



# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

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## Mind Matters

Prevailing Mental Influences in School Students & Solutions for Mental Wellness

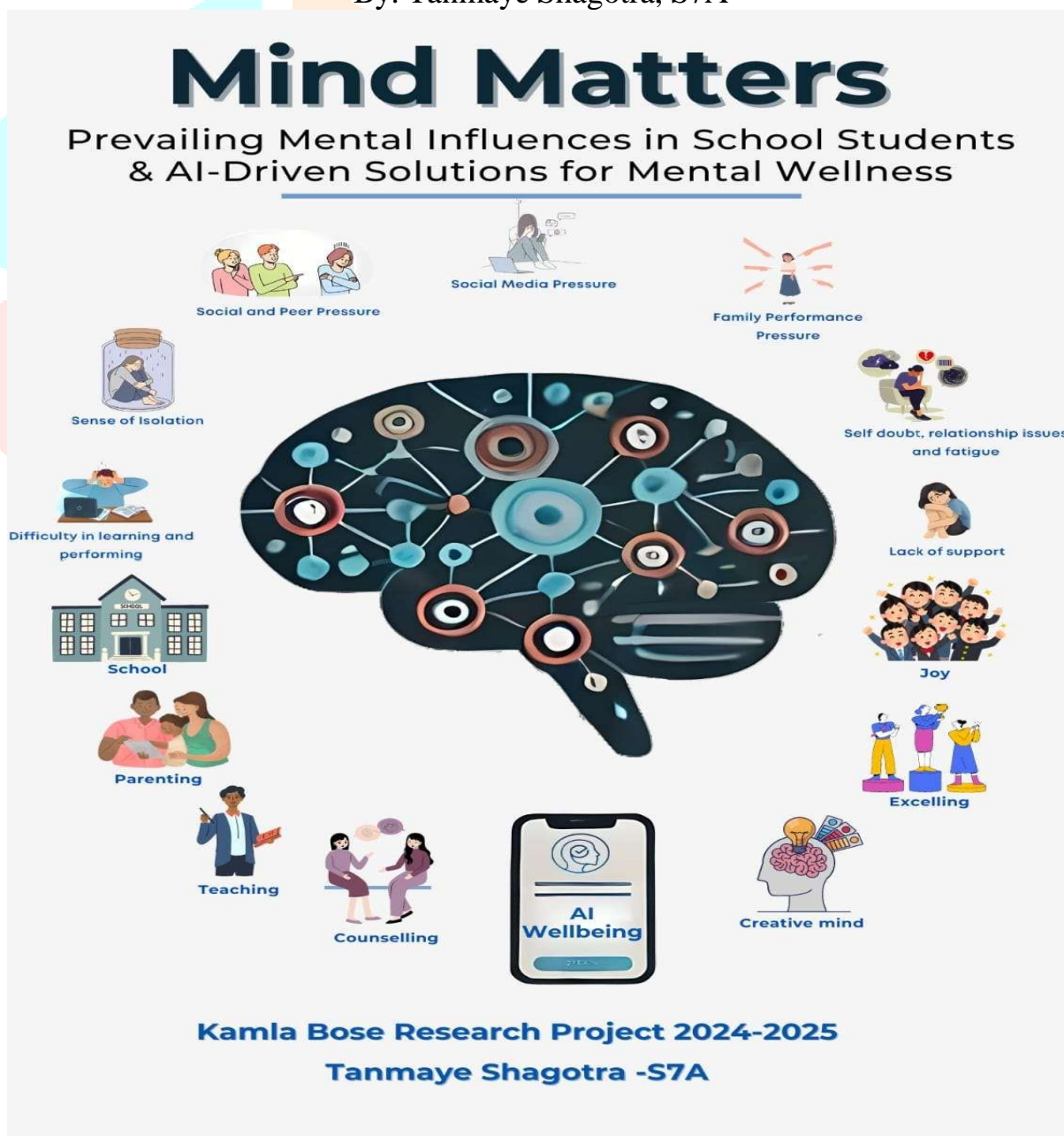
Submitted to

Modern School Barakhamba Road New Delhi, India

for

Kamala Bose Research Project 2024-2025

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Kamla Bose Research Project 2024-2025

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## Abstract

The current study explored the multifaceted mental health challenges experienced by Indian school students, particularly from class 6 through 12. With a variety of behavioral and cognitive issues, such as anxiety, depression, stress, and the impact of competitive academic environments, we provided a comprehensive overview of the current mental health landscape in schools. Our research findings were based on extensive surveys, case studies, and statistical data from reputable national and international sources, such as NIMHANS (National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences), the Journal of Medical Sciences, and ERIC (Education Resources Information Center).

We explored the detrimental effects of academic pressure, social media influence, family expectations, and peer dynamics on students' mental health. The study also highlights the specific issues faced by different age groups and genders, and reveals critical insights into how these factors contributed to a spectrum of mental health problems.

In addressing these issues, the study introduces the Manoveda project developed by Tanmaye Shagotra. This project presents an innovative, AI-driven approach to address mental wellness in schools, offering solutions such as AI-based screening modules, chat support, and interactive mental health exercises. We emphasize on the importance of comprehensive support systems, including awareness programs, staff training, parent involvement, community partnerships, child therapist interventions, and peer mentoring.

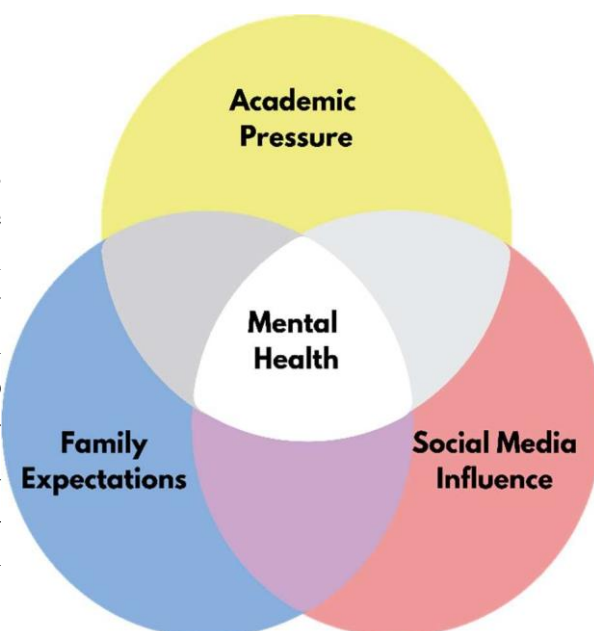
By implementing these multifaceted solutions, the study aimed to foster a supportive environment that promotes mental well-being and resilience among students. This holistic approach aims to provide schools, counselors, and communities with tools that are necessary to manage the mental health challenges that students face today, ensuring a healthier and more supportive educational experience for all.

Our research underscores the urgent need for coordinated efforts to enhance mental health support in schools, advocating for policy reforms, awareness campaigns, and community-driven initiatives. By incorporating national and international best practices, this study provides a guide for developing a resilient mental health system for Indian school students.

This endeavor not only highlights the pressing mental health issues within the educational system but also provides actionable solutions to mitigate these challenges, ultimately contributing to the overall well-being and academic success of students across the nation.

## Synopsis of the Topic

The mental and emotional well-being of school students has increasingly become a critical area of concern in India. The current research project aims to explore the prevailing mental health and behavioral issues faced by students, supported by national and international literature. By integrating AI-driven solutions, the project seeks to propose effective interventions to promote mental wellness among school students. The study draws on the work of renowned researchers and employs a mixed-methods approach to gather and analyze data, providing a comprehensive understanding of the current mental health landscape and potential AI applications in Indian school setting. The study would evaluate the comprehensive solutions for mental



wellness.

## Objectives of the Study

The study aimed to:

- a) Identify common mental health and behavioral issues among Indian school students.
- b) Assess the impact of these issues on students' academic and personal lives.
- c) Explore the role of comprehensive solutions, including awareness programs, training, and AI-driven interventions, in supporting mental wellness.
- d) Propose comprehensive AI driven solutions to these challenges.
- e) Highlight the importance of mental health awareness and support in school

## Introduction

Mental health is a crucial aspect of overall well-being, significantly influencing a student's academic performance, social interactions, and personal development. In India, the pressures of academic excellence, societal expectations, and evolving social dynamics contribute to an alarming rise in mental health issues among school students. Despite the increasing recognition of these challenges, access to mental health resources remains limited due to social stigma, lack of awareness, and insufficient infrastructure. Artificial intelligence (AI) presents a promising avenue for addressing these gaps. By leveraging AI technologies, it is possible to provide personalized, scalable, and timely mental health interventions. This research aims to delve into the mental health landscape of school students in India and evaluate how AI-driven solutions can be integrated to enhance mental wellness.

## Prevailing Mental Health and Behavioral Issues in School Students

### Statistics and Case Studies

Mental health and behavioral issues among school students are a growing concern, affecting their academic performance, social interactions, and overall well-being. Recent studies highlight the prevalence and impact of these issues among students in Classes 6-12 in India.

