

Burdened Brilliance: The Effect of Parental Pressure on the Academic Performance of Elementary Pupils

Gysmae Anncris R. De Guzman^{1*}, Gracelyn Joy V. Aranas^{1,2}, Ma. Liera Joy Z. De Manuel^{1,3}, Rea S. Nosotros^{1,4}, Mark Jeriel M. Racasag^{1,5}

¹Aklan State University, College of Teacher Education

*gysmaeanncrisdeguzman@gmail.com, ²aranasgracelyn6@gmail.com, ³lierajoydemanuel@gmail.com,

⁴ryaanosotros@gmail.com, ⁵racasagmarkjeriel@asu.edu.ph

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between parental pressure and the academic performance of elementary pupils at Mangan Elementary School. Using a correlational research design, 30 pupils aged 10 to 13 years participated in the study. A structured questionnaire measured parental pressure across four dimensions: setting rules and standards, expectations, rewards and penalties, and monitoring and support. Data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, and Pearson product-moment correlation. Results showed an overall parental-pressure mean of 3.23 (Sometimes), with setting rules and standards receiving the highest mean of 3.48 (Often). Requiring homework to be completed before leisure registered the highest individual mean of 4.27 (Always). Setting

rules and standards was significantly and negatively related to academic performance ($r = -0.385$, $p = .036$), and overall parental pressure also showed a significant negative relationship with academic performance ($r = -0.312$, $p = .047$). Expectations, rewards and penalties, and monitoring and support were not significantly related to academic performance. The findings indicate that parental guidance may promote discipline, but excessive or rigid pressure can be associated with lower academic performance and may contribute to stress. The study supports balanced parental involvement characterized by realistic expectations, emotional support, constructive monitoring, and school-based parent orientation.

Keywords: *parental pressure, academic performance, elementary pupils, parenting practices, parental involvement, student stress*

INTRODUCTION

Education is commonly regarded as one of the most important investments parents make in their children. Because academic success is often associated with future opportunities, parents may establish expectations, rules, and routines intended to encourage effort and achievement. However, guidance may become burdensome when demands for high performance, perfect work, or strict compliance exceed what a child can manage comfortably. In the source study, parental pressure was treated as the demands, expectations, and standards parents set in relation to children's studies, particularly through rules and standards, expectations, rewards and penalties, and monitoring and support.

Existing research cited in the source manuscript illustrates the tension between supportive involvement and excessive control. Ahmad et al. (2023) associated excessive parental pressure with lower grades, anxiety, and deterioration in the parent-child relationship, while Wu et al. (2024) reported a negative relationship between controlling parenting styles and academic achievement among senior elementary students. Klemencic Mirazchyski and Mirazchyski (2025) further showed that parental perceptions of homework as highly important

may increase burden and reduce motivation. At the same time, the local evidence is not uniform; De Jesus et al. (2025) reported that parental involvement did not affect the academic performance of Grade IV pupils in their context.

These contrasting findings suggest that the effects of parental involvement may depend on the form and intensity of the behavior rather than on parental participation alone. Structured routines, encouragement, and supervision may help children remain focused, yet rigid standards and unrelenting demands may also create stress and anxiety. This distinction is especially relevant for elementary pupils, whose academic habits and emotional responses are still developing.

The study addressed the limited local evidence on the direct relationship between parental pressure and academic performance among elementary pupils. It aimed to determine the level of parental pressure experienced by pupils in terms of setting rules and standards, expectations, rewards and penalties, and monitoring and support, and to test whether these dimensions were significantly related to academic performance. The results were intended to guide parents and schools toward approaches that encourage achievement without sacrificing pupils' well-being.

Literature Review

Parental pressure and academic performance

The literature used in the source manuscript reflects sustained attention to the relationship between family influence and school performance. Studies have specifically examined parental pressure and academic outcomes among adolescents and college students (Ahmad et al., 2023; Collado et al., 2023) as well as the role of perceived parental pressure and academic anxiety in student performance (Ali & Sinha, 2025). In the elementary-school context, related research has investigated parental involvement and achievement among Grade Three, Grade Six, and other school-age pupils (Adelantar, 2024; Destura et al., 2025; Omar, 2024). Together, these works situate parental behavior as an important family-level factor in understanding how learners experience and respond to academic demands.

