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EDITORIAL

EDUCATION FOR A RESILIENT AND REFLECTIVE GENERATION

“Learning is the journey where the mind discovers its strength, and the heart discovers its purpose.”

Education today is not merely about academic mastery—it is about shaping individuals who can think clearly, act responsibly, and stand resilient amid the challenges of modern life. The articles presented in this issue invite us to pause, reflect, and reimagine the ways in which we nurture young minds.

The study on **academic stress among high school students** reminds us that learning should never become a burden. As educators, we must strive to create environments where students feel supported, encouraged, and understood. Academic achievement should walk hand in hand with emotional well-being.

In an age dominated by screens and social networks, the article on **digital harassment and cyber safety** brings to light the urgent need to equip students with digital wisdom. Beyond technology use, we must cultivate responsible online citizenship, empathy, and awareness in every learner.

The piece on **ancient Tamil games that empowered women** beautifully demonstrates that empowerment is not a modern invention—it is embedded in our cultural roots. These traditional practices remind us of the strength, creativity, and leadership that women have carried through generations.

Finally, the exploration of **self-discipline and responsibility among student teachers** highlights the core qualities required of future educators. A healthy mind nurtures healthy actions, and when teachers model discipline, balance, and integrity, they inspire their students to do the same.

Collectively, these articles illuminate a vital truth: **Education must develop not only knowledgeable students, but thoughtful, safe, confident, and responsible human beings.**

As we move forward, may we continue to build classrooms that promote holistic well-being—where minds are challenged, hearts are respected, and every learner is encouraged to grow with courage and curiosity.

Let this issue serve as a reminder that the power to shape society begins with shaping the mind.

Editorial Board

Research Article

Academic Stress among High School Students: A Comparative Study Based on Type of School Management

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ABSTRACT

Academic stress is a growing concern among adolescents, particularly during high school years when academic demands and expectations intensify. This study aims to explore and compare the levels of academic stress experienced by high school students across different types of school management—namely, government, government-aided, and private institutions. The research focuses on identifying whether the administrative and educational practices of these management types influence the stress levels of students. A stratified random sampling method was employed to select a representative sample of high school students from each school type. Data were collected using a standardized academic stress scale, and statistical techniques such as ANOVA were used to analyze the differences across groups. The findings revealed significant variations in academic stress levels among students based on the type of school management, with students from government institutions reporting higher stress levels compared to their peers in private and aided schools. These results highlight the need for school administrators and policymakers to implement targeted stress-reduction strategies tailored to the specific pressures associated with each management type. The study underscores the importance of creating a balanced academic environment that prioritizes student mental health and well-being.

Keywords: Academic Stress, High School Students, School Management, Student Well-being

Introduction

Academic stress has become a significant challenge faced by high school students, often impacting their mental health, academic performance, and overall well-being. During adolescence, students are expected to meet high academic standards while also coping with emotional, social, and developmental changes. These pressures can lead to increased levels of stress, particularly in competitive academic environments. The type of school management—whether government, government-aided, or private—can influence the intensity of academic expectations and support systems available to students. All schools, often driven by performance-oriented goals, may exert more pressure on students. This study seeks to examine the variations in academic stress among high school students across different types of school management. By identifying patterns and differences, the research aims to inform educators, parents, and policymakers about the need for school-specific strategies to manage academic stress and foster a supportive learning atmosphere for students.

Objective of the study

To study the significant difference in Academic Stress among High School Students based on the type of school management (Government, Government-Aided, and Private Schools).

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in Academic Stress of High School Students owing to difference in Type of School Management.

Analysis of Data and Testing of Hypothesis

H1: There is no significant difference in Academic Stress of High School Students owing to difference in Type of School Management.

Table.1 showing the difference in academic stress of high school students owing to difference in type of school management.

Variables	Category	Sub-category	N	Mean	SD
Academic Stress	Type of School Management	Government	150	58.87	9.625
		Government Aided	150	50.45	17.062
		Private	200	51.73	12.416

The above table.1 shows that the mean scores of Government School Students is 58.87 with standard deviation 9.625 and the mean scores of Government Aided School Students is 50.45 with standard deviation of 17.062. Similarly, the mean score of Private School Students is 51.73 with standard deviation of 12.416.

Table.1 (a) one-way ANOVA showing the difference in academic stress of high school students owing to type of school management

Variable	Category	ANOVA	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig. Level
Academic Stress	Type of School Management	Between Groups	6339.001	2	3169.501	17.930	0.000 S
		Within Groups	87855.927	497	176.772		

The above table.1 (a) shows that P value 0.000 which is less than the P value 95% of confidence level 0.01 at 498 degree of freedom. The hypothesis which is assumed that there is no significant difference in academic stress of high school students owing to the difference in type of management is not accepted. Therefore it is concluded that there is significant difference in academic stress of high school students owing to the difference in type of management.