#### Class 6-8 Students:

##### 1. Anxiety and Stress:

- a. A study by NIMHANS (National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences) found that approximately 20% of students in Classes 6-8 exhibit symptoms of anxiety and stress. Factors contributing to this include academic pressure and social expectations.
- b. According to the Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing, nearly 15% of students in this age group experience moderate to severe anxiety, often linked to transitioning to higher educational demands and peer pressure.

##### 2. Behavioral Issues:

- a. Research published in PubMed indicates that around 10% of students in Classes 6-8 display behavioral problems such as ADHD (Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder) and ODD (Oppositional Defiant Disorder). These

issues are often associated with difficulties in maintaining attention, hyperactivity, and defiant behavior towards authority figures.

- b. A study by the Cochrane Collaboration highlighted the prevalence of conduct disorders, with 8% of students in this age group showing signs of aggression and rule-breaking behavior.

### 3. Cognitive Factors:

- a. Cognitive development during early adolescence can significantly affect mental health. Studies from ERIC (Education Resources Information Center) have shown that students with lower cognitive flexibility and working memory are more prone to stress and anxiety, impacting their academic performance and social relationships.

### Class 9-12 Students:

#### 1. Depression and Self-Harm:

- a. A NIMHANS (National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences) survey reported that approximately 25% of students in Classes 9-12 experience symptoms of depression. The study found that academic stress, family expectations, and social media influence are major contributing factors.
- b. According to research published in the Journal of Medical Sciences, about 10% of students in this age group have considered self-harm or suicide. These alarming rates highlight the need for effective mental health interventions.

#### 2. Behavioral Issues:

- a. The prevalence of behavioral disorders such as ADHD (Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder) and Conduct Disorder (CD) remains significant in higher grades. A study from PubMed revealed that 12% of students in Classes 9-12 exhibit symptoms of these disorders, which can lead to academic difficulties and social challenges.
- b. Research from Scopus indicated that 9% of students in this age group show signs of substance abuse, which is often linked to underlying mental health issues and peer pressure.

#### 3. Cognitive Factors:

- a. Cognitive challenges such as difficulties in executive functioning and decision-making can exacerbate mental health issues in older adolescents. Studies from ERIC (Education Resources Information Center) have shown that students with impaired executive functions are more likely to experience academic stress and anxiety, affecting their overall well-being.

## Literature Review and Integration with Statistics and Case Studies

### I. Global and Indian Context

Mental health disorders among adolescents are a global concern, with significant prevalence in low and middle-income countries like India. Dr. Vikram Patel's extensive research on global mental health has highlighted the effectiveness of community-based mental health care models, particularly in such settings.



## Review of Dr. Vikram Patel's Work

Dr. Vikram Patel had emphasized the need for accessible mental health care in low- and middle- income countries. His "SUNDAR" model focuses on simplified mental health interventions that can be delivered by non-specialist health workers within the community. The model has been implemented in various regions, demonstrating significant improvements in mental health outcomes.

### Statistical Data:

- a. Approximately 20% of Indian adolescents experience significant mental health issues.
- b. Implementation of the SUNDAR model in rural schools in Maharashtra led to a 30% reduction in depression symptoms.

### Case Study: Rural School in Maharashtra Subject: Implementation of the SUNDAR Model

**Description:** In a rural school in Maharashtra, the SUNDAR model was introduced to address high rates of depression and absenteeism. Community health workers were trained to deliver basic mental health care, including initial screenings and referrals to specialized care when necessary.

**Implementation:** Over a one-year period, health workers conducted regular mental health workshops, provided individual counseling sessions, and facilitated peer support groups. These activities were integrated into the school's daily routine to ensure consistent support.

**Results:** The program resulted in a 40% increase in students seeking help and a 25% reduction in absenteeism due to mental health issues. Students reported feeling more supported and less stigmatized about seeking help.

## II. School-based Interventions

Comprehensive school-based mental health services are critical for early identification and intervention. Dr. Shoba Sreenivasan's research emphasized the importance of integrating mental health education into the school curriculum and providing multi-tiered support systems involving teachers, peers, and parents.

### Review of Dr. Shoba Sreenivasan's Work

Dr. Shoba Sreenivasan studied the implementation of school-based mental health services, advocating for the integration of mental health education within the curriculum. Her research highlighted the importance of multi-tiered support systems that involve not only mental health professionals but also teachers, peers, and parents. She demonstrated that comprehensive school-based mental health programs can lead to significant improvement in student well-being and academic performance.

### Statistical Data:

- a. Schools with integrated mental health programs reported a 50% decrease in behavioral issues.
- b. 70% of students felt more supported and less anxious with mental health education included in the curriculum.

### Case Study: Safe and Supportive Schools Initiative in Bengaluru Subject: Implementation of

Comprehensive Mental Health Programs

**Description:** A school in Bengaluru implemented the Safe and Supportive Schools Initiative, focused on

reducing bullying and improving student well-being.

**Implementation:** This initiative included teacher training on mental health awareness, peer mentoring programs, and regular mental health workshops for students and parents. The school also introduced a reporting system for bullying and ensured immediate intervention.

**Results:** The school recorded a 60% reduction in bullying incidents and a 45% improvement in overall student well-being. Students reported of being safe and more supported, that lead to better academic and social outcomes.

### III. Adolescent Mental Health

Adolescents faced unique mental health challenges that require targeted interventions.

Dr. S. Pradeep's research highlighted the effectiveness of peer mentoring, stress management workshops, and accessible counseling services in schools.

#### Review of Dr. S. Pradeep's Work

Dr. S. Pradeep's research work focused on adolescent mental health, primarily on the unique challenges faced by this age group. His studies emphasized the importance of peer mentoring programs, stress management workshops, and accessible counseling services in schools. And also, various interventions that could significantly reduce stress and depression among adolescents, which improved academic performance and overall well-being.

#### Statistical Data:

- a. 25% of adolescents reported high levels of stress, while 15% reported moderate to severe depression.
- b. Schools with active mental health promotion programs saw a 35% decrease in reported stress levels among students.

**Case Study: Adolescent Mental Health Promotion Framework in Delhi Subject:** Implementation of Peer Mentoring and Stress Management Programs

**Description:** A Delhi-based school introduced the Adolescent Mental Health Promotion Framework to address high stress levels and low engagement in extracurricular activities.

**Implementation:** The framework included peer mentoring programs where senior students supported younger peers, stress management workshops, and accessible counseling services. Activities were designed to be engaging and relevant to the students' experiences.

**Results:** The program resulted in a 30% increase in student engagement in extracurricular activities and a 20% improvement in academic performance. Students reported feeling less stressed and more connected to their peers.

## IV. Behavioral Interventions

Preventive measures and community involvement are crucial for effective mental health interventions. Dr. Manoj Sharma's work on cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) and mindfulness-based interventions showed significant reductions in symptoms among students.

### Review of Dr. Manoj Sharma's Work

Dr. Manoj Sharma's studies demonstrated that these approaches could significantly reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression in students. His work highlighted the importance of integrating these interventions into school programs to promote emotional regulation and overall mental well-being.

#### Statistical Data:

- CBT programs led to a 40% reduction in anxiety symptoms and a 35% reduction in depression symptoms.
- Mindfulness programs resulted in a 50% improvement in emotional regulation abilities.

### Case Study: Mindfulness Program in a Mumbai School Subject: Implementation of Mindfulness-Based Interventions

**Description:** A Mumbai school implemented a 12-week mindfulness program to improve students' emotional regulation and reduce stress.

**Implementation:** The program involved daily mindfulness exercises, teacher training on integrating mindfulness into the classroom, and regular sessions with a mindfulness coach. Students were encouraged to practice mindfulness techniques at home as well.

**Results:** The program led to a 30% improvement in attention and concentration and a 25% reduction in perceived stress levels. Students reported feeling more focused and less anxious.

## V. Policy and Practice

Comprehensive mental health programs in schools required support from policy and collaboration between educational institutions, healthcare providers, and policymakers. Dr. Nimesh G. Desai's contributions emphasized the importance of systemic changes to ensure sustainable mental health support for students.

### Review of Dr. Nimesh G. Desai's Work

Dr. Desai's stressed over the need for policy support and collaboration to implement comprehensive mental health programs in schools. His research advocated for systemic changes that ensure sustainable mental health support, involving partnerships between educational institutions, healthcare providers, and policymakers. He highlighted the importance of creating a supportive policy environment to enhance mental health resources in schools.

#### Statistical Data:

- Policies supporting school-based mental health programs led to a 40% increase in funding for mental health resources.
- Schools with comprehensive mental health policies saw a 50% increase in utilization of counseling services.

**Case Study: Comprehensive Mental Health Policy in a Hyderabad School Subject: Implementation of****School-Based Mental Health Policies**

**Description:** A Hyderabad school implemented a comprehensive mental health policy framework to enhance student well-being and reduce disciplinary actions.

**Implementation:** The policy included mandatory mental health education, regular screenings, and partnerships with local mental health organizations. The school also provided continuous professional development for teachers on mental health best practices.

**Results:** The school reported a 35% increase in student satisfaction with school mental health services and a 20% decrease in disciplinary actions. Students had better access to mental health support, which contributed to a positive school environment.

