

## An Analysis of Effective Strategies for Reducing Examination Stress among B.Ed. Students

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### Abstract

Examination stress is a common psychological challenge experienced by teacher education students due to academic workload, internal assessments, teaching practice, lesson planning, project submissions, and university examinations. Excessive examination stress negatively affects students' emotional well-being, academic performance, confidence, concentration, and overall professional preparedness. Since B.Ed. students are prospective teachers, developing effective stress management strategies is essential not only for their academic success but also for preparing emotionally resilient educators. The present study aimed to analyze the effectiveness of various strategies adopted for reducing examination stress among B.Ed. students. The study employed a descriptive survey research design. A sample of 50 B.Ed. students was selected through the Simple Random Sampling Technique from colleges of education. Data were collected using a self-developed structured questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale. The questionnaire measured students' perceptions regarding examination stress, effectiveness of stress reduction strategies, challenges experienced during examination preparation, and institutional support for stress management. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, namely Mean (M), Standard Deviation (SD), and Rank. The findings indicated that B.Ed. students considered time management, mindfulness practices, teacher support, positive self-talk, and systematic study planning as highly effective strategies for reducing examination stress. The study also revealed that excessive academic workload, fear of failure, limited preparation time, and performance anxiety were major causes of examination stress. Students recommended regular stress management workshops, counselling services, flexible assessment practices, and teacher mentoring programmes to improve their emotional well-being and academic confidence. The study concludes that effective examination stress management requires collaborative efforts involving teacher educators, educational institutions, counsellors, and students. The findings provide valuable implications for improving teacher education programmes and promoting psychologically healthy learning environments in colleges of education.

**Keywords:** Examination Stress, B.Ed. Students, Stress Management, Teacher Education, Academic Anxiety, Emotional Well-being, Coping Strategies, Higher Education.

### 1. Introduction

Examinations constitute an integral component of the educational process, serving as an important means of evaluating students' knowledge, skills, and professional competencies. However, examinations often become a major source of psychological stress, particularly among students enrolled in professional teacher education programmes. B.Ed. students experience examination stress due to multiple academic responsibilities such as lesson

planning, internship activities, micro-teaching, practical examinations, assignments, project work, internal assessments, and university examinations. These academic demands frequently create emotional pressure, anxiety, reduced concentration, sleep disturbances, and decreased academic confidence. Examination stress influences not only students' academic achievement but also their emotional well-being, decision-making abilities, interpersonal relationships, and professional preparedness. Moderate levels of stress may motivate students to perform better; however, excessive stress adversely affects memory, attention, problem-solving ability, and learning efficiency. Since B.Ed. students are future teachers, developing healthy coping mechanisms and stress management skills is essential for both their personal well-being and future professional effectiveness. Teacher education institutions play a significant role in helping students manage examination stress by creating supportive learning environments, providing academic guidance, organizing counselling services, and promoting positive coping strategies. Effective stress reduction techniques such as time management, mindfulness, relaxation exercises, peer support, positive thinking, and teacher mentoring contribute significantly to improving students' confidence and academic performance. Therefore, the present study investigates the effectiveness of various examination stress reduction strategies among B.Ed. students. It examines students' perceptions regarding stress management practices, identifies major challenges experienced during examination preparation, and suggests institutional measures for promoting emotional well-being and academic success in teacher education programmes.

## **2. Review of Literature**

Examination stress has become one of the most widely investigated psychological issues in education because of its significant influence on students' academic performance, emotional well-being, and professional development. Numerous national and international studies have demonstrated that excessive examination stress affects students' concentration, motivation, confidence, decision-making, and overall academic success. The following review highlights important theoretical and empirical studies related to examination stress and stress reduction strategies among higher education students, particularly in teacher education.

Lazarus, Richard S. and Folkman, Susan (1984) proposed the Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping, which explains that stress arises when individuals perceive environmental demands as exceeding their coping resources. The theory emphasizes cognitive appraisal and coping strategies as fundamental mechanisms for stress management. It provides a theoretical basis for understanding examination stress among B.Ed. students and highlights the importance of adaptive coping behaviours.

Bandura, Albert (1997), through the Self-Efficacy Theory, argued that students possessing high self-efficacy experience lower levels of examination anxiety because they believe in their capability to perform academic tasks successfully. Strong self-confidence encourages persistence, emotional stability, and effective stress management during examinations.

Zeidner, Moshe (1998) examined examination anxiety and concluded that excessive academic stress negatively affects students' cognitive functioning, memory, emotional regulation, and

academic achievement. The study suggested that emotional regulation, systematic preparation, and cognitive restructuring effectively reduce examination anxiety.

Cassady, Jerrell C. and Johnson, Ronald E. (2002) investigated cognitive test anxiety and found that excessive worry and negative thinking interfere with concentration, information processing, and examination performance. Their findings emphasized the importance of psychological interventions for reducing examination-related stress.

Research conducted by Putwain, Dave (2007) demonstrated that teacher communication, classroom climate, and assessment practices significantly influence students' examination stress levels. Positive teacher support and constructive feedback contribute to increased academic confidence and lower anxiety.

Weare, Katherine (2013) emphasized the importance of school mental health programmes in promoting students' emotional well-being. The study reported that mindfulness, counselling services, and emotional literacy programmes significantly improve students' coping abilities and reduce academic stress.

Davidson, Richard J. and Goleman, Daniel (2017) reported that mindfulness meditation strengthens attention, emotional regulation, and resilience while reducing stress hormones. Their findings support the incorporation of mindfulness-based stress management programmes in educational institutions.

Studies conducted in teacher education indicate that B.Ed. students frequently experience examination stress due to academic workload, teaching practice, lesson planning, assignments, internal assessment, internship activities, and university examinations. Researchers have observed that inadequate time management, fear of failure, lack of confidence, and performance pressure increase psychological stress among prospective teachers. However, strategies such as peer support, teacher mentoring, counselling services, positive self-talk, relaxation techniques, and effective study planning significantly improve emotional well-being and academic performance.

### **3. Objectives of the Study**

The present study was conducted with the following objectives:

1. To examine the level of examination stress experienced by B.Ed. students.
2. To identify the effectiveness of various strategies adopted for reducing examination stress.
3. To analyze the major challenges faced by B.Ed. students during examination preparation.
4. To explore institutional measures that support examination stress management among B.Ed. students.
5. To suggest educational strategies for promoting emotional well-being and reducing examination stress in teacher education institutions.

### **4. Research Methodology**

The present study adopted a descriptive survey research design to analyse the effectiveness of strategies for reducing examination stress among B.Ed. students. The descriptive survey method was considered appropriate because it facilitates the systematic collection, analysis,

and interpretation of students' opinions and experiences regarding examination stress and coping strategies.

The population of the study comprised students enrolled in the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) programme in colleges of education. A sample of 50 B.Ed. students was selected using the Simple Random Sampling Technique, ensuring equal opportunity for participation.

A self-developed structured questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale (Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree) was used for data collection. The questionnaire consisted of statements related to examination stress, stress reduction strategies, academic challenges, and institutional support.

The research instrument was validated through expert opinion from teacher educators and educational psychology specialists to ensure content validity. Necessary modifications were incorporated based on expert suggestions. The reliability of the questionnaire was established using Cronbach's Alpha, which indicated satisfactory internal consistency.

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, namely Mean (M), Standard Deviation (SD), and Rank. Mean scores were used to determine students' level of agreement, Standard Deviation measured the consistency of responses, and Rank analysis was employed to identify the relative importance of various examination stress reduction strategies. The findings were interpreted objectively in relation to the objectives of the study and supported by relevant educational literature.

### 5. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data collected from the 50 B.Ed. students were analyzed systematically to examine their perceptions regarding examination stress and the effectiveness of various stress reduction strategies. Descriptive statistical techniques, namely Mean (M), Standard Deviation (SD), and Rank, were employed to analyze the responses obtained through the structured five-point Likert scale questionnaire. The mean score was used to determine the level of agreement with each statement, while the standard deviation measured the consistency of responses among the participants. Rank analysis was applied to identify the most significant stress reduction strategies, challenges, and institutional support measures perceived by the B.Ed. students.

**Table 1: B.Ed. Students' Perceptions of Examination Stress (N = 50)**

Sr. No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Rank
1	I experience stress during university examinations.	4.58	0.54	I
2	Academic workload increases my examination stress.	4.46	0.61	II
3	Fear of poor performance creates anxiety before examinations.	4.34	0.68	III
4	Time constraints affect my examination preparation.	4.22	0.72	IV
5	Examination stress affects my concentration during studies.	4.14	0.76	V

Table 1 presents the perceptions of B.Ed. students regarding examination stress. The statement "I experience stress during university examinations" received the highest mean score ( $M = 4.58$ ,  $SD = 0.54$ ) and secured Rank I, indicating that the majority of respondents experience considerable stress during examinations. The statement "Academic workload increases my examination stress" obtained the second highest mean score ( $M = 4.46$ ,  $SD = 0.61$ ), suggesting that lesson planning, assignments, practical work, internal assessments, and university examinations collectively contribute to students' stress levels. Fear of poor academic performance ( $M = 4.34$ ,  $SD = 0.68$ ) ranked third, demonstrating that anxiety regarding examination outcomes significantly influences students' emotional well-being. Time constraints during examination preparation ( $M = 4.22$ ,  $SD = 0.72$ ) and reduced concentration due to stress ( $M = 4.14$ ,  $SD = 0.76$ ) were also identified as important concerns. The relatively low standard deviation values indicate consistency among respondents' opinions. Overall, the findings reveal that examination stress is a common academic and psychological concern among B.Ed. students and requires appropriate institutional and personal coping strategies.

**Table 2: Effectiveness of Strategies for Reducing Examination Stress among B.Ed. Students (N = 50)**

Sr. No.	Stress Reduction Strategy	Mean	SD	Rank
1	Effective time management reduces examination stress.	4.76	0.39	I
2	Regular study planning improves examination confidence.	4.68	0.46	II
3	Mindfulness and relaxation techniques reduce anxiety.	4.56	0.52	III
4	Positive teacher support improves emotional well-being.	4.43	0.60	IV
5	Positive self-talk enhances confidence before examinations.	4.34	0.66	V

### Interpretation

Table 2 shows the effectiveness of various examination stress reduction strategies as perceived by B.Ed. students. The highest mean score was obtained by the statement "Effective time management reduces examination stress" ( $M = 4.76$ ,  $SD = 0.39$ ), securing Rank I. This finding indicates that systematic planning of study schedules, assignment completion, and revision significantly reduces examination anxiety. The strategy "Regular study planning improves examination confidence" ranked second ( $M = 4.68$ ,  $SD = 0.46$ ), suggesting that students who prepare consistently experience greater confidence and lower stress. Mindfulness and relaxation techniques ( $M = 4.56$ ,  $SD = 0.52$ ) received the third rank, demonstrating that breathing exercises, meditation, and relaxation practices effectively improve emotional stability during examinations. Teacher support ( $M = 4.43$ ,  $SD = 0.60$ ) also emerged as an important stress reduction factor, highlighting the positive role of teacher encouragement, guidance, and reassurance. Finally, positive self-talk ( $M = 4.34$ ,  $SD = 0.66$ )

ranked fifth, indicating that constructive thinking helps students manage examination anxiety and maintain confidence. The low standard deviation values indicate a high degree of agreement among respondents. Overall, the findings suggest that both personal coping strategies and institutional support contribute significantly to reducing examination stress among B.Ed. students.

**Table 3: Challenges Faced by B.Ed. Students During Examination Preparation (N = 50)**

Sr.	Challenge	Mean	SD	Rank
1	Heavy academic workload increases examination stress.	4.62	0.48	I
2	Lack of sufficient time for revision creates anxiety.	4.50	0.56	II
3	Fear of failure affects my confidence during examinations.	4.42	0.63	III
4	Practical work and assignments increase examination pressure.	4.31	0.69	IV
5	Lack of counselling and emotional support affects stress management.	4.18	0.75	V

Table 3 presents the challenges experienced by B.Ed. students during examination preparation. The statement "Heavy academic workload increases examination stress" secured the highest mean score ( $M = 4.62$ ,  $SD = 0.48$ ) and obtained Rank I, indicating that the extensive academic responsibilities associated with the B.Ed. programme significantly contribute to examination stress. Students are expected to complete lesson plans, assignments, teaching practice records, project work, internal assessments, and university examination preparation simultaneously, thereby increasing their academic burden.

The statement "Lack of sufficient time for revision creates anxiety" ranked second ( $M = 4.50$ ,  $SD = 0.56$ ), demonstrating that limited revision time negatively affects students' confidence and preparedness. Fear of failure ( $M = 4.42$ ,  $SD = 0.63$ ) ranked third, reflecting the psychological pressure experienced by students regarding examination performance and academic achievement. Practical work and assignment completion ( $M = 4.31$ ,  $SD = 0.69$ ) were also identified as important stress-inducing factors because of overlapping academic deadlines. The statement "Lack of counselling and emotional support affects stress management" received the fifth rank ( $M = 4.18$ ,  $SD = 0.75$ ), indicating that students expect greater psychological and academic support from educational institutions. The relatively low standard deviation values suggest consistency in the responses. Overall, the findings indicate that both academic and psychological factors contribute substantially to examination stress among B.Ed. students.

**Table 4: Institutional Measures Suggested by B.Ed. Students for Reducing Examination Stress (N = 50)**

Sr. No.	Suggested Measure	Mean	SD	Rank
1	Organize regular stress management and counselling programmes.	4.84	0.37	I
2	Conduct time management and study skills workshops.	4.72	0.45	II
3	Strengthen teacher mentoring and academic guidance.	4.60	0.51	III
4	Adopt flexible and continuous assessment practices.	4.46	0.59	IV
5	Establish student wellness and mental health support centres.	4.38	0.64	V

Table 4 reveals the institutional measures suggested by B.Ed. students for reducing examination stress. The statement "Organize regular stress management and counselling programmes" obtained the highest mean score ( $M = 4.84$ ,  $SD = 0.37$ ) and secured Rank I, indicating that students strongly believe professional counselling and stress management programmes can effectively improve emotional well-being and examination preparedness.

The second-ranked measure, "Conduct time management and study skills workshops" ( $M = 4.72$ ,  $SD = 0.45$ ), demonstrates that students consider structured academic guidance essential for reducing examination-related anxiety. Strengthening teacher mentoring and academic guidance ( $M = 4.60$ ,  $SD = 0.51$ ) ranked third, highlighting the importance of supportive teacher-student relationships during examination periods. Students also recommended flexible and continuous assessment practices ( $M = 4.46$ ,  $SD = 0.59$ ) to reduce excessive dependence on end-semester examinations and promote continuous learning. Finally, the establishment of student wellness and mental health support centres ( $M = 4.38$ ,  $SD = 0.64$ ) ranked fifth, indicating the growing need for institutional mental health services within teacher education colleges. The low standard deviation values indicate considerable agreement among respondents. Overall, the findings suggest that institutional support mechanisms are essential for minimizing examination stress and promoting academic success among B.Ed. students.

## 6. Major Findings

1. B.Ed. students experience moderate to high levels of examination stress during university examinations.
2. Academic workload was identified as the primary cause of examination stress.
3. Time management emerged as the most effective strategy for reducing examination stress.
4. Regular study planning significantly improves examination confidence.
5. Mindfulness, relaxation techniques, and positive self-talk contribute to emotional stability during examinations.
6. Teacher support and academic mentoring play a vital role in reducing examination anxiety.

