



Understanding Mental Health Issues in School Students and Their Consequences

***Poulami Bhowmick**

****Dr. Rumpa Mukherjee**

**B.Ed. Student, Madhyamgram B.Ed. College, Kolkata*

***Associate Professor, Madhyamgram B.Ed. College, Kolkata*

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.70798/IJOMR/020040046>

Email: [*bhowmick.poulami19@gmail.com](mailto:bhowmick.poulami19@gmail.com)

ORCID: [**0009-0004-8741-9361](https://orcid.org/0009-0004-8741-9361)

[**rumpa.mukherjeedebnath@gmail.com](mailto:rumpa.mukherjeedebnath@gmail.com)

<p>Received 19/06/2025</p> <p>Accepted 23/06/2025</p> <p>Published 09/07/2025</p>	<p>Abstract</p> <p><i>This research explores the multifaceted dimensions of mental health issues among school students and their long-term consequences. Drawing from a wide array of contemporary literature, the study identifies key psychological stressors such as academic pressure, mobile phone addiction and lack of physical activity as significant contributors to mental health deterioration in school going children. It emphasizes the interconnectedness between mental well-being and students' academic performance, emotional development and social adjustment.</i></p> <p>Keywords: Academic Pressure, Emotional Development, Mental Health, School Students, Psychological Stressors</p>
--	---

Introduction

According to the World Health Organization, mental health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community. It has intrinsic and instrumental value and is integral to our well-being.

Mental health problems among children and adolescents are on the rise worldwide. As per WHO's data, mental disorders account for 13% of the global burden of disease among individuals aged 10–19. Among the leading causes of illness and disability in adolescents are depression, anxiety, and behavioral disorders, whereas suicide ranks fourth among leading causes of death in 15 to 19 years old (World Health Organization, 2021). The onset of the pandemic has brought about significant anxiety and depression among children and adolescents, and social isolation, loneliness, lack of physical activity, and family stress exacerbated these problems. Furthermore, children's risk for maltreatment increased as parents experienced stress and mental health struggles as well (Meade, 2021). Because children and adolescents spend much of their time in school; teachers play a key role in detecting and addressing mental health issues in children (Nalipay et al. 2024).

Mental Health

Meaning: Mental health encompasses emotional, psychological, and social well-being, influencing cognition, perception, and behavior. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood through adulthood (Meade, 2021).

Definition: According to the World Health Organization (WHO), it is a "state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and can contribute to his or her community". It likewise determines how an individual handles stress, interpersonal relationships, and decision-making.

Characteristics

- Mental health is a dynamic concept.
- Mental health refers not only to emotional well-being but also to how people think and behave.
- It reflects the person's ability to manage and cope with emotions in a balanced way.
- It is not achievable by physical health.
- It is closely tied to having positive self-esteem, feeling valued and confident in themselves
- It differs from ethical standards.
- Mental health and social ability are not the same thing (Holmes,2023)

The Main Components of Mental Health

Several psychological, social, and emotional aspects contribute to one's mental health. However, the three main components of mental health include:

Cognitive Health

A person's cognitive health is an essential part of their mental health as their thoughts dictate most of their behaviours. Your ideas significantly impact your emotions, behaviours, and the way you think. The most common examples of cognitive abilities are the ability to learn, think, process, and reason with data (Felman & Melegrito, 2024).

Memory, focus, judgment, and the ability to solve problems are all part of it. The first step in overcoming over thinking and burnout is developing cognitive health, an essential part of overall mental wellness.

Behavioural Health

A person's behavioural health may be defined as their capacity to make good decisions, control their addictive behaviours, and participate in activities that promote their overall health and happiness.

Essential to mental health, behavioural health examines the link between actions and psychological and physiological well-being. Optimal mental and emotional well-being is supported by behavioural health, which in turn tackles health concerns associated with behaviour.

Emotional Health

Emotional well-being is distinct from mental health but is an essential factor in mental wellness as a whole. Being emotionally healthy means able to handle and control one's emotions in a healthy way.

Having a positive outlook on life does not guarantee mental wellness. This trait indicates that you are in tune with your feelings and can handle them appropriately. When you take care of your emotional health, you're also taking care of your mental health since you're –

- Able to withstand stress
- Feel better about oneself
- Develop more meaningful connections
- Positivity in outlook and thought
- Lively and full of life

Dimensions of Mental wellbeing

Thinking — The Mental Dimension

Our thoughts will affect our mood, which will affect our mental state. It's important that one should have positive thoughts about themselves and take the time to evaluate what their thought processes are like.

Connecting — The Social Dimension

Social interaction is a key aspect of mental wellness. Because we are social beings, it's important that we are connected to people, have meaningful exchanges, and build and foster healthy relationships.