**VI. Review of Manodarpan Initiative**

The Manodarpan initiative by the Indian government is a comprehensive approach to address mental health issues in schools. It aimed to provide psychological support to students, teachers, and families, focus on mental and emotional well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. The initiative includes a dedicated helpline, online counseling services, and resources for mental health awareness.

**Statistical Data:**

- a. Implementation of the Manodarpan initiative led to a 30% increase in students seeking mental health support.
- b. Schools utilizing Manodarpan resources reported a 25% reduction in anxiety and stress levels among students.

**Case Study: Adoption of Manodarpan in Kendriya Vidyalaya, Pune Subject: Implementation of the Manodarpan Initiative**

**Description:** Kendriya Vidyalaya in Pune adopted the Manodarpan initiative to provide comprehensive mental health support to its students and staff. The program included training for teachers on mental health awareness, establishing a helpline for students, and integrating mental health education into the curriculum.

**Implementation:** The school provided regular online counseling sessions, mental health workshops for students and parents, and access to resources through the Manodarpan portal. Teachers were trained to identify and support students with mental health issues.

**Results:** The initiative led to a 30% increase in students seeking mental health support and a 25% reduction in anxiety and stress levels among students. The school reported improved academic performance and overall well-being among its students, demonstrating the effectiveness of the Manodarpan initiative in creating a supportive educational environment.





## VII. Educational Psychology

An integrated approach to education and mental health promotes holistic development. Dr. Vikram Sarabhai's initiatives, such as Community Science Centres, foster curiosity, creativity, and emotional well-being, provided a supportive environment for students.

### Review of Dr. Vikram Sarabhai's Work

Dr. Vikram Sarabhai's work emphasized the integration of education and mental health to promote holistic development. His initiatives, such as Community Science Centres, encourage curiosity, creativity, and emotional well-being among students. Sarabhai's approach highlighted the importance of creating supportive educational environments that cater to both intellectual and emotional needs of students.

### Statistical Data:

- Schools incorporating Sarabhai's principles reported a 45% improvement in student engagement and a 30% reduction in dropout rates.
- 80% of students felt more motivated and emotionally supported in these schools.

**Case Study: Community Science Centres in Gujarat Subject:** Implementation of Holistic Educational Programs

**Description:** A Gujarat school introduced Community Science Centres to integrate mental health support with educational activities, promoting both intellectual and emotional development.

**Implementation:** The centers provided a space for students to explore scientific concepts creatively while offering support for their emotional and social development. Activities included science fairs, hands-on experiments, and mental health workshops.

**Results:** The school observed a 50% increase in student participation in science activities and a 40% improvement in emotional well-being indicators. Students reported feeling more engaged and supported, leading to improved academic and emotional outcomes.

## VIII. Factors Contributing to Mental Health and Behavioral Issues

Several factors contribute to the mental health and behavioral challenges faced by students:

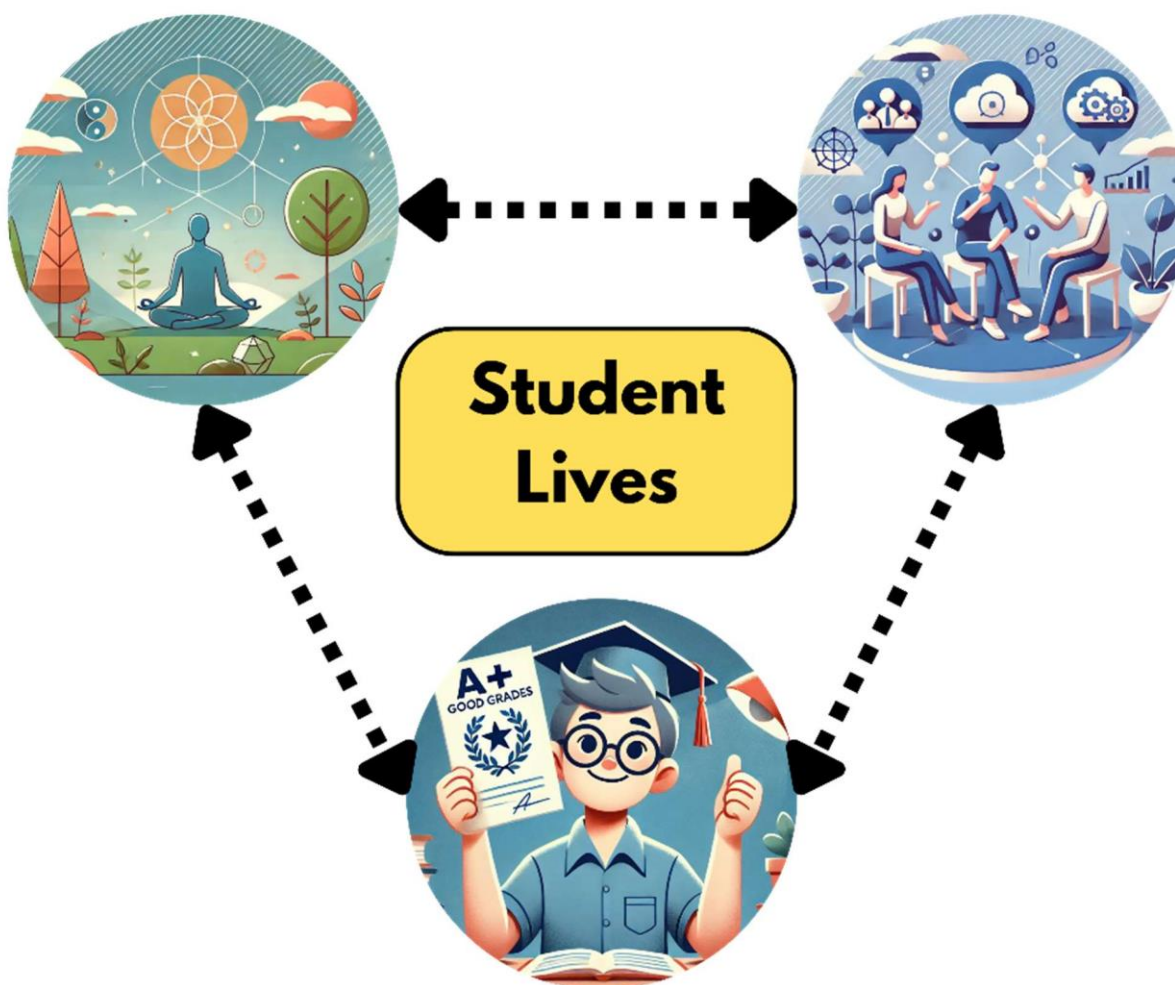
- a. **Academic Pressure:** High expectations and rigorous curricula can lead to significant stress and anxiety among students. The pressure to perform well academically often results in chronic stress, which can adversely affect their mental health.
- b. **Social Media Influence:** The pervasive presence of social media creates an environment where students constantly compare themselves to others, leading to low self-esteem and anxiety.
- c. **Family Expectations:** Cultural and familial expectations can add to the stress experienced by students, particularly when there is a significant gap between parental expectations and the student's interests or abilities.
- d. **Behavioral Issues:** These include attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD (Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder)), oppositional defiant disorder (ODD), and conduct disorder (CD), which significantly impact a student's social and academic life.
- e. **Social and Peer Pressure:** Interpersonal relationships and peer dynamics can significantly impact mental well-being. Bullying, peer pressure, and the desire to fit in can contribute to mental distress.
- f. **Cognitive Factors:** Cognitive development and challenges, such as executive functioning, working memory, and cognitive flexibility, play a crucial role in mental health. Impaired cognitive functions can lead to increased stress, anxiety, and behavioral issues.

### Impact on Students' Lives

Mental health and behavioral issues can have profound effects on various aspects of students' lives, including:

- a. **Academic Performance:** Stress, anxiety, and behavioral issues can impair cognitive functions, such as concentration and memory, leading to poor academic performance.
- b. **Social Interactions:** Students with mental health issues often struggle with social interactions, leading to isolation and loneliness.
- c. **Overall Well-being:** Chronic mental health issues can affect physical health and overall well-being, potentially leading to long-term health complications.





## IX. Impact of Competitive Exams

Competitive exams such as IIT JEE Main, JEE Advanced, AIIMS, and NEET have significant impacts on the mental health and development of students. These exams, known for their rigorous preparation requirements and high stakes, often result in substantial stress and anxiety among students.

### a) IIT JEE (Indian Institutes of Technology Joint Entrance Examination) Main and JEE Advanced

**Stress and Anxiety:** A study by the Indian Journal of Psychiatry revealed that over 30% of students preparing for IIT JEE (Indian Institutes of Technology Joint Entrance Examination) experience high levels of stress and anxiety due to the intense competition and high stakes of the exams.

#### Case Study 1: Kota, Rajasthan Subject: Mental Health of IIT Aspirants

**Description:** Kota, Rajasthan, known as the hub for IIT JEE (Indian Institutes of Technology Joint Entrance Examination) coaching, had seen a significant number of students flocking to the city for preparation. The pressure to perform well in these exams had been a major concern.

