



Between Ambition and Anxiety: Academic Stress and the Fear of Failure Among Students of Bangladesh's Four Autonomous Universities

Nazmul Hasan Raz^{1*}, Yeasir Arafat², Mahbubul Alam³, Shammi Islam⁴

University of Rajshahi

Corresponding Author: Nazmul Hasan Raz knajmul430@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: Academic Stress, Fear of Failure, Mental Health, University Students in Bangladesh

Received : 3 August

Revised : 21 September

Accepted: 21 October

©2025 Raz, Arafat, Alam, Islam: This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).



ABSTRACT

This study explores the complex relationship between ambition and anxiety by examining the academic stress and fear of failure experienced by students at four autonomous universities in Bangladesh: University of Dhaka, University of Rajshahi, Jahangirnagar University, and University of Chittagong. A structured questionnaire with both Likert-scale and open-ended questions was used in data collection applying a mixed-methods approach. It examines the role of academic pressure, family expectations, self-comparison, and institutional inadequacies in contributing to the mental and emotional struggles of students. The findings revealed that most of the respondents were found to be having chronic anxiety about their academic performance; they tend to associate their self-worth with their success in work. Physically, emotionally, and socially exhausted respondents reported symptoms due to academic stress. Qualitative responses point to insufficient support for mental health under a culture of silence about vulnerability and very deeply rooted disappointment potential from family members. The study shows the quick need for whole help systems— including school mental wellness services, parent understanding, and friend support groups to lessen the fear of messing up and advance student wellness in Bangladesh higher learning fields

INTRODUCTION

In our competitive environment of higher education, academic success is frequently perceived as the primary indicator of student success. For a large number of students, and particularly in the developing countries such as Bangladesh, this pressure is exacerbated by societal standards, family expectations and a lack of quality educational and professional options. The four universities are autonomous, known for their strict academic standards and relative independence in governance, and they draw some of the country's brightest young minds. But this same autonomy and exposure that makes these institutions so attractive can contribute to a high-pressure environment with high expectations and also great peer competition. In such a context, academic stress is a reality for most. Some stress is motivating, but chronic, overwhelming stress has been associated with burnout, mental health problems and lower grades. One of the most powerful influences on this stress is the fear of failure – a pervasive anxiety about one's ability to not achieve specific internal or external standards, which can result in avoidance behaviors, diminished self-esteem and – in more extreme cases – psychological detriment. This fear is informed by cultural dynamics, including the emphasis placed on academic achievement in Bangladeshi society, the stigmatization of doing poorly in school, and competitive admission processes that students have already gone through to get into these universities. Internationally, there is strong evidence for the association between academic stress and fear of failure with students' well-being, but the studies related to the particular context of socio-cultural and institutional aspects of Bangladesh's autonomous universities are scarce. It is therefore important to investigate how students in these institutions experience and manage academic stress and fear of failure. Such knowledge base can guide specific mental health interventions, institutional policies, and support structures that enhance student outcomes and contribute to healthier academic environments. This study has attempted to undertake that gap by identifying the origins, expressions and defense mechanisms of academic stress drawing on fear of failure of the students in the four autonomous universities in self and others learning, and by providing evidence-based recommendations for improving both student academic success and psychological well-being.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Education means a systematic approach to a particular topic or course to make someone fully understand it by a certain organization or person within a proper environment and infrastructure (Arafat & Fahmida, 2024). But, it is very difficult within some constraints. Student satisfaction has emerged as a critical measure of quality assurance and institutional effectiveness in higher education (Alam, Arafat, & Mahmud, 2025). Academic stress and its impact on college students have been widely studied, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Barbayannis et al. (2022) highlight that academic stress significantly affects students' mental well-being, with some groups more vulnerable than others. Similarly, Chen, Wang, and Yang (2024) found a strong association between academic stress and depression among Chinese college students during the pandemic. Chowdhury et al. (2022) emphasize the additional burden of stress

related to future career uncertainties among university students, a finding consistent with Hossain et al. (2021), who reported heightened fear of academic delays and psychological distress among Bangladeshi students due to online education adjustments.

Sifat (2020) also reported increased anxiety and depression among students in Bangladesh, further corroborated by Schmits et al. (2021), who documented sustained psychological distress one year into the pandemic. Fear of failure is a significant psychological factor influencing student stress and academic performance. Atkinson (1987) originally studied the fear of failure, noting its motivational consequences. Conroy (2001) and Conroy, Willow, and Metzler (2002) developed a multidimensional measurement of fear of failure, highlighting its impact on student emotions and behavior such as procrastination. Duru, Balkis, and Duru (2024) further revealed that fear of failure decreases academic satisfaction by mediating emotion regulation difficulties and procrastination. Martin and Marsh (2003) discuss fear of failure as both a potential motivator and an obstacle, while Vaughn, Srivatsa, and Graf (2021) show that effort-based praise can improve resilience among students with high fear of failure. Academic buoyancy, defined as students' ability to successfully manage everyday academic challenges, is shown to counteract negative academic experiences. Martin and Marsh (2008) argue that academic buoyancy is crucial for everyday academic resilience. Collie et al. (2015) found that academic buoyancy positively influences student achievement through increased control over academic setbacks. Collie et al. (2016) and af Ursin, Järvinen, and Pihlaja (2020) emphasize that social support enhances academic buoyancy, helping students better manage adversity and maintain school engagement. Yang, Azari Noughabi, and Jahedizadeh (2022) add that academic buoyancy, coupled with self-efficacy, contributes to persistence and grit, particularly among English language learners.

