

## THE EFFECT OF PARENTAL PRESSURE ON STUDENT MOTIVATION AND PERFORMANCE IN EDUCATION

Anan Gilang Fakhruddin  
English Language Education, Teacher's Training and Education Faculty, Pekalongan University

anan.gilangagf@gmail.com

### ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze how parental encouragement affects students' learning motivation and academic achievement, and the factors that play a role in the relationship between the two. Using a narrative qualitative approach, this research highlights the experiences of a college student who has felt the academic burden from elementary school to college. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews and then analyzed through a process of transcription, narrative coding, and retelling.

The results of this study revealed that pressure from parents who have high expectations without open communication and emotional support can result in mental fatigue, anxiety, and decreased motivation to learn. Although in the long run such pressure can build academic discipline and enthusiasm, the psychological effects are significant and can hinder individual development. This research introduces the term "educational conflict" to describe the tension between parents' expectations and students' psychological needs. Therefore, parental involvement in education should be based on empathy, good communication, and recognition of children's abilities in order to create a supportive learning atmosphere both academically and emotionally.

### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bagaimana dorongan dari orang tua mempengaruhi motivasi belajar dan pencapaian akademik siswa, serta faktor-faktor yang berperan dalam hubungan antara keduanya. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif naratif, penelitian ini menyoroti pengalaman seorang mahasiswa yang telah merasakan beban akademik sejak sekolah dasar hingga ke perguruan tinggi. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur dan kemudian dianalisis melalui proses transkripsi, pengkodean narasi, dan penceritaan ulang.

Hasil dari penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa tekanan dari orang tua yang memiliki ekspektasi tinggi tanpa komunikasi yang terbuka dan dukungan emosional dapat mengakibatkan kelelahan mental, kecemasan, dan penurunan motivasi belajar. Meskipun dalam jangka panjang tekanan tersebut dapat membentuk kedisiplinan dan semangat akademik, efek psikologis yang ditimbulkan tetap signifikan dan dapat menghambat perkembangan individu. Penelitian ini memperkenalkan istilah "konflik pendidikan" untuk menggambarkan ketegangan antara harapan orang tua dan kebutuhan psikologis siswa. Oleh karena itu, keterlibatan orang tua dalam pendidikan harus didasari oleh empati, komunikasi yang baik, dan pengakuan terhadap kemampuan anak agar dapat menciptakan suasana belajar yang mendukung baik dari segi akademis maupun emosional.

**Key Words** : Academic achievement, educational conflict, narrative research, parental pressure, student motivation.

### INTRODUCTION

Parental involvement in education is becoming an increasingly prominent issue as competition in the modern academic world rises. Many parents have high expectations for their children to achieve well as an investment for the future and a source of family pride. Unfortunately, these expectations are often not backed up by good communication and sufficient emotional support, which can cause a heavy psychological burden on students. In Indonesia, this condition has become common and often causes tension in the parent-child relationship.

Many studies show the significant impact of parents on children's motivation and academic success. Research has shown that parental involvement and motivation contributed up to 83.7% to students' academic achievement (Rakian et al., 2022). In addition, found a positive relationship of 0.68 between parental education level and students' enthusiasm for learning at the primary school level. However,

excessive pressure without balanced communication and emotional understanding can result in anxiety, stress, fatigue, or even a decline in students' enthusiasm for learning (Acoci et al., 2023).

An initial survey of 100 high school students showed that 35% of them felt high pressure from uncommunicative parents, and this had a negative impact on their motivation and mental health. On the other hand, 25% of students who felt high pressure but with good communication reported consistent and even increased motivation to study. Meanwhile, 30% of students felt comfortable and remained motivated when receiving low pressure along with emotional support, and 10% of students who felt low pressure but without parental involvement tended to experience unstable motivation. This data suggests that pressure from parents is not always negative, but depends largely on how it is delivered.

More deeply, the tension between parental expectations and children's emotional needs is referred to as "educational conflict" in this study. This conflict arises when students feel hindered by high parental expectations, but are not given the opportunity to express feelings, cope with stress, or choose according to their interests and abilities. In fact, data from the Indonesian Ministry of Health in 2023 showed that the prevalence of anxiety disorders in school adolescents rose to 18.3%, where one of the causes was academic pressure from the home environment. This shows the need to change the way parents guide their children's education.

This study aims to address these issues with a narrative approach, which not only views academic pressure from a quantitative point of view, but also explores students' personal experiences as a realization of the impact of this pressure. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to analyze the effect of parental pressure on students' learning motivation, as well as to identify the factors that play a role in the relationship between pressure, motivation, and academic achievement. In addition, this study aims to present the reflections and narratives of students who experience educational conflict, as well as provide suggestions to parents, educators, and policy makers to create a more emotionally and psychologically balanced education system.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study adopts a qualitative method with a narrative approach, which aims to understand students' personal experiences in dealing with parental pressures that affect their motivation and academic performance. The narrative method was chosen because it allows subjects to reflect comprehensively on their life experiences, particularly in the context of conflicts in education. This approach was considered appropriate to uncover the meaning behind the psychological dynamics faced by students, which cannot be explained by statistical data alone.