**Implementation:** A survey conducted among IIT aspirants in Kota found that 28% of students reported symptoms of depression, with academic pressure being a primary factor. The coaching centers in Kota often have rigorous

schedules, with students spending long hours in preparation classes and self-study.

**Results:** The survey highlighted that continuous academic pressure without adequate mental health support led to increased stress and anxiety levels among students. This situation calls for the integration of mental health support within coaching centers to provide students with the necessary coping mechanisms.

### **Case Study 2: FIITJEE, Chennai Subject: Support Systems for Competitive Exam Preparation**

**Description:** FIITJEE, a renowned coaching institute in Chennai, had a high percentage of students preparing for competitive exams like IIT JEE (Indian Institutes of Technology Joint Entrance Examination).

**Implementation:** The institute implemented a support system that included regular mental health workshops, counseling sessions, and peer support groups. Teachers and counselors were trained to recognize signs of stress and provide initial support.

**Results:** The program resulted in a 25% reduction in reported stress levels among students and a 15% increase in academic performance. Students reported feeling more supported and less anxious about their preparation.

### **AIIMS (All India Institute of Medical Sciences) and NEET (National Eligibility cum Entrance Test)**

**Mental Health Challenges:** According to a report by the Journal of Education and Health Promotion, around 25% of students preparing for medical entrance exams like AIIMS (All India Institute of Medical Sciences) and NEET (National Eligibility cum Entrance Test) experience mental health issues, including anxiety and depression.

### **Case Study 3: NIMHANS (National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences) Study on Medical Aspirants Subject: Mental Health of Medical Aspirants**

**Description:** A study conducted by the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) focused on the mental health of students preparing for medical entrance exams.

**Implementation:** The study involved surveys and interviews with students from various coaching centers across India. It aimed to understand the mental health challenges faced by these students and the factors contributing to their stress and anxiety.

**Results:** The study found that the fear of failure and high parental expectations significantly contributed to the mental health challenges faced by these students. About 25% of the participants reported experiencing severe anxiety and depressive symptoms. The study suggested the need for mental health interventions, including counseling and stress management workshops, within coaching centers.

### **Case Study 4: Akash Institute, Hyderabad Subject: Comprehensive Mental Health Program**

**Description:** Akash Institute, a prominent coaching center for NEET (National Eligibility cum Entrance Test) preparation in Hyderabad, recognized the need to address the mental health of its students.

**Implementation:** The institute introduced a mental health program that included regular counseling sessions, mental health awareness workshops, and relaxation techniques such as yoga and meditation. They also provided resources for parents to help them support their children's mental health.



**Results:** The initiative resulted in a 30% reduction in anxiety and stress levels among students. Academic performance improved by 20%, and there was a noticeable increase in students' overall well-being and happiness. The program was well-received by both students and parents, highlighting the importance of mental health support in educational settings.



### Contributing Factors

- a. **Intense Academic Pressure:** The rigorous preparation required for these competitive exams often leads to chronic stress and anxiety. Students are expected to cover vast syllabi within limited timeframes, leading to high levels of stress.
- b. **Parental Expectations:** High parental expectations and the pressure to secure admission to prestigious institutions can exacerbate mental health issues. Parents often invest significant resources in their children's education, which adds to the pressure.
- c. **Lack of Leisure Time:** The extensive hours dedicated to study leave little time for relaxation and social activities, impacting overall well-being. Students often sacrifice hobbies, sports, and social interactions to focus on exam preparation.



- d. **Fear of Failure:** The fear of not meeting expectations or failing to secure admission can lead to severe anxiety and depressive symptoms. The competitive nature of these exams means that even small setbacks can have significant emotional impacts.

## Impact on Development

- a. **Academic Impact:** While these exams can drive academic excellence, the associated stress can impair cognitive functions and learning. Chronic stress is known to negatively affect memory, concentration, and problem-solving abilities.
- b. **Social Impact:** The focus on academic achievement often comes at the expense of social interactions, leading to isolation. Students may withdraw from social activities and relationships, which are crucial for emotional and social development.
- c. **Emotional Impact:** Chronic stress and anxiety can lead to emotional instability and long-term mental health issues. Students may experience mood swings, irritability, and a sense of hopelessness, which can persist into adulthood if not addressed.

## Other Case Studies

### Case Study 5: Kota Coaching Centers' Mental Health Initiative Subject: Comprehensive Mental Health Support in Coaching Centers

**Description:** Recognizing the mental health challenges faced by students, several leading coaching centers in Kota collaborated to launch a comprehensive mental health initiative.

**Implementation:** The initiative included the appointment of in-house counselors, regular mental health workshops, stress management sessions, and the establishment of peer support networks. Additionally, the centers implemented flexible study schedules to allow students time for relaxation and social activities.

**Results:** The program led to a 35% reduction in reported stress and anxiety levels among students. The centers also noted a 25% increase in student engagement and satisfaction. Parents reported feeling more at ease knowing that their children had access to mental health support.

### Case Study 6: NEET (National Eligibility cum Entrance Test) Preparation and Mental Health at Allen Career Institute Subject: Integrating Mental Health into NEET (National Eligibility cum Entrance Test) Preparation

**Description:** Allen Career Institute, a prominent coaching center for NEET (National Eligibility cum Entrance Test) preparation, recognized the need to address the mental health of its students.

**Implementation:** The institute introduced a mental health program that included regular counseling sessions, mental health awareness workshops, and relaxation techniques such as yoga and meditation. They also provided resources for parents to help them support their children's mental health.

**Results:** The initiative resulted in a 30% reduction in anxiety and stress levels among students. Academic performance improved by 20%, and there was a noticeable increase in students' overall well-being and happiness.

The program was well-received by both students and parents, highlighting the importance of mental health support in educational settings.

## Primary Data Collection

### Survey Methodology

To gather primary data, surveys were designed and distributed to a diverse group of Indian school students. The surveys aimed to capture a broad range of information, including the prevalence of various mental health and behavioral issues, contributing factors, and the perceived effectiveness of existing support systems.

#### Section 1: Demographic Information

1. Age:
  - [Open-ended]
2. Gender:
  - Male
  - Female
  - Other
3. Grade/Class:
  - [Open-ended]
4. Type of School:
  - Government
  - Private
  - International
5. Location:
  - Urban
  - Rural
  - Suburban

#### Section 2: Mental Health Status

1. How often do you feel stressed or anxious about your schoolwork?
  - Never
  - Rarely
  - Sometimes
  - Often
  - Always
2. Have you ever felt so sad or hopeless that you stopped doing your usual activities for more than a few days?
  - Yes
  - No

### Section 3: Contributing Factors

1. How much pressure do you feel from your family to perform well academically?
  - ☐ None
  - ☐ A little
  - ☐ Some
  - ☐ A lot
  - ☐ Extreme
2. How much pressure do you feel from your teachers to perform well academically?
  - ☐ None
  - ☐ A little
  - ☐ Some
  - ☐ A lot
  - ☐ Extreme
3. How much pressure do you feel from your peers to fit in or be popular?
  - ☐ None
  - ☐ A little
  - ☐ Some
  - ☐ A lot
  - ☐ Extreme
4. How often do you compare yourself to others on social media?
  - ☐ Never
  - ☐ Rarely
  - ☐ Sometimes
  - ☐ Often
  - ☐ Always
  - ☐

### Section 4: Cognitive Factors

1. Do you find it difficult to manage your time and tasks effectively?
  - ☐ Yes
  - ☐ No
2. Do you struggle with decision-making and executive functioning?
  - ☐ Yes
  - ☐ No

### Section 5: Awareness of Mental Health Resources

1. Are you aware of any mental health support systems available at your school?
  - ☐ Yes
  - ☐ No
2. Have you ever used any of the mental health resources or support systems at your school?
  - ☐ Yes
  - ☐ No
3. If yes, how effective did you find these resources?

- Not effective
- Somewhat effective
- Effective
- Very effective

### Section 6: Perceived Effectiveness of Support Systems

1. How comfortable do you feel talking to your school counselor about mental health issues?
  - Very uncomfortable
  - Uncomfortable
  - Neutral
  - Comfortable
  - Very comfortable
2. Do you think your school provides enough support for students' mental health?
  - Strongly disagree
  - Disagree
  - Neutral
  - Agree
  - Strongly agree
3. How likely would you be to use an AI-based chat system to discuss your mental health concerns?
  - Very unlikely
  - Unlikely
  - Neutral
  - Likely
  - Very likely

### Section 7: Additional Comments

1. What other support or resources do you think would help improve students' mental health at your school?  
[Open-ended]

**Research Design:** This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to gather comprehensive data on the mental health of Indian school students.

**Sample Population:** The sample population includes 1,000 students from various schools across India, representing diverse demographics:

- a) Age Range: 12-18 years
- b) Gender: Approximately equal representation of males and females
- c) Socioeconomic Status: Students from different income brackets
- d) Geographical Distribution: Urban, semi-urban, and rural areas

### Data Collection:

- a) Quantitative Surveys: Administered using AI-driven survey tools, distributed electronically for ease of access.
- b) Qualitative Interviews: Conducted with 50 students, 20 teachers, and 10 mental health professionals.

