PMSHRI KENDRIYA VIDYALAYA GACHIBOWLI
AN APPROACH TO REDUCE ACADEMIC PRESSURE

CHINMAYEE SATAPATHY
PGT COMP SC

THEME: *ACADEMIC PRESSURE*

(Studies, Exam Anxiety, Pressure to Perform)

SCHOOL PROFILE:

Kendriya Vidyalaya, Gachibowli was established in the year 1987, run by Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, an autonomous body formed by Ministry of Education, Government of India, New Delhi. The current enrolment of the school is 1800. The school offers education from classes I to XII (Science & Commerce streams). The school boasts of three well-equipped laboratories, a large well-stocked library with several books and magazines and a full-fledged Computer Department for the senior classes. The school is situated at GPRA Campus, Gachibowli, Hyderabad – 500032. The school comprises of 50 nos. of teaching & non-teaching staff and is a leading quality education provider in the state capital of Telangana.

INTRODUCTION:

"When Wealth Is Lost, Nothing Is Lost; When Health Is Lost, Something Is Lost; When Character Is Lost, All Is Lost."

All of us should have come across this quote referred by our parents, teachers, or elders. The essence of this quote emphasizes on building a good character. However, there are certain things which once lost can never be recovered. The loss is irreparable and irrecoverable. Many often, we are coming across cases of suicide due to academic pressure which is more of psychological than performance-oriented. To address this perennial and ever-growing problem of delivering academic excellence, I preferred to give an insight to this issue.

FACTS & FIGURES:
- Share of students among suicide victims in India grew by 70% over the past decade (NCRB data).
- Kota records 23 student suicides already in 2023, it's highest since 2015. All of them were aspirants of NEET and JEE.
- Over 13,000 students took their own lives in India in 2022 according to NCRB. Students accounted for 7.6% of all suicide deaths in 2022.
- Across age groups, 2,095 people died by suicide after failure in examinations, out of which 1,123 are below the ages of 18 years (NCRB data).

The above findings are self-explanatory in understanding the magnitude of academic pressure on young students at the very budding stage of life.

This creates an alluring situation for all of us and we as school teachers play a vital role in addressing the situation.

IDENTIFICATION OF THE VULNERABLE

Through Academic Behaviour		Through Non-Academic Behaviour		
Academic Performance	**Monitoring Absenteeism**	**Physical/Mental Health**	**Behavioural Change**	**Academic & Social life Balance**
Analysis of overall vis-a-vis subject-wise performance over a period of time to find out the key areas of improvement. More specifically to ascertain whether the fear is for overall performance or for any particular subject.	Monitoring absence for a continuous period or frequent absence is taken up with parent and the respective student to identify the exact reason of absence.	Observing frequent sickness just prior to commencement of exams due to lack of adequate preparation, resulting in low morale/confidence.	Observing any behavioural change prior or during the examination, showing symptoms of low confidence, silence, isolation etc.	Analysing the quantum of time spent by the students in terms of academic hours (study, practice) and non-academic hours (social interaction, family time, parental interaction, leisure activities etc) activity
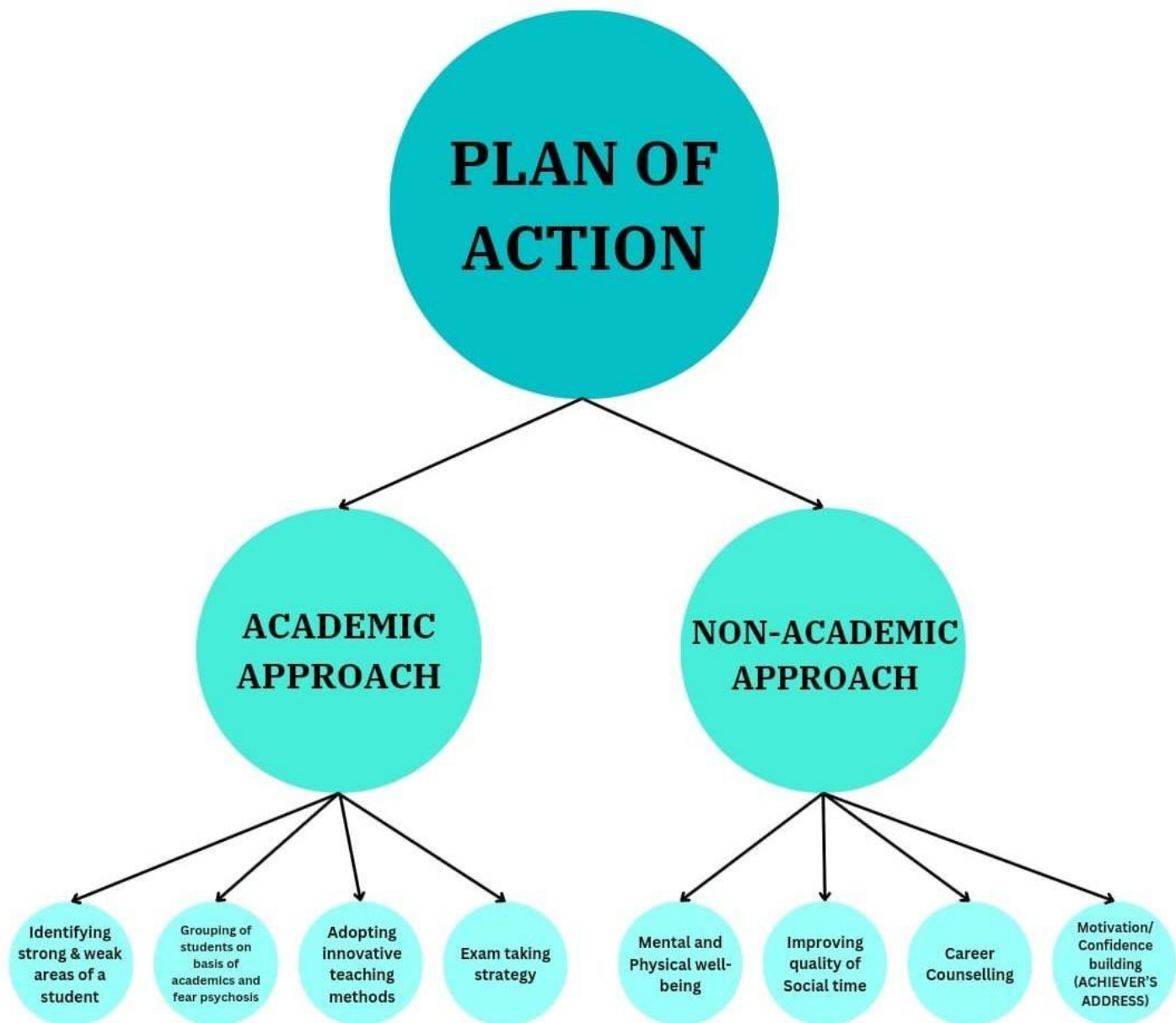
ACADEMIC APPROACH:

A. The students who are good/very good at studies are victims of psychological fears and mismatch of Delivery vs. Expectation. Even though the students are good at studies, an exceeding expectation by the parents to deliver beyond the ability of the student, builds the pressure. In such a scenario, the students are counselled to maintain the consistency of performing well and strive to perform *LITTLE BETTER* than before. Whereas, the parents are counselled to believe in the student's performance and to encourage/inspire them to perform well than insist/impose to perform well.

B. The students were grouped into two categories basis their academic performance and fear psychosis:
    - Overall performers
    - Low achievers (below average)

C. For below average, Average and above average students, apart from a general practice of improvement classes, various innovative teaching methods were implemented to make the student academically strong by their own efforts. This resulted in, **"I CAN DO IT"** attitude.

      i. Make your own question and answer assignments on particular topic (Here, a student is given to prepare the questions of his/her own and answer it accordingly.)

      ii. Role reversal: Student plays a role of a teacher. In this, the student is assisted/encouraged to explain the topic which he/she is good at to other in presence of the subject teacher.

      iii. Framing maximum questions on a topic and answering it through OBE (Open Book Examination system).

      iv. Pressure to Perform ⟶ Prefer to Perform

For most of the examinations (X, XII, Under-graduate, Graduate etc) the overall marks are considered for any practical purpose than subject-wise marks except for minimum passing criteria.

PERFORMANCE OF A STUDENT		
	PRESENT PERFORMANCE	**EXPECTED PERFORMANCE**
SUBJECT	MARKS OBTAINED (OUT OF 100)	MARKS OBTAINED (OUT OF 100)
English	50	60
Mathematics	80	90
Science	80	90
TOTAL MARKS: (%)	**210 (70%)**	**240 (80%)**

From the above tabular presentation, it is easier for the student to achieve 80% if a preference is given to the student to deliver in the subjects, he/she is good at rather than breaking his/her head in the subject of English to get 80 marks. As only overall percentage counts for all practical purpose a student should be encouraged to perform in his subject of preference where he/she is good at thereby compensating the marks in subjects he/she is poor at.

F — Figure / Find out (Which You Can)

E — Eliminate / Exclude (Which You Can't/take longer time)

A — Attend First (Which You Can)

R — Revisit / Reassess (Which You Can't/take longer time)

D. An innovative approach to tackle the exam fear in the model of FEAR was practised among the students:

NON-ACADEMIC APPROACH:

A. Ensuring in maintaining a good physical mental health during and prior to examination which includes adequate rest, healthy foods, and a stress-free environment at home as well as school. The students are observed for any behavioural change at school or home and reporting the same to parents/teacher to ascertain the exact change in behaviour, more particularly just prior or during the exam.