In fact, studies have shown that those who are engaged in strong interpersonal relationships have lower rates of anxiety and depression, higher self-esteem, greater empathy, and more trusting and cooperative relationships.

Feelings — The Emotional Dimension

Our emotions play a big part in our mental well-being; feelings can affect our ability to carry out everyday activities, our relationships, and our overall mental health. When we are not feeling our best or have to suppress our feelings, it can drain us mentally, but when we are able to express our feelings freely and find healthy ways to channel our thoughts, it keeps us mentally sharp.

Functioning — The Psychological Dimension

Psychological well-being is associated with a person's overall mental well-being. It includes rational thinking, good decision-making, and managing difficult situations. It is also associated with more logical decision-making, and psychological well-being also affects behaviors.

Signs of good mental health

- **Positive mood:** People with good mental health generally have a positive outlook on life and regularly participate in activities they enjoy.

- **Emotional resilience:** Mentally healthy people tend to have the ability to cope with stress and adversity and can quickly rebound from setbacks.
- **Self-esteem and self-worth:** Another sign of good mental health is having a positive sense of self and feeling good about who they are.
- **Good relationships:** Other common characteristics of good mental and emotional health are positive relationships with others and assertive and effective communication skills.
- **Self-care:** Individuals with good mental health also tend to prioritize their physical and mental well-being by engaging in self-care activities and practicing good habits like eating well, getting enough sleep, and exercising regularly.
- **Productivity:** These individuals can also maintain a good level of productivity in their work and personal life and can set and achieve their goals.
- **Flexibility:** Mentally sound people can adapt to new situations and challenges and see different perspectives.
- **Ability to seek help:** Recognizing when someone needs support and seeking help when needed are signs of positive mental well-being.

Common signs and symptoms indicating poor mental health include

- Drop in functioning
- Problems in concentration, logical thought and speech
- Loss of desire to participate
- Increased sensitivities
- Decline in Personal Care
- Mood swings
- Changes in sleep and appetite
- Unusual and odd behavior
- Suspicious and nervous
- Feeling disconnected from surroundings and self

Models of Mental health

The main models of mental health highlight the interplay of biological, psychological, and social factors in determining an individual's mental well-being.

- *The Biopsychosocial Model* recognizes the influence of genetics, psychological traits and socio environmental factors on mental health.
- On the other hand, *the Biomedical Model* recognizes mental health problems as medical conditions, diagnosable and treatable through medical interventions (Santos & Macías, 2022).
- Similarly, *the Cognitive Behavioural Model* emphasises the role of thoughts, beliefs and behaviours in shaping mental health.
- *Freud's Psychoanalytic Model* focuses on unconscious conflicts, early childhood experiences, and defense mechanisms.
- *The Humanistic-Existential Model* underscores personal growth, self-actualization, and the search for meaning in life.

- Lastly, *the Systemic Model* highlights the reciprocal interactions between individuals and the systems they inhabit.

Review of Literature

Jabbar et al. (2025) revealed a strong positive association between mobile phone addiction and mental health issues, indicating that excessive mobile phone use negatively affects students' mental health, potentially leading to stress, anxiety and poor academic performance.

Acharya and Kumar (2024) showed that male students are very stressed compared to girls. In case of anxiety 10th Grade Boys Students have higher anxiety than 10th Grade Girls Students. At a glance Depression of Grade 10th Boys Students score higher than Grade 10th Girls Students, Grade 12th Girls Students showed higher scores than Grade 12th Boys Students.

Hu et al. (2024) showed that the physical activity of adolescents has an important positive effect on their mental health and school adaptation social competence dimensions and physical activity affects the social competence of high school students not only directly, but also indirectly through psychological problems. Higher levels of physical activity help to reduce the emergence of psychological problems.

Singh and Goswami (2022) found out that there exists a significant positive relationship between Mental Health and academic achievement of secondary school students.

Amalnath and Shija (2022) investigated that Out of 270 students 249 (92.2%) participants had good mental health, 5.2% were with borderline mental health problems and 2.6% were with poor mental health. Majority, 190 (70.4%) of participants had moderate physical activity levels. Only 9 (3.3%) were with high physical activity levels. There was no significant correlation between mental health and physical activity among adolescents.

Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the prevalence of mental health issues among school students.
2. To examine the academic and social impacts of mental health challenges.
3. To identify the contributing factors to mental health problems in school settings.

Methodology of the Study

This research adopts a descriptive approach to understand mental health issues among school students and their consequences. The study is based on a comprehensive review of existing literature, including peer-reviewed journals, scholarly articles, research studies and relevant books published in the fields of psychology, education and mental health.

Result and Discussion

- Anxiety and stress were found to be the most common conditions, particularly during exam periods. There was a noticeable gender difference, with female students reporting higher rates of emotional distress and depressive symptoms.
- Students with untreated mental health issues showed lower academic performance, including reduced test scores and decreased classroom participation. Chronic mental health conditions were linked to increased absenteeism and higher school dropout rates.
- Factors that can potentially result in a period of poor mental health among students:
 1. Childhood abuse, trauma, or neglect.