The source manuscript also identifies evidence that pressure can become counterproductive. Ahmad et al. (2023) linked excessive pressure with poorer academic and emotional outcomes, while Wu et al. (2024) reported that controlling parenting styles were negatively associated with academic achievement. Conversely, De Jesus et al. (2025) found no effect of parental involvement on Grade IV pupils in their setting. Such variation underscores the importance of distinguishing general involvement from specific pressuring behaviors and of examining these behaviors within a local elementary-school context rather than assuming that all forms of parental involvement operate in the same way.

Expectations, homework demands, and parenting practices

A substantial portion of the cited literature centers on the ways parents structure schoolwork and communicate expectations. Research in the source reference base has addressed parental expectations and academic performance (Shekhawat & Sushmita, 2024; Zhao & Bodovski, 2021), parental rearing practices and children's performance (Dagoc, 2024), and broader parenting approaches and academic achievement in elementary schools (Lic, 2024). These lines of inquiry are directly relevant to the present study's dimensions of rules and standards and expectations, because they focus on how parents organize, direct, or evaluate children's academic behavior.

Homework is another recurring context in which parental involvement can shift from support to pressure. Klemencic Mirazchiyski and Mirazchiyski (2025) examined student and parental perceptions of homework, while Núñez et al. (2024) synthesized evidence on parental homework support and academic performance. Other studies in the source list considered intrusive homework support (Park et al., 2023) and the influence of parental structure and chaos on homework anxiety through motivation (Li & Ding, 2024). The source manuscript uses this broader literature to support the need to examine whether rules around study time, homework completion, and performance expectations are associated with pupils' academic outcomes.

Monitoring, support, stress, and learner well-being

Parental monitoring and support can provide children with structure and encouragement, but the emotional quality of that involvement is also important. The source reference list includes work on stress, coping mechanisms, and academic performance among Grade VI pupils (Jamil et al., 2025), homework stress and need frustration (Katz et al., 2022), and the influence of early parent involvement and depression on academic achievement, psychosocial behavior, and motivation (Mahdavi, 2017). These studies frame academic performance as intertwined with emotional experiences and coping rather than as a product of rules and expectations alone.

The literature base also includes research on parental fear of missing out in children's schooling and learning engagement (Hong et al., 2025), suggesting continued scholarly interest in forms of highly involved or potentially intrusive parenting. Within this context, the present study examined monitoring and support separately from expectations and sanctions. This distinction allows parental checking, reminders, and encouragement to be considered alongside more controlling practices, while the correlation analysis determines which dimensions are actually associated with academic performance in the participating pupils.

METHODS**Research Design**

The study employed a quantitative correlational research design. The design was used to describe the level of parental pressure experienced by elementary pupils and to determine the statistical relationship between parental pressure and academic performance without manipulating the study variables.

Research Locale

The study was conducted at Mangan Elementary School, a public elementary school serving learners in its local community. The research focused on pupils enrolled in the school during the period of data collection.

Participants and Sampling Technique

Thirty elementary pupils participated in the study. Their ages ranged from 10 to 13 years. The source manuscript reported that 47% were 11 years old, 40% were 12 years old, and 13% were 10 years old. The group consisted of 11 males (37%) and 19 females (63%). Most participants were in Grade 6 (87%), while 13% were in Grade 5. The manuscript described the respondents as selected pupils but did not specify a named sampling technique; therefore, no additional sampling method was inferred in this article.

Research Instrument

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to obtain the pupils' demographic information and measure parental pressure. The parental-pressure component was organized into four dimensions: setting rules and standards, expectations, rewards and penalties, and monitoring and support. Pupils indicated their responses using a Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The wording was designed to be simple and age-appropriate for elementary respondents. The source manuscript did not report separate validity or reliability coefficients, and none were added in this article.