Since F is significant for type of management, Post Hoc tests were used to analyze between the sub groups and the results are presented in table.1 (b).

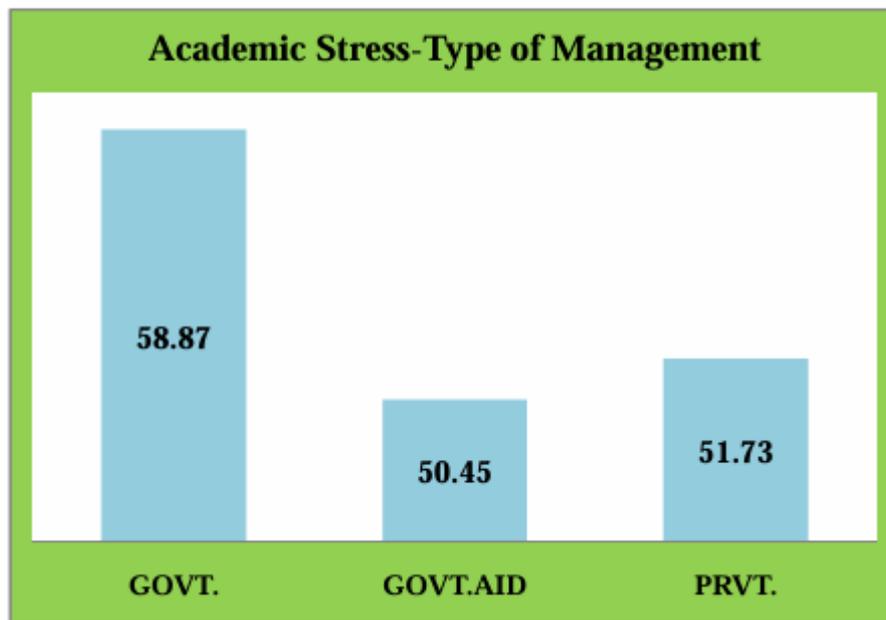
Table.1 (b) showing the post hoc test analysis between the sub groups

Dependent Variable	Sub-groups	Mean Difference	Standard Error	Sig. Level
Academic Stress	Government Vs Government Aided	8.41333*	1.53524	0.000 S
	Government Vs Private	7.13667*	1.43609	0.000 S
	Government Aided Vs Private	1.27667	1.43609	0.374 NS

From the above table.1 (b) it was found that there is significant difference in the academic stress among government school students and government aided school students and also between government school students and private school students.

The computed mean difference indicates that academic stress of government school students was more than government aided school students and private school students.

Figure.1 Bar Diagram Showing the Mean Difference in Academic stress of High School Students owing to Type of management



Findings of the study

- There is significant difference in academic stress of high school students owing to the difference in type of management.
- It was found that there is significant difference in the academic stress among government school students and government aided school students and also between government school students and private school students.
- The computed mean difference indicates that academic stress of government school students was more than government aided school students and private school students

Conclusion

The study clearly reveals a significant difference in academic stress among high school students based on the type of school management. The findings indicate that students from government schools experience higher levels of academic stress compared to their counterparts

in government-aided and private schools. Statistical analysis supports this difference, highlighting that the mean academic stress scores of government school students are significantly higher. These results suggest that factors related to school management, such as availability of resources, teaching methods, academic expectations, and support systems, may contribute to varying levels of stress among students. The notably higher stress levels in government schools may reflect systemic challenges that need to be addressed to create a more balanced and supportive academic environment. Hence, targeted interventions and reforms in government schools are essential to reduce academic stress and promote the mental well-being of students. Further research could explore specific stressors contributing to these differences.

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Conceptual Article

Digital Harassment and Cyber Safety Concerns among Students

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Abstract

Digital harassment, commonly known as cyberbullying, has become a pervasive threat to student well-being worldwide. Driven by the ubiquitous presence of social media and messaging platforms, students are exposed to risks ranging from psychological abuse to privacy violations and online sexual harassment. This paper reviews the prevalence, forms, and impacts of digital harassment among students, identifies major online safety challenges, and discusses holistic prevention and intervention strategies. Legal frameworks, digital literacy, and collaborative approaches traversing educators, families, policymakers, and technology platforms are emphasized as key to tackling this issue and safeguarding students in an increasingly digital society.