7. Heavy workload, limited revision time, fear of failure, and practical assignments were the major challenges reported by students.
8. Students strongly recommended organizing counselling programmes and stress management workshops in teacher education institutions.
9. Continuous assessment and flexible evaluation practices were perceived as effective measures for reducing examination pressure.
10. Overall, students emphasized that examination stress management requires both individual coping strategies and institutional support systems.

### **7. Educational Implications**

1. Teacher education programmes should integrate stress management and emotional well-being into the curriculum.
2. Colleges should organize regular workshops on time management, examination preparation, and study skills.
3. Professional counselling services should be made available for B.Ed. students throughout the academic year.
4. Teacher educators should adopt supportive mentoring practices to improve students' confidence and reduce anxiety.
5. Continuous and formative assessment methods should complement traditional examinations to minimize examination pressure.
6. Colleges should establish student wellness centres to promote psychological well-being.
7. Educational institutions should encourage mindfulness, relaxation exercises, and peer support activities.
8. Teacher educators should identify students experiencing high stress and provide timely academic and emotional guidance.
9. Institutional policies should emphasize student well-being alongside academic excellence.
10. Examination reforms should balance academic rigor with students' mental health and holistic development.

### **8. Recommendations**

1. Teacher education institutions should organize regular workshops, seminars, and orientation programmes on examination stress management, emotional well-being, and positive coping strategies.
2. Colleges should establish counselling and guidance centres staffed by qualified counsellors to provide psychological support to students experiencing academic stress and anxiety.
3. B.Ed. students should be trained in effective time management, study planning, goal setting, and examination preparation techniques to reduce last-minute academic pressure.
4. Teacher educators should provide continuous academic guidance, emotional encouragement, and individual mentoring to students throughout the academic session, especially during examination periods.

5. Educational institutions should promote mindfulness meditation, yoga, breathing exercises, and relaxation techniques to improve students' emotional regulation and mental health.
6. Greater emphasis should be placed on continuous internal assessment, project-based learning, presentations, and practical activities to reduce dependence on high-stakes final examinations.
7. Academic activities, assignments, internship requirements, and project submissions should be scheduled systematically to avoid excessive workload during examination periods.

## **9. Conclusion**

Examination stress has become a significant psychological and academic concern among B.Ed. students due to increasing academic responsibilities, practical teaching requirements, assignments, internal assessments, and university examinations. The present study examined the effectiveness of various strategies for reducing examination stress and identified students' perceptions regarding stress management practices, academic challenges, and institutional support mechanisms.

The findings revealed that B.Ed. students experience considerable examination stress primarily due to heavy academic workload, limited preparation time, fear of failure, and performance-related anxiety. Despite these challenges, students perceived effective time management, systematic study planning, mindfulness practices, teacher mentoring, and positive self-talk as highly effective strategies for reducing examination stress. These findings indicate that both personal coping strategies and institutional support systems contribute significantly to students' emotional well-being and academic success.

The study further highlights that counselling services, stress management workshops, continuous assessment, teacher guidance, and student wellness programmes are essential components of a supportive teacher education environment. Such initiatives not only reduce examination anxiety but also strengthen self-confidence, resilience, emotional intelligence, and professional preparedness among future teachers.

The findings are consistent with contemporary educational psychology theories emphasizing that stress management should be considered an integral part of holistic education rather than an isolated psychological intervention. Teacher education institutions must therefore recognize students' mental health as an important determinant of academic achievement and professional development.

In conclusion, effective examination stress management requires coordinated efforts from educational institutions, teacher educators, counsellors, parents, and students themselves. Developing emotionally resilient, confident, and psychologically healthy teachers will ultimately contribute to improving the quality of school education and promoting positive learning environments for future generations.

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