Student and Societal Pressures: Exploring Causes, Consequences and Potential Stress-Reduction Strategies

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ABSTRACT

This investigation aims to explore the causes and consequences of student stress in order to design practical strategies that parents, teachers, and schools can use to mitigate stress. In today's society, many students face high societal pressures and expectations. The desire to meet these high expectations can often be extremely stressful, affecting a student's mental health and well-being. Understanding and addressing this issue is essential to effectively create a supportive, stress-free environment where students can balance academic achievement and well-being. Some of the consequences of stress include poor academic performance, insufficient sleep, anxiety, depression, physical illness, irritability, and social withdrawal. The investigation results also identified five components that make up a stress-free environment. The components are positive parental involvement, a learning-based, non-competitive school environment, positive peer relationships, and teacher motivation and behavior. Additionally, the results suggest that implementing Social-Emotional Learning courses in schools is an excellent strategy to help students manage stress and foster positive peer relationships.

Introduction

In today's world, pursuing academic excellence has become predominant, driven by the belief that high educational achievements pave the way for future success. Consequently, students navigate an increasingly demanding educational environment with rigorous classes, competitive environments, and high expectations. The desire to meet these soaring expectations can often create immense pressure on students, and it can have harmful consequences on their overall well-being. The impact of high academic expectations and academic pressure on student stress is a big concern since it can affect students' mental and emotional health, hindering their learning experience and academic performance. This investigation will explore and analyze the relationship between high academic expectations, academic pressure, and student stress, aiming to identify the causes of student stress and its consequences on student mental and physical health and academic performance. Furthermore, this investigation aims to identify practical solutions that schools, teachers, and parents can use to mitigate the effects of student stress by analyzing the effectiveness of already implemented programs and presenting other possible strategies. In order to design effective strategies to use, it is essential to understand the components that make up a healthy, supportive environment, both at home and at school. Thus, this investigation aims to identify the components that make up a stress-free environment. It will delve into parental pressure, educational stress, student academic competition, teacher-student relationships, and social-emotional learning in schools. In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the issue, content analysis, interview, and survey methodologies were employed. Understanding and addressing this issue is essential for fostering a supportive, stress-free educational environment where students can balance academic achievement and well-being.

Research Questions

What are some causes and consequences of stress for students?

      What can be done to reduce levels of student stress?

      What components make up a stress-free environment for students?

Literature Review

The Causes and Consequences of Student Stress and Solutions to Mitigate Stress

Student stress has become a growing concern in schools due to its adverse consequences on student well-being. The source "Student Stress. Information Capsule. Volume 1006," by Blazer, aims to identify the sources and consequences of students' stress at school. It also strives to identify stress-reduction strategies that parents, schools, and students can implement. The source reviews other investigations to gather information. The source presents various surveys that reveal that students' most significant source of stress is academic pressure. For instance, one of the presented studies polled almost 3,500 students from seven high schools in the California Bay Area. Over 70% of students said they were "often" or "always" stressed by academics, and 56% said they were "often" or "always" worried about grades, tests, and college acceptance. Furthermore, academic-related concerns were the most common stressors for students across all seven institutions. Another study presented by the source, by the Horatio Alger Association, showed that student stress levels have risen over time. In 2008, 79% of 1,000 students aged 13 to 19 stated that pressure to earn good grades was a problem for them. Between 2001 and 2008, there was a 17% increase in the number of kids who reported that academic pressure was a problem for them. Furthermore, the source also looks into the long-term consequences of school-related stress. Some consequences include poor academic performance, insufficient sleep, anxiety, depression, physical illness, drug or alcohol use, cheating, irritability, and social withdrawal. Additionally, the source identified various causes of student stress. Some causes include parental pressure, overly demanding academic content, peer relationships, overbooked schedules, and teacher conflicts. The source's findings also include suggestions that schools, parents, and students can use to alleviate school-related stress. First, strategies for students include eating well, exercising, relaxing, talking to a trusted adult, and learning stress management skills. Second, strategies for parents include emphasizing learning over grades, encouraging healthy habits, and talking to their children. Finally, strategies for schools include shifting the focus from grades to learning and understanding, identifying students with high stress symptoms, incorporating stress education, and providing support to students. The following article elucidates this argument by indicating that:

      All types of students are subject to school-related stress. While it has long been assumed that struggling students are most prone to academic stress, recent studies indicate that high achievers are especially vulnerable to school-related stress. While some students are. able to handle high pressure school environments, others report feeling chronically stressed, overworked, and sleep deprived. Some use whatever means necessary to earn high grades and test scores. Consequently, researchers have chronicled increases in cheating, sleepless nights, depression, drug use, and self-mutilation (Dinesh & Kumari, 2010; Gibezzi, 2010; Pope, 2010; Conner et al., 2009; Mathews, 2006). [...]

      A certain amount of stress is good and has been found to foster motivation and healthy competition in the classroom, on tests, and in extracurricular activities. But chronic stress, as a result of the feeling that one cannot possibly meet all of the demands placed upon him, has been consistently associated with negative outcomes. Continued exposure to school-related stressors often leads to physical, emotional, and behavioral symptoms, such as fatigue, irritability, depression, and decreases in academic performance (Sedere, 2010; Conner et al., 2009; Copeland, 2008; Wilde, 2008; Muir, 2006). (Blazer, 2010)

The importance of this source, regarding this investigation, is that it provides information concerning student stress and its causes and consequences, as well as some strategies that schools, parents, and students can use to mitigate student stress. It provides data demonstrating that students' primary source of stress is academic pressure and that student stress levels are rising, validating the relevance of student stress. The studies showed that students often felt overwhelmed by the pressures to succeed in school, whether from their parents or teachers.

Additionally, it sheds light on the severity of the issue of student stress by elucidating its adverse effects on students; thus, it highlights how impactful student stress can be on a student's performance and well-being. Utilizing the presented information, parents and schools can take steps to create a stress-free learning environment. For instance, parents should encourage healthy habits and avoid imposing pressure on their children. Moreover, schools should ensure students receive support and strive to reduce test anxiety. By familiarizing themselves with the causes and consequences of stress, schools, and parents can make better decisions to mitigate it.