Key Words: Digital harassment, Cyberbullying, Online safety, Student well-being

Introduction

In today's interconnected world, the digital landscape profoundly shapes how students learn, interact, and express themselves. While access to digital tools has enhanced educational opportunities and connectivity, it has also introduced new dimensions of aggression and risk. Digital harassment, manifesting as cyberbullying, stalking, rumor-spreading, and online sexual harassment, can exact a heavy toll on students' psychological health, sense of safety, and academic trajectories. Alarming recent studies reveal that nearly half of students experience some form of cyber harassment, underlining the necessity of robust and vigilant online safety measures. This paper explores the complex nature of digital harassment, its multidimensional impacts, and the coordinated community solutions essential for creating safer environments for learners.

Defining Digital Harassment

Digital harassment takes multiple forms on social media, messaging platforms, and other online spaces. It includes actions like repeated threats, hateful or abusive messaging, public shaming, exclusion, impersonation, and unwelcome dissemination of private images or details. Online sexual harassment—an especially invasive category—encompasses unsolicited advances, the sharing of explicit materials, and coercive interactions. For example, a 2024 Danish survey found 11% of high school students had received sexually offensive messages, and 10% had been sent explicit materials without their consent in the prior year. Other common experiences included feeling ignored (25%), rumors (13%), and direct threats (12%). Such experiences often become a silent burden, invisible to adults but keenly felt by students.

Impacts on Students

The human cost of digital harassment is profound and far-reaching.

- **Mental Health:** Victims commonly report elevated anxiety, depression, loneliness, and diminished self-esteem. The psychological impact can become overwhelming, sometimes leading to self-harm or even suicidal thoughts.
- **Academic Performance:** Exposure to cyberbullying and online threats erodes engagement and focus, impeding both learning and achievement.
- **Social Relationships:** Students suffering digital harassment may withdraw from peer interactions in both digital and real-world contexts, leading to isolation and loss of social trust.
- **Physical Well-being:** Chronic stress linked to digital abuse may manifest as headaches, insomnia, and other health problems, impacting everyday functioning. It is important to remember that each statistic represents a young person whose confidence, curiosity, and hope can be shaken by these experiences.

Online Safety Challenges

Anonymity and Virality

For many perpetrators, anonymity on digital platforms provides a shield, making detection and accountability difficult. The viral nature of digital content means that one harmful message or image can rapidly spread, dramatically amplifying victims' trauma.

Inadequate Legal Protections

Cyber harassment laws and policies remain inconsistent across countries and are often poorly enforced. Even where strong legislation exists, gaps in awareness and the absence of child-friendly reporting pathways hinder effective legal recourse for students and families.

Lack of Digital Literacy

Many students lack the tools to critically assess and respond to harmful online behavior. Unfamiliarity with privacy settings, reporting tools, or supportive protocols can leave students vulnerable for too long, compounding harm.

Sociocultural Factors

Stigma, embarrassment, fear of retaliation, and perceptions that online abuse is “normal” or trivial can silence students. Some school cultures may even inadvertently minimize the seriousness of online aggression, suppressing crucial conversations about harm.

Prevention and Intervention Strategies

Legal and Policy Reforms

Effective safety requires clear definitions of digital harassment, streamlined reporting, and swift justice. National and local guidelines should make help accessible, with online portals, hotlines, and protections for students who speak up.

Digital Literacy and Education

Integrating digital citizenship, empathy, and online safety into the curriculum builds students' ability to navigate digital spaces wisely. Educational efforts should empower students to recognize abuse, intervene as bystanders, and foster positive digital communities.

Technological Solutions

Social platforms and school IT systems must provide effective safeguards, including content filtering, monitoring, harassment reporting, and the ability to swiftly block offenders. Algorithms can help flag harmful behavior, but human oversight remains essential to ensure justice and support.

School and Community Engagement

Schools should establish firm, visible anti-harassment policies and reporting mechanisms. Regular training for both staff and students helps build a culture of vigilance. Counseling services, peer support structures, and parent engagement are all indispensable in supporting victims.

Promoting Empathy and Support Networks

Programs in social-emotional learning (SEL) grow empathy, resilience, and trust among students, strengthening the overall climate and reducing the incidence and harm of cyberbullying.

Conclusion

Digital harassment represents a significant and evolving challenge in the lives of students. Its impacts penetrate the mind, spirit, and future potential of the young. While technological progress makes abuse easier and more scalable, it also provides tools for intervention and protection. Only through comprehensive policy, strong legal protections, digital literacy, and compassion-driven community effort can we ensure that the digital world becomes a place of opportunity rather than harm. Educators, families, policymakers, and technology developers must stand together to protect and empower every student to thrive in the connected age.

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Conceptual Article

Ancient Tamil Games that Empowered Women

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Abstract

In ancient Tamil culture, traditional games were not merely recreational activities but served as vehicles for cultural transmission, physical fitness, emotional strength, and social cohesion. Among these, many games played by women both indoors and outdoors nurtured bravery, quick thinking, leadership, and emotional resilience. This paper explores a variety of indigenous Tamil games such as *Pandy Attam* (hopscotch), *Paramapatham* (snakes and ladders), *Kannamuchi* (hide and seek), *Pallanguzhi* (strategy board game), *Dhayam* (dice game), *Thatangal* (Pebble game), *Pachai Kuthirai* (leap game), *Kummi* (folk dance circle), and *Kollattam* (stick dance). These games were often played in temples, homes, courtyards, and community gatherings, providing a platform for girls and women to express themselves, build self-esteem, and experience camaraderie. Games like *Pallanguzhi* sharpened strategic thinking and mathematical skill, while *Thatangal* and *Pachai Kuthirai* promoted agility, fearlessness, and readiness to act under pressure. Folk games like *Kummi* and *Kollattam* fostered group coordination, leadership, and rhythm, empowering women to claim their presence in the public and ritual spaces of society. This paper examines how these games influenced the social, mental, and emotional development of women, enabling them to face patriarchal societal norms with greater courage and assertiveness. Drawing from oral traditions, literature, and cultural studies, this study aims to reclaim these ancestral tools of empowerment and highlight their relevance in the 21st-century context of women's agency and social equity.

Keywords: Ancient Tamil games; Women empowerment; Folk traditions; Indigenous sports; Tamil culture

Introduction

In the deeply rooted traditions of Tamil culture, play was more than a source of entertainment. It was a powerful medium for learning, self-expression, and cultural continuity. Embedded in everyday life, festivals, and family rituals, traditional games formed an essential part of Tamil heritage. Far from being trivial diversions, these games embodied the philosophical, moral, physical, and emotional training that prepared individuals particularly women to face life's challenges with courage and conviction. Tamil girls and women actively engaged in a variety of ancient games that demanded not only physical energy but also strategic thinking, emotional control, and social cooperation. Whether played in temple courtyards, village grounds, or the shaded verandahs of ancestral homes, these games provided safe and joyful spaces for girls to assert themselves, collaborate, compete, and lead. In an era when women were often confined to domestic roles and denied formal avenues of power or education, games offered a hidden curriculum of empowerment. Games like **Pallanguzhi**, with its focus on strategy and counting, cultivated cognitive sharpness and decision-making abilities. **Dhayam** and **Paramapatham** taught risk management and philosophical acceptance of life's ups and downs. Physical games like **Pandy Attam**, **Thatangal**, and **Pachai Kuthirai** promoted physical fitness, spatial awareness, and a fearless spirit. **Kannamuchi** taught observation and memory, while dance-based games like **Kummi** and **Kollattam** fostered rhythm, voice, body coordination, and social bonding. Moreover, the performative aspects of games like *Kummi* and *Kollattam* enabled women to contribute to the aesthetic and spiritual dimensions of their communities. Their participation in such rituals and festivities was not passive it was active, assertive, and symbolic of their agency. These dances and games were often composed with songs of social relevance, protest, or devotion, giving women a voice in shaping communal narratives. This paper presents a cultural and analytical exploration of these ancient Tamil games and how they empowered women across various dimensions—physical, emotional, intellectual, and social. By reclaiming and revisiting these indigenous practices, we gain insight into the tools of silent resistance and self-realization used by Tamil women throughout history. In doing so, we also reflect on how these practices can inform contemporary movements for gender equality, cultural preservation, and holistic education. Let us see in detail about the games.

Pandy Attam (Hopscotch): Leaping Beyond Limits

Girls in traditional attire jumping across a chalk-drawn hopscotch grid on an earthen courtyard. *Pandy Attam*, known in English as hopscotch, is one of the oldest and most beloved traditional games played by girls in rural and semi-urban Tamil communities. This simple yet skillful game involves hopping across numbered squares drawn on the ground using chalk, coal, or lime powder. Though its format may appear straightforward, the game is layered with cultural meaning, physical discipline, and symbolic value especially for young girls who were often confined within domestic spaces. Traditionally played barefoot on sun-baked earth, *Pandy Attam* demanded not only balance and coordination but also acute spatial awareness, rhythm, and timing. A small object, often a stone or shell, is thrown into a designated square, and the player must retrieve it while hopping through the grid on one foot, avoiding lines and other marked areas. The rules train players in accuracy, focus, and body control. Beyond its physicality, *Pandy Attam* carried deeper metaphorical resonance. Each jump over a square could be seen as a symbolic leap over life's challenges poverty, gender bias, fear, and restriction. For girls growing up in patriarchal environments, participating in *Pandy Attam* was an act of claiming space—both literally and metaphorically.

