study.

Delimitation

1. The study will limited to Class 8 students only.
2. The study will confined to selected two schools of a indore city only.
3. The study focus only on Parental Pressure, Exam Anxiety, and Self-Esteem.