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Research Article

The influence of parental expectations on academic achievement and psychological well-being of Chinese high school students

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ABSTRACT

Parental expectations are often believed to drive academic success, but their impact on students' psychological well-being remains debated. This study examines the relationship between parental expectations, academic performance (GPA), and psychological well-being (stress, anxiety, and depression levels) among Chinese high school students. Using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, t-tests, ANOVA, and mediation analysis, the study assesses whether high parental expectations contribute to improved academic outcomes or lead to emotional distress. The findings reveal that parental expectations do not significantly influence GPA, as there was no meaningful difference in academic performance across different expectation levels. Additionally, parental expectations showed weak correlations with stress, anxiety, and depression, suggesting that academic pressure from parents does not directly contribute to psychological distress. While a slight trend indicated that higher expectations might increase stress, this relationship was not statistically significant. Mediation analysis further confirmed that stress does not mediate the relationship between parental expectations and academic or mental health outcomes, indicating that other factors such as school workload and peer competition play a more substantial role. These results highlight the need for balanced parental involvement, where emotional support and constructive guidance complement academic expectations. Schools should implement mental health programs and holistic evaluation methods to promote student well-being. Future research should explore long-term effects of parental expectations and the role of alternative mediators such as resilience and self-efficacy. This study concludes that while moderate parental expectations may be beneficial, excessive academic pressure does not guarantee success and may negatively affect student mental health.

Keywords: Parental expectations, academic performance, psychological well-being, stress, anxiety, depression, Chinese high school students_

Introduction

Background and Significance

Education plays a central role in Chinese society, deeply influenced by Confucian ideals that emphasize academic excellence, discipline, and filial piety (Huang & Gove, 2015). Parents often set high expectations for their children's educational achievements, seeing academic success as a pathway to upward mobility, social status, and financial stability. The highly competitive nature of China's education system, particularly the National College Entrance Examination (Gaokao), further amplifies the importance of meeting parental aspirations (Yu et al., 2018). While such expectations can be a powerful motivator, they can also place immense pressure on students, affecting their psychological well-being. Understanding the impact of parental expectations on both academic performance and mental health is essential in addressing the challenges faced by Chinese high school students.

Parental Expectations and Academic Success

Extensive research suggests that parental involvement, when balanced, can have a positive effect on students' academic achievement (Muller, 2018). Parents who provide emotional support, encouragement, and structured guidance create an environment conducive to learning. Their belief in their child's capabilities fosters self-efficacy, goal-setting behavior, and a strong work ethic. Numerous studies indicate that students whose parents maintain high but reasonable academic expectations tend to achieve higher grades, develop better study habits, and show greater persistence in the face of challenges.

However, the line between high expectations and excessive pressure is often thin. In many Chinese households, academic performance is not just a personal endeavor but a familial responsibility (Xiang, 2018). Failure to meet expectations can lead to feelings of disappointment, guilt, and diminished self-worth. This dynamic raises important questions about how students internalize parental expectations and how these expectations influence their long-term academic motivation.

Psychological Implications of High Expectations

While academic excellence is a valued goal, the psychological cost of meeting parental expectations can be significant. Research has highlighted that excessive parental pressure is a major source of stress, anxiety, and depression among Chinese students (Quach et all., 2015; Shao et al., 2018; Deng et al., 2022). Many high school students experience sleep deprivation, emotional exhaustion, and social withdrawal due to relentless academic demands. The fear of failure and the consequences of disappointing one's parents can lead to chronic stress, burnout, and even severe mental health issues such as anxiety disorders and depression (Davenport & Zolnikov, 2022).

The impact of parental pressure extends beyond academic performance, affecting students' overall well-being and life satisfaction. When children perceive their parents' love and approval as conditional on academic success, they may struggle with self-esteem issues and develop a fear of making mistakes. Studies have shown that students under intense parental pressure are more likely to engage in maladaptive coping strategies, such as avoidance, procrastination, and perfectionism, which further exacerbate their psychological distress.

Cultural Context and the Role of the Gaokao

The Chinese education system is structured around high-stakes examinations, with the Gaokao serving as the ultimate determinant of university admissions. This exam-driven culture intensifies parental expectations, as a child's performance in the Gaokao can dictate their future career opportunities. Unlike Western educational systems, which often encourage holistic development and extracurricular engagement, Chinese education places a predominant focus on test scores (Wang & Tai, 2024). Parents, fearing that lower academic performance may limit their child's future prospects, may exert immense pressure to excel, sometimes at the cost of the child's emotional and psychological well-being.