Data Gathering Procedure

Prior to data collection, permission was obtained from school authorities and consent was secured from parents or guardians. The structured questionnaire was then administered to the selected pupils. Responses were organized according to demographic characteristics and the four dimensions of parental pressure before statistical analysis.

Data Analysis

Frequency counts and percentages were used to describe participant characteristics. Means and standard deviations summarized the level of parental pressure across the four dimensions and their indicators. Pearson

product-moment correlation coefficients were used to test the relationship between each parental-pressure dimension, overall parental pressure, and academic performance. Statistical significance was evaluated at the .05 level.

Ethical Consideration

The study obtained permission from the school and consent from parents or guardians before involving elementary pupils. Participation was conducted in accordance with the ethical standards stated in the source manuscript. Because the participants were minors, parental or guardian consent formed an essential safeguard during data collection, and the information gathered was used for the purposes of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Level of Parental Pressure Experienced by Elementary Pupils

The overall mean for parental pressure was 3.23 (SD = 1.31), interpreted as Sometimes. Among the four dimensions, setting rules and standards obtained the highest mean of 3.48 (SD = 1.17), interpreted as Often. Monitoring and support followed with a mean of 3.35 (SD = 1.34), while expectations (M = 3.11, SD = 1.33) and rewards and penalties (M = 2.99, SD = 1.38) were both experienced Sometimes. These results indicate that pressure was present in the pupils' academic lives, but it was most visible through rules governing study behavior and standards for school responsibilities.

Table 1. *Summary of the Level of Parental Pressure*

Dimension	Mean	SD	Description
Setting rules/standards	3.48	1.17	Often
Expectations	3.11	1.33	Sometimes
Rewards and penalties	2.99	1.38	Sometimes
Monitoring and support	3.35	1.34	Sometimes
Overall parental pressure	3.23	1.31	Sometimes

Within the rules-and-standards dimension, requiring pupils to finish homework before leisure had the highest mean of 4.27 (SD = 0.94), interpreted as Always. Following parents' plans for free time (M = 3.67) and spending more time studying after school (M = 3.50) were also experienced Often. These findings show that academic responsibilities frequently took priority over leisure. Structured routines may cultivate discipline and time management, but the source study cautions that excessive control over study and leisure can become stressful when it is not balanced with pupils' emotional and developmental needs.

Parental expectations were experienced Sometimes overall (M = 3.11). Expecting homework to be completed correctly was the strongest item (M = 3.53, Often), whereas expectations of perfect test grades (M = 2.77) and contest participation (M = 2.80) were less frequent. This pattern suggests that parents generally valued good academic performance without uniformly demanding perfection across all activities. The tension between encouragement and unrealistic expectations is consistent with the concerns raised in the source literature on parental pressure, expectations, and academic performance (Ahmad et al., 2023; Shekhawat & Sushmita, 2024; Zhao & Bodovski, 2021).

Rewards and penalties were experienced Sometimes (M = 2.99). Praise for good grades was the most frequent practice (M = 3.63, Often), while taking away toys for poor performance was Rarely reported (M = 2.33). The results therefore indicate a greater use of positive reinforcement than punitive consequences, although some pupils still experienced disciplinary responses when they did not meet expectations. The distinction matters because the source manuscript emphasizes that rewards may motivate pupils, whereas excessive punishment may negatively affect emotional well-being.

Monitoring and support also occurred Sometimes overall (M = 3.35). Telling pupils to study more when grades were low was reported Often (M = 3.73), followed by asking about grades and encouraging improvement (M = 3.47). The results show that parents remained engaged with pupils' academic progress. However, the study

also recognized that repeated reminders and pressure to improve may contribute to anxiety or burnout when support becomes overly controlling. This interpretation is compatible with the broader source literature on homework stress, parental structure, and learner well-being (Jamil et al., 2025; Katz et al., 2022; Li & Ding, 2024).