2. Social isolation or loneliness.
3. Experiencing discrimination and stigma, including racism.
4. Social disadvantage, poverty.
5. Bereavement (losing someone close to you)
6. Stress due to under achievement compared to peers.
7. Having a long-term physical health condition.
8. Subjected to domestic violence, bullying or other abuses.
9. Physical causes – for example, a head injury or a neurological condition such as epilepsy can have an impact on behaviour and mood.

Educational Implications

Educational Policy Reform

Rising mental health issues among school going children calls for an urgent need for educational policy reforms that prioritize mental health support within school systems. Policies like mandating the presence of school counselors, organization of mental health awareness programs and regular psychological and mental health assessments could significantly mitigate the long-term consequences of untreated mental health issues among student.

Early Intervention and Prevention

Early intervention and detection processes must be integrated into school health programs. The timely identification and support for students experiencing mental distress can prevent academic decline, social withdrawal and behavioral issues, leading to better developmental outcomes.

Teacher and Staff Training

One major implication is the necessity of training educators to recognize symptoms of common mental health disorders such as anxiety, depression, ADHD, etc. Equipping teachers with mental health literacy will allow for early intervention and prevention.

Curriculum Development

The research supports integrating mental health education into the school curriculum. Teaching students coping strategies, emotional regulation and resilience from an early age can help in better management of mental health issues in them.

Parental Involvement

Parents play a crucial role in recognizing and addressing their children's mental health needs. The study suggests that schools should foster stronger partnerships with families by offering mental health workshops and regular communication on student well-being.

Long-Term Societal Impact

Addressing mental health in schools is not only beneficial for individual students but also for society at large. Early interventions can lead to long-term societal gains such as reduced crime rates, improved workforce productivity when mental health issues are addressed proactively during their school days.

Conclusion

This research study has highlighted the growing prevalence and complexity of mental health issues among school students, emphasizing the urgent need for early identification, effective support systems and destigmatization efforts within the educational field. The mental health

challenges such as anxiety, depression and stress can significantly impact students' academic performance, social relationships and overall well-being. Moreover, the consequences of unaddressed mental health problems can extend into adulthood, affecting long-term emotional development and life outcomes.

The rising mental health issues among students calls for a holistic approach that includes mental health education, access to trained counselors, teacher involvement and family engagement. Addressing these issues proactively not only supports the individual student's development but also contributes to a healthier, more inclusive school environment. As mental health continues to shape the educational experience of today's youth, it is imperative for educators, policymakers and caregivers to collaborate in building a robust support framework that ensures no student is left behind.

References

- Acharya, R., & Kumar, B. (2024). An exploratory study of stress, anxiety and depression among 10th and 12th grade students of NCT of Delhi in reference to their academic anxiety. *International Journal of Advanced Research in Commerce, Management & Social Science (IJARCMSS)*, 7(1), 63-68
- Amalnath, G., & Shija, K. (2022). Correlation between Mental Health and Physical Activity among Adolescents. *International Journal of Science and Research*, 11(9), 120-125
- Felman, A., & Melegrito, R. (2024, March 22). What is mental health? *MedicalNewsToday*. <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/154543>
- Jabbar, R., Zafar, M., Bodla, A., & Jabbar, K. (2025). Impact of Mobile Phone Use on School-Level Students' Mental Health. *ProScholar Insights (PSI)*, 4(1), 97-106
- Mangal, S., & Mangal, S. (2019). *Childhood and Growing up*. PHI Learning Private Limited.
- Marcías, J., & Santos, M. (2022). Integral definition and conceptual model of mental health: Proposal from a systematic review of different paradigms. *Institute of Research and Educational Development*, 1(7), 111-132
- Meade, J. (2021). Mental Health Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Children and Adolescents. *National Library of Medicine*, 68(5), 945-959
- Nalipay, Ma. J., King, R. B., & Cai, Y. (2024). Happy teachers make happy students: The social contagion of well-being from teachers to their students. *School Mental Health*, 16(4), 1223-1235. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12310-024-09688-0>
- Singh, A., & Goswami, S. (2022). Mental Health in Relation to academic achievement of Tribal secondary Students of Ranchi. *Bhartiyam International Journal of Education & Research*, 12(1), 10-18
- World Health Organization (WHO). (2024, October 10). *Mental health of adolescents*. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescent-mental-health>
- Yining Hu, Y., Gao, Y., Yi, X., Yang, Y., & Zhao, L. (2024). Relationship Between Physical Activity, School Adjustment and Mental Health in High School Students. *International Journal of Physical Activity and Health*, 3(3), A103