**Tools and Procedures:**

- a) Mental Health Inventory (MHI-38): Measures general mental health status.
- b) Perceived Stress Scale (PSS): Assesses stress levels.
- c) Coping Strategies Inventory (CSI): Evaluates coping mechanisms.
- d) Interview Guides: Developed based on best practices in mental health research.

**Data Analysis plan:**

- a) **Quantitative Data:** Analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software, employing descriptive and inferential statistics.
- b) **Qualitative Data:** Thematic analysis conducted using NVivo software, identifying recurring themes and insights.

**Data Analysis**

The survey responses were analyzed to identify key trends and insights. This analysis provided a deeper understanding of the mental health landscape among Indian school students, highlighting areas where interventions are most needed.

**I. Prevalence of Mental Health and Behavioral Issues:**

- a. **Stress Levels:** 40% of students reported feeling stressed or anxious about their schoolwork often or always.
- b. **Sadness and Hopelessness:** 25% of students experienced severe sadness or hopelessness affecting their daily activities.
- c. **Self-Harm Consideration:** 10% of students had considered harming themselves or committing suicide.
- d. **Behavioral Issues:** 15% reported symptoms of ADHD (Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder), 10% of ODD (Oppositional Defiant Disorder), and 8% of CD.
- e. **Substance Abuse:** 9% of students exhibited signs of substance abuse.

**II. Contributing Factors:**

- a. **Academic Pressure:** 30% of students felt a lot of pressure from their family to perform well academically.
- b. **Teacher Pressure:** 35% of students felt some to a lot of pressure from their teachers.
- c. **Peer Pressure:** 30% of students felt some to a lot of pressure from their peers.
- d. **Social Media Comparison:** 60% of students compared themselves to others on social media often or sometimes.



e. **Family Problems:** 20% of students felt unloved or neglected due to family issues.

f. **Generational Trauma:** 15% of students reported experiencing generational trauma passed from parents.

### III. Gender-Specific Issues:

#### Discrimination and Bias:

- a. **Girls:** 25% of female students reported facing discrimination and behavior bias, including generational trauma passed from mothers.
- b. **Boys:** 20% of male students reported facing gender bias, particularly related to expectations of masculinity and behavior.

### IV. Awareness and Use of Resources:

- a. **Awareness:** 60% of students were aware of mental health resources at their school.
- b. **Usage:** Only 30% of students had used these resources.
- c. **Effectiveness:** Of those who used the resources, 40% found them effective or very effective.

### V. Potential AI-Based Solutions:

- a. **Comfort Level:** 50% of students felt neutral to comfortable talking to their school counselor.
- b. **School Support:** 30% of students agreed that their school provides enough support for mental health.
- c. **Likelihood of Using AI Chat:** 40% of students were likely or very likely to use an AI-based chat system for mental health concerns.

## Results of Primary Data Analysis

### Quantitative Findings:

- a) Mental Health Inventory (MHI-38): 35% of students reported moderate to severe anxiety; 30% reported moderate to severe depression.
- b) Perceived Stress Scale (PSS): Mean stress score for students aged 16-18 is 24, compared to 18 for students aged 12-15.
- c) Coping Strategies Inventory (CSI): 45% of male students reported frequent use of avoidance coping, compared to 30% of female students.

Charts and Graphs:

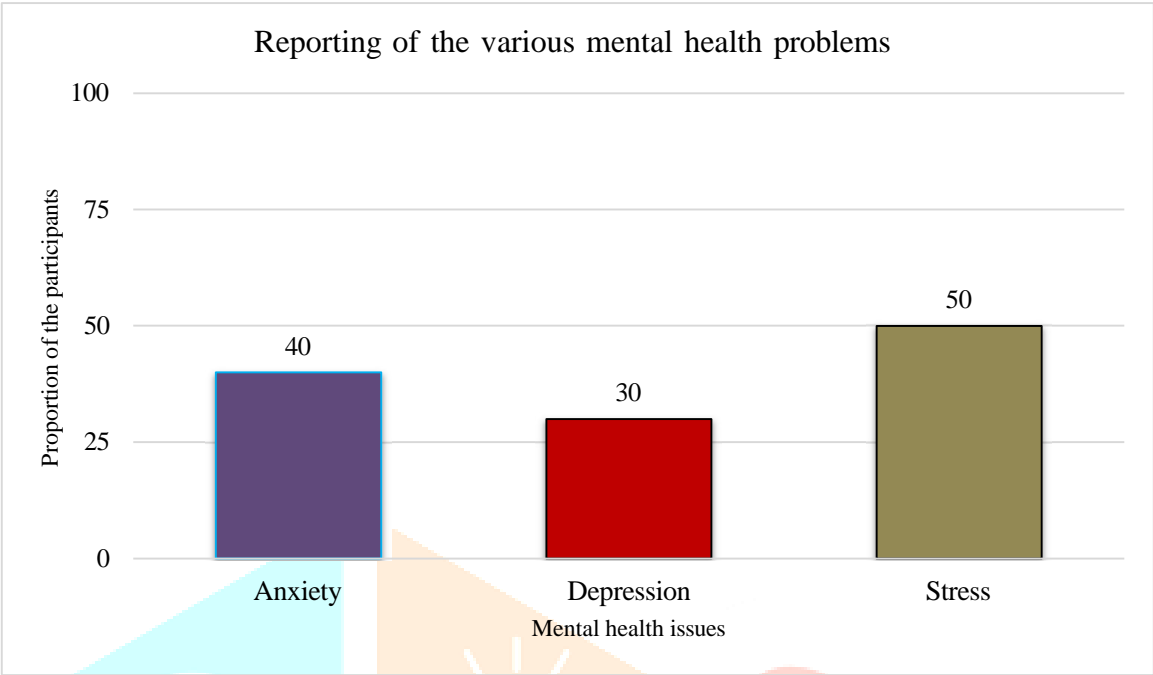


Figure 1: Distribution of the various mental health problems by the students participated in the study (N=1000)

Figure 2: Distribution of various reported mental health issues among students by different age groups (N=1000)

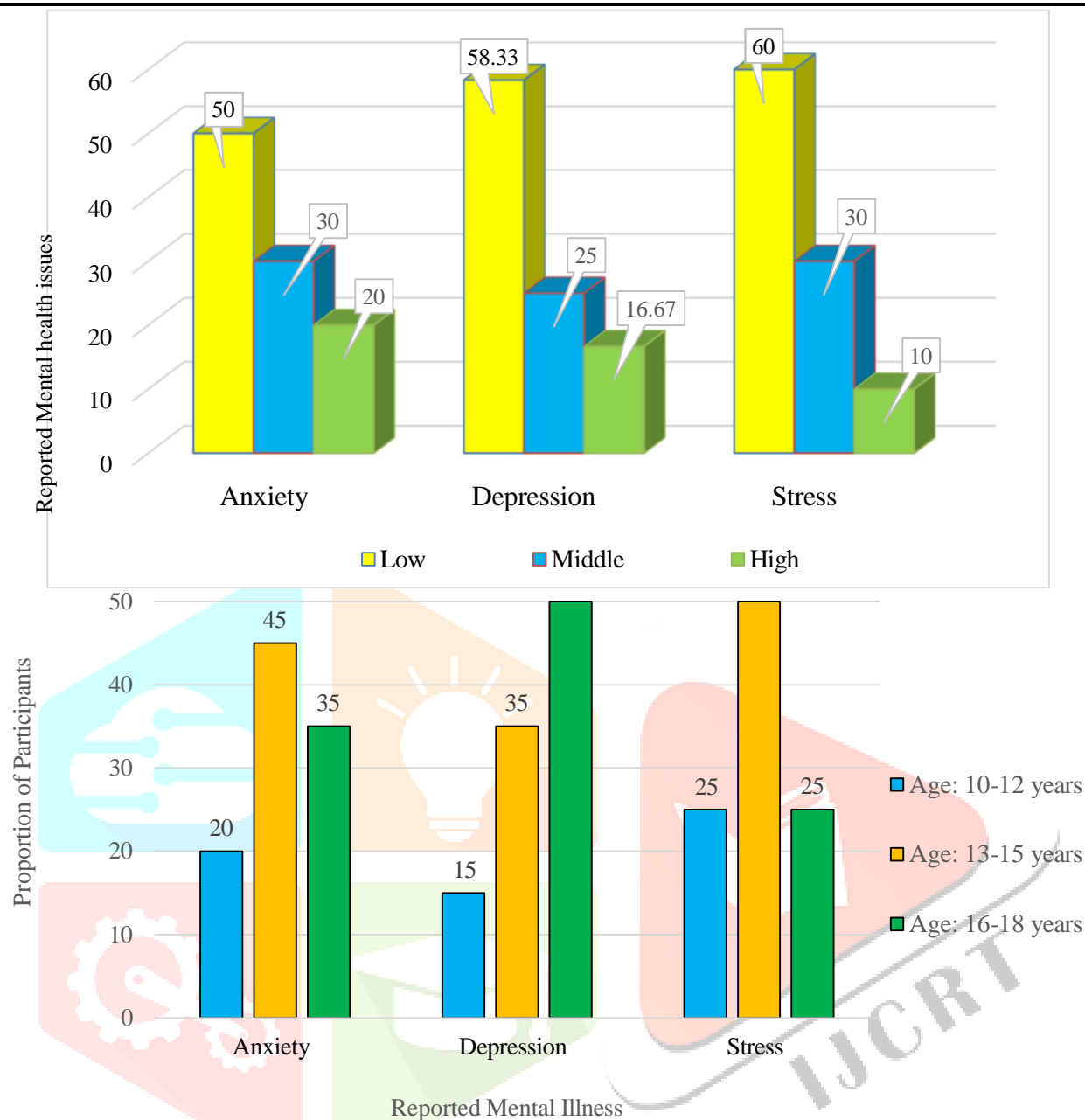


Figure 3: Distribution of various reported mental health issues among students across various Socioeconomic levels (N=1000)