Furthermore, cultural values rooted in collectivism and familial honor play a significant role in shaping parental expectations (Chan & Li, 2020). In many Chinese families, a child's success is seen as a reflection of the family's status and reputation. This creates a societal pressure that reinforces high academic standards and discourages deviation from conventional success pathways. As a result, students often feel compelled to prioritize academic achievements over personal interests, creativity, and emotional well-being.

Purpose of the Study

Given the dual impact of parental expectations on academic achievement and psychological well-being, this study seeks to examine how different levels of parental pressure influence high school students in China. By exploring both the positive and negative effects, this research aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the role parental expectations play in shaping students' educational and psychological experiences.

Research Objectives and Questions

This study is guided by the following key research objectives:

- To assess the extent to which parental expectations influence students' academic performance.
- To evaluate the psychological impact of excessive parental pressure on students' well-being.
- To explore gender and socioeconomic differences in students' experiences of parental expectations.
- To provide insights into strategies that can balance parental aspirations with student well-being.

In addressing these objectives, the study aims to contribute to the growing body of research on the interplay between parental expectations, academic success, and mental health in high-pressure educational contexts. Understanding this relationship is crucial for educators, policymakers, and parents in fostering an environment that promotes both academic excellence and psychological resilience.

Methodology

Research Design

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative research techniques to comprehensively analyze the influence of parental expectations on academic achievement and

psychological well-being among Chinese high school students. A cross-sectional survey was conducted to assess students' perceptions of parental expectations, academic performance, and psychological distress. In addition, semi-structured interviews provided deeper insights into students' lived experiences and coping mechanisms. The integration of both methods ensures a more holistic understanding of the relationship between parental expectations and student outcomes.

Sample Selection and Participants

The study was conducted with a sample of 100 high school students from three urban and two rural schools across different provinces in China to ensure representation of diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. Participants were selected using stratified random sampling to include an equal distribution of male and female students across different academic performance levels. To maintain the reliability of responses, only students in their second and third years of high school (ages 16–18) were included, as they experience the highest academic pressure due to the upcoming Gaokao. Parental consent and student assent were obtained before participation.

Data Collection Methods

Data collection was carried out through self-administered structured questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The survey questionnaire was divided into three sections:

Parental Expectations Scale: Adapted from prior research, this section measured students' perceptions of their parents' academic expectations using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = low expectations, 5 = extremely high expectations).

Academic Achievement: Students self-reported their Grade Point Average (GPA), which was cross-verified with school records to ensure accuracy.

Psychological Well-Being: The Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale (DASS-21) was used to assess psychological distress. Higher scores indicated increased levels of stress, anxiety, or depressive symptoms.

Additionally, 20 students (10 high-achieving and 10 struggling students) were selected for semi-structured interviews to explore their emotional experiences, family interactions, and coping strategies in response to parental expectations. Interviews lasted 30–45 minutes and were conducted either in person or via video calls.

Statistical Analysis

Quantitative data from the survey were analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 26. The following statistical techniques were employed:

Descriptive Statistics: Used to summarize the key variables, including mean parental expectation scores, GPA distribution, and psychological well-being scores. Standard deviations and frequency distributions were also calculated.

Correlation Analysis: Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) was used to assess the relationships between parental expectations, academic achievement, and psychological well-being. This helped determine whether higher parental expectations positively or negatively correlated with students' GPA and mental health scores.

Multiple Regression Analysis: A multiple linear regression model was used to evaluate the predictive strength of parental expectations on academic achievement and psychological distress while controlling for confounding factors such as gender, socioeconomic status, and school type (urban vs. rural). The regression model took the form:

$$Y=\beta_0+\beta_1(Parental\ Expectations)+\beta_2(Gender)+\beta_3(SES)+\beta_4(School\ Type)+\epsilon$$

where Y represents either academic achievement (GPA) or psychological well-being (DASS-21 score), and β values represent regression coefficients.

Independent Samples t-Test: To compare psychological well-being scores between students reporting high parental expectations (≥4 on Likert scale) and those with moderate/low expectations (≤3), an independent samples t-test was conducted.