The role of the educational environment and support systems in fostering student success has also been highlighted. Museus, Yi, and Saelua (2017) stress the importance of culturally engaging campus environments in promoting a sense of belonging and reducing dropout rates among minority students. Ives and Castillo-Montoya (2020) conducted a systematic review indicating that first-generation college students face unique academic challenges requiring specialized support. Banks and Dohy (2019) similarly argue that targeted efforts to reduce barriers for students of color improve persistence and graduation rates. Lorenzetti et al. (2019) support mentoring programs as key partnerships that enhance graduate student peer support, aiding academic and psychological well-being. Mental health challenges are pervasive among students and have been exacerbated by the pandemic. Meeks, Peak, and Dreihaus (2021) document the prevalence of depression, anxiety, and stress among university populations, including faculty and staff. Lee, Jeong, and Kim (2021) found increased stress and mental health service utilization among undergraduates during COVID-19. Koppenborg et al. (2022) identify mindfulness skills as beneficial in mitigating academic stress, especially for international students. Pérez-Jorge et al. (2025) provide evidence that academic stress negatively affects overall student well-

being in higher education, while Pang, Quan, and Lu (2024) demonstrate how perceived academic overload can lead to social media exhaustion and anxiety. Context-specific studies further enrich understanding of academic stress.

Phillips, Halder, and Hasib (2020) analyzed academic stress among Bangladeshi tertiary students, categorizing stressors and highlighting local challenges. Rabbi and Islam (2024) similarly report on academic stress and mental anxiety among students at Khulna University, emphasizing the need for institutional support. Theoretical frameworks offer insight into the development and resilience of students facing academic and psychological challenges. Spencer, Dupree, and Hartmann (1997) introduced the phenomenological variant of ecological systems theory (PVEST), which Cunningham et al. (2023) further charted as a useful model for understanding identity development and coping in educational settings. Finally, innovative approaches to education emphasize integrating positive psychology and neuroscience to improve learning and student outcomes. Alex-Assensoh (2021) argues that such integration enhances teaching practices and student motivation, contributing to healthier academic experiences.

METHODOLOGY

- **Quantitative:** Research means a systematic finding and study of materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new results (Arafat, 2024a). A structured questionnaire was distributed among 412 students of four autonomous universities in Bangladesh, selected through stratified sampling.
- **Qualitative:** A small qualitative element was also included to gather open-ended responses, which were analyzed thematically.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Universities of the Students Belong

Among the 412 responses, University of Dhaka dominates by 26.2%, and is the most commonly cited university. Each of the selected universities, apart from the University of Rajshahi and Jahangirnagar University (24.5% each), has significant representation in the dataset with the University of Chittagong 24.8% being the next most represented one. It also implies that there is an outsized smartphone user focus in Dhaka, with a relatively proportional representation from the other big universities. But the higher number of responses from the University of Dhaka could create a bias and bring more focus to the experiences of Dhaka-based students in regarding academic stress and fear of failure.

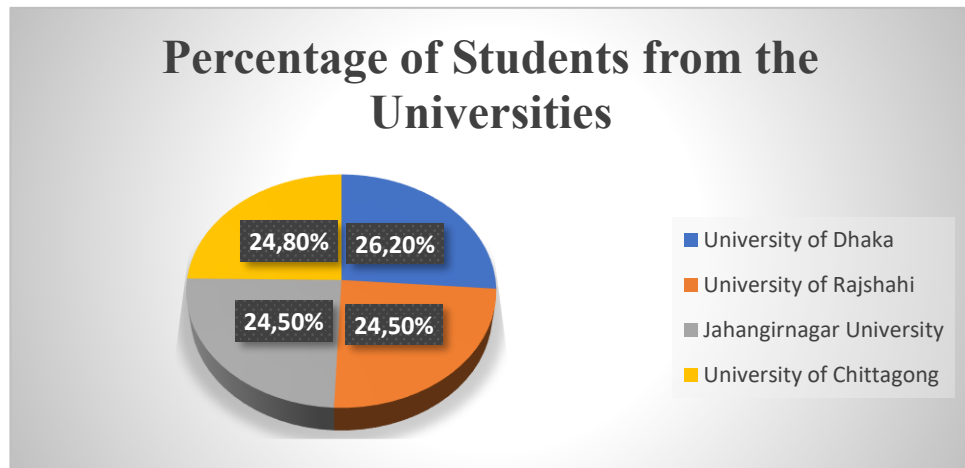


Figure 1. Developed by the Authors Based on the Collected Data

Year of Study

The sample is composed mainly of 2nd-year students holding the highest ratio (35.5%), then 1st-year students (28.7%) as seen in the data above. This indicates that many participants are still at the beginning of university life, during which a high level of stress generally prevails. Third-year students 20.1% are under heavier academic pressure and Fourth-year students, 11.6% both graduation projects and work pressure. Among the five categories, master's students are the minority (4.1%), likely facing research- and career-related stresses. In general, the results show that stress is different by study level in which early-year students are dominant loose-ended group and have distinctive transition issues.