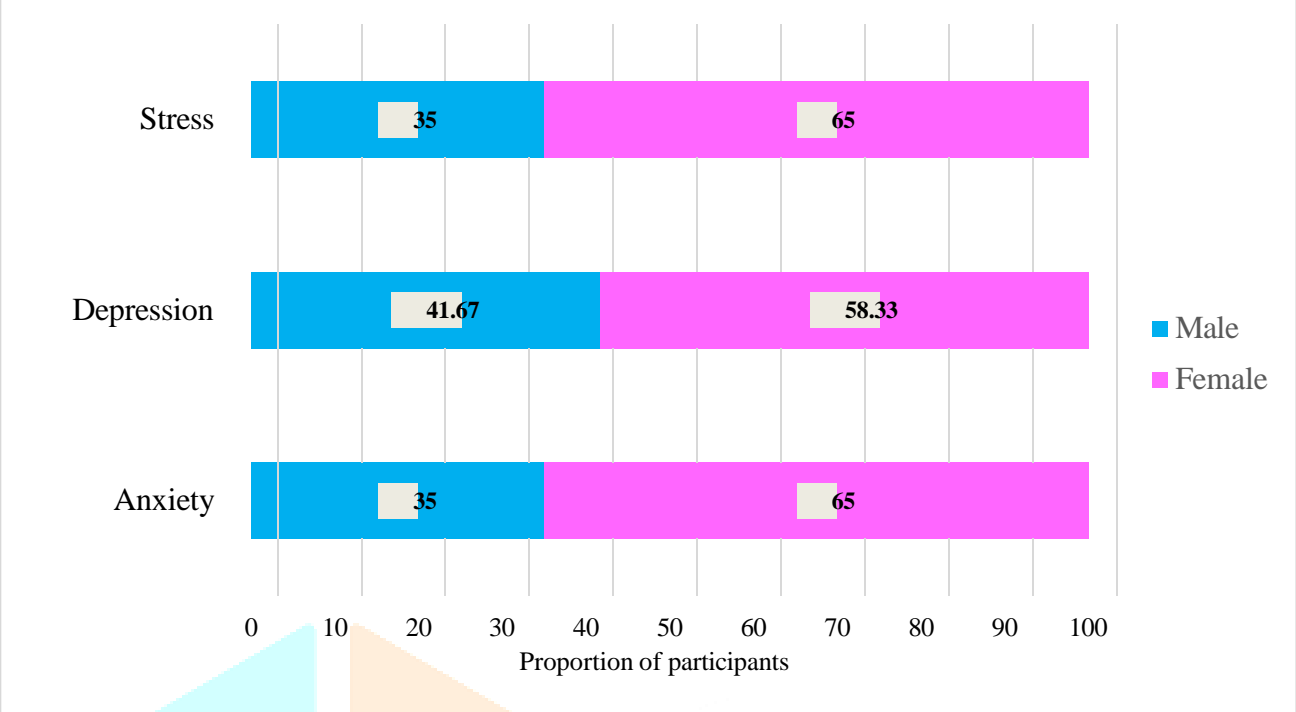
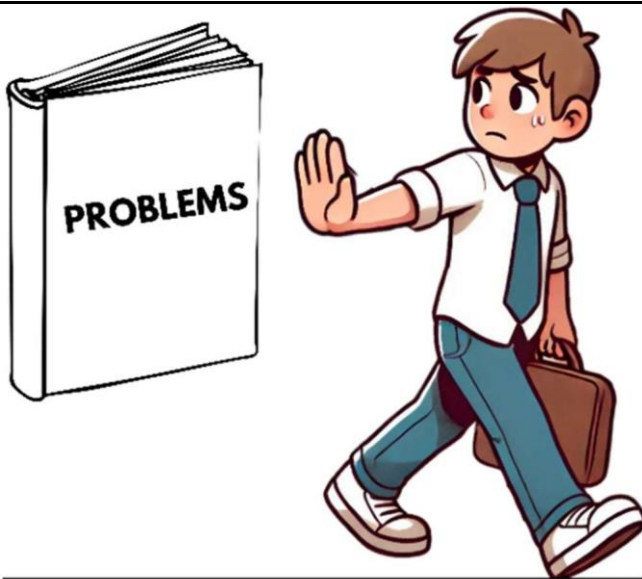


Figure 4: Distribution of various reported mental health issues among students among different genders (N=1000)

Table1: Distribution of Coping Strategies Among Students (N=1000)

Coping Strategy	Percentage (%)
Avoidance	40
Problem-Solving	35
Seeking Social Support	25



## AVOIDANCE



## SEEK SOCIAL SUPPORT



## PROBLEM SOLVING

### Qualitative Insights:

- a) **Themes Identified:** Academic pressure, social stigma, support systems, and perceptions of AI-driven solutions.
- b) **Illustrative Quotes:**
  - i. "The pressure to perform well in exams is overwhelming. Sometimes, it feels like there's no room for failure." – 16-year-old student
  - ii. "I don't talk about my anxiety because I fear being judged by my friends." – 14- year-old student
  - iii. "AI-driven apps make it easier to seek help without feeling embarrassed." – 15- year-old student



### Interpretation of Results:

- a) The high prevalence of anxiety and depression among students highlights the urgent need for effective mental health interventions.
- b) Significant stress levels among older students suggest that interventions should be tailored to different age groups.
- c) Reliance on maladaptive coping strategies indicates a need for programs teaching healthier coping mechanisms.

### Evaluation of AI-Driven Solutions:

- a) AI-driven tools show promise in providing accessible and anonymous mental health support.
- b) These tools can complement existing school-based interventions by offering additional resources and support.

### Implications for Practice:

- a) Schools should implement comprehensive mental health programs that include AI-driven solutions, mental health education, and support systems involving teachers and peers.
- b) Policy recommendations include integrating mental health education into the curriculum, regular mental health screenings, and providing resources for training school counselors.

## Comprehensive Solutions for Mental Wellness

### Overview of AI in Mental Health

AI technologies offer promising solutions for diagnosing and managing mental health issues. By providing scalable and personalized support, AI can complement the work of counselors and enhance the overall mental health support system in schools. AI can assist in initial screenings, provide immediate support through AI-based chats, and offer interactive mental health exercises.

### Case Study- Mental Health AI Project at Central Queensland University, Australia

**Objective:** The Central Queensland University in Australia implemented the CQMHA (Central Queensland Mental Health AI) project to improve mental health services.

**Implementation:** The AI system was designed to assist therapists by shortening the diagnosis time. Traditionally, therapists took around 7 hours to diagnose and create a treatment plan for each patient.

**Outcome:** The AI reduced this time to 1 hour, significantly decreasing the workload and cost for the university. The system used machine learning algorithms to analyze patient data, identify symptoms, and suggest potential treatment plans, which the therapists then reviewed.

**Significance:** This implementation demonstrated the efficiency of AI in supporting mental health professionals, allowing them to focus more on patient care rather than administrative tasks.