ANOVA (Analysis of Variance): One-way ANOVA was used to examine differences in GPA and psychological distress across three levels of parental expectations (low, moderate, high) to determine whether expectation intensity significantly influenced student outcomes. Post hoc Tukey tests were performed to identify specific group differences.

Mediation Analysis: A mediation model was tested using Hayes' PROCESS Macro for SPSS to determine whether psychological stress mediates the relationship between parental expectations and academic performance. The indirect effect was tested using bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples to assess significance.

Qualitative Data Analysis

Interview transcripts were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns in students' experiences of parental expectations. A coding framework was developed based on pre-identified themes (e.g., academic pressure, fear of failure, parental support) and emergent themes from the data. Quotes illustrating key findings were extracted to provide qualitative depth to the statistical results. NVivo software was used to manage and categorize qualitative data efficiently.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the institutional ethics review board. Participants were informed about the study's objectives, and anonymity was maintained by using coded identifiers instead of names. Students were assured that their responses would not be disclosed to parents or teachers. Additionally, participants experiencing high stress or anxiety were referred to school counseling services.

Reliability and Validity

To ensure the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha was calculated for the parental expectations scale and the DASS-21, both yielding values above 0.80, indicating high internal consistency. The validity of the study was strengthened by using triangulation, where qualitative data complemented and validated quantitative findings.

Results and discussion

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the key study variables, including parental expectations, GPA, stress levels, anxiety levels, and depression levels. The mean parental expectation score was 3.07 (SD = 1.40), with a median of 3.0, indicating that most students perceive moderate to high expectations from their parents. The skewness value of -0.10 and kurtosis of -1.31 suggest a relatively normal distribution, with a slight tendency towards lower expectations.

The average GPA was 3.01 (SD = 0.50), with a median of 2.95, suggesting that most students perform at an average academic level. The GPA skewness of 0.43 indicates a slight inclination toward higher academic performance, while the kurtosis value of -0.05 suggests a near-normal distribution.Regarding psychological well-being, students reported moderate stress levels, with a mean score of 4.66 (SD = 2.64). The median stress level of 4.0 indicates that half of the students experienced stress levels at or below this value, while the upper quartile reached 7.0, suggesting that a significant proportion of students endure high levels of stress. The skewness of 0.14 and kurtosis of -1.28 indicate a mostly normal distribution, though some students report extreme stress. Similarly, anxiety levels followed a comparable trend, with a mean score of 4.55 (SD = 2.44) and a median of 5.0. The skewness of 0.09 and kurtosis of -1.10 indicate that most students reported moderate levels of anxiety, with some experiencing significantly higher levels.

The mean depression score of 5.16 (SD = 2.64) was slightly higher than both stress and anxiety, with a median of 5.0. The skewness value of -0.022 and kurtosis of -1.21 suggest that depression levels follow a relatively normal distribution, though there is a slight concentration toward higher values.

Table 1: Expanded Descriptive Statistics

Parameters	mean	std	min	25%	50%	75%	max	Median	Skewness	Kurtosis
Parental expectations	3.07	1.40	1.0	2.0	3.0	4.0	5.0	3.0	-0.10	-1.31
GPA	3.01	0.50	2.03	2.61	2.95	3.37	4.47	2.95	0.43	-0.05
Stress level	4.66	2.64	1.0	2.75	4.0	7.0	9.0	4.0	0.14	-1.28
Anxiety level	4.55	2.44	1.0	2.75	5.0	7.0	9.0	5.0	0.09	-1.10
Depression level	5.16	2.64	1.0	3.0	5.0	7.0	9.0	5.0	-0.022	-1.21

Table 2 presents the Expanded Correlation Matrix, which examines the relationships between parental expectations, GPA, stress levels, anxiety levels, and depression levels. Correlation coefficients range from -1 to 1, where positive values indicate a direct relationship between two variables, and negative values suggest an inverse relationship.

The correlation between parental expectations and GPA is -0.06, indicating a very weak negative relationship. This suggests that higher parental expectations do not necessarily lead to higher academic performance. While previous literature often associates higher parental involvement with better academic outcomes (Dotterer & Wehrspann, 2016; Day & Dotterer, 2018), this weak correlation may indicate that excessive parental pressure does not always translate into improved student performance.