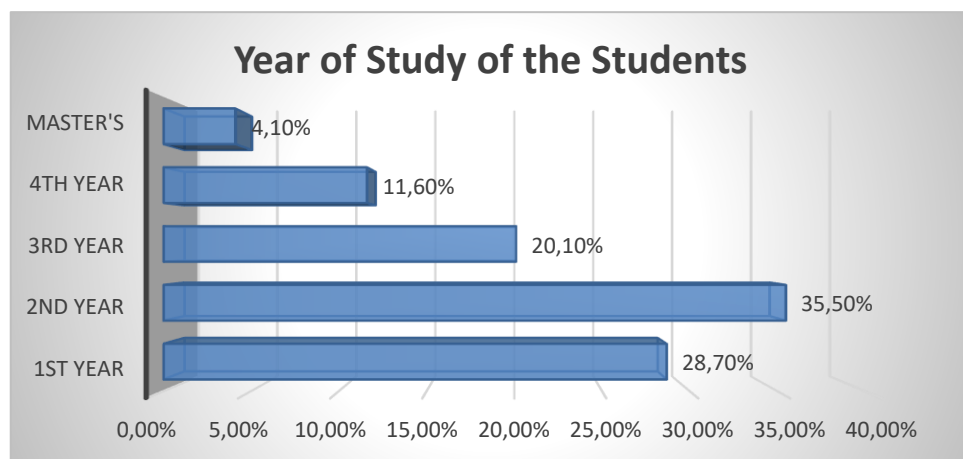


Figure 2. Developed by the Authors Based on the Collected Data

Gender

The gender data analysis shows that the Gender female (51%) forms a large share of the dataset indicating a slightly higher frequency as compared to Gender male (49%).

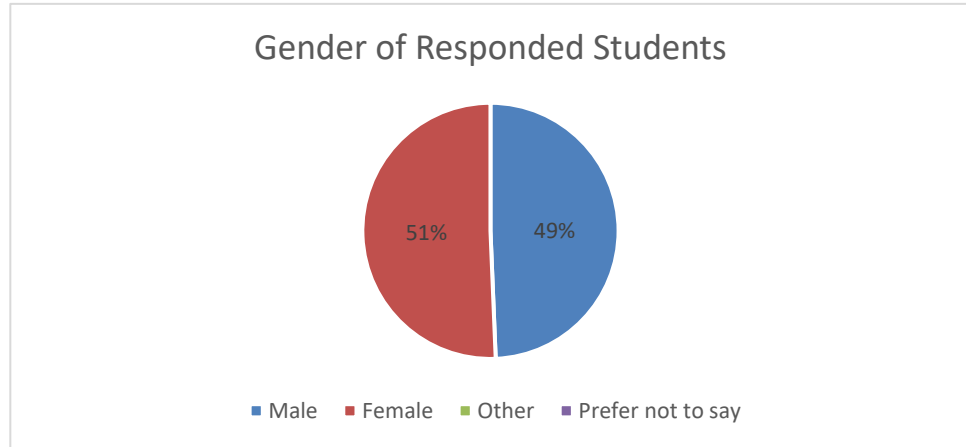


Figure 3. Developed by the Authors Based on the Collected Data

Academic Anxiety and Performance Concerns

According to this study, 39.8% of the students Agree that they constantly worry about their academic performance, even when doing well, and 18.8% Strongly Agree. 23.6 percent are Neutral, reflecting mixed opinions, and 15.9 percent Disagree, suggesting they don't fret much. Only a mere 1.9% Strongly Disagree which is suggesting that there are only few numbers of students who do not have a concern about their academic performance. In general, a large proportion of students seems to have anxiety with regard to academic achievements.

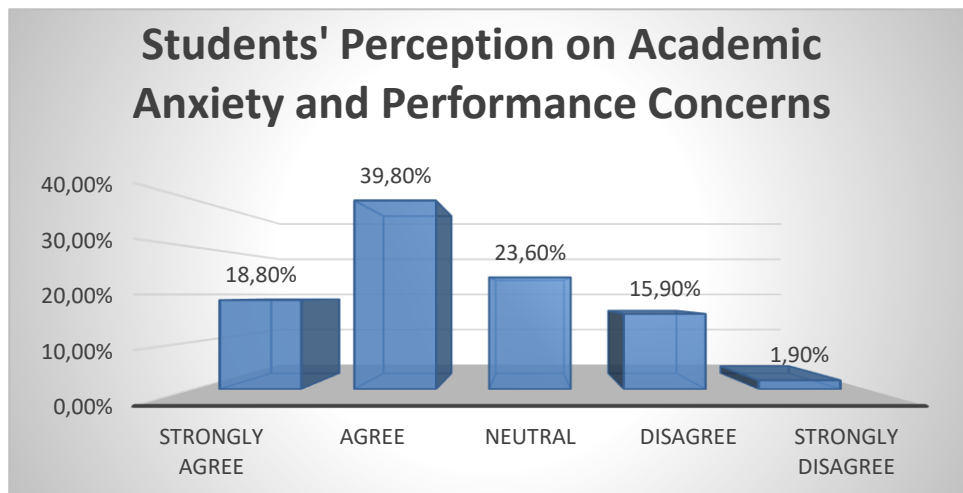


Figure 4. Developed by the Authors Based on the Collected Data

Fear of Failure and Impact on Sleep

The response analysis of the item stay awake for fear of failure, indicates that 34.9% of the students agree that they stay awake as a result of academic fears. 22.3% Disagree (they are not this anxious), 14% Strongly Agree with a significant minority of students in a state of high stress and fear. 25.3% of students answered Neutral, and 3.5% Strongly Disagree indicating a lesser number of students who does not have these anxieties. This implies that fear of failure is negatively impacting a large number of the student's health, in particular, their ability to get a good night sleep.

