

# Pressure to Preform

Ali-Mert Hazar  
Michael Moutoussis  
Clement Lam Lam

# Effects on mental health

---

51% of adults who felt stressed reported feeling depressed, and 61% reported feeling anxious.

Of the people who said they had felt stress at some point in their lives, 16% had self-harmed, and 32% said they had suicidal thoughts.

29% reported that they started drinking or increased their drinking, and 16% reported that they started smoking or increased their smoking.



# Workplace

- Redundancy during COVID-19
  - 14.2 per thousand employees between July and November 2020 (ONS, 2020)
- Job insecurity was positively associated with major depression (Wang et al., 2008)
- Workplace stress (Reichenberg & MacCabe, 2007)
  - High job demands is associated with psychological disorders.
  - 45% of new cases of depression and anxiety were due to high job demands
- Higher suicide rates were associated with lower overall job status and satisfaction (Agerbo et al., 2007)



# Academic Pressure

---

- Students have the worse overall mental health compared to the general population (Ibrahim et al., 2013)
- Examination-related anxiety is positively correlated with psychiatric problems (Deb et al., 2015)
- Concerned with getting high-status jobs and earning a high income (Coughlan, 2015)
  - Results in increased feelings of academic pressure as early as secondary school
- Graduate students face greater competition to find a job (1:91; ISE, 2021)



# Relationships & Parenthood

---

- Media stereotypes can create unrealistic expectations
  - E.g. Expectations to be a "perfect partner and father"
- Tanner et al. (2012): 4 key family themes found in Disney films:
  - Family relationships are a strong priority,
  - Families are diverse, but the diversity is often simplified,
  - Fathers are elevated, while mothers are marginalised and,
  - Couple relationships are created by "love at first sight,"



# Relationships & Parenthood

---

- Imbalance between personal and professional life was associated with having mental disorders (Wang et al., 2007)
- Parental expectations – Perfectionism (Curran & Hill., 2022)
  - Children internalise those expectations and depend on them for their self-esteem.





# Overcoming the pressure to perform

- Encouraging open dialogue and communication
    - Reducing stigma and promoting wellness activities (Seaton et al., 2019)
  - Challenging traditional gender roles and stereotypes
  - Organisations supporting mental health
  - Seeking professional help
    - Less than 10% of men seek professional help (Lubian et al., 2016)
-

# References

- Agerbo, E., Gunnell, D., Bonde, J.P., Mortensen, P.B. and Nordentoft, M., 2007. Suicide and occupation: the impact of socio-economic, demographic and psychiatric differences. *Psychological medicine*, 37(8), pp.1131-1140.
- Coughlan, S., 2015. Rising numbers of stressed students seek help. *BBC News*, 30. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-34354405>
- Curran, T. and Hill, A.P., 2022. Young people's perceptions of their parents' expectations and criticism are increasing over time: Implications for perfectionism. *Psychological Bulletin*.
- Deb, S., Strodl, E. and Sun, H., 2015. Academic stress, parental pressure, anxiety and mental health among Indian high school students. *International Journal of Psychology and Behavioral Science*, 5(1), pp.26-34.
- Ibrahim, A.K., Kelly, S.J., Adams, C.E. and Glazebrook, C., 2013. A systematic review of studies of depression prevalence in university students. *Journal of psychiatric research*, 47(3), pp.391-400.
- Lubian, K., Weich, S., Stansfeld, S., Bebbington, P., Brugha, T., Spiers, N. & Cooper, C. 2016. Chapter 3: Mental health treatment and services. In S. McManus, P. Bebbington, R. Jenkins, & T. Brugha (Eds.), *Mental health and wellbeing in England: Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey 2014*. Leeds: NHS Digital
- Mental health Foundation, 2018. Results of the mental health foundation's 2018 study. <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/mental-health-statistics/stress-statistics>
- Office for National Statistics, 2021. Labour market overview, UK: January 2021. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/uklabourmarket/january2021#redundancies>
- Seaton, C. L., Bottorff, J. L., Oliffe, J. L., Medhurst, K., & DeLeenheer, D. 2019. Mental health promotion in male-dominated workplaces: Perspectives of male employees and workplace representatives. *Psychology of Men & Masculinities*, 20(4), 541.
- Reichenberg, A. and MacCABE, J.H., 2007. Feeling the pressure: Work stress and mental health. *Psychological Medicine*, 37(8), pp.1073-1074.
- Tanner, L.R., Haddock, S.A., Zimmerman, T.S. and Lund, L.K., 2003. Images of couples and families in Disney feature-length animated films. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, 31(5), pp.355-373.
- Wang, J., Lesage, A., Schmitz, N. and Drapeau, A., 2008. The relationship between work stress and mental disorders in men and women: findings from a population-based study. *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*, 62(1), pp.42-47.