Effects of Chronic Stress on Student Academic Performance and Health

The detrimental effects of chronic stress on students extend beyond negative academic performance, affecting students' overall health and well-being. The source "Chronic Stress and Its Consequences on Subsequent Academic Achievement among Adolescents," by Schraml et al., aims to determine if teenage academic achievement and health is affected by chronic stress. For this study, the researchers had 270 high school students from Stockholm, Sweden, fill out a questionnaire. The students were asked about stress symptoms at the beginning and end of high school. The questionnaire also inquired about students' self-esteem, demands, sleep quality, perceived sleep duration, and self-rated health. The students were then classified into three groups based on their stress levels: no stress, transitory stress, and chronic stress. First, students in the no-stress group experienced little to no stress, neither at the start of high school nor at the end. Second, students in the transitory stress group only experienced stress temporarily at the start or end of high school. Third, students in the chronic stress group reported having high levels of stress both at the beginning and end of high school. After analyzing the data gathered, the researchers found that the students who had chronic stress received significantly poorer grades than those who had transitory stress or no stress at all. The results indicated that chronic stress also has short-term and long-term effects on health and general well-being. Students experiencing chronic stress slept insufficiently and were in poor health conditions. Moreover, the chronic stress group reported the lowest levels of global self-esteem and self-rated health, perceived significantly less social support, and reported the highest levels of perceived demands. Chronic stress can harm a student's academic achievement; consequently, it could harm the student's future career opportunities. The study elucidates this argument by stating:

Among all of the investigated high school students, 173 (63%), 106 boys and 67 girls, did not feel stressed, neither at the beginning of high school nor two years later and were placed in the no-stress group. In the transitory stress group were 59 students (22%), 20 boys and 39 girls, who reported experiencing a high degree of stress symptoms temporarily, either at the beginning or at the end of their time in high school. Finally, the chronic stress group, consisting of students who reported high levels of stress related symptoms both at the beginning and at the end of high school, was made up of 41 students (15%), 10 boys and 31 girls. Since the individual high school entrance grades for 112 students were available, a simple one-way ANOVA was carried out in order to investigate if there were initial differences between the stress groups regarding academic achievement. The results showed that there were no initial differences between the three stress groups in terms of the students' entrance grades (F_2, 109-1.001, p-0.371, ns). [...] According to the results of the ANOVA, comparing the final grades of the different stress groups showed significant differences (F_2,266-5.605, p-0.004, partial 17=0.040). It was revealed that the chronic stress group achieved significantly worse grades than the other two groups, which did not differ significantly from each other. Furthermore, there was neither a main effect for

gender (F1,266-3.333; p=0.069, ns) nor any interaction effect (F1,266-1.159; p=0.315, ns). (Schraml et al., 2012)

The importance of this source concerning this investigation is that it delineates how long-term stress negatively impacts students' performance and well-being. The study found that students with chronic stress symptoms had significantly worse grades than those who reported little to no stress. Furthermore, these students had poor sleep quality, low self-esteem, poor self-rated health, low perceived social support, and high perceived demands. Low perceived social support can be due to a lack of teacher, peer, and parental support, and high perceived demands could be correlated with high parental pressure and expectations. This suggests that positive parental involvement, peer support, and teacher support are key factors in mitigating stress. It is evident that stress has short-term and long-term consequences; consequently, students' future opportunities could be affected if schools and parents do not take steps to reduce student stress. Schools and parents can start by identifying students who have chronic stress symptoms. Thus, they can begin fostering a supportive, stress-free student environment.

Impact of Parental Support and Pressure on Student School Happiness

Parental involvement plays a crucial role in sustaining a healthy environment for students to learn. The objective of the source "How Can We Make Students Happier at School? Parental Pressure or Support for Academic Success, Educational Stress and School Happiness of Secondary School Students," by Toraman et al., is to determine the relationships between secondary school students' gender, parents' income, grade, parental pressure or support for their child's academic success, educational stress, and level of student school happiness. The source explores different factors that can influence the happiness of secondary school students. It focuses explicitly on parental involvement, support for academic success, educational stress, and their effects. The source collected data from 1,051 secondary school students in Düzce, Turkey. It utilized three scales to collect data. The scales were "parental pressure or support scale for academic success," "educational stress scale," and "school happiness scale." After using path analysis to analyze the data, the researchers found that student happiness decreased as hopelessness, expectations, school workload, and work pressure increased. The results also indicated that if parents show their children support for academic success, their school happiness will increase. Moreover, results also suggested that educational stress leads parents to apply more pressure on their children for academic success, further reducing their school happiness. Furthermore, the researchers identified that regardless of how much support parents give, stress can reverse its positive effects. The only instance where the positive effects were maintained was when parents applied work pressure on their children. The following article delineates this argument by indicating that:

Hopelessness versus Expectation, one of the subdimensions of educational stress scale, has a significant negative impact on happiness at school (p<.01), which means happiness at school decreases when hopelessness versus expectation increases. Similarly, Eriksen (2020) states that the reason for this is the fact that the more parents expect from their children to be academically better students, they also put some academic pressure on their children, and if the students get a low score from an assignment or an exam, they may lose their hopes for the future academic results. Workload, one of the subdimensions of educational stress scale, has a negative but significant impact on happiness at school (p<01). Therefore, it can be concluded that happiness at school decreases as the workload increases. [...| Working pressure, one of the subdimensions of the educational stress scale, has a significant but negative effect on happiness at school (p<01). This result reveals that happiness at school decreases as the working pressure increases. (.) the parental support for academic success has a positive and significant effect on happiness at school (p<.01), which suggests that when parental support for academic success increases, happiness at school increases, as well. (Cetin et al., 2022)

The information presented in this source validates the importance of parental involvement in shaping a child's school experience. It shows how high parental expectations and pressure can lower a student's school happiness; conversely, it shows that academic support from parents can increase a student's school happiness. That information demonstrates the importance of positive parental support instead of pressure. The results indicated that high parental expectations and pressure can lead to low student happiness. Low school happiness can have drastic effects on student well-being, such as stress, anxiety, and depression. Therefore, to benefit their childs school happiness and academic performance, parents must not impose academic pressure or educational stress; instead, they must support them and apply work pressure. The research elucidates that educational stress and pressure can negatively affect the student's happiness, which may be counterintuitive to the parents' intentions. By avoiding imposing academic pressure and educational stress and instead supporting their child, parents can create a healthy, nurturing environment for their children that can benefit them emotionally and academically.

Societal, Economic, and Cultural Factors Causing Parental Pressure for Academic Success

In today's extremely competitive world, the increasing societal, economic, and cultural pressures faced by parents can shape the expectations and pressure they put on their children. The source "Academic Competition and Parental Practice," by Zhao et al., investigates how anxious parents and the social settings in which they operate co-create the reality of academic competition in China's secondary education. It also aims to comprehend the intricate interplay of societal, economic, and cultural factors that influence parents' perceptions and practices toward their children's education. It focuses on the anxiety-driven practices of parents from various socioeconomic backgrounds, emphasizing how economic and cultural capital affects their approach to education. The researchers conducted a study from 2015 to 2016 with approximately 70 Chinese students and parents from two Chinese cities, Jinan and Shanghai. The researchers utilized Pierre Bourdieu's sociological concepts of habitus, capital, and field to explain the trend of academic competition in China. Participants in the study were from a wide range of socioeconomic backgrounds. The data gathered displays a habitus among parents and students, shaped by societal expectations and people's perceptions of the necessity of educational achievement for future success. Due to the belief that education is the only path leading to a decent life, many parents put lots of pressure on their children to do well in school. The study reveals that parents from various socioeconomic backgrounds have varied attitudes toward education. Working-class parents, for example, characterized a good education as obtaining a high school degree and learning skills in reading and writing, as these were the essential educational credentials and job skills required for economic survival. These parents were frequently anxious and felt helpless to improve their families' economic and social circumstances. As a result, the parents put all their effort into making their child "successful," but this is difficult due to a lack of resources. For middle-class parents, academic success was important not solely for economic survival but also a way to preserve the social positions and sense of social status that previous generations had worked hard to achieve. The study additionally revealed that parents' expectations for their children influence their children's motivations and aspirations. For instance, Hao, an 11th grader from a working-class household, claimed that his main source of motivation was to provide a better life for his parents in the future; he must work hard and make money to support them. In contrast, a young girl from a high-class household questioned her mother about the value of attending a reputable college, claiming she could be successful either way. The researchers interpret that "the level of economic capital that these families possess has the effect of freeing their children from the need to support their parents in return of the sacrifice they have made" (Zhao et al., 2018, p. 155). Children from wealthy households do not have to worry about providing for their families in the future. Another of the study's findings was that parents' socioeconomic background influenced the strategies they could employ to help their children perform better. Middle-class and overseas returnees utilized a greater variety of strategies than working-class parents. One strategy that many parents frequently used was comparing their children to their higher performing classmates.