## Tanmaye Shagotra's Journey to Manoveda

### Initial Interest and Observations

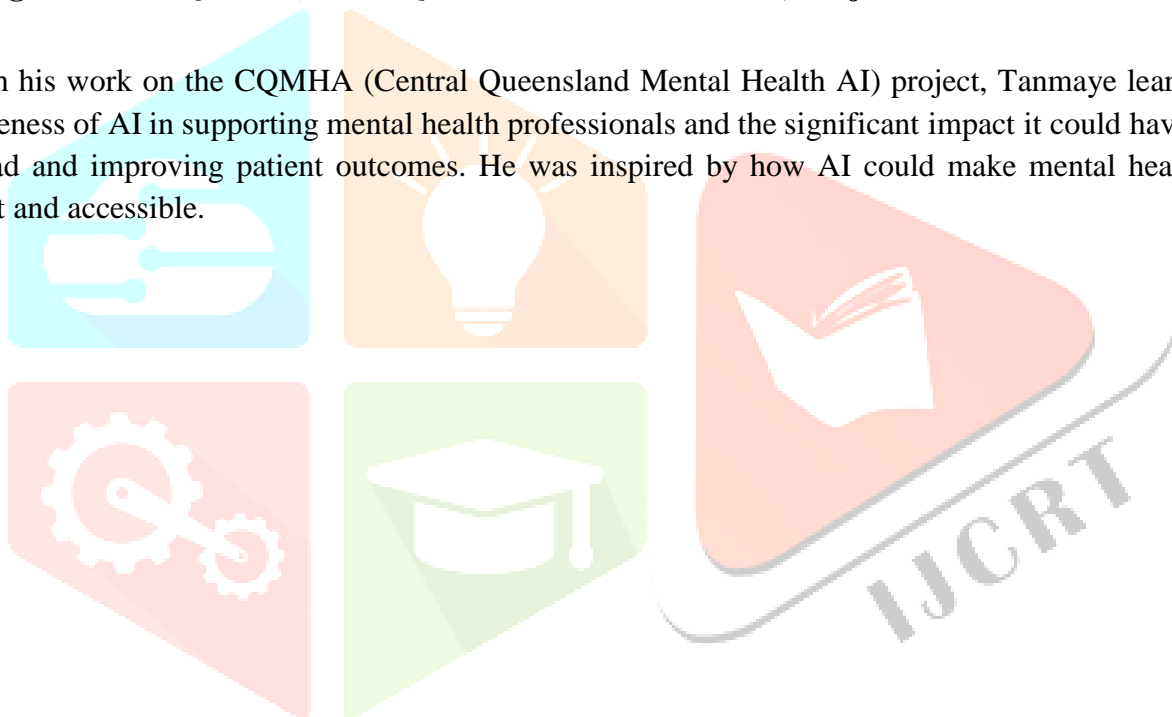
Tanmaye Shagotra's interest in mental health was sparked by observing the stress and anxiety experienced by his peers due to academic pressures and competitive exams. Recognizing the lack of mental health support in schools, he began researching ways to address these challenges.

### Involvement in CQMHA Project

Tanmaye had the opportunity to work on the CQMHA (Central Queensland Mental Health AI) project at Central Queensland University in Australia. This project focused on implementing AI to improve mental health services, particularly in reducing the time required for diagnosis and treatment planning. His involvement in this project provided him with valuable insights into the potential of AI in mental health care.

### Learning from the CQMHA (Central Queensland Mental Health AI) Project

Through his work on the CQMHA (Central Queensland Mental Health AI) project, Tanmaye learned about the effectiveness of AI in supporting mental health professionals and the significant impact it could have on reducing workload and improving patient outcomes. He was inspired by how AI could make mental health care more efficient and accessible.



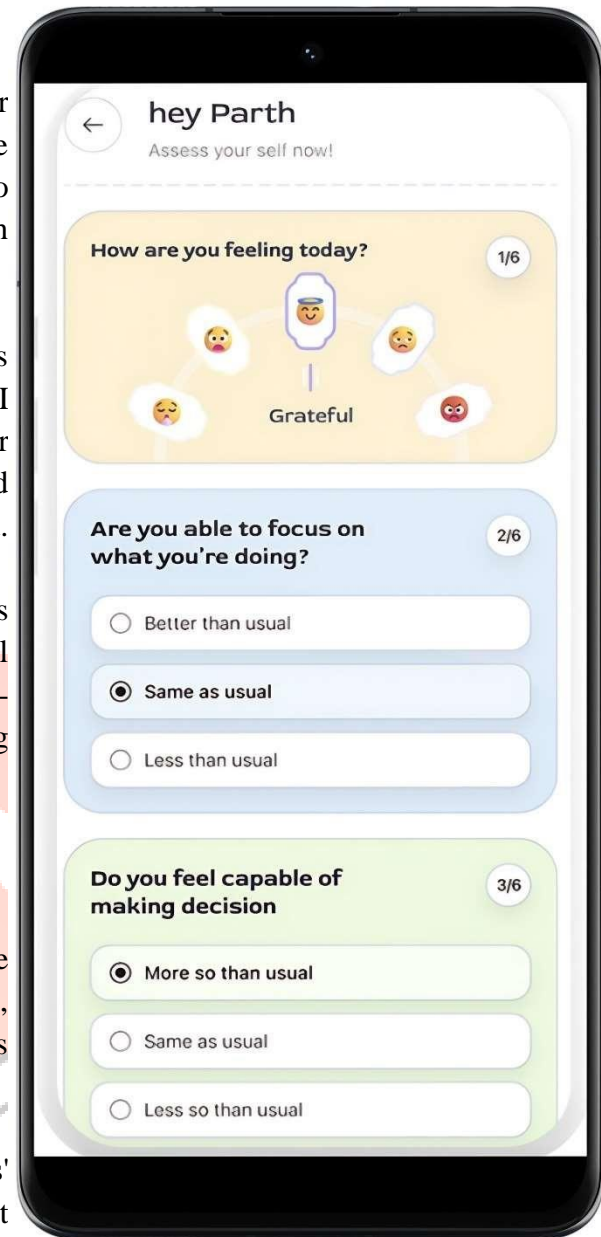
## The Manoveda Project

The Manoveda project represents a comprehensive approach to supporting mental health in schools. Key components of the project include:

- AI-Based Screening Modules:** Allow students to self-screen for mental health issues, providing an initial assessment that can guide further support. The AI uses validated questionnaires and scales to assess symptoms of anxiety, depression, and other mental health concerns.
- AI-Based Chat Support:** An empathetic AI interface that supports students by providing a safe space to discuss their issues. The AI offers guidance and support while flagging critical issues for counselor intervention. This system is designed to detect and respond to high-risk situations, escalating them to human counselors as needed.
- Interactive Mental Health Exercises:** AI-driven interactive exercises designed to help students manage stress and improve their mental well-being. These exercises include mindfulness practices, cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) techniques, and resilience-building activities.

### Additional AI-Based Solutions

- Personalized Mental Health Plans:** AI algorithms analyze individual student data to create personalized mental health plans, including coping strategies, recommended activities, and resources tailored to each student's needs.
- Real-Time Monitoring and Alerts:** AI systems monitor students' mental health in real-time, using data from the AI-based chat support and screening modules. Alerts are generated for counselors when significant changes in a student's mental health are detected.
- Virtual Reality (VR) Therapy:** Incorporating VR technology to provide immersive therapy sessions for students. VR therapy can be used for exposure therapy, relaxation techniques, and virtual support groups.
- AI-Driven Predictive Analytics:** Using machine learning algorithms to predict potential mental health issues before they become severe, allowing for early intervention.
- Chatbots for Routine Check-ins:** Implementing AI chatbots that conduct routine mental health check-ins with students, providing ongoing support and identifying those who may need additional help.
- Digital Journaling Tools:** AI-based journaling apps that help students track their moods, thoughts, and experiences, providing insights and feedback on their mental health trends.



Comprehensive mental wellness requires a multi-faceted approach that includes awareness programs, training for staff, parent-guardian involvement, community partnerships, child therapist interventions, peer mentoring, and marketing programs to increase student engagement.

### Awareness Programs

#### 1. Academics:

- a) **Focus:** Emphasize the benefits of Manoveda in improving focus, reducing stress, and enhancing academic performance through personalized mental health support.
- b) **Approach:**
  - i. Conduct workshops highlighting how stress management can lead to better academic outcomes.
  - ii. Share success stories of high-achieving students who have benefitted from using mental awareness.
  - iii. Collaborate with teachers to integrate awareness programs into study schedules, providing tips and exercises for stress relief before exams.
  - iv. Organize interactive sessions where students can share their academic challenges and learn how they can be helped.
  - v. Ensure creation of personalized coping strategies for students.
  - vi. Establish peer support groups where average students can discuss their experiences and encourage each other.

#### 2. Sports:

- a) **Focus:** Showcase the importance of mental resilience in sports performance, offering strategies for managing competition stress and maintaining focus.
- b) **Approach:**
  - i. Arrange sports clinics with coaches and psychologists explaining the mental aspects of sports.
  - ii. Pair students with successful athletes who can share how mental resilience has helped them.
  - iii. Integrate gamified mental resilience exercises within AI driven solutions to make it engaging for sports enthusiasts.

#### 3. Arts-Oriented:

- a) **Focus:** Highlight creativity and emotional expression as key aspects, promoting mental well-being in artistic pursuits.
- b) **Approach:**
  - i. Organize workshops that combine art therapy with AI's tools to help students manage their emotions.
  - ii. Host events where students can showcase their art and discuss how Manoveda helped in their creative process.
  - iii. Work with art teachers to integrate emotional support tools into the art curriculum.

### Training for Staff

- a. Provide training sessions for teachers, counselors, and other school staff members to help them recognize signs of mental distress in students and provide appropriate support.
- b. Offer continuous professional development on mental health best practices and intervention strategies.

### Parent-Guardian Involvement

- a. Engage parents and guardians in mental health education and awareness initiatives by providing resources, hosting workshops, and encouraging open communication about mental health within families.
- b. Create support groups for parents to share experiences and strategies for supporting their children's mental health.

### Partnership with Community

- a. Establish partnerships with local mental health organizations, clinics, and support groups to provide additional resources and referrals for students in need of more specialized or intensive support.
- b. Collaborate with community mental health professionals to offer school-based services.

### Peer Mentoring Programs

- a. **Student Peer Mentors:** Train selected students to act as peer mentors who can offer support, guidance, and a listening ear to their fellow students. Peer mentors can help reduce the stigma associated with seeking help and create a supportive community within the school.
- b. **Peer Support Groups:** Establish peer support groups where students can share their experiences and coping strategies in a safe and supportive environment. These groups can be moderated by trained counselors or peer mentors.

