

## LETTER TO EDITOR

# Bridging Education and Emotion: Teachers' Role in Supporting Student Mental Health

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### ARTICLE CYCLE

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Dear editor,

I write to express my concern and highlight regarding the mental well-being of children and adolescence which are the key developmental phases with respect to mental health. During this phase of life, the significant role played by school teachers and their literacy levels in shaping students' mental health is remarkable. Children and adolescents acquire cognitive and social-emotional skills at this phase of life, which will help in shaping their future mental health and also for assuming adult roles in society. (1) According to Malhotra et al., the prevalence rate of mental health issues in India among children was determined to be 23.33% and 6.46% in school and community respectively. (2) World Health Organization has reported teenage as the most common age group for mental health disorders to emerge. The developmental changes in the brain during the teen phase makes them vulnerable for the development of mental health problems. Other contributing factors may be academic stress, lack of emotional support, poor nutrition, lack of physical-activity, excessive use of digital devices fluctuations in hormones, environmental influences, and social pressures. (3) A narrative review done by Anderson et al., on factors contributing to adolescent anxiety and associated mental health disorders have indicated that students' ability to learn, contribution in school activities, and their positive relationships with peers and teachers are some the factors contributing for their mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and behavioural disorders.(4) Frontline educators like teachers plays a crucial role

in identifying early signs of mental health concerns among school students as they are the first point of contact.(5) Evidence shows that the quality of student-teacher relationship significantly influences students' psychological well-being. A study by Longobardi et al., 2021 found that positive teacher-student relationships are linked with reduced levels of anxiety, depression, and behavioural problems among school-aged children. (6) Without proper training or institutional support, the emotional burdens carried by both teachers and students are often neglected.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Incorporate child psychology and mental health literacy into teacher training curricula. Strengthen foundational literacy programs in primary education to boost confidence and reduce academic stress. Train Teachers to recognize early warning signs and respond empathetically. Schools should embed Social- emotional Learning into the curriculum to build emotional resilience and interpersonal skills among students. Every school should have access to qualified mental health professionals to support both teachers and students. Encourage Physical Activity, playtime, and mindfulness in daily schedules. Implement structured emotional and psychological check-ins for students, especially in early grades.

### WAY FORWARD

A collaborative effort is essential involving educators, parents, mental health professionals, and policymakers. Schools must shift from a purely

academic focus to a more holistic approach that prioritizes emotional resilience and psychological safety. As children spend most of their formative years in classrooms, the educational system must evolve to become a bastion of support, not stress. Raising awareness and initiating structured reform in school environments will not only improve academic outcomes but also foster healthier, more emotionally stable future generations.

#### **DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE AI AND AI ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES IN THE WRITING PROCESS**

The authors haven't used any generative AI/AI assisted technologies in the writing process.

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