When asked about this, one girl stated, "I don't know whether to laugh or to cry about it. My parents always compare me with other kids. Once it was just too much and I got annoyed. I said to my mom, "Why don't you learn from the better parents? Why do you always ask me to learn from the better kids? [...] This comparing and competing habit of thinking is not healthy. This is not good for children's psychological health" (Zhao et al., 2018, p. 158). One of the interviewed fathers pointed out that the combination of a competitive education system and overprotective parents who constantly emphasize to their children the importance of protecting their self-interests can result in a generation of selfish children incapable of collaborating with others. The constant pressure and expectations of parents can lead to high levels of academic competitiveness in schools, which can negatively impact students' mental health. The following source goes into detail by indicating that:

A middle-class father in our study also describes the problem to a "materialistic" and "narrow-minded" view of life generated in a market economy:

The market economy promotes the idea of so-called "career success". Following this materialistic way of thinking, the most promising, the easiest, and the guaranteed path to success is either to become a government official or to make a lot of money. People don't think about other options. This [practice] creates many social problems: problems of social morality, education, family relationships, and general mental health problems. […]

The feeling of anxiety also exists among the overseas returnee parents, despite their possession of higher levels of social, economic, and cultural capital. One mother observed, "Gradually, the expectation increases: the pressure of society on children to achieve high, to go to the best universities in the world, and the pressure from teachers on children to go to the best high schools." Speaking English during the discussion, these mothers said they struggle to answer basic questions such as: What is a good education for my children? Is it about extracurricular activities or academic work? What kind of life should I guide and support my children to live? Where should we draw the line between supporting their educational success and harming them by putting too much pressure on them? (Zhao et al., 2018)

This source's salient and summarized information indicates how a competitive academic environment can contribute to parental academic pressure. The Chinese parents who were interviewed all valued education, as they perceived it to be the only way to get a better future. The educational stress caused by this belief can lead to parents putting immense pressure on their children to do well in school. This creates a competitive academic environment for students. The study identified that not all parental stressors are the same; they vary based on their social and economic context. Working-class parents pressure their children to do well because they depend on their children's success for economic survival. Meanwhile, families from a higher socioeconomic background often put pressure on their children not solely for economic survival but for them to continue the family legacy and not let all the parents' sacrifices go to waste. One student felt it was his duty to perform well in school to support his parents. However, the constant desire to do well in school to help his parents could be detrimental. Students' desire to come out on top can spark competition in school. Furthermore, the study discussed strategies parents typically use to get their children to do better and work harder, one of them being comparing them with higher-performing students. As demonstrated in the interviews, children disliked when parents compared them. When parents constantly compare their children to higher-performing classmates, it can create a mindset that students need to be the best to succeed. This can spark more school competition and create an environment prioritizing performance over actual learning. The source explains the causes of academic competition, its effect on parental pressure, and how it can contribute to student stress. This source encapsulates trends that may occur in other places around the world. The insights provided by the study are valuable to parents and schools alike. They can utilize the information to create a healthy and stress-free environment for their kids.

Impact of Academic Competition on Student Stress and Motivation

An exceedingly competitive school environment can lead to high levels of stress, exhaustion, and disengagement. The objective of the source "No One Wants to be a Loser:' High School Students' Perceptions of Academic Competition," by Kowalski & Christensen, is to investigate the role of competition in educational settings and its impact on academic motivation. The source does so by interviewing eleven high school students. Half of the students were enrolled in an AP English course, while the other half were enrolled in remedial and regular English programs. Five students came from a large public school, while the remaining six came from a private Catholic school. Students were asked about their perspectives on the role of competition in their school and their own learning experiences. The students were classified based on their perceived competency and whether the competition had low or high stakes. First, students with high perceived competence associate low-stakes competition with excitement and camaraderie. Students in this category choose to partake in low-stakes competitions for two reasons. Some compete because they are confident, they can win, while others compete because the low stakes competition is unimportant to them. Second, students with low perceived competence in low-stakes competitions frequently disengage from their classes. One of these students shared their feelings about competitiveness and how their competitive classmates made them feel stressed. Students in this category choose not to participate because they associate competition with anxiety and pressure or because they wish to preserve their self-concept. Third, students who have high perceived competence associate high-stakes competition with stress. Many students stated that their desire to outperform their peers often drives and motivates them. Furthermore, the students explored the potential pressure and stress resulting from their desire to outperform their peers. Finally, students with low competence in high-stakes competitions frequently diminish the relevance of competition and avoid it altogether. Different from high competence students, who continually want to surpass their classmates, low-competence students are uninterested in their peers' grades. They talked about two primary reasons for reducing the competitive aspects of high-stakes scenarios: they want to protect their self- concept and associate the competition with anxiety and pressure. One student even discussed avoiding taking AP classes to avoid the stress and competition that comes with them. According to the investigation results, all students participating in the study experienced some form of competition at their school. Students regarded their classrooms as environments where peer comparison, exhibiting their abilities, and not being a "loser" were more important than learning and improving. Students described the concept of competition as potentially stressful for students. The following article explains this further by stating:

One non-AP student discussed the unnecessary stress created by competitive classmates:

I think that not everything has to be a competition, necessarily. People always make it a competition; you might be pressuring other people to stress them out and other people don't perform in an environment like that. Where some people like low stress and that's where they can perform better and they're not pushed. For this student, competition, even low stakes competition, seemed to be synonymous with pressure, and high ability seemed to be synonymous with ability to work under pressure.

Despite these largely positive strategies, one AP student admitted that in the face of challenge he is tempted to cheat rather than fail:

Instead of me thinking through a problem, to really think through a problem and I may get it wrong, because I don't allow myself to fail, because I am so concerned with my status. I'm more inclined to just go to Google for an answer, or to perhaps cheat, or even sometimes it just motivates me in wanting to get on my teacher's good side, almost be like a teacher's pet. I think it helps and in some ways hurts because then you try to take the easy route. Like his non-AP counterparts, this same student also believed that if competition was overtly emphasized in the classroom it can make for a "hostile environment." (Kowalski & Christensen, 2019)

The salient extrapolated data from this source, and its value to this investigation, is that it demonstrates how an extremely competitive school environment can cause more student stress.

The study explored high school students' perceptions of academic competition in schools and its impact on student motivation. The investigation showed that students' perceived competence levels affected their feelings about competition. For example, regarding low-stakes competition, some students enjoyed it and felt

no harm, while others disengaged from the class due to the stress caused by the competition. The students who had fun had high perceived competence and believed they could succeed, and the students who disengaged from the competition had low perceived competence and disengaged to protect their self-image; their fear of being perceived as a "loser" impacted them to the point where students would rather disengage from school than actively learn. This supports students' statements that their school environment prioritized performance goals over actual learning. Therefore, stress from competition may be limiting students' learning potential. Moreover, disengagement from classes due to competition could even be affecting student relationships, a crucial part of a student's support system. Despite their different perceived competence, all students agreed that high-stakes competition was a significant stressor for students. It is evident that a school's environment and dynamic can affect students' learning process and motivation. Therefore, schools must identify and remove possible stressors in the school environment. For instance, schools need to prioritize learning over performance goals. By doing so, schools can lower levels of competition among students, consequently removing a big stressor for students.

The Relationship Between Academic Competition and Student Anxiety and Depression

An immensely competitive school environment can also contribute to student anxiety and depression. The source "Competition, Anxiety, and Depression in the College Classroom: Variations by Student Identity and Field of Study, " by Posselt & Lipson, examines the link between perceived academic competitiveness and the risk of developing anxiety and depression among college students. Additionally, it aims to determine if discrimination and peer support influence the relationship between perceived academic competition and mental health outcomes. The researchers collected data from the Healthy Minds Study administrations from 2007 to 2013.

The sample included 40,350 undergraduates from 70 colleges and universities, with 56.1% identifying as female, 92.2% as heterosexual, 74.3% as White, 38.2% as first-generation students, and 3.5% as international students. 4,000 students were recruited from each institution, and for institutions with less than 4,000 students, all were recruited. According to the study's results, there is a positive relationship between high levels of perceived competitiveness and depression and anxiety. 18.1% of the participants were depressed, while 10.1% were anxious. Controlling for other covariates, students who perceived their classroom environments as extremely competitive had a 37% higher risk of depression and a 69% higher risk of anxiety. An additional finding from the study demonstrated that perceived competitiveness has a stronger association with depression and anxiety in students from underrepresented or marginalized groups. For Black students, for example, increased perceived competitiveness was associated with an 8.0 percentage point increase in the risk of anxiety and a 6.7 percentage point rise in the risk of depression. Students from other ethnicities, such as Hispanic and Asian, also had a significantly higher risk of experiencing anxiety and depression. First-generation students and queer students were also more likely to experience depression and anxiety. Queer students showed the highest percentage point rise in depression and anxiety, with 12.7 and 12.5 increases, respectively. The study's results also revealed that discrimination and a lack of peer support both increased the risk of students developing depression and anxiety. Both social experiences exacerbated the negative relationship between perceived competition and depression and anxiety.

All groups investigated indicated that high levels of competition had a positive relationship with depression and anxiety. The following article demonstrates the importance of peer relationships by indicating that:

We observe main effects for experiences with discrimination and weak peer support with both depression and anxiety. Students who experience discrimination have 28% higher odds of screening positive for depression and 43% higher odds of screening for anxiety. For those reporting weak peer support, odds of depression and anxiety increase by 43% and 51%, respectively. Consistent with Hypothesis 3, we also find significant interaction effects for discrimination and weak peer support as moderators of the competition and depression/

anxiety relationships. In our sample, both of these adverse social experiences strengthen the negative relationship between perceived competition and depression/anxiety. For students who have experienced discrimination, perceived competition is associated with 4.1- and 5.0 percentage point increases in the probabilities of screening positive for anxiety and depression, respectively. For students with weak peer support, perceived competition is associated with 6.3- and 5.3- percentage point increases in the probabilities of screening positive for anxiety and depression, respectively. Put another way, perceived competition with discrimination and/or weak peer support is associated with increased risk of depression and anxiety, above and beyond competition. (Posselt & Lipson, 2016)

In essence, this article helps advance the investigation by validating that an immensely competitive school environment can harm students' mental health. The source provides quantitative data that demonstrates how perceived competition increases the risk of developing anxiety and depression among college students. It also reveals how the risk of developing anxiety and depression increases among students from underrepresented/marginalized groups. Furthermore, the results show that discrimination and weak peer support can further increase the risk of students developing anxiety and depression. This information demonstrates the importance of peer relationships in an educational environment. Without the support of their classmates, students do not have the needed support to manage stress, anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues. The presented information is essential in aiding educational institutions in creating school interventions or programs that foster positive peer relationships. This way, schools can ensure a healthy environment for all students.

Impact of Teacher-Student Relationships on Student Stress and Health

Positive teacher-student relationships are vital in a supportive school environment. The source "How Many Teachers Does It Take to Support a Student? Examining the Relationship between Teacher Support and Adverse Health Outcomes in High-Performing, Pressure-Cooker High Schools," by Conner et al., aims to determine how teacher-student relationships affect students' academic progress and health in high-performing secondary schools. The study examines the connection between teacher support and student academic and nonacademic outcomes. The researchers surveyed 5,557 students from fourteen high-performing high schools. According to the source, "high-performing schools" are those whose students frequently obtain good grades, perform well on standardized tests, and report working hard in school. The study evaluated school support, academic worry, stress, and mental and physical health. According to the findings, students who believe their professors care about them and have an adult they can confide in can better manage academic anxiety and have fewer health issues correlated to school stress. The results of the survey revealed that as students' academic anxiety, internalizing symptoms, and physical health increased, teacher support decreased. First, there was a 0.46 decrease in teacher support for every unit increase in internalizing symptoms, a 0.70 decrease in teacher support for every unit increase in physical health problems, and a 0.24 decrease in teacher support for every unit increase in academic anxiety. This demonstrates the relationship between teacher support and student stress and well-being. Additionally, the findings revealed that having several teachers to confide in is preferable to having just one. The following article delineates this argument by stating:

Positive teacher-student relationships are those in which the student feels respected, valued, and supported (Doll, Zucker & Brehm, 2004; Sulde et al., 2009). Researchers have established that teacher support is a powerful protective factor for students' mental health. Students who perceive their teachers as warm, caring, and emotionally supportive are less likely to become depressed or suffer declines in self-esteem (Colarossi & Eccles, 2003; DeWit Karidia, Rye & Shain, 2011; Murray & Zvoch, 2011; Reddy, Rhodes, & Mulhall, 2003).

[…] students are better off when they believe that more of their teachers care for them, even if there is not one adult in their school to whom they would turn with a personal problem. Although we understand that most teachers do indeed care about their students, the findings of this study reinforce the notion that teachers need not only care about their students, but also take steps to help more of their students perceive this caring

relationship. Rather than attempting to forge close, confidential relationships with a few select students, we suggest teachers focus on sending messages of general care and respect to all of their pupils. (Conner et al., 2014)

The presented information is paramount for the advancement of this investigation because it elucidates the relationship between teacher support and student academic and health outcomes. It provides data that shows that teacher support is negatively associated with academic anxiety, internalizing symptoms, and physical health. This supports the claim that positive teacher-student relationships are vital in an educational environment. Teachers serve as mentors to students; they teach them, but they can also serve as guides emotionally and motivationally. Moreover, just as teachers can easily support students, their words and actions can hurt them. Therefore, teachers must stay conscious of the pressure they apply on students, as it could adversely affect students' academic performance and well-being. By understanding how teacher-student relationships can affect student performance and well-being, better suggestions can be made for schools and teachers to mitigate stress and promote a healthy educational environment. This source delineates just that, making it invaluable to the investigation.