B. During or prior to exam the students are required to maintain a stress-free life which helps them to overcome the fear, anxiety about the exam. One such advise is to increase the family/ parental interaction time/ social interaction time other than academics.

C. Life never ends with NEET and JEE. It is only two available branches/options of career out of hundreds of options available. Career aspects in various branches of Science, Technology, Humanities, Commerce, Fine Arts etc are explained to the students. The academic requirements for pursuing such courses which provides equal earning capacity are explained to the students, to create a confidence among the students that an average or above average student can achieve as big as a best performer cracking NEET/JEE.

D. A session called achievers address was implemented which are mainly targeted at students with low academic score and having fear of failure. Various achievers from diversified field are invited to school to share their success stories and their specific efforts, strategies to overcome the fear of failure. The approach here is based on two different criteria:
   - Person excelling in a diversified field irrespective of their academic background.
   - Person successful in life with poor academic record.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

		INFORMATICS PRACTICES						
Subject →		INFORMATICS PRACTICES						
Examination →		MT-1	MT-2	MT-3	MT-4	MT-5	MT-6	MT-7
Month of Exam →		APR	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
Maximum Marks →		40	40	40	40	40	70	70
Roll No.	Name of students	Marks Scored↓						
1	STUDENT 1	20	18	21	27	32	49	51
2	STUDENT 2	25	24	28	27	35	49	55
3	STUDENT 3	31	25	32	28	35	58	61
4	STUDENT 4	18	18	20	16	28	26	38
5	STUDENT 5	19	21	22	20	27	37	43
6	STUDENT 6	22	17	21	21	27	35	41
7	STUDENT 7	21	19	20	18	26	36	44
8	STUDENT 8	20	17	21	18	25	37	40
9	STUDENT 9	23	19	30	26	31	45	49
10	STUDENT 10	22	24	28	26	28	40	47
11	STUDENT 11	26	17	27	25	29	45	51
12	STUDENT 12	23	16	22	20	24	25	42
13	STUDENT 13	28	20	30	27	32	45	55
14	STUDENT 14	30	20	31	28	30	47	57
15	STUDENT 15	25	22	30	21	32	29	41
16	STUDENT 16	18	16	29	20	27	30	41

It is evident from the above data that out of 16 students, 15 students have shown an increasing academic performance consistently over a period of 4 months. This is the result of adopting and implementing the above cited practices.

TOGETHER WE CAN - STAKE HOLDERS CONTRIBUTION:

A square has 4 similar sides. Likewise, the four stakeholders as enumerated below, have similar roles and responsibilities in shaping the overall well-being of the student.
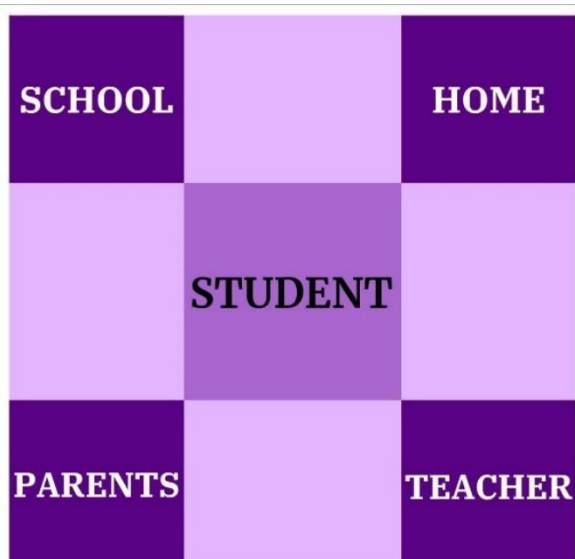
1. The atmosphere at both the places i.e., school and home should be conducive to the student

2. We should acknowledge the fact that the parents are the first teacher of the child and the teacher is the second parent of the child. This necessitates discharging the dual responsibility by both the stakeholders at both the places.

INSIGHTS:

1.   Academic pressure can be easily phased out by proper analysis and support of guidance.

2.   Major cause of concern in more of psychological orientation than of performance

3.   Performing to parental expectation (it is due to a concept that what I could not be you should be) which leads to a stage of pressure to perform everywhere than prefer to perform wherever you can

4.   Communicate (both parent and student), coach/counsel, confidence building are the four constructive pillars to eliminate academic pressure.

CHALLENGES FACED:

1.   Creating an atmosphere of mutual trust between the student and teacher

2.   A role of the teacher here is none of a moderator between the student and parents

3.   Accuracy or genuineness of feedback of the student/parent on any particular matter

4.   Drawing a balance between a student's ability to perform and expectations of parent

5.   Time management, giving adequate time to students for their overall development beyond academic hours and convincing parents about their requirement in involvement with the student in their day today life.

6.   Parents not showing concern in the academic performance of their ward.

SNAP SHOTS: