

SITUATION -46

STUDENT FACE

STRESS DUE TO COMPETITIVE EXAMS.

STEP 1: INTRODUCTION

In today's highly competitive academic environment, students face immense pressure due to competitive examinations. These exams play a crucial role in determining a student's future education and career opportunities. As a result, students are expected to perform exceptionally well, often within limited time and under intense expectations from parents, teachers, and society. This constant pressure leads to stress, anxiety, fear of failure, and emotional imbalance among students. Excessive competition, long study hours, lack of proper guidance, and insufficient rest further increase stress levels. Student stress due to competitive exams has become a serious concern, affecting not only academic performance but also mental health and overall well-being. Therefore, it is important to understand the causes, impacts, and possible solutions to reduce stress and support students effectively.

STEP 2 : OBSERVATION :

In recent years, competitive examinations have become a central part of students' academic lives. Students preparing for exams such as JEE, NEET, CET, UPSC, and other entrance tests are observed to be under continuous mental pressure. Many students attend school or college during the day and coaching classes in the evening, leaving very little time for rest, hobbies, or relaxation.

Common observations include lack of sleep, constant worry about performance, reduced social interaction, and emotional exhaustion. Students often judge their self-worth based on mock test scores and ranks. Even capable students feel stressed due to the intense competition and uncertainty of results. This stress not only affects academic performance but also impacts physical and mental health.

STEP 3 : STAKEHOLDERS OR USER IDENTIFICATION :

The problem of student stress involves multiple stakeholders who directly or indirectly influence the situation:

Primary Stakeholders

Students:

They are the main users who experience stress, anxiety, fear of failure, and pressure to perform well.

Secondary Stakeholders

Parents:

Parents often expect high academic success and stable careers, sometimes unknowingly increasing pressure.

Teachers and Coaching Faculty:

Responsible for teaching, testing, and motivating students.

Educational Institutions:

Schools, colleges, and coaching centers that design curriculum and evaluation methods.

Tertiary Stakeholders :

Society:

Social norms that value ranks, marks, and prestigious careers.

Government and Exam Authorities:

Bodies that design competitive exam structures and policies.

STEP 4 : INTERVIEW QUESTIONS :

How often do you feel stressed during exam preparation?

What are the major causes of your stress?

How many hours do you study daily?

Do you feel pressure from parents or society?

Do you get enough sleep and leisure time

Have you experienced anxiety or fear before exams?

Do you receive emotional or academic support when stressed?

What do you do to cope with exam stress?

FORM RESPONSES :

1	Timestamp	How often do you feel stressed during exam	What are you doing
2	1/23/2026 8:36:24	sometimes	syllabus
3	1/23/2026 8:37:55	sometimes	syllabus
4	1/23/2026 8:44:39	sometimes	syllabus
5	1/23/2026 8:49:33	sometimes	syllabus
6	1/23/2026 8:53:24	always	syllabus
7	1/23/2026 9:02:16	sometimes	syllabus
8	1/23/2026 9:08:04	always	parental
9	1/23/2026 10:14:32	sometimes	fear of fail
10	1/23/2026 10:25:41	rarely	syllabus
11	1/23/2026 10:32:42	sometimes	syllabus
12	1/24/2026 16:23:43	sometimes	fear of fail
13	1/24/2026 16:39:42	sometimes	
14	1/24/2026 16:42:07	sometimes	syllabus

15	1/24/2026 16:48:07	always	fear of fa
16	1/24/2026 17:11:14	sometimes	syllabus
17	1/24/2026 17:11:27	always	syllabus
18	1/24/2026 18:07:45	always	fear of fa
19	1/24/2026 18:18:27	always	syllabus
20	1/25/2026 9:45:58	sometimes	syllabus
21	1/25/2026 9:46:48	rarely	fear of fa
22	1/25/2026 9:47:18	rarely	parental
23	1/25/2026 9:47:44	sometimes	syllabus
24	1/29/2026 16:58:00	always	fear of fa
25	1/29/2026 17:00:36	sometimes	syllabus
26	1/29/2026 18:51:53	always	syllabus
27	1/30/2026 8:23:04	always	parental
27	1/30/2026 8:23:04	always	parental
28	1/30/2026 8:23:15	sometimes	parental
29	1/30/2026 8:26:16	sometimes	fear of f
30	1/30/2026 8:26:22	always	syllabus
31	1/30/2026 8:26:46	sometimes	fear of f
32	1/30/2026 8:27:37	sometimes	fear of f

STEP 5 : PIN POINT ANALYSIS

Pin point analysis focuses on identifying the exact, specific problems faced by students that directly lead to stress during competitive exam preparation. Instead of looking at the issue broadly, this analysis

highlights the most critical pressure points affecting students' mental and emotional well-being.

Key Pin Points Identified

1. Excessive Syllabus in Limited Time

Competitive exams require students to cover a vast syllabus within a short time. This creates constant pressure to complete topics quickly, often without proper understanding, leading to anxiety and panic.

2. Continuous Evaluation and Mock Tests

Regular mock tests, rankings, and score comparisons make students feel constantly judged. Poor performance in even one test lowers confidence and increases fear of failure.

3. Fear of Failure and Uncertainty

Students worry about what will happen if they fail to qualify. The uncertainty about future career opportunities creates mental stress and self-doubt.

4. Parental and Social Expectations

Many students experience pressure from parents and society to achieve high ranks. Comparison with peers or relatives intensifies stress and creates fear of disappointing loved ones.

5. Lack of Personal Time

Long study hours and coaching schedules leave little time for rest, hobbies, or social interaction. This imbalance leads to emotional exhaustion and burnout.

6. Sleep Deprivation

Late-night study routines and early classes disturb sleep cycles. Poor sleep reduces concentration, memory, and emotional stability, increasing stress levels.

7. Limited Emotional Support

Students often hesitate to share their stress due to fear of being judged. Lack of open communication and professional counseling worsens emotional strain.

8. One-Dimensional Definition of Success

Success is often measured only by exam results and ranks. This narrow perspective makes students feel worthless despite efforts and abilities.

STEP 6: ROOT CAUSE IDENTIFICATION

The root causes behind student stress include:

Exam-Centric Education System:

Focus on results rather than learning.

Limited Opportunities:

Few seats for a large number of aspirants.

Unrealistic Expectations:

Parents and society expecting guaranteed success.

Lack of Counseling Facilities:

Mental health support is often neglected.

Poor Time Management Skills:

Students struggle to balance studies and personal life.

STEP 5 :

STEP 7: WICKED PROBLEM UNDERSTANDING

A wicked problem is a complex issue that is difficult to define clearly and does not have a single, simple, or permanent solution. The problem of students facing stress due to competitive exams is considered a wicked problem because it involves multiple interconnected factors, many stakeholders, and varying individual experiences.

Why Student Stress Due to Competitive Exams Is a Wicked Problem

1. Multiple Causes, Not One Single Reason

Student stress is caused by many factors such as high competition, vast syllabus, parental pressure, fear of failure, and societal expectations. Removing one cause does not eliminate the problem completely.

2. Many Stakeholders Involved

The issue involves students, parents, teachers, educational institutions, exam authorities, and society. Each stakeholder has different expectations and responsibilities, making it difficult to reach a single agreed solution.

3. No Universal Solution

What works for one student may not work for another. Stress levels, coping abilities, and support systems vary among individuals, so a single strategy cannot solve the problem for all students.

4. Constantly Changing Nature

Competitive exams evolve over time with changes in syllabus, exam patterns, and competition levels. As the system changes, new stress factors emerge.

5. Interconnected Effects

Any change in one area affects others. For example, reducing syllabus may increase competition, while increasing counseling may not reduce parental pressure. Solutions in one domain can create new challenges in another.

STEP 8 : REFLECTION :

This report helped in understanding the serious impact of competitive examinations on students' mental and emotional well-being. Through observation and analysis, it was found that students experience high levels of stress due to academic pressure, fear of failure, parental expectations, and intense competition. Competitive exams often create a mindset where success is measured only by ranks and marks, which increases anxiety among students.

The study also reflects that students lack proper guidance, emotional support, and stress-management skills. Long study hours, lack of sleep, and limited leisure time further worsen their stress levels. Many students hesitate to express their difficulties, which leads to frustration and loss of self-confidence.

STEP 9: CONCLUSION :

In conclusion, stress among students due to competitive examinations has become a major challenge in today's education system. Excessive academic pressure, high expectations from parents and society, and fear of failure significantly affect students' mental and emotional well-being. If not addressed at the right time, this stress can lead to anxiety, reduced concentration, poor academic performance, and health problems. Therefore, it is essential to create a supportive learning environment that focuses not only on academic success but also on mental health. Proper guidance, realistic

expectations, effective time management, regular breaks, and emotional support from parents, teachers, and institutions can help students manage stress better. By promoting balanced education and prioritizing student well-being, the negative impact of competitive exam stress can be reduced, leading to healthier and more confident students.