Student Burnout and Its Correlation with Stress and Student Well-Being

Student burnout is a pressing issue in schools, as it can have a lasting impact on student mental health and well-being. The source "Burnout among high school students: A literature review," by Walburg, aims to investigate existing studies on school-related burnout among high school students to understand better school-related burnout, academic stress, its causes, and consequences. The researchers conducted a literature review of sixteen studies conducted in various locations worldwide between 2001 and 2013. According to the source, burnout was previously only applied to working adults, but it is now applied to university and high school students. The source defines stress as "a physical and emotional state of being exhausted and overwhelmed during which the demands exceed the internal and external resources of an individual to cope with the situation" (Walburg, 2014). Then, it defines burnout as "an emotional state of exhaustion, cynicism and depersonalization engendered by an exposure to a high level of chronic stress" (Walburg, 2014). Family relationships, academic pressures, the school environment, teacher support/motivation, and peer groups were identified as risk factors for burnout and academic stress. Furthermore, one of the studies found that transitioning from one grade level to another can be a stressor for students. The source's findings also revealed that burnout is notably more common in females than males. Next, the source addresses the potential mental health consequences of burnout. Some of the consequences include symptoms of depression, somatic symptoms, and a greater risk of dropping out of school. Additionally, the source discusses the possibility of developing suicidal ideation. According to one of the reviewed studies, depression exacerbates the relationship between stress and suicidal ideation. The following excerpt demonstrates the widespread relevance of student stress The following article showcases the following:

The different studies reviewed in this paper were conducted at various geographical locations (Northern Europe, Eastern Europe, Asia, Turkey, Malaysia) suggesting that the phenomenon is not geographically or culturally restricted but could be found among students with different school organizations and academic policies. The results of these studies revealed the marked incidence of school-related burnout on adolescent school life. Indeed, these studies indicate that school-related burnout increases the risk for internalized problems like anxiety (Silvax, 2001) and depression (Salaaela-Ard Savolainen, et al., 2009) as well as somatic symptoms Murberg and Bru, 2003, Murberg and Bru, 2007). [...]

All studies found higher school-related burnout and school related stress scores among girls than boys which is consistent with previous research stipulating that girls experienced higher levels of internalized problems (Pomeranz, Altermatt, & Saxon, 2002)

Certain studies indicate some protective factors like problem resolution coping strategies (Yusoff, 2010), high-achieving peer groups (Kiuru et al., 2008) and pursuit of achievementrelated goals (Vasalampi et al., 2009). (Walburg, 2014)

Pertaining to the information presented in this source and its usefulness within the investigation, it provides a comprehensive overview of school-related burnout, its risk factors, and its consequences on mental health. It demonstrates how burnout directly relates to stress, explaining how persistent stress can lead to student burnout. Furthermore, the source acknowledges that school-related burnout occurs worldwide, underscoring its ubiquitous relevance. Additionally, mentioning risk factors for burnout and stress gives essential information that schools, parents, and teachers can consider when creating a healthy student environment. One of the high-lighted risk factors was negative school environments. This can include teacher practices and the resources that schools give students to cope with stress. The source described student stress as a reaction to insufficient external or internal resources to deal with a situation. Schools can reduce stress by implementing interventions that discuss stressreduction methods. This way, schools can provide students with resources to cope with stress, lowering student burnout and increasing their quality of life.

Impact of Different Educational Practices on Student Burnout Levels

The various educational practices employed by teachers play a pivotal role in influencing student burnout levels. The source "What types of educational practices impact school burnout levels in adolescents?" by Meylan et al. examines the relationship between high school students' perceptions of educational practices and their level of burnout. It aims to determine the educational practices that significantly influence school burnout in high school adolescents and specify their effects on its three dimensions. The source starts with an introduction to the concept of burnout. Like the previous sources analyzed in this investigation, the source describes burnout as a response to chronic stress characterized by exhaustion, cynicism, and feelings of inadequacy. The source defines each of the dimensions of burnout: "Exhaustion refers to the feeling of being overwhelmed by school-related pressure, including chronic fatigue due to concerns and ruminations about schoolwork. Cynicism to-wards school refers to a detached or indifferent attitude towards school in general, with a loss of interest and motivation in schoolwork and an inability to make sense of it. A feeling of inadequacy as a pupil refers to the feeling of "not being up to the mark" in schoolwork, a lack of achievement in schoolwork and at school in general" (Meylan et al., 2020). The source also lists other studies that examine the causes of school burnout. One study, for example, revealed that students prioritizing academic performance over learning have higher levels of burnout. The researchers recruited 146 girls and 141 boys from a public high school in French-speaking Switzerland. The students completed a questionnaire about their perceptions of educational practices and school burnout. The study's findings revealed that different educational practices impacted different dimensions of burnout. First, teacher support and teaching time impacted student exhaustion. Second, teacher instructional behavior and motivation affected cynicism. Finally, rule clarity and implementation influenced students' feel-ings of inadequacy. Regarding the educational practices that can influence student burnout, the following article is able to indicate that:

Janosz and Bouthillier [34] have defined which categories of educational practices are recognized by research and field professionals as influencing the quality of students' behavior and learning. Eight of these were considered of particular interest. (1) Support for struggling students. [...] (2) Teachers' instructional be-havior. [.. (3) Teaching time, [...] (4) Rule clarity and implementation, [...] (5) Application of rules, [...] (6) Students' participation in school life, [...] (7) Behavioral management, [...] (8) School-family relationships, […]

It first appears that only five educational practices are significantly associated with school burnout. In particular, our results highlight that Support for Struggling Students as well as Teaching Time are negative predictors of Exhaustion (B =-0.24, $p < 0.001$; B = -0.16, $p < 0.05$, respectively). Then, it appears that Appli-cation of Rules is a direct and negative predictor of Inadequacy (B = -0.21, $p < 0.01$). Finally, we observe that

Teacher Motivation as well as Teachers' Instructional Behavior are negative predictors of Cynicism (B = -0.31, p < 0.001;B= -0.22, p < 0.01, respectively). Taken together, the predictors explained 27% of the variance for Exhaustion, 20% for Cynicism and 9% for Inadequacy. (Meylan et al., 2020)

The data extrapolated from this source, and its relevance to this investigation, are that it offers valuable insights into which educational practices are most effective at reducing school burnout levels in students. It identified that teacher support, teaching time, instructional behavior, motivation, rule clarity, and rule implementation all impacted student burnout levels. Since burnout is highly correlated with academic stress, reducing student burnout could also reduce stress levels. Elucidating how educational practices can reduce burnout levels helps pinpoint what teachers and schools need to focus on improving to benefit their students' well-being. Increasing teacher support and ensuring they are always motivated to teach would alleviate student stress. Furthermore, for schools to successfully improve their educational practices, they must address specific issues affecting teacher motivation and behavior. For example, teacher stress and anxiety can significantly influence their educational practices, impacting student's learning process. This topic will be explored in the following source.