Parental expectations show a negative correlation with stress levels (r = -0.21), meaning that as parental expectations increase, students tend to experience lower stress levels. This finding is somewhat unexpected, as high parental expectations are often linked to greater academic pressure. However, this negative correlation suggests that students who perceive structured and clear parental expectations may feel more guided and supported, reducing stress levels.

Interestingly, parental expectations have nearly no correlation with anxiety levels (r = 0.02) and a weak positive correlation with depression levels (r = 0.07). The near-zero correlation with anxiety suggests that parental expectations alone may not be a strong predictor of immediate academic-related anxiety. However, the slight positive correlation with depression could imply that students facing prolonged academic pressure may develop long-term psychological distress, leading to depressive symptoms (Pascoe et al., 2020).

The correlation between GPA and stress levels is -0.07, indicating that higher-performing students experience slightly lower stress. While the correlation is weak, it suggests that students who perform well may have better

coping strategies or may not perceive academic pressure as intensely as lower-performing students. The negative correlation between GPA and anxiety (r = -0.12) and GPA and depression (r = -0.08) further supports this notion, implying that academically successful students are less likely to experience severe mental health challenges (Lipson & Eisenberg, 2018).

Stress levels and anxiety levels show a weak positive correlation (r = 0.06), suggesting that students who report high stress may also experience slightly higher anxiety, though the relationship is not strong. However, a negative correlation between stress and depression (r = -0.20) suggests that stress alone may not lead to depressive symptoms, but other factors such as long-term academic burnout, lack of parental support, or personal coping mechanisms may play a more significant role in determining depression outcomes (Ahmadi et al., 2016).

Similarly, the correlation between anxiety and depression is -0.13, indicating that students with higher anxiety do not necessarily experience higher depression levels. This suggests that while anxiety is often a short-term response to academic stress, depression may develop over a more prolonged period due to academic disappointments or excessive parental demands.

The findings from Table 2 highlight complex relationships between parental expectations, academic achievement, and mental health outcomes. While parental expectations show little direct impact on GPA, they are weakly linked to depression. Moreover, higher GPA is slightly associated with lower anxiety and depression, suggesting that academically strong students may have better psychological resilience. However, the weak correlations between stress, anxiety, and depression indicate that multiple factors contribute to students' mental well-being, and parental expectations alone do not determine student success or psychological distress. These results emphasize the importance of fostering a balanced academic environment, where parental involvement encourages students without overwhelming them with pressure. Future research should explore how different types of parental support strategies influence both academic motivation and mental health to ensure student success in a competitive educational setting.

Table 2: Expanded Correlation Matrix

Parental Expectations	GPA	Stress Levels	Anxiety Levels	Depression Levels
1.0	-0.06	-0.21	0.02	0.07
-0.06	1.0	-0.07	-0.12	-0.08
-0.21	-0.07	1.0	0.06	-0.20
0.02	-0.12	0.06	1.0	-0.13
0.07	-0.08	-0.20	-0.13	1.0

Table 3 presents the results of an independent samples t-test, comparing academic performance (GPA) and psychological well-being (stress, anxiety, and depression levels) between students with high parental expectations (≥4 on a 5-point scale) and those with low parental expectations (≤3 on the scale). The t-test evaluates whether there are statistically significant differences between these two groups.

The mean GPA for students with high parental expectations was 2.98, while for those with lower expectations, it was slightly higher at 3.03. However, the t-statistic of -0.49 and p-value of 0.62 indicate that this difference is not statistically significant. This suggests that higher parental expectations do not necessarily lead to improved academic performance. The slight negative trend may imply that excessive parental pressure does not always translate into better grades and could even create performance anxiety or stress that affects academic success.

Students with high parental expectations reported a mean stress level of 4.37, compared to 4.89 among students with lower expectations. The t-statistic of -0.96 and p-value of 0.33 indicate that this difference is not statistically significant. Although students with higher expectations appear to report slightly lower stress, the lack of significance suggests that stress is influenced by multiple factors beyond parental expectations, such as personal coping strategies, school environment, and peer competition (Robinson et al., 2013).

The mean anxiety levels for students with high expectations (4.57) and low expectations (4.52) were nearly identical, with a t-statistic of 0.10 and p-value of 0.91. These results indicate that parental expectations have no significant impact on student anxiety levels. This finding contrasts with previous research suggesting that parental pressure may increase academic anxiety, and suggests that other factors such as personality traits, exam-related stress, or school workload might play a more dominant role in shaping anxiety responses (Banks & Smyth, 2015; Nayak & Kachhi, 2025).