Impact on Women and Society

Physical Empowerment

- Developed agility, coordination, and lower-body strength.
- Encouraged healthy outdoor activity and mobility
- Built endurance and resilience through repeated efforts and play.

Emotional and Psychological Growth

- Nurtured a sense of self-worth through mastery and progression.
- Helped girls deal with failure constructively when they stepped outside the lines or missed a turn.
- Strengthened decision-making under pressure and improved focus,

Social and Cultural Relevance

- Promoted outdoor visibility for girls in conservative rural areas, where mobility was limited.
- Created a supportive peer environment where girls played, competed, and learned cooperation.
- Reinforced social bonds among friends, siblings, and community members across age groups.

Educational Value

- Introduced early concepts of numeracy, counting, and pattern recognition
- Improved memory and planning as players remembered rules and devised strategies
- Functioned as an informal preparatory ground for physical education and emotional discipline

In today's world, reviving *Pandy Attam* in schools, women's circles, and cultural festivals could serve as a powerful medium to reconnect with this ancestral source of confidence, balance, and courage.

Thatangal (Pebble Game): Nurturing Bravery through Play

Illustration Suggestion: Village girls crouched in a circle, intensely focused on flicking or collecting pebbles in a dirt courtyard. *Thatangal* is an ancient Tamil traditional game played primarily with small stones or pebbles. Though variations exist depending on region, the core objective remains consistent: to skillfully manage and manipulate a set of pebbles using agility, quick reflexes, and strategic timing. While often categorized under the broader umbrella of pebble or stone games, *Thatangal* held a unique place in fostering bravery, strategic thinking, and social cohesion—especially among young girls and women in rural Tamil society. Unlike board games that focused on mental calculations or chance, *Thatangal* was a more **tactile, action-oriented** game. It required players to gather pebbles from the ground swiftly while tossing and catching one or more pebbles mid-air without dropping them. Some versions involved flicking pebbles into designated zones, defending one's collected pieces, or

intercepting the opponent's turn all of which demanded intense hand-eye coordination, speed, and focused attention.

Rules and Play Style

- Typically played in groups, with players taking turns.
- Pebbles are arranged in patterns or collected in a pile.
- One pebble is thrown into the air while the player picks up others before catching the airborne one.
- Some versions include striking opponents' pebbles to “capture” or defend one's territory.

Impact on Girls and Women

Physical and Reflex Development

- Enhanced fine motor skills, finger agility, and reaction time.
- Fostered spatial judgment and coordination through rapid movements.
- Encouraged alertness and physical readiness—qualities essential for real-life confrontations.

Cultivating Courage and Assertiveness

- Developed risk-taking behavior in a controlled, safe environment.
- Reinforced confidence in self-judgment and hand precision.
- Helped reduce fear of physical errors or public performance, teaching emotional control under pressure.

Leadership and Defensive Strategy

- Involved team dynamics and turn-based strategies, often placing players in positions of decision-making.
- Girls learned how to read the body language and timing of opponents, cultivating leadership traits.
- Taught proactive defense—anticipating challenges and preparing quick responses.

Emotional and Social Development

- Created space for friendly competition, mutual encouragement, and skill recognition.
- Increased peer respect for capable players, boosting social esteem.
- Encouraged bonding and team loyalty, especially in multi-round versions requiring partnerships.

Cultural and Gender Significance

- One of the few games where girls actively engaged in hand-based "combat" styles.
- Subverted the stereotype of passive femininity by promoting physical mastery and self-assertion.
- Played as part of seasonal festivities or daily routines, subtly integrating empowerment into tradition.

Pachai Kuthirai (Green Horse Jump)

Pachai Kuthirai, also known as the Green Horse Jump, is a traditional hopping game popular among young girls in Tamil Nadu. The game involves a series of chalk-drawn squares or grids on the ground. Players take turns hopping on one leg across these squares, following a particular sequence. Sometimes, a stone or marker is thrown into a square, and the player must avoid that square while hopping. Losing balance or stepping on the lines results in elimination.

This game is usually played barefoot, encouraging body awareness and foot strength. It is often accompanied by songs or rhythmic claps, creating a joyful, energetic atmosphere. The movements require excellent balance, leg strength, and coordination. Players must also remember the patterns and follow specific sequences, making it a mentally engaging game.

Impact on Women

- **Physical Empowerment:** This game builds strength, balance, and stamina in young girls, encouraging physical confidence.
- **Risk-taking and Confidence:** Learning to jump with precision instills courage and trust in one's own abilities.