Teacher Stress and Anxiety in the Face of Educational Technology Implementation

The continued increasing integration of educational technology in classrooms presents a significant source of stress and anxiety for teachers, affecting their behavior and motivation. The source "Impact of educational technology on teacher stress and anxiety: A literature review," by Femández-Batanero, investigates current research that reports on teacher stress and anxiety due to the implementation of educational technology. The source examined and analyzed sixteen investigations from various countries worldwide, with a significant number from Malaysia and the United Kingdom. The results of the investigations indicated that implementing educational technology in schools can lead to increased teacher stress, anxiety, and exhaustion. According to the results, some key factors that may lead to teacher technostress stress related to technology implementation) are a lack of training to utilize technology, the pressure to implement technology, and fear or stress caused by needing to change their work dynamic. If these feelings of stress and anxiety continue, it may result in teacher burnout. One investigation looked into possible solutions to combat technostress. Some effective solutions included maintaining a positive attitude toward innovation, avoiding resistance to technological change, and employing stress-reduction techniques. It also emphasized the importance of providing teachers with the proper training in technology usage so that they feel comfortable incorporating technology into their classroom setting. The source additionally highlights the topic's increasing significance during the COVID-19 pandemic, when all teachers were forced to shift to and rely exclusively on technology. The following article delves into the topic of teacher stress and anxiety due to educational technology implementation by stating:

However, many of the papers included in the review arose from the pressure that teachers feel to use educational technology but do not feel prepared to do so. For example, AlFudail and Mellar [13] conducted their research on the teacher-technology environment interaction model' to examine whether teachers were experiencing technology stress when they had to incorporate educational technology into their teaching practices. Their results confirmed that teachers suffer from technology stress when using educational technology and indicate that the main factors are the effort to explain how technology works to students, the training required to remodel teaching practices, the problems with the operation of school software and facilities, and the lack of support for implementing technology in the classroom. […]

Perfectionism can cause unnecessary stress on people. High levels of performance in the management of technologies can have a negative impact on the mental health of teachers, developing problems such as stress and/or anxiety. In the field of education, perfectionism is a growing and worrying phenomenon for experts and authorities. [...] Faced with this phenomenon, teachers must transmit to their students the necessary tools to

learn to assimilate failure and thus become resilient young people who focus more on ways to overcome their problems than on these inconveniences. (Fernández-Batanero, 2021)

This source's summarized information indicates that implementing educational technology can negatively stress teachers. It can lead to anxiety, stress, and exhaustion. As the previous source mentions, teacher motivation is indeed a predictor of student burnout. If teacher stress and exhaustion levels are increasing, it could increase student burnout and stress levels. This issue is incredibly relevant now, in a time when technology is being implemented in most schools. Due to the prevalence of investigations in different countries, there is evident global concern for the issue. Of course, as years go by and teachers continue to be exposed to educational technology, technostress levels may decrease. However, addressing the issue in its current state is important, as it could have profound implications for students and teachers alike. One possible solution would be for schools to provide workshops for their teachers to facilitate the transition to digital educational tools. Finding solutions for this issue is essential for creating an environment that benefits the well-being of both teachers and students.

Benefits of Social-Emotional Learning Interventions in School on Student Stress Management

Various schools have been implementing Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) interventions to address the rise in student stress. The source "Winding down the Stressed Out: Social and Emotional Learning as a Stress Coping Strategy with Norwegian Upper Secondary Students," by Tharaldsen, aims to see if mindfulness practices, self-regulated learning strategies, and social skills are regarded as critical factors in dealing with school-related stress among Norwegian upper secondary school students. As part of a school intervention, students studied mindfulness, self-regulated learning, and social competency in six classes across three campuses. Breathing exercises and lectures on rumination and mental awareness were part of the Social-Emotional Learning intervention. Techniques for enhanced learning processes, balancing demands with one's requirements, and tactics for in- depth learning were all covered in self-regulated learning sessions. Students learned the value of social interactions and communication skills throughout the social skills courses. After taking the course, students and teachers were interviewed. They were asked about their stress levels, an evaluation of the intervention, and future directions. When asked about stress, the students mentioned three primary stressors: a new environment, high expectations/demands, and schoolwork pressure. One student said, "At least for me, it was all the expectations, definitely. Both from teachers and others" (Tharaldsen, 2019). Next, when discussing the intervention, students considered the topics helpful. One student found stress theory very useful and said, "A lot of people think I don't need help, I can fix it myself". "Cause many want to believe that they can fix it themselves (...) But I think that talking more about it can make stress less threatening because we've actually never talked about stress" (Tharaldsen, 2019). Another student mentioned, "Now we have more tools to work with. And especially the part about making work schedules (...), but also the part about the social.." (Tharaldsen, 2019). Then, the students discussed aspects of the intervention that could be improved in the future, such as timing and other topics students felt should be included. The teachers agreed with the students' perspectives and deemed the intervention necessary. For instance, one teacher stated, "There is definitely a need for such tips and advices" (Tharaldsen, 2019). Overall, the intervention was praised and considered highly effective by both students and teachers. The following excerpt further discusses teacher and student perceptions of the SEL intervention:

The teachers also perceived high expectations as a main stressor for the students: It is the expectation pressure [...], I have some students [...] that have so high expectations to themselves that they get sick. Students were asked to discuss how they coped with stressors. Few students seemed to be aware of using coping strategies or how those strategies may have influenced them: "I just let it run its course, I don't know" (School 1). The more cognizant emphasized two strategies, preparing work plans for their schoolwork and leisure activities: "To make a plan [...] and check off one by one, to get it done" (School 1) and "when I played soccer I only

thought about that, nothing else" (School 3). Other coping strategies were linked to avoidance: "I agree with both [name] and [name] that I postponed it until the last minute" (School 3). Making plans were also mentioned by the teachers: "I have several girls that make a concrete plan for every day?"

Student also found stress theory useful:

We got confirmed that everybody is stressing, that it is something everyone is struggling with, and therefore it should not be a big deal for anyone to hide it. As everyone is stressed out, we might as well be open about it (School 3). (Tharaldsen, 2019)

The application of the focal point of this source concerning this investigation is that it delineates the positive effects that the practice of mindfulness, self-regulated learning techniques, and social skills has on students. After the intervention at their high school, students were asked for feedback on the course. The students and teachers responded with positive feedback when asked about the intervention; moreover, students now had the skills to cope with their stress effectively. The study found that many students had initially felt stressed due to being in a new environment, having high expectations, and having lots of schoolwork pressure. Then, after the school intervention, they felt more equipped to battle stress. The presented information demonstrates the effectiveness of Social-Emotional Learning courses in school, marking them as an excellent option for schools to mitigate student stress. It proves that when students are given resources to combat stress, it can have a lasting impact on their well-being and academic performance.