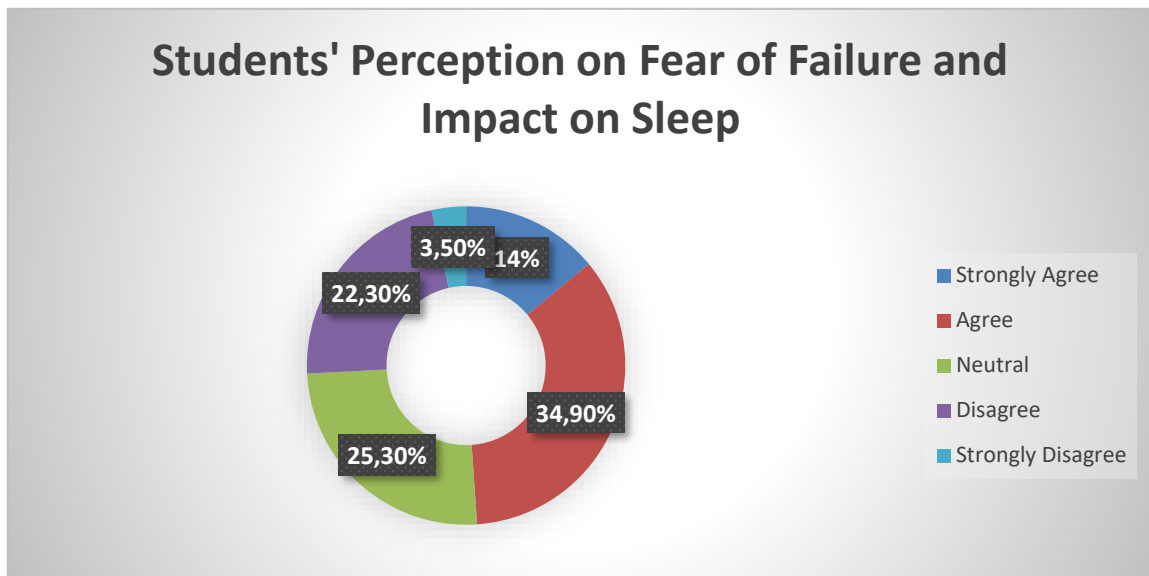


Figure 5. Developed by the Authors Based on the Collected Data

Impact of Family Expectations on University Life

Asked whether their families have high expectations of them, 39.4% said it is hard to relax or enjoy university life because of what their family members wanted or expected from them. Among this group, 15.4% strongly agreed the pressure from family is premature for them to feel comfortable. On the flip side, 20.5% disagreed – indicating they're not really affected by family expectations – and 22.9% were neutral on the subject. Just 1.8% strong disagreed, a small contingent relatively unconcerned about family demands." Together, findings suggest that family expectations are strongly associated with the overall well-being and enjoyability of college life for a large majority of students.

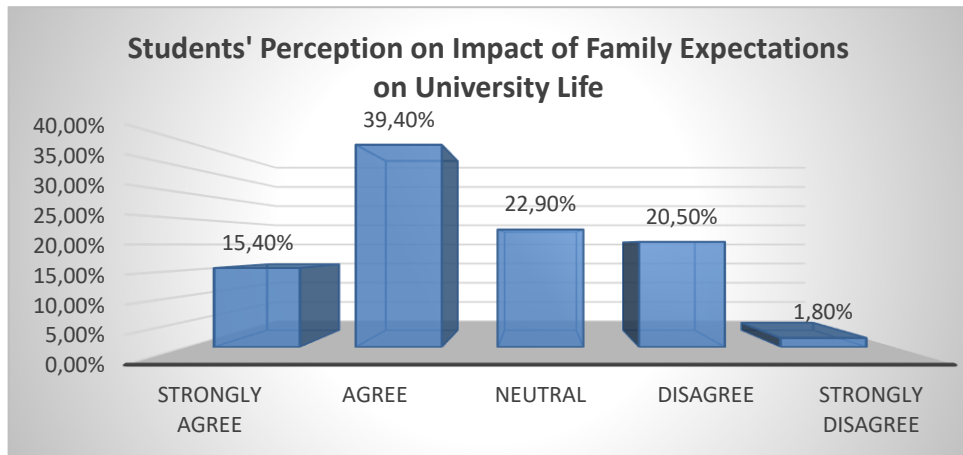


Figure 6. Developed by the Authors Based on the Collected Data

Physical Symptoms Due to Exams Stress

The response analysis for the question on physical symptoms during exams or result periods indicates that 37.4% Agree to physical symptoms such as headache and chest pain during exams and results periods. 16.1% Strongly Agree, that is a number of students experience very severe physical problems as a result of examination stress. 24.2% Disagree, insinuating no, they don't suffer from any such symptoms, meanwhile 20.4% are Neutral, uncertain, or it's a mixed bag for them. 1.9% of participants Strongly Disagree, indicating a minority with no physical symptoms. This indicates that the influence of exam-stress on students' physical health is very large.