- **Breaking Stereotypes:** Girls playing physically demanding games in public spaces challenges traditional ideas of femininity and passivity.
- **Play as Empowerment:** Public play teaches girls to claim space, be visible, and be heard in society.

Pallanguzhi

Pallanguzhi is a traditional indoor mancala-style board game predominantly played by women in Tamil households. It consists of a wooden board with 14 small pits and is played using tamarind seeds, cowrie shells, or small pebbles. Two players sit opposite each other and distribute the seeds evenly into the pits. The gameplay involves strategic movement and capturing of seeds based on counting and memory.

Pallanguzhi is not just a game but a symbol of cultural heritage, usually passed down from older women to younger girls. It was often played in the evenings or during family gatherings. The game is simple to learn but requires deep concentration, planning, and memory recall.

Impact on Women

- **Intellectual Development:** Encourages logical thinking, arithmetic, memory, and planning.
- **Cultural Transmission:** Older women teach the game to younger generations, fostering intergenerational bonds.
- **Domestic Leisure:** Played within homes, it gave women a mental escape and social engagement in otherwise restrictive domestic environments.
- **Empowerment through Wisdom:** Recognized women's intellectual contributions and skills in strategic thinking.

Dhayam (Dice Game)

Dhayam, the ancient version of modern-day Ludo, is a dice-based board game played on a cross-shaped board using pawns. The game requires players to move their pawns based on the dice rolls (traditionally using cowrie shells). The aim is to complete a full circle of the

board and bring all pawns home safely, avoiding other players' pawns which can knock them back to the start.

This game was often played during leisure time by women, especially during festive occasions or family gatherings. The strategic planning involved in choosing which pawn to move and when to enter the safe zone made it intellectually engaging.

Impact on Women

- **Mathematical Thinking:** Enhances probability estimation, numerical skills, and logic.
- **Leadership and Decision-making:** Offers women opportunities to strategize, plan, and compete.
- **Confidence in Uncertainty:** Teaches managing luck and setbacks—relevant for navigating real-life challenges.
- **Social Role:** Served as a tool for forming social circles and community among women in conservative settings.

Paramapatham (Snakes and Ladders)

Paramapatham, known as Snakes and Ladders in modern times, has its roots in ancient Indian philosophy. The board typically features 100 numbered squares with ladders symbolizing virtues and snakes symbolizing vices. Players roll dice to advance their token to the final square (100), climbing ladders and avoiding snakes along the way.

Traditionally, this game was more than just entertainment — it served as a moral lesson embedded in fun. Women and children played it together, making it a valuable educational and social tool in the household.

Impact on Women

- **Moral Education:** Served as a gentle way to discuss ethics, right and wrong, especially with children.
- **Teaching Role:** Women, as moral guides in families, used this game to educate younger generations.
- **Resilience Training:** Helped women cope with setbacks and cultivate perseverance.

- **Spiritual Agency:** Reinforced women's role as nurturers of cultural and moral values in society.

Kummi (Circle Dance)

Kummi is a vibrant, rhythm-based folk dance traditionally performed by women in rural Tamil Nadu. It is done in a circular formation with rhythmic clapping, singing folk songs, and synchronized steps. Kummi is performed during festivals like Pongal, Navaratri, and harvest celebrations, often without any musical instruments, relying solely on claps and voices. Women of all ages participate, fostering a deep sense of community and celebration. The movements are repetitive and inclusive, making it accessible to everyone regardless of age or skill level.

Impact on Women

- **Social Unity:** Brought women together in joyful and equal participation, breaking barriers of age, caste, or background.
- **Cultural Expression:** Gave women a voice to express local stories, emotions, and shared experiences through songs.
- **Physical Wellness:** Provided movement and exercise in times when structured physical activity for women was rare.
- **Community Leadership:** Older women often led the songs and steps, reinforcing their respected roles.

Kollattam (Stick Dance)

Kollattam is a folk stick dance performed in pairs or groups where women strike short sticks together rhythmically while dancing in circles or rows. It requires coordination, rhythm, agility, and timing. Dancers often sing while performing, making it a multi-sensory experience. It is performed during temple festivals and social gatherings, often accompanied by folk music.

This dance involves active physical participation, with energetic footwork and sharp hand movements, helping improve fitness levels.

Impact on Women

- **Body Awareness and Empowerment:** Increases agility, coordination, and rhythmic control, empowering women through movement.
- **Breaking Inhibitions:** Encouraged freedom of expression in a socially accepted form.
- **Group Identity and Empowerment:** Reinforced a sense of unity, support, and strength among women dancers.
- **Visibility in Public Life:** Allowed women to take center stage during festivals, symbolizing strength and celebration.