Table 2. *Highest and Lowest Indicators Across Parental-Pressure Dimensions*

Dimension	Highest indicator (Mean)	Lowest indicator (Mean)
Rules/standards	Finish homework before leisure (4.27)	Daily chores without fail (2.93)
Expectations	Homework completed correctly (3.53)	Perfect test grades (2.77)
Rewards/penalties	Praise for good grades (3.63)	Take away toys for poor performance (2.33)
Monitoring/support	Study more when grades are low (3.73)	Watch study carefully (3.10)

Relationship Between Parental Pressure and Academic Performance

Correlation analysis showed that setting rules and standards had a statistically significant negative relationship with academic performance ($r = -0.385$, $p = .036$). Overall parental pressure was also significantly and negatively related to academic performance ($r = -0.312$, $p = .047$). Thus, higher levels of rules-based pressure and higher overall parental pressure were associated with lower academic performance among the 30 participating pupils. These results directly address the central concern of the study by showing that not all forms of parental pressure were equally related to academic outcomes.

Table 3. *Correlation Between Parental Pressure and Academic Performance*

Parental-pressure dimension	r	p-value	Interpretation	Decision
Setting rules/standards	-0.385	.036	Significant negative	Reject H0
Expectations	+0.124	.514	Non-significant positive	Fail to reject H0
Rewards and penalties	+0.215	.254	Non-significant positive	Fail to reject H0
Monitoring and support	-0.094	.621	Non-significant negative	Fail to reject H0
Overall parental pressure	-0.312	.047	Significant negative	Reject H0

Expectations ($r = +0.124$, $p = .514$), rewards and penalties ($r = +0.215$, $p = .254$), and monitoring and support ($r = -0.094$, $p = .621$) were not significantly related to academic performance. Consequently, the null hypothesis was not rejected for these three dimensions. The pattern suggests that the negative association was concentrated in rules and standards and in the cumulative experience of pressure rather than in every parental behavior measured. This result also helps explain why the literature reports mixed findings on parental involvement: supportive or occasional involvement may function differently from rigid, persistent control (De Jesus et al., 2025; Núñez et al., 2024; Park et al., 2023).

The significant negative correlations should be interpreted as associations rather than causal effects because the study used a correlational design and a small group of pupils from one school. Even so, the findings support the source manuscript's central argument that parental guidance is most constructive when it combines academic structure with realistic expectations and emotional support. In this sample, stricter rules and greater overall pressure were linked with lower academic performance, reinforcing the need to avoid equating strong parental involvement with ever-increasing demands.

CONCLUSION

Parental pressure was present in the academic experiences of elementary pupils at Mangan Elementary School, with the overall level interpreted as Sometimes. Rules and standards were the most frequently experienced form of pressure, particularly the requirement to complete homework before leisure. Expectations, rewards and penalties, and monitoring and support were generally experienced less frequently. The results indicate that parents commonly sought to build discipline and academic responsibility, but the intensity and form of that involvement were important.

The study further concluded that setting rules and standards and overall parental pressure were significantly and negatively associated with academic performance. In contrast, expectations, rewards and penalties, and monitoring and support were not significantly related to performance. These findings suggest that parental involvement should emphasize guidance, encouragement, and realistic structure rather than excessive control. The study contributes local evidence from an elementary-school setting and highlights the importance of balancing academic expectations with pupils' need for rest, autonomy, and emotional well-being.

Recommendation

Parents are encouraged to maintain clear and reasonable rules while avoiding excessive demands for perfect performance. Academic reminders and monitoring should be paired with open communication, emotional support, recognition of effort, and sufficient time for rest and play. Pupils may also be guided in self-regulation, time management, help-seeking, and constructive ways of responding to mistakes or academic difficulty.

Teachers should help reduce unnecessary academic pressure through clear instructions, fair assessment, positive reinforcement, and a classroom climate where pupils can participate without fear of failure. Mangan Elementary School may conduct continuing parent-orientation activities focused on constructive parental involvement, realistic expectations, social-emotional support, and stress reduction. Future studies may include larger samples from multiple schools and use mixed-method designs to provide a broader and deeper understanding of how different forms of parental pressure affect academic performance and well-being.

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