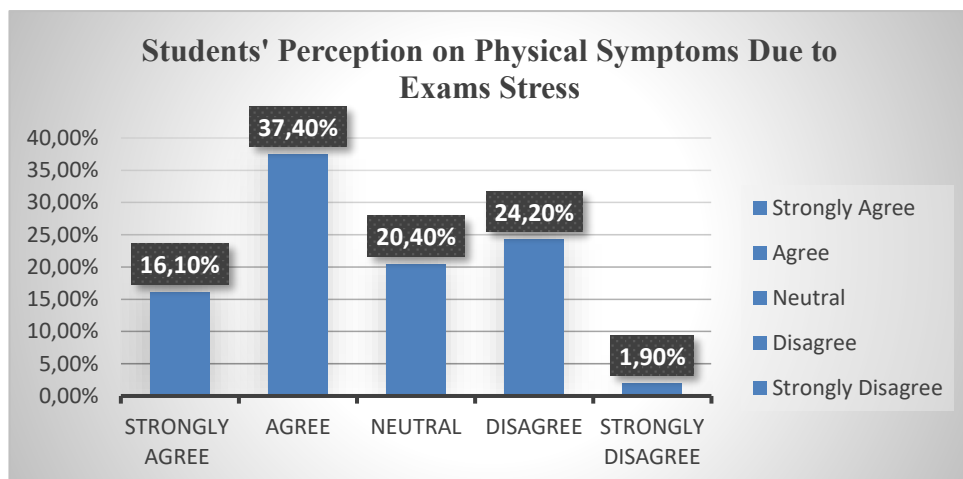


Figure 7. Developed by the Authors Based on the Collected Data

Academic Stress and Its Impact on Social Life

The interpretation of the responses of the item of stress affecting friendships and social life is such that 25.3 percent students remain Neutral with the notion that academic stress both positively and negatively affects social life. 26.3% Disagree, so they don't feel that academic stress has a huge impact on their social life, but 32.3% do Agree that academic stress does negatively affect and 14.5% Strongly Agree meaning a smaller percentage of students have a strong

negative effect. Only a very small percentage (1.6% indicates it hardly matters), of students strongly disagree with academic stress having an impact on their social life completely. This is to suggest that, though the great effort that students make for school seems to bring social disruption to most of them, some of them do not report such a case.

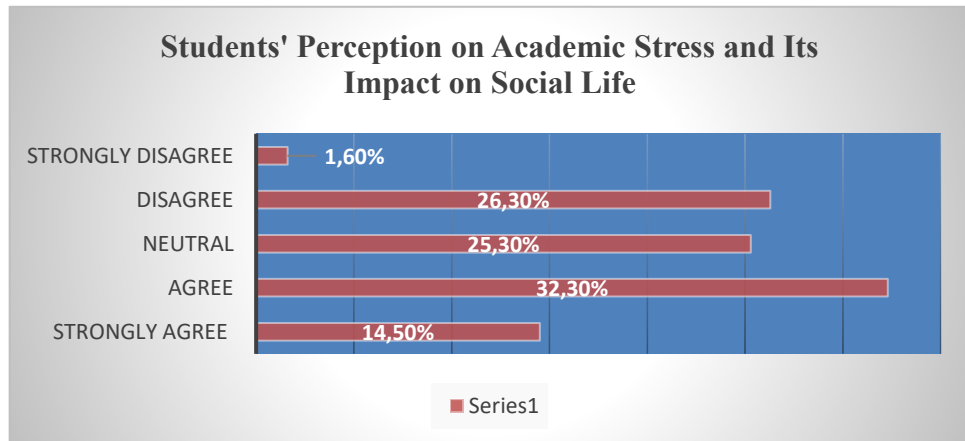


Figure 8. Developed by the Authors Based on the Collected Data

Increasing Academic Anxiety Throughout University

An examination of the answer options to the acceleration question demonstrates that 42.5% of students Agree that their academic anxiety is getting worse as they progress in university, 27.1% Strongly Agree, suggesting that a significant portion of students are experiencing increased academic anxiety. 20.1% are Neutral: they seem unsure or ambivalent about the topic. 9.2% Disagree: they don't feel much higher anxiety at all. Only 1.1% of students have checked Strongly Disagree which represents a minority of students that don't experience the increase in academic anxiety. This suggests that such academic anxiety is becoming a source of concern for many students as they advance within their academic trajectories.