Conclusion

The ancient Tamil games of *Pachai Kuthirai*, *Pallanguzhi*, *Dhayam*, *Paramapatham*, *Kummi*, and *Kollattam* were not merely pastimes but culturally embedded tools of learning, empowerment, and well-being for women. Each game, rooted in physical agility, mental sharpness, and emotional expressiveness, contributed to the holistic development of women from a young age. Through structured play, these activities enhanced problem-solving skills, emotional regulation, coordination, and social engagement. They offered spaces for communal support, intergenerational learning, and the preservation of cultural identity.

In times when women's roles were largely domestic, these games allowed for self-expression, decision-making, and leadership in informal yet impactful settings. For example, *Pallanguzhi* nurtured cognitive development, while *Kollattam* encouraged synchronization and teamwork. The inclusive nature of *Kummi* and *Paramapatham* helped instill moral values and unity. Moreover, physical games like *Pachai Kuthirai* promoted health and resilience. Today, revisiting these traditional games offers a valuable lens to empower women through cultural heritage, making learning joyful, organic, and rooted in identity. Reintegrating these practices into modern settings can contribute to women's empowerment through creative, educational, and fitness-oriented initiatives. These games embody a legacy of strength, wisdom, and resilience — timeless tools for holistic female development.

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Conceptual Article

Healthy Mind, Healthy Life: Practicing Self-Discipline and Responsibility among Student Teachers

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Abstract

Student teachers play a pivotal role in shaping the moral and intellectual foundations of future generations. To be effective educators, they must first cultivate a healthy mind and balanced lifestyle through core values such as self-discipline and responsibility. This article explores the significance of instilling these values in teacher trainees, emphasizing how practicing self-discipline fosters emotional resilience, enhances time management, and supports personal wellness. Responsibility, when internalized, helps student teachers manage academic tasks, meet professional obligations, and become role models for their students. The practice of these values not only contributes to individual mental well-being but also strengthens interpersonal relationships and institutional harmony. Drawing upon the principles of value education and wellness psychology, this article discusses strategies for integrating self-discipline and responsibility into teacher education programs. It also reflects on how these values influence emotional regulation, goal achievement, and stress reduction. The paper concludes that student teachers who consistently practice these values are more likely to develop a healthy mind and sustain a productive, meaningful life both personally and professionally.

Keywords: Self-discipline, Responsibility, Student Teachers, Mental Wellness, Value Education, Emotional Resilience, Life Skills, Moral Development, Healthy Lifestyle

Introduction

In today's fast-paced and demanding educational environment, student teachers must develop more than academic and pedagogical knowledge. A healthy mind and balanced lifestyle are essential for long-term success and well-being in the teaching profession. This begins with practicing fundamental values such as **self-discipline** and **responsibility**. These qualities form the backbone of a well-regulated and purposeful life. **Self-discipline** enables student teachers to manage time effectively, resist distractions, and remain focused on academic and professional goals. Meanwhile, **responsibility** empowers them to take ownership of their actions, fulfill commitments, and build trust in professional relationships. Together, these values nurture emotional intelligence, mental clarity, and resilience key elements of a healthy life and successful teaching career. This article aims to highlight how instilling these values during the formative years of teacher education can contribute to the holistic development of student teachers. It further explores the interconnectedness of values, wellness, and teaching efficacy.

Self-Discipline: Foundation of Mental Strength

Self-discipline is often regarded as one of the most essential life skills for success, especially in demanding fields such as teaching. For student teachers, self-discipline is not only a matter of academic routine but a critical component that shapes their emotional, mental, and professional development. It involves the ability to regulate one's thoughts, emotions, and behaviors in the service of long-term goals. A student teacher faces many distractions — mobile phones, social media, peer pressure, lack of sleep, and sometimes even emotional instability. Without self-discipline, the temptation to procrastinate or avoid responsibilities increases, leading to poor academic performance, reduced confidence, and elevated stress levels. Conversely, those with strong self-discipline are better at time management, planning, prioritization, and persistence even in the face of setbacks. Self-discipline also helps in maintaining a balanced lifestyle. It enables student teachers to follow healthy routines such as getting enough sleep, exercising, practicing mindfulness, and keeping commitments. It strengthens emotional intelligence by helping individuals manage impulses and regulate emotions effectively skills crucial for classroom management and dealing with students compassionately.