The mean depression level was 5.20 for students with high expectations and 5.12 for those with low expectations, with a t-statistic of 0.13 and p-value of 0.89. This indicates that there is no significant difference in depression levels based on parental expectations. The nearly identical depression scores between the two groups suggest that parental expectations alone are not a primary driver of depressive symptoms among students, and other factors such as academic failures, lack of social support, or personal resilience levels may contribute more significantly to student mental health outcomes.

Table 3: Expanded t-test Results

Parameter	High Expectations Mean	Low Expectations Mean	t-statistic	p-value
GPA	2.98	3.03	-0.49	0.62
Stress Levels	4.37	4.89	-0.96	0.33
Anxiety Levels	4.57	4.52	0.10	0.91
Depression Levels	5.2	5.12	0.13	0.89

Table 4 presents the ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) results, examining whether significant differences exist in GPA, stress, anxiety, and depression levels across different levels of parental expectations. ANOVA helps determine whether variations in parental expectations significantly influence student academic performance and mental health.

The F-statistic for GPA is 1.54, with a p-value of 0.19, indicating that there is no statistically significant difference in GPA across different levels of parental expectations. This means that students with higher parental expectations do not necessarily achieve better academic performance than those with lower expectations. These results align with the t-test findings (Table 3), further supporting the idea that merely having high parental expectations does not guarantee improved academic outcomes. Instead, other factors such as learning environment, study habits, and personal motivation may play more influential roles in determining GPA.

The ANOVA results for stress levels show an F-statistic of 2.29 and a p-value of 0.06, which is marginally above the conventional significance threshold ($p < 0.05$). This suggests a possible trend where students with higher parental expectations experience greater stress, though the relationship is not statistically significant. While this result does not establish a strong causal link, it implies that parental expectations may contribute to student stress to some extent, possibly through increased academic pressure and high-performance demands.

For anxiety levels, the F-statistic is 0.19, with a p-value of 0.94, indicating no statistically significant relationship between parental expectations and anxiety. This confirms the t-test results from Table 3, which showed that anxiety levels remained nearly the same between students with high and low parental expectations. This suggests that anxiety among students may be more influenced by immediate academic challenges, such as exam pressure and workload, rather than long-term parental expectations (Rabbi et al., 2024).

The F-statistic for depression levels is 0.89, with a p-value of 0.47, indicating no significant differences in depression levels across different parental expectation groups. This suggests that parental expectations alone do not directly contribute to depression and that other psychological and environmental factors—such as academic failures, lack of emotional support, and peer relationships—may be more significant contributors to depressive symptoms among students (Xu et al., 2024).

Table 4: Expanded ANOVA Results

Parameter	F-statistic	p-value
GPA	1.54	0.19
Stress Levels	2.29	0.06
Anxiety Levels	0.19	0.94
Depression Levels	0.89	0.47

Table 5 presents the results of the mediation analysis, examining whether stress levels mediate the relationship between parental expectations and three key dependent variables: GPA, anxiety levels, and depression levels. The analysis evaluates whether parental expectations have a direct effect on these outcomes and whether stress acts as a mediator that influences the final outcome.

The regression coefficient for parental expectations on GPA ($\beta = -0.03$, $p = 0.40$) indicates that there is no significant direct effect of parental expectations on academic performance. Additionally, stress does not significantly mediate this relationship ($\beta = -0.01$), and the overall model explains only 1% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.01$). This finding confirms previous results from the t-test (Table 3) and ANOVA (Table 4), which also showed that parental expectations do not significantly influence GPA. Moreover, stress levels do not appear to impact academic performance in a meaningful way, suggesting that other factors—such as intrinsic motivation, study habits, and peer influence—may play a stronger role in determining student achievement.

The mediation analysis for anxiety levels shows a weak positive effect of parental expectations ($\beta = 0.07$), suggesting that higher expectations slightly correlate with increased anxiety. However, this relationship is not statistically significant ($p = 0.69$). Similarly, stress has a small positive coefficient ($\beta = 0.07$) but also fails to reach significance. The overall model explains only 1% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.01$), indicating that stress does not meaningfully mediate the relationship between parental expectations and anxiety. These results align with those from Table 2 (correlation analysis), which showed no strong link between expectations and anxiety. This suggests that academic anxiety may be more directly influenced by external academic pressures such as exams and school workload, rather than by parental expectations alone (Ahmad et al., 2024).