Methods

The investigation used a computer with an internet connection and the Google Chrome web browser. The Google search engine was essential for locating the necessary sources to answer the research questions and find the papers required for this investigation. Although the internet connection was occasionally inconsistent, it was sufficient to conduct all of the needed components of this investigation. The investigation mentor evaluated or authorized all of the sources. This investigation was completed utilizing a documentary analysis design. To populate this research, it was necessary to specify the purpose of each of the eleven sources used.

Furthermore, it was essential to recognize the source's design and approach, indicate the target audience, highlight their limitations, and determine the recommendations and findings in each. An analytical component outlining the significance of the data presented in the inquiry was generated, so a descriptive content analysis methodology had to be utilized for this investigation. Another methodology within this investigation included an interview with the Social Emotional Learning teacher from the Commonwealth-Parkville school. A survey was also a part of the methodology of this investigation. The anonymous responses from 58 students also aided in developing the results. All these components working in tandem created the optimal conditions for the consummation of this project.

Results

The best search engines for the sources chosen for this analysis were Google Scholar and Ebsco Host. These results will be categorized by publication date; however, the number assigned to each will depend on which order it appears in the Literature Review (i.e., first source, second source, etc.). The first source was published in 2010, the second source was published in 2012, the seventh and eighth sources were published in 2014, and the sixth source was published in 2016, so these sources can be considered not recent. Respectively, they delineated the causes and consequences of student stress and possible solutions to mitigate it, the effects of chronic stress on student academic performance and health, the impact of teacher-student relationships on student stress and health, student burnout and its correlation with stress and student well-being, and finally, the relationship between academic competition and student anxiety and depression. The fourth, fifth, and eleventh sources were

recent since they were published in 2018 and 2019, respectively. The fourth outlined the social, economic, and cultural factors causing parental pressure for academic success; the fifth showcased the impact of academic achievement on student stress and motivation; and the eleventh source discussed the benefits of social-emotional learning interventions on student stress management. The ninth source was published in 2020, the tenth source was published in 2021, and the third source was published in 2022, so these can be considered very recent sources. The ninth source elaborated on the impact of different educational practices on student burnout levels. The tenth source showcased teacher stress and anxiety in the face of educational technology implementation. Finally, the third source also highlighted the influence of parental support and pressure on student school happiness.

Discussion

The sources in the research paper help delineate the causes and consequences of student stress and provide information regarding effective strategies that can be used to reduce it. The first source identifies the prevalence of student stress, highlighting its causes and consequences. Some of the presented causes include parental pressure, overly demanding academic content, negative peer relationships, and teacher conflicts. Moreover, some of the presented consequences of stress include poor academic performance, insufficient sleep, anxiety, depression, physical illness, drug or alcohol use, cheating, irritability, and social withdrawal. The second source elucidates the consequences of prolonged student stress on their academic performance and health. It reveals that chronic stress has short-term and long-term effects on students' performance and well-being. It also identifies insufficient sleep and poor health as consequences of stress, similar to the first source. By familiarizing themselves with the consequences of stress, schools can identify students with stress and tailor better strategies to alleviate their stress. These sources underscore the importance of addressing student stress by delineating its detrimental consequences on students' mental health and well-being. The third source demonstrates the importance of positive parental involvement in sustaining student school happiness. It identifies that high parental expectations and pressure can reduce student happiness and that parental support can significantly boost a student's happiness. Thus, it marks parental support as a major component of a stress-free environment. The fourth source explains how societal, cultural, and economic factors influence parental pressure on students. One of the presented factors was socio-economic status, which affected the different reasons parents put pressure on their children. Additionally, it mentioned that parents constantly compare their children to their higher-performing peers. This strategy caused distress in students. Furthermore, it can create competition in schools, as students may feel they need to be the best to succeed. This marks the comparison of classmates as a strategy parents should avoid. The fifth source validates how an extremely competitive environment can lead to student disengagement and stress. It highlighted the importance of creating a school environment prioritizing learning over performance goals. The sixth source delineates how academic competition can contribute to student anxiety and depression. Moreover, it demonstrates how peer support and discrimination can exacerbate the relationship between competition, anxiety, and depression. These sources identify a learning-based, non-competitive school environment and positive peer support as two major components of a stress-free environment. The seventh source reveals that teacher support can influence students' ability to manage stress and their general well-being. This pinpoints positive teacher support as another major component of a stress-free environment. The eighth source presents the rising issue of student burnout and the lasting impact it can have on students. It explains how burnout is directly correlated to chronic stress. Also, it demonstrates how burnout can lead to depressive symptoms, somatic symptoms, and a higher risk of dropping out of school. The ninth source identifies different teacher educational practices that can influence student burnout levels. Distinct educational practices were found to affect the various dimensions of burnout. These educational practices were teacher support, teaching time, instructional behavior, motivation, and rule implementation. Although these practices may affect some dimensions individually, when they are all applied, they could significantly reduce burnout levels. Therefore,

schools should ensure that teachers are supportive and motivated to teach. These sources mark teacher behavior and motivation as another component of a stress-free environment. The tenth source presents the issue of teacher stress and anxiety due to the rapid implementation of educational technology. The source delineates various causes for teacher stress and anxiety, including a lack of training to use technology, pressure to implement technology, and fear or distress caused by having to change the classroom dynamic. Continuous stress and anxiety can lead to teacher burnout. The ninth source presented that teacher motivation and behavior directly correlate to student burnout and stress; thus, schools must remove teacher stress and anxiety. An effective strategy would be for schools to provide training so that teachers feel comfortable integrating technology into their classrooms. Finally, the eleventh source demonstrates the benefits of a Social-Emotional Learning course on student stress management and emotional well-being. It highlights Social-Emotional Learning classes as an excellent strategy to mitigate stress. All in all, the sources give excellent information regarding student stress, its causes, consequences, and possible strategies to reduce it. For the interview, the Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) teacher at Commonwealth-Parkville School was contacted to gain teacher insights into the benefits and effectiveness of the SEL course. The teacher was asked eleven questions regarding the class, its benefits, and their perceptions of factors that can affect the effectiveness of the course. One question was, "Do you feel it is important for students to have Social-Emotional Learning courses in school? If so, why? The teacher responded, "I believe it's very necessary to have the class because right now there are many children facing a lot of pressure from their parents and social media, as well as their friends. I think it's a class that enables them to self-regulate and express their feelings whenever they want, providing them with different tools so that when they experience strong emotions or don't know how to handle a situation, they have the tools to work through it." (Translated) Another question was, "How has it benefitted your students to have the course?" The teacher answered, "There was indeed a group in which various changes occurred. At least one specific case was a student who didn't speak at all and then, after doing an exercise called 'venting' every Friday, he opened up more to other students, gained confidence, and I feel that now he is somewhat more social than he was before. The class has also united the groups and at least for children who exhibit more challenging behavior, it has helped reduce such behavior, essentially making them more accepted within their peer groups." (Translated) Another question was, "How do you handle resistance or disengagement from students regarding the SEL content?" The teacher responded, "Usually what I try to do, since I'm still starting and gaining experience, is to carry out many activities in which they [students] describe themselves and that are more about them. Because by talking about themselves, I feel that you then discover a lot more about them, and by paying attention to them, that's enough for them to feel better and then open up a bit more to the class and to the activities we give them. I have an example of a student who started in another group this year and didn't want to hand in anything, didn't want to do anything, and now at least he is with the other kids, he's socializing more and doing the work that he didn't want to do before." (Translated) Additionally, the teacher was asked, "What setbacks have you experienced with students in the class that may have affected students' reception of the material?" The teacher stated, "Well, I'm here looking for examples, but at least with last year's eighth-grade group, there weren't many setbacks because the students all came prepared for what the class was about. But in the first semester, there were children who didn't care about anything and never cared at all, but this year, as they already have an idea of the class and everything has been more structured, they have been much more open. The setback is that they don't want to talk, they don't want to do work, or they do talk and don't pay attention, but over time, they begin to improve, and, in the end, they end up much calmer than at the beginning. The seventh and eighth grades are quite difficult transitions and a very challenging age, and it is understandable why there are those setbacks or that resistance to the class." (Translated) Furthermore, the teacher was asked, "Has this course allowed you to develop teacher-student relationships in a deeper way?" The teacher mentioned, "Yes, of course, with me, yes. There is, of course, that limit between teachers and students because you can be friends to a certain extent, but for me, it is important to form a relationship with them because if not, it [the class] won't work until I get to know them or some sort of connection forms, even if at a distance, because some children are more receptive than others. I'm with them