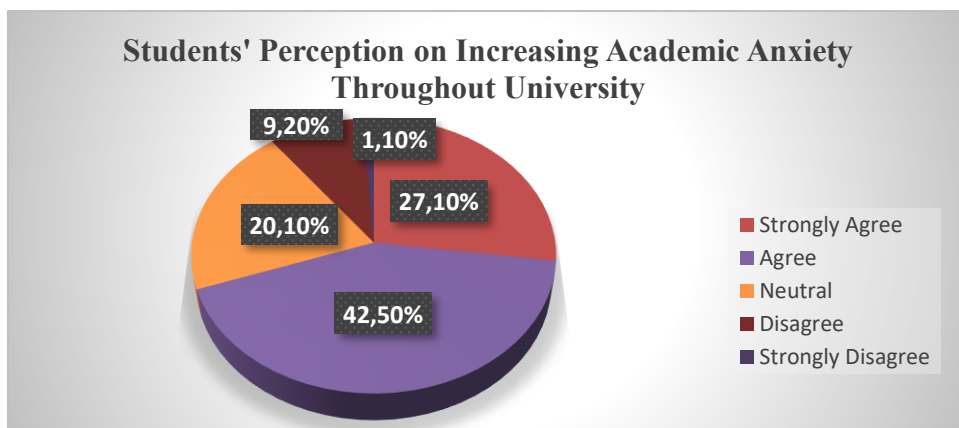


Figure 9. Developed by the Authors Based on the Collected Data

Fear of Academic Failure Ruining Future

The results for the item "a mistake in school can ruin the whole future" are as follows: 29.3% of students Disagree, as this is not true that a school mistake would have such dramatic effect. But 'Neutral' 19.7% are about the outcome in a Neutral Way! 32.1% Agreed that not performing everyday could ruin their life, and 15.1% Strongly Agreed, representing substantial amount of anxiety some students have in academics. We had only 3.8% Highly Disagreed. This implies that a considerable number of students are under a lot of stress with the fear of failure, and therefore this tendency might be harmful not only for their mental health but also for their academic achievements.

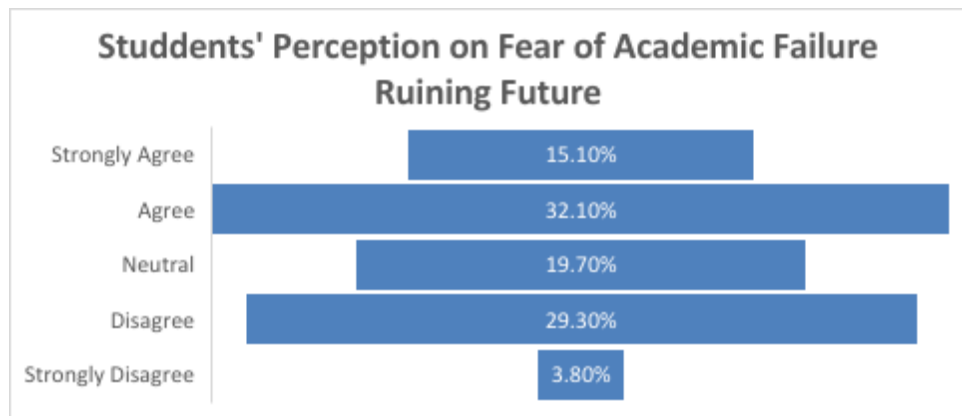


Figure 10. Developed by the Authors Based on the Collected Data

Mental Health Support in Autonomous Universities

The breakdown of responses to a question on whether the university offers enough mental health support reveals that 28% of students are Neutral based on the availability of mental health support. 17.7% Strongly Agree that the university supports them. This is a fairly optimistic response from a small number of students. 28.3% Agree, and 23.8% Disagree, indicating the percentage who don't feel that they're getting the support. Only 2.2% strongly disagree, a very few students who feel mental health support is close to non-existent. This underscores the fact that while students are to some extent supported, many believe further support is needed.

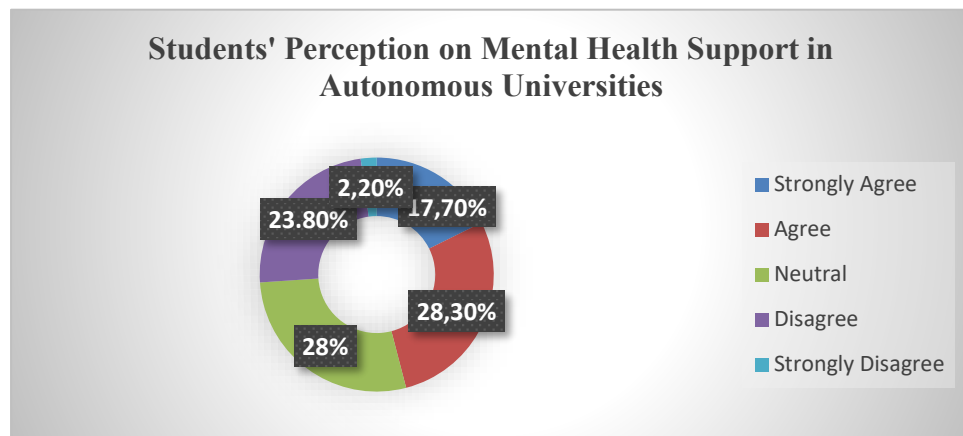


Figure 11. Developed by the Authors Based on the Collected Data

Personal Experience of Academic Stress

Students' responses reveal that academic stress has a profound impact on both emotional and physical well-being, with many reporting anxiety, depression, mental exhaustion, and fear of failure tied to academic expectations. Sleep problems, loss of interest in daily activities, and financial strain over tuition fees were frequently mentioned, showing how stress extends beyond academic performance to everyday life. Although some students tried to approach stress positively, they admitted it often undermined their self-esteem, motivation, and confidence, leaving them feeling drained and inadequate. Concerns about disappointing their families further intensified the pressure, while persistent stress manifested in social withdrawal, lethargy, headaches, and chest pain. Overall, academic stress emerges as a pervasive challenge that damages students' mental health, disrupts their daily functioning, and diminishes their overall quality of life.

