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KEEPING PUPILS FROM STRESS: PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

Tajbenova Sawle

PhD in pedagogical sciences, associate professor

Jumabaeva Malika Polatbek qızı

Student of Primary education faculty

Abstract: Student stress has become a prevalent issue in educational environments, significantly affecting students' mental health, academic performance, and overall well-being. The primary causes of stress include academic pressure, heavy workloads, time management struggles, social expectations, fear of failure, and family pressures. This stress is further exacerbated by uncertainty about the future and, in some cases, pre-existing mental health conditions. Addressing student stress requires a multifaceted approach, including promoting a balanced lifestyle, improving time management skills, fostering open communication, reducing academic pressure, and providing access to mental health resources. By creating a supportive environment and encouraging healthier coping mechanisms, educational institutions can help mitigate the impact of stress on students.

Key Words: Student stress, academic pressure, time management, mental health, social pressure, coping mechanisms, workload, family expectations, fear of failure, educational support, student well-being, school stress management.

Student stress has become a widespread concern in educational systems around the world, affecting learners of all ages. With the increasing demands of academic achievement, extracurricular involvement, and social pressures, students are experiencing heightened levels of stress that can negatively impact their mental health, academic performance, and overall quality of life. The modern educational landscape, characterized by intense competition, standardized testing, and the pursuit of high grades, places considerable pressure on students to excel. This stress is often compounded by a lack of effective coping mechanisms, limited support systems, and challenges in balancing schoolwork with personal and social

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responsibilities. Additionally, many students face the added burden of family expectations, societal standards, and the uncertainty of future career prospects. As a result, students may experience a range of emotional and psychological issues, including anxiety, depression, burnout, and feelings of inadequacy.

Addressing the root causes of student stress is essential for fostering a healthy learning environment. Educational institutions must adopt a comprehensive approach to support student well-being, which includes promoting healthy habits, teaching stress management techniques, and creating a culture of open communication. By acknowledging the pressures students face and providing them with the tools to manage stress effectively, schools can help students thrive both academically and personally. [2]

1. Academic Pressure and Its Impact on Pupils

Academic pressure is one of the leading contributors to stress among pupils. Many students feel the weight of expectations from parents, teachers, and society to perform at high levels. The pressure to excel in exams, standardized tests, and assignments can create feelings of anxiety and fear of failure. Pupils often associate academic success with their self-worth, which can lead to stress when they struggle to meet these standards. Furthermore, as pupils advance through their education, the demands increase, making them more susceptible to stress. To mitigate academic pressure, educational institutions should foster a growth mindset. Instead of focusing solely on outcomes, teachers and parents can emphasize the importance of effort, persistence, and learning from mistakes. Providing opportunities for pupils to develop skills beyond academics, such as creative thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration, can help reduce the pressure to achieve perfection.

2. Heavy Workload and Time Management Challenges

Pupils today are often burdened with a heavy academic workload, which can leave them with little time for relaxation, extracurricular activities, or socializing. Long hours of homework, projects, and test preparation can lead to physical and emotional exhaustion. When pupils are overloaded with work, they may struggle to balance their responsibilities, leading to heightened stress. One solution is to implement effective time management strategies. Pupils can benefit from learning how to prioritize tasks, break them into manageable chunks, and avoid procrastination. Schools can offer workshops on time management and study techniques, encouraging pupils to use planners or digital tools to organize their schedules. Encouraging



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regular breaks and time for relaxation is also essential for maintaining mental health and reducing burnout.

3. Social Pressures and Mental Health Issues

Social pressures, including the desire to fit in with peers, deal with bullying, and manage relationships, are significant stressors for many pupils. Social media amplifies these pressures by creating environments where pupils constantly compare themselves to others. Additionally, bullying, whether physical or online, can lead to feelings of isolation, anxiety, and depression. Schools must foster a positive, inclusive atmosphere where pupils feel supported and valued. Anti-bullying programs, peer mentoring, and social-emotional learning initiatives can help pupils navigate relationships in healthy ways. Providing access to mental health resources, such as counselors or support groups, is crucial for addressing and managing issues like anxiety, depression, or low self-esteem.

4. Fear of Failure and Perfectionism

The fear of failure is often compounded by perfectionist tendencies in students, where they feel compelled to succeed at everything and fear the consequences of making mistakes. This fear can create a constant state of anxiety, preventing pupils from taking risks or pursuing activities outside their comfort zones. Pupils with perfectionist traits may also experience higher levels of frustration when they don't meet their own or others' expectations. Encouraging pupils to embrace failure as part of the learning process can help shift their perspective. Teachers and parents can promote resilience by modeling positive responses to setbacks and emphasizing that mistakes are opportunities for growth. Creating environments that celebrate effort, experimentation, and progress rather than perfection can foster healthier attitudes towards success and failure.[4]

The impact of stress on pupils is a significant concern that requires attention and action from educators, parents, and communities. By addressing the root causes of stress, promoting a balanced approach to learning, and providing adequate support systems, we can help pupils manage stress more effectively and foster an environment where they can thrive academically and personally. The solutions outlined in this paper—ranging from teaching time management to promoting mental health resources—can reduce stress levels, improve well-being, and enhance the overall educational experience for pupils.

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