in classes, but there are many children who come at other times, in the morning, during snack, lunch, and in the afternoon, to talk to me about their problems or things that have happened, to give them tools, or just to listen to them. For me, that is to continue creating a relationship beyond what perhaps another teacher might do or have with a student. I think it works out better that way." (Translated) Overall, the teacher's responses suggest that the class has positively impacted the students, strengthening their peer relationships and helping them over-come stressful situations. Moreover, the course seems to have a greater impact on students who come to class with more need for it. Also, the teacher provided insights into some factors limiting how students benefit from the class; for instance, when students aren't open to the class, it reduces the benefits they can take away from the class. For the survey, 58 students at Commonwealth-Parkville School were asked various questions on their perceptions of the SEL class. They were asked general information, such as grade, age, and gender. 40% of the students were in seventh grade, 22% were in eighth grade, and 38% were in ninth grade. 46% of the students identified as male, and 54% as female. Eleven questions were asked using the Likert Scale to make the survey easy to answer. 84.5% of the students responded "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" to the claim "I often feel school-related stress." Those responses indicate that stress was prevalent among the surveyed students. Other claims included "The SEL course has made me closer with my classmates," "The projects/activities done in the SEL course are engaging and relevant," "The SEL course has given me valuable skills to cope with stress and over-come challenging, stressful situations," "I always look forward to going to SEL class," and "I believe the SEL course is essential for promoting a healthy school environment." As presented by the results, the vast majority of students answered "Strongly Agree" and "Agree" for all of those claims. One free-response question was asked: "What topic/activity from the SEL class do you feel benefitted you the most and why?" The majority of responses all concerned the students' ability to express their feelings through projects and activities. One student mentioned, "What impacted me was people including myself, sharing our experiences, and realizing we are all more alike than we seem and we can help each other." One prevalent activity among the responses was the Friday venting sessions, where students discussed their issues. One student responded, "From the SEL class, I found the weekly vents most impacting. Everyone in the class would talk about their personal issues and seek for advice. It was a good thing to get everything off my chest and it was eye-opening to hear everyone else's problems." The salient information from the survey demonstrated that students who reported experiencing stress benefitted from the class, supporting the SEL teacher's view. Conversely, the results suggest that students who reported not experiencing much stress didn't benefit much from the class. This indicates a correlation between the students' necessity for the program and the benefits students get from the course. Considering all the infor-mation presented in the survey and interview, the SEL course is an excellent outlet for students to learn effective tools to manage their emotions and develop more robust peer and teacher relationships.

Conclusion

The presented sources were able to elucidate effective strategies that can be used to reduce stress. The sources identified different components that can significantly impact student stress. The first two sources identified the causes and consequences of student stress. This is valuable in aiding schools in identifying stressors in the school environment and identifying students who may struggle with stress. The third and fourth sources identify positive parental involvement as a significant component in a stress-free environment. They demonstrate that parents must provide support and avoid imposing pressure on their children. The fifth and sixth sources identify learning-based, non-competitive school environments and positive peer relationships as other primary compo-nents of a stress-free environment. Positive peer relationships and the support that comes with them can help students manage stress; however, competition can impact peer relationships. The seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth sources identify positive teacher-student relationships and teacher motivation and behavior as other major components of a stress-free environment. They demonstrate how crucial teacher support is in reducing student stress.

Additionally, they present how teacher motivation can influence student burnout and stress. Therefore, schools need to create programs that target teacher stress and anxiety to improve their motivation and behavior in the classroom. One example is having workshops to teach teachers how to use and implement technology in their classrooms; this is an effective strategy for teachers who need help with technology usage. Finally, the eleventh source, the survey, and the interview provide adequate evidence that proves that Social-Emotional Learning courses are an excellent strategy to help students manage stress and foster positive peer relationships. Ultimately, this investigation aimed to answer how high societal expectations and pressure can affect student stress and the strategies that can be used to mitigate stress. Sources converged to provide an answer, which is that there is no way to completely prevent students from experiencing stress; what can be done is to give them the proper resources to manage it, reducing its effect. Thus, in order to effectively give them the resources needed, the students' environment must have all of the components of a stress-free environment. When all components are working in tandem to support students, it creates an optimal environment where students can mitigate the effects of stress and balance academic performance with well-being. For upcoming continuing research and data analysis, recommendations include securing more years of data and requesting more study resources. As for surveys, it would be beneficial to conduct a survey on a broader range of students from different ethnicities and schools to draw firmer conclusions on the issue.

Limitations

For the inquiry to be successful, the research question's scope needed to be expanded to gather more data on the topic and allow for the ideal circumstances for providing a response. Initially, the research question involved student stress and its causes and consequences. Had the initial research topic remained the same, the study would have covered only a small portion of the problem and would have missed important details. Even though there was a ton of material available on the subject, it felt crucial to offer potential solutions in addition to a list of causes and effects. As a result, the research now includes doable tactics that parents, instructors, and schools may implement to help students feel less stressed. The information gathered encompasses a trend of student stress from 2001 to 2023. The investigation is not able to delineate a long-term answer to the research questions, as trends are constantly changing, meaning the causes of student stress may vary over the years. This may be addressed through continued research.

As for the survey, it has a few limitations. Since the SEL course was implemented one year prior to this investigation, only three grade levels had taken the class, limiting the number of students who could be surveyed. The sample consisted of a small group of students from one school. However, the survey still provides a glimpse into students' perceptions of the Social-Emotional Learning course and provides guidance for the school and teacher to improve it, making it extremely useful for the investigation. It can also catalyze other investigations to research this topic.

Acknowledgments

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