Support to Overcome the Stress

The results indicate that various systems of support strongly influence students' fear of failure, with family support emerging as particularly vital in providing empathy and emotional reassurance that ease stress. Institutional support also plays a key role, as students highlight the need for accessible counselling, teacher guidance, flexible curricula, adjustable deadlines, and stress management workshops to reduce academic pressure. Financial stability further alleviates strain, with financial aid offering relief from both academic and personal burdens. Many students emphasise the importance of a holistic educational approach that prioritises learning and personal growth over grades, alongside more open discussions about failure, positive reinforcement from teachers, and peer encouragement to create a healthier academic environment.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The political frameworks and structures of Bangladesh remain highly complex and marked by anomalies. Recent research by Arafat and Fahmida (2025a) and Arafat (2024b) highlights the historical and systemic factors that reinforce hierarchical governance and weaken accountability, while Arafat et al. (2025) demonstrate how national integrity and institutional barriers shape the behaviour of political actors. Yet, accountability remains a cornerstone of democratic governance, essential to ensuring that public officials and institutions serve the people's best interests (Arafat and Fahmida, 2025b), and this principle is equally vital for the welfare of students. This study reveals the damaging effects of academic stress and fear of failure on students' emotional well-being and daily lives, showing how pressure-driven academic culture and insufficient support systems leave them anxious, depressed, and overwhelmed. At the same time, the findings underscore the protective role of family support, counselling, and student-centred learning environments in helping students cope with stress and sustain healthy academic engagement. Despite its limitations, including a relatively small and potentially unrepresentative sample drawn from selected universities, reliance on self-reported data, and the cross-sectional nature of the research, this study offers valuable insight into the burdens students face. It also points to the need for further exploration of institutional and family characteristics, cultural and social contexts, and the long-term consequences of stress. Future research that is broader, longitudinal, and attentive to external factors such as personal life stressors or extracurricular demands would provide a deeper understanding of academic stress and the effectiveness of different support systems.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors have declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

REFERENCES

- Af Ursin, P., Järvinen, T., & Pihlaja, P. (2020). The Role of Academic Buoyancy and Social Support in Mediating Associations Between Academic Stress and School Engagement in Finnish Primary School Children. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 65(4), 661–675. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00313831.2020.1739135>
- Alam, M. M., Arafat, M. Y., & Mahmud, D. M. S. (2025). Assessing Student Satisfaction With the Academic Environment at the University of Rajshahi: A Mixed Approach. *Demagogi: Journal of Social Sciences, Economics and Education*, 3(4), 262–276. <https://doi.org/10.61166/demagogi.v3i4.92>
- Alex-Assensoh, Y. M. (2021). Using neuroscience and positive psychology to enhance college teaching and learning. *The National Teaching & Learning Forum*, 30(2), 1–3. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ntlf.30268>
- Arafat, M. Y. (2024a). Research ethics: Meaning and principles. *International Journal of Academic Multidisciplinary Research*, 8(1). <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4887943>
- Arafat, M. Y. (2024b). Student politics, Bangladesh and solutions. *International Journal of Academic Multidisciplinary Research*, 8(9), 230–236. <http://ijeais.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/9/IJAMR240932.pdf>
- Arafat, M. Y., & Fahmida, F. (2024). Effective class management: A study to enhance education system. *Semarak International Journal of Innovation in Learning and Education (SIJILE)*, 3(1), 47–60. <https://doi.org/10.37934/sijile.3.1.4760a>
- Arafat, M. Y., & Fahmida. (2025a). History, agendas, and anomalies of Bangladesh politics. *DIROSAT: Journal of Education, Social Sciences & Humanities*, 3(2), 323–341. <https://doi.org/10.58355/dirosat.v3i2.158>
- Arafat, M. Y., & Fahmida. (2025b). Envisioning Accountability through a Mobile Application: a Theoretical Framework . *Journal of Governance and Accountability Studies*, 5(2), 93–111. <https://doi.org/10.35912/jgas.v5i2.2706>
- Arafat, M. Y., Alam, M. M., Raz, N. H., Opee, M. F. S., Tabassum, N., & Fahmida. (2025). Exploring the determinants and barriers of national integrity in the context of Bangladesh. *INTERDISIPLIN: Journal of Qualitative and Quantitative Research*, 2(4), 291–310. <https://doi.org/10.61166/interdisiplin.v2i4.121>
- Atkinson, J. W. (1987). Michigan studies of fear of failure. In F. Halisch & J. Kuhl (Eds.), *Motivation, intention, and volition* (pp. 47–59). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-70967-8_5
- Banks, T., & Dohy, J. (2019). Mitigating barriers to persistence: A review of efforts to improve retention and graduation rates for students of color in higher education. *Higher Education Studies*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.5539/hes.v9n1p118>

