

Causes of poor mental health among university students

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Every student studying at university has likely experienced adverse [mental health](#) throughout their studies due to various factors. Increased mental health challenges among university students may arise from worsening personal and financial stress and can include diagnoses of depression, anxiety, and panic attacks.

The debilitating mental health of university students is a cause of concern, and failure to address these issues will be detrimental in the future.

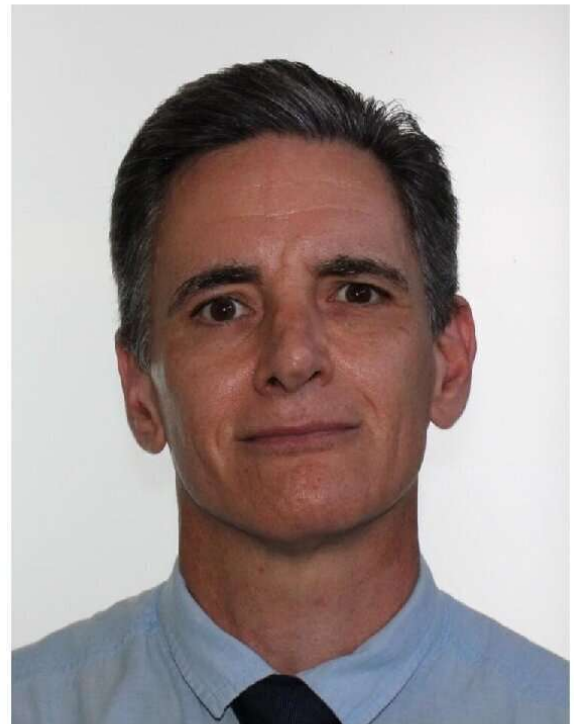
Academic pressure

Academic pressure is a leading cause of poor mental health among university students.

The grading system in the education sector is elitist—it excludes those who do not conform to a rigid, arbitrary standard, and it communicates to students that their intelligence is linked to their grades. Students who score low grades are perceived to have low intelligence, whereas those with high grades are perceived to have high intelligence. These labels influence students' self-esteem.

Students with continuous low grades become discouraged and will likely convince themselves that they cannot achieve anything to a high standard in life. This low self-esteem and self-criticism can lead to developing symptoms of depression or anxiety.

Universities can also place academic pressure on students if they consistently achieve low grades. For example, certain universities can place low-achieving students on probation, and if there is no observed change in performance, the student is expelled.



David Mandrake

Conversely, high-achieving students can also suffer from poor mental health, as they are pressured to maintain their high grades.

The pressure to succeed often negatively impacts students' mental health and sense of self-worth. Anxiety can develop from worrying about matching or excelling beyond their peers' performances and depression can develop from a failure to achieve.

A student who consistently scores high grades could also receive pressure from their family's expectations. Students will likely develop poor mental health outcomes if they believe their family is overly critical and values their educational achievement more than their character traits.

Whether they are high- or low-achieving students, students need to reduce their self-criticisms, and ideally, their families will reduce academic pressure.

Financial burden

It is common knowledge that undertaking a university education is expensive. Another contributing factor to poor mental health is the financial burden shouldered by university students.

Since the Great Recession, there has been a significant increase in American university students seeking help for mental health issues. These students have witnessed the burden of financial difficulty and feel uncertain about their future careers and job opportunities.

Students who cannot afford the significant financial burden of higher education complete their enrollment regardless because they understand that a college education increases the likelihood of employment. Almost all university students take out student loans and work part-time alongside their studies.

Some students have to travel a great distance to study at university, and as such, they add housing and upkeep expenses to the already high tuition fees. A study reported that 33% of students find it difficult to afford food, 39% experience challenges covering clothing expenses, 30% cannot afford accommodation, 54% could not afford educational resources, 29% find it challenging to cover medication expenses, and 36% could not cover travel costs.

Colleges could consider decreasing their tuition fees and should actively promote student loans, scholarships, or grants to assist. Without financial stress or academic pressure, students can concentrate on their studies, and their mental health would significantly benefit.

David Mandrake
The Guardian Alliance
+1 202-773-8117

[email us here](#)

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