

Pressure to score high marks in SSLC exam

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

Students driven to severe mental stress, suicide: Study

Indian Express, Oct 8 2001

Thiruvananthapuram, Oct 8: A study conducted by 'Thrani' Crisis Control Centre of the Foundation for Integrated Research in Mental Health (FIRM) has found that the immense pressure on students to score high marks in SSLC examinations was causing severe mental stress to them even to the extent of driving some of them to resort to the extreme step.

The suicide rate among such students in the State has shown an increase during the last three years.

According to the study, the centre received 180 distress telephone calls from students who appeared in SSLC examinations in May 1999. Their number increased to 2,200 in May 2000, of which 300 were from those in acute mental stress. As many as five suicide cases were reported dur-

ing this period.

The distress calls showed further increase in May 2001 SSLC examinations with the number reaching 3,250 of which 400 were from those in severe stress. Even the reported suicides went up to an alarming 14.

During the sample survey conducted as part of the study - 33.46 per cent stated that SSLC results had played little role in their present status while in the case of 20.5 per cent it was to a certain extent. As many as 15.5 per cent stated that the SSLC results had a good impact and just 2.6 per cent said that the results had enormous impact.

On whether they were satisfied with their present status - 10.3 per cent replied in the negative, 61.5 per cent said that they were satisfied and 28.8 per cent said that they were fully satisfied.

According to Thrani, the

outcome revealed that SSLC results had a very little role in increasing their status of life and personality development. Several of those who secured very less marks could reach high positions due to their sheer hard work and grit. One of the examples was of a person who owing to his mediocre performance in the SSLC had decided to join the army and went on to become an eminent doctor.

The Study also found that the pressure on students from various quarters to perform well and secure ranks, particularly in the SSLC examination, was uncalled for. This tendency will not help the students even to mould their character.

The study concludes that there is an urgent need for changing the present rank-oriented education system. It is high time to replace the rank system with grading.