Pressure to Preform

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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.

Mental Health Foundation (2018)
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


- 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*.