The research was conducted in two types of settings, namely in-person interviews and online interviews, depending on the circumstances and convenience of the subjects. Data collection took place over nine months, from September 22 to June 10, to allow sufficient time to build relationships with the subjects and obtain in-depth and authentic data. The main subject in this study is a female student named Rose (pseudonym) who is studying higher education in Solo and lives in Tirto, Pekalongan. The subject was purposively selected because she has experiences related to academic pressure from elementary school to college. In this context, the population consists of students or college students

who receive pressure from parents, while the sample is drawn specifically according to the research focus.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, which provided flexibility to elicit personal narratives from the subjects. The researcher used 15 open-ended questions grouped into three main focuses, namely psychological conditions in education, motivation to learn, and compatibility with parental care. In addition to the primary data from the interviews, this study was also supported by secondary data obtained from literature studies, including scientific journals, educational theory books, and previous research results related to the theme of parental pressure and educational conflict.

To ensure the validity of the data, the researcher applied the triangulation technique by comparing the interview results with documentation and literature references. Data validation was also conducted through the member check method, where the researcher verified the interpretation of the story directly with the subject to ensure the accuracy of the meaning and experience conveyed. All data was collected with full consent from the subjects in accordance with the ethical principles in qualitative research.

The data analysis process in this study relied on narrative analysis which was conducted through three main steps: transcription, coding, and restorying. The researcher identified important elements in the narrative, such as character, setting, action, conflict, and turning points, which were then reorganized into a complete narrative that reflected the dynamics of parental pressure on students' motivation and learning outcomes. The results of this analysis are presented in descriptive and interpretative form to capture the deeper meaning and psychological impact of the subject's experience in the context of educational conflict.

## **FINDING**

This study aims to identify the impact of parental pressure on students' motivation and academic performance using a narrative approach. The subject of this study was a female college student named Rose, who narrated her life journey from elementary school to college, which was filled with high expectations from parents. The research data were obtained through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using the restorying method to illustrate the dynamics of the educational conflict experienced.

From the interviews conducted, it was revealed that since childhood, Rose was always expected to achieve good grades. She also attended various additional lessons such as TPQ, swimming, tutoring, and language courses. Her days were very busy even when she was in elementary school. When her academic results didn't meet expectations, she was often punished by being banned from playing or accessing entertainment. She admitted to feeling physically and mentally exhausted and often feigned illness so she could rest. In the long run, this pressure led to anxiety, guilt and fear of disappointing her parents, despite her academic achievements.

However, Rose also realized that behind the pressure were the good intentions of her parents. This realization began to emerge when she entered university and was physically separated from her family. Improved communication during college gave her the opportunity to reflect on her past in a more mature way. She began to understand that although the pressure she was under was heavy, the

foundations laid by her parents helped shape the perseverance and discipline she now possesses.

The main finding of this narrative is that parental pressure can serve as both a motivator and a source of emotional stress. This is strongly influenced by the quality of communication and emotional engagement between parents and children.

## **DISCUSSION**

The results of this study support the findings that have existed in previous research. On this phenomenon, pressure exerted by parents without being balanced with emotional communication can lead to anxiety and decreased interest in learning (Hu et al., 2024). In Rose's case, the drive to be perfect and meet parental expectations had caused inner stress and guilt, despite her achievements.

This finding is also in line with theory of motivation, which states that the need for self-esteem and self-actualization can only develop properly if basic needs such as security and affection are met. In this context, excessive pressure without emotional support can actually hinder the development of internal motivation and make students learn out of fear, rather than based on their own desires (Maslow, 1970).

In addition, this research explains that uncontrolled pressure can lead to prolonged mental tension, where children feel anxious about their abilities and self-esteem (Baumrind, 1966). In Rose's experience, this pressure led to fear of failure and reluctance to express feelings to parents. This suggests that poorly managed academic pressure can be detrimental to students' psychological balance.

However, it is also important to note that not all forms of pressure have negative effects. As shown in a study, parents' positive and empathic involvement in their children's education can increase students' motivation and academic achievement. This was seen in Rose's college phase of life, when better communication with her parents made her feel more valued and able to see the positive side of her past experiences (Asare et al., 2024).

The concept of "educational conflict" discussed in this study emphasizes the importance of balancing the expectations and psychological needs of children. Parents' expectations still play an important role as motivation for achievement, but they must be conveyed in a communicative and empathetic way. Thus, education is not only a platform for academic achievement, but also a safe space for children's emotional and personality development.

## **CONCLUSION**

The pressure that parents put on their children in the field of education cannot be considered only as a driver of success or as the only obstacle. This research reveals that pressure can be a source of inner conflict for students, where the drive to meet expectations is often not accompanied by space to express oneself, complain, or even understand one's full potential. Under these conditions, motivation to learn usually does not arise from within the child, but rather as a reaction to fear or guilt, which has the potential to be detrimental to the student's psychological health in the long run.

Parents' awareness of good intentions is not enough to neutralize the effects of pressure. What is needed are equal communication patterns, recognition of the child's capabilities, and healthy parental emotional involvement. In their absence, pressure often turns into a heavy burden, rather than a hint or guidance. Thus, it is important to pay attention to the educational conflict that occurs between parents' expectations and children's psychological needs in current education and parenting practices.

As a suggestion, future research is recommended to expand the range of subjects and include more perspectives, including from parents and teachers, to gain a more thorough understanding of the dynamics of pressure and motivation. In addition, the use of a longitudinal approach is also needed to explore the effects of the longitudinal approach.

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