- Barbayannis, G., Bandari, M., Zheng, X., Baquerizo, H., Pecor, K. W., & Ming, X. (2022). Academic stress and mental well-being in college students: Correlations, affected groups, and COVID-19. *Front. Psychol.*, 13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.886344>
- Chen, B., Wang, W., & Yang, S. (2024). The relationship between academic stress and depression among college students during the COVID-19 pandemic: A cross-sectional study from China. *BMC Psychiatry*, 24, 46. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-024-05506-8>
- Chowdhury, U., Suvro, M. A. H., Farhan, S. M. D., & Uddin, M. J. (2022). Depression and stress regarding future career among university students during COVID-19 pandemic. *PLOS ONE*, 17(4), e0266686. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0266686>
- Collie, R. J., Martin, A. J., Bottrell, D., Armstrong, D., Ungar, M., & Liebenberg, L. (2016). Social support, academic adversity and academic buoyancy: A person-centered analysis and implications for academic outcomes. *Educational Psychology*, 37(5), 550–564. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01443410.2015.1127330>
- Collie, R. J., Martin, A. J., Malmberg, L. -E., Hall, J., & Ginns, P. (2015). Academic buoyancy, student's achievement, and the linking role of control: A cross-lagged analysis of high school students. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 85(1), 113–130. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjep.12066>
- Conroy, D. E. (2001). Progress in the development of a multidimensional measure of fear of failure: The performance failure appraisal inventory (PFAI). *Anxiety, Stress & Coping*, 14(4), 431–452. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10615800108248365>
- Conroy, D. E., Willow, J. P., & Metzler, J. N. (2002). Multidimensional fear of failure measurement: The performance failure appraisal inventory. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 14(2), 76–90. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10413200252907752>
- Cunningham, M., Swanson, D. P., Youngblood, J. II, Seaton, E. K., Francois, S., & Ashford, C. (2023). Spencer's phenomenological variant of ecological systems theory (PVEST): Charting its origin and impact. *American Psychologist*, 78(4), 524–534. <https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0001051>
- Duru, E., Balkis, M., & Duru, S. (2024). Fear of failure and academic satisfaction: The mediating role of emotion regulation difficulties and procrastination. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, 39, 2901–2914. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10212-024-00868-9>
- Hossain, M. J., Ahmmed, F., Rahman, S. M. A., Sanam, S., Emran, T. B., & Mitra, S. (2021). Impact of online education on fear of academic delay and psychological distress among university students following one year of COVID-19 outbreak in Bangladesh. *Heliyon*, 7(6), e07388. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2021.e07388>

- Ives, J., & Castillo-Montoya, M. (2020). First-generation college students as academic learners: A systematic review. *Review of Educational Research*, 90(2), 139-178. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654319899707>
- Koppenborg, K. A., Garnefski, N., Kraaij, V., & Ly, V. (2022). Academic stress, mindfulness-related skills and mental health in international university students. *Journal of American College Health*, 72(3), 787-795. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07448481.2022.2057193>
- Lee, J., Jeong, H. J., & Kim, S. (2021). Stress, anxiety, and depression among undergraduate students during the COVID-19 pandemic and their use of mental health services. *Innovative Higher Education*, 46, 519-538. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10755-021-09552-y>
- Lorenzetti, D. L., Shipton, L., Nowell, L., Jacobsen, M., Lorenzetti, L., Clancy, T., & Paolucci, E. O. (2019). A systematic review of graduate student peer mentorship in academia. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, 27(5), 549-576. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2019.1686694>
- Martin, A. J., & Marsh, H. W. (2003). Fear of failure: Friend or foe? *Australian Psychologist*, 38(1), 31-38. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00050060310001706997>
- Martin, A. J., & Marsh, H. W. (2008). Academic buoyancy: Towards an understanding of students' everyday academic resilience. *Journal of School Psychology*, 46(1), 53-83. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2007.01.002>
- Meeks, K., Peak, A. S., & Dreihaus, A. (2021). Depression, anxiety, and stress among students, faculty, and staff. *Journal of American College Health*, 71(2), 348-354. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07448481.2021.1891913>
- Museus, S.D., Yi, V., & Saelua, N. (2017). The Impact of Culturally Engaging Campus Environments on Sense of Belonging. *The Review of Higher Education* 40(2), 187-215. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1353/rhe.2017.0001>.
- Pang, H., Quan, L., & Lu, J. (2024). How does perceived overload influence international students' educational attainment? The mediating roles of social media exhaustion and academic anxiety. *Current Psychology*, 43, 7794-7808. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-023-04984-5>
- Pérez-Jorge, D., Boutaba-Alehyan, M., González-Contreras, A. I., et al. (2025). Examining the effects of academic stress on student well-being in higher education. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 12, 449. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-025-04698-y>
- Phillips, S. C., Halder, D. P., & Hasib, W. (2020). Academic stress among tertiary level students: A categorical analysis of academic stress scale in the context of Bangladesh. *Asian Journal of Advanced Research and Reports*, 8(4), 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.9734/ajarr/2020/v8i430203>

- Rabbi, M. F., & Islam, M. S. (2024). The effect of academic stress and mental anxiety among the students of Khulna University. *Edukasiana: Jurnal Inovasi Pendidikan*, 3(3), 280–299. <https://doi.org/10.56916/ejip.v3i3.723>
- Schmits, E., Dekeyser, S., Klein, O., Luminet, O., Yzerbyt, V., & Glowacz, F. (2021). Psychological distress among students in higher education: One year after the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(14). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18147445>
- Sifat, R. I. (2020). COVID-19 pandemic: Mental stress, depression, anxiety among the university students in Bangladesh. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, 67(5), 609–610. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020764020965995>
- Spencer, M. B., Dupree, D., & Hartmann, T. (1997). A phenomenological variant of ecological systems theory (PVEST): A self-organization perspective in context. *Development and Psychopathology*, 9(4), 817–833. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954579497001454>
- Vaughn, K. E., Srivatsa, N., & Graf, A. S. (2021). Effort praise improves resilience for college students with high fear of failure. *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice*, 25(2), 378–397. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1521025120986517>
- Yang, S., Azari Noughabi, M., & Jahedizadeh, S. (2022). Modelling the contribution of English language learners' academic buoyancy and self-efficacy to L2 grit: evidence from Iran and China. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 45(7), 2701–2717. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2022.2062368>