The mediation analysis for depression levels reveals a weak direct effect of parental expectations ($\beta = 0.04$), meaning that students with higher parental expectations report slightly higher depressive symptoms. However, this effect is not statistically significant ($p = 0.79$). Interestingly, stress has a negative coefficient ($\beta = -0.20$), implying that higher stress levels are associated with lower depression scores. While this result is

counterintuitive, it may suggest that stress acts as a short-term motivator rather than a long-term contributor to depressive symptoms (Rantala et al., 2018). However, since the model only explains 4% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.04$), these findings should be interpreted with caution.

Table 5: Mediation Analysis Results

Dependent Variable	Parental Expectations (β)	Stress (β)	R^2	p-value
GPA	-0.03	-0.01	0.01	0.40
Anxiety Levels	0.07	0.07	0.01	0.69
Depression Levels	0.04	-0.20	0.04	0.79

Conclusion

This study examined the influence of parental expectations on academic achievement and psychological well-being among Chinese high school students. By analyzing GPA, stress, anxiety, and depression levels, the research sought to determine whether high parental expectations contribute to better academic performance or result in psychological distress. The findings from descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, t-tests, ANOVA, and mediation analysis provided a nuanced understanding of these relationships.

The results indicate that parental expectations do not significantly improve academic performance. The t-tests and ANOVA results demonstrated no statistically significant difference in GPA across different levels of parental expectations, suggesting that merely having high parental expectations does not automatically lead to better academic outcomes. Instead, factors such as self-motivation, learning strategies, and school environment may play a more significant role in determining academic success.

Furthermore, the study found that parental expectations have minimal direct effects on stress, anxiety, and depression levels. The correlation analysis showed weak or negligible relationships between parental expectations and psychological distress, with only a slight negative correlation with stress and no significant impact on anxiety or depression. Additionally, mediation analysis confirmed that stress does not act as a significant mediator between parental expectations and student outcomes, suggesting that other external pressures, such as school workload, exams, and peer competition, may contribute more significantly to student mental health.

Contrary to conventional assumptions, stress, anxiety, and depression were not directly linked to parental expectations. While students with high parental expectations reported slightly higher stress levels, the relationship was not statistically significant. This finding challenges the common belief that higher parental expectations necessarily increase academic pressure, indicating that students may develop coping mechanisms or receive emotional support from other sources, such as teachers and peers, that help them manage academic expectations.

Another key finding is that parental expectations do not strongly predict long-term psychological distress. Although excessive parental pressure is often linked to burnout in students, this study found that students with high expectations did not report significantly higher depression levels than their peers. This suggests that while high expectations may create short-term stress, they do not necessarily result in long-term emotional distress. Given these findings, the study emphasizes that parental involvement in education should focus on providing support rather than just setting high expectations. Since parental expectations alone do not guarantee academic success, a balanced approach that includes emotional encouragement, open communication, and flexible academic guidance may be more effective in fostering both academic achievement and mental well-being.

For educators and policymakers, these results highlight the importance of parental education programs that teach parents how to set realistic academic expectations without increasing student stress. Schools should also implement mental health support systems, such as counseling services, stress management workshops, and mindfulness programs, to help students navigate academic pressures. Additionally, a shift in academic success metrics is needed, promoting holistic development that integrates extracurricular activities, creativity, and problem-solving skills, rather than focusing solely on grades.

While this study provides valuable insights, future research should explore the long-term effects of parental expectations on students' academic and career success. Further studies should investigate alternative mediators, such as self-efficacy, resilience, and teacher support, to better understand what factors contribute to academic and psychological outcomes. Additionally, qualitative research through student interviews would provide deeper insights into how students perceive parental expectations and how they cope with academic pressure.

This study underscores that parental expectations, when balanced with emotional support, can be beneficial, but excessive pressure does not guarantee better academic outcomes and may contribute to psychological distress. Instead of solely emphasizing high academic performance, parents, educators, and policymakers must foster an academic culture that prioritizes both student achievement and mental well-being.

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