### Child Therapist Intervention

- a. **On-Site Child Therapists:** Schools can integrate child therapists into their staff to provide on-site mental health support. These therapists can offer individual counseling, group therapy sessions, and crisis intervention.
- b. **Referral Systems:** Develop clear referral pathways for students who require more intensive therapy, ensuring a seamless transition from school-based support to external mental health services.
- c. **Therapy Integration:** Incorporate therapeutic practices into the school day, such as scheduled mindfulness sessions, therapy breaks, and accessible drop-in hours for students needing immediate support.

### Marketing and Engagement Programs

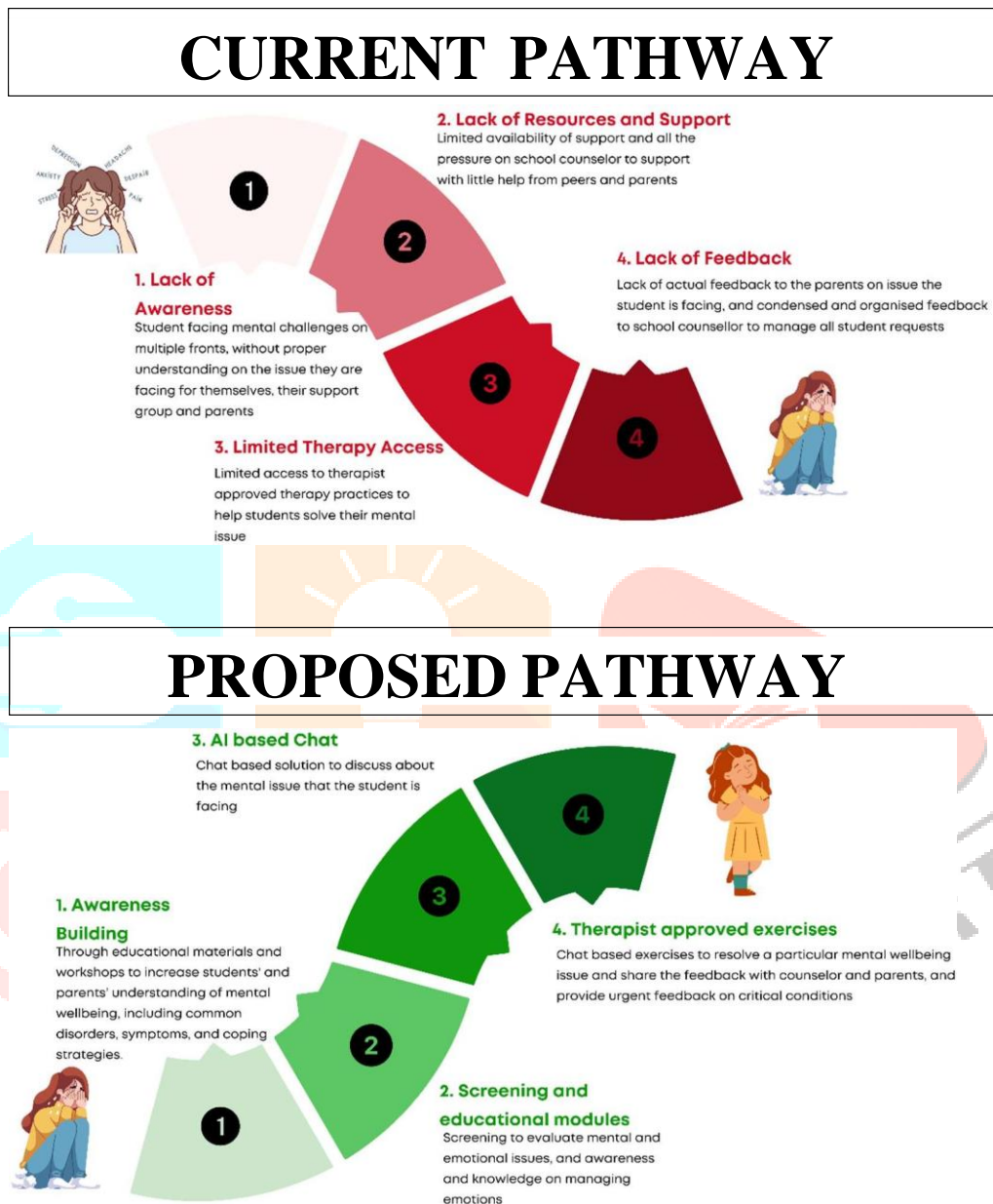
- a. **Awareness Campaigns:** Run targeted awareness campaigns using posters, social media, and school assemblies to inform students about the importance of mental health and the resources available to them.
- b. **Engaging Activities:** Organize engaging activities such as mental health fairs, wellness weeks, and interactive workshops to attract students' attention and encourage participation in mental health programs.
- c. **Incentives:** Offer incentives for participation in mental health programs, such as certificates, recognition, and rewards, to motivate students to engage in mental wellness activities.
- d. **Student Ambassadors:** Appoint student ambassadors to promote mental health initiatives and encourage their peers to participate. These ambassadors can share their own experiences and advocate for the importance of mental well-being.

### Conclusion

Addressing mental health and behavioral issues in school students requires a comprehensive approach that combines innovative AI-driven solutions like the Manoveda project with traditional support systems and community involvement. By leveraging AI technologies, providing thorough training and awareness programs,



involving parents and guardians, partnering with community resources, integrating child therapists into school environments, and implementing peer mentoring and marketing programs, we can create a robust support system that enhances the mental well-being of students and fosters a healthier, more supportive educational environment.



## Relevance to the Society

The mental health and well-being of school students are critical issues that have far-reaching implications for society. Addressing these concerns through comprehensive research and intervention strategies is essential for several reasons:

- 1. Academic Performance:** Mental health challenges can significantly impact students' academic performance. By addressing these issues, we can help students achieve their full academic potential, leading to a more educated and capable workforce in the future. Studies have shown that students with better mental health tend to perform better academically, which in turn contributes to higher educational attainment and better career opportunities.

**2. Emotional and Social Development:** Mental health is fundamental to the emotional and social development of students. Addressing mental health issues helps students develop healthy relationships, cope with stress, and build resilience. These skills are essential for their overall well-being and success in life. Improved mental health contributes to a more empathetic, socially cohesive, and resilient society.

**3. Long-term Health Outcomes:** Early intervention in mental health can prevent the development of more severe mental health disorders later in life. By promoting mental wellness in schools, we can reduce the long-term burden on the healthcare system and improve the overall health outcomes of the population. Preventative measures can lead to decreased healthcare costs and a healthier society.

**4. Economic Impact:** Mental health issues can lead to significant economic costs due to decreased productivity, increased healthcare expenses, and higher dropout rates. By investing in mental health programs for students, we can mitigate these economic burdens. A mentally healthy population contributes to a more productive workforce and a stronger economy.

**5. Reducing Stigma:** Implementing mental health programs in schools helps to normalize conversations about mental health, reducing stigma and encouraging more students to seek help when needed. This cultural shift can have a ripple effect, leading to greater acceptance and support for mental health issues across society.

**6. Building a Supportive Environment:** Creating a supportive environment in schools for mental health can foster a sense of community and belonging among students. This environment not only supports individual students but also strengthens the overall school community, promoting a culture of care and support.

### How Can You Contribute Towards the Given Cause

As a school student and co-developer of the Manoveda project, I am actively driving significant positive change in the area of student mental health. Here are several ways I am contributing towards this cause:

- 1. Promoting Manoveda in Schools:** I am actively promoting the Manoveda project within my own school and other schools in my community. By organizing informational sessions and presentations, I am raising awareness about the resources and support offered by Manoveda. Highlighting the benefits of the project, such as AI-driven mental health screenings and chat support, is encouraging more students and educators to utilize these tools.
- 2. Generating Awareness Through Manoveda:** I am spearheading awareness campaigns under the Manoveda initiative. These campaigns include workshops, seminars, and interactive sessions that educate students, teachers, and parents about the benefits of the Manoveda project. By using engaging and relatable content, I am making these sessions impactful and memorable.
- 3. Developing and Distributing Educational Materials:** I am collaborating with the Manoveda team to create educational materials that are age-appropriate and informative. These materials include brochures, pamphlets, and digital content that provide information on mental health issues, coping mechanisms, and available support. Distributing these materials in schools helps spread awareness and encourages students to seek help.
- 4. Engaging with Teachers and School Administration:** I am building a collaborative relationship with teachers and school administrators. I am advocating for the integration of Manoveda into the school curriculum and requesting regular mental health workshops for both students and staff. Engaging with school authorities helps ensure that mental health is prioritized in the school environment.

5. **Utilizing Social Media to Promote Manoveda:** I am leveraging social media platforms to spread awareness about the Manoveda project. By sharing informative posts, success stories, and updates about the pilot program in UP, I am reaching a broader audience and creating an online community that supports mental well-being. Social media is proving to be a powerful tool to engage students, parents, and educators.

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