Research by Tangney et al. (2004) affirms that self-discipline is more predictive of success than IQ. Students with higher self-discipline are found to have higher grades, fewer absences, and better relationships. In the context of teacher education, student teachers who practice self-discipline demonstrate greater classroom readiness, take feedback constructively, and exhibit professionalism in lesson planning and teaching demonstrations. Institutions can encourage this value by incorporating structured schedules, offering time management workshops, and setting clear academic expectations. When practiced consistently, self-discipline becomes a habit, and this habit supports the formation of a healthy mind one that is focused, resilient, and purpose-driven. Such a mind not only thrives in a teaching environment but also inspires the same values in students.

Responsibility: Building Trust and Accountability

Responsibility is a core ethical value that enhances both personal growth and social contribution. For student teachers, the development of responsibility is critical as they transition from learners to future educators. Responsibility implies being dependable, accountable, and responsive to one's duties whether personal, academic, or professional. In the training phase, student teachers must handle lesson planning, assignments, peer collaboration, and participation in school-based internships. Without a strong sense of responsibility, there's a risk of missing deadlines, poor classroom preparation, or neglecting reflective practice all of which negatively affect both learning outcomes and teacher credibility. Being responsible also entails taking ownership of one's actions. A responsible student teacher does not shift blame for poor performance or incomplete work but instead seeks ways to improve and make amends. This proactive attitude fosters resilience and builds trust with peers, mentors, and students. Responsibility also supports ethical behavior ensuring that fairness, respect, and justice are upheld in professional practice.

Furthermore, responsible student teachers understand the long-term impact they will have on learners. They are aware that their actions, words, and attitudes set examples for impressionable young minds. This value thus encourages moral consistency and accountability in both behavior and teaching content. Teacher training programs should actively promote responsibility through consistent evaluation, peer and mentor feedback, leadership roles, and reflective journals. Activities like group projects, community service, and peer teaching help

reinforce this value. When responsibility is internalized, it leads to a strong professional identity and ethical commitment to education. In the long run, responsible individuals contribute positively to school culture, foster student development, and maintain a clear conscience all contributing to a healthy, peaceful, and purposeful life. Being responsible is more than meeting expectations; it's about honoring one's role as a future nation builder.

Impact on Mental Health and Wellness

The values of self-discipline and responsibility are not only important for professional competence but are directly linked to mental health and overall wellness. Mental health encompasses emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how individuals think, feel, act, cope with stress, and make choices. When student teachers embrace values that support structure, stability, and self-regulation, their mental health significantly improves. Self-discipline contributes to emotional regulation. It helps individuals pause, reflect, and respond thoughtfully rather than react impulsively. This is especially helpful in academic environments that can be stressful due to deadlines, assessments, and performance expectations. Instead of feeling overwhelmed, disciplined students are better prepared, both emotionally and logistically. This preparedness brings down anxiety and boosts self-confidence.

Similarly, responsibility nurtures a sense of control. One major contributor to poor mental health is the feeling of helplessness or lack of agency. When student teachers take responsibility for their actions, decisions, and outcomes, they feel empowered. This empowerment reduces feelings of victimhood, promotes problem-solving skills, and enhances self-efficacy. Duckworth and Seligman (2005) found that student with greater self-control and a sense of responsibility report higher levels of happiness, fewer behavioral problems, and better academic performance. These values also correlate with lower rates of depression, substance abuse, and burnout — issues that are increasingly affecting young adults, including student teachers.

Furthermore, these values foster better interpersonal relationships. A responsible and disciplined student is seen as trustworthy and dependable, which improves social support networks — another protective factor for mental health. Colleges should offer mental health workshops that incorporate value-based training. Practices like journaling, self-reflection, goal setting, mindfulness, and group discussions on ethical dilemmas can reinforce these values

while simultaneously supporting mental health. In essence, when student teachers consistently practice self-discipline and responsibility, they build a psychological foundation of balance, resilience, and clarity leading to a healthier and more fulfilling life.

Role in Teacher Training Programs

Integrating values such as self-discipline and responsibility into teacher education is not optional it is essential. These values form the moral and psychological fabric of every effective educator. For student teachers to develop into well-rounded professionals, their training programs must go beyond subject knowledge and pedagogical skills to also include character formation.

Institutions should embed value education into the curriculum in both implicit and explicit ways. This can be done through classroom management simulations, community engagement, peer mentoring, and reflective teaching practices. Values must be demonstrated through faculty behavior as well student teachers learn more from what educators *do* than from what they say. Experiential learning methods such as service-learning projects, where student teachers take part in teaching underprivileged children or volunteering in community education programs, are effective in instilling a sense of responsibility and empathy. They also allow future teachers to see the real-world impact of their work. Assignments like reflective journals encourage self-awareness and critical thinking. Student teachers can write about challenges they faced, how they managed time, or how they responded to conflict helping them recognize their own patterns of discipline and responsibility.

Institutions can also use peer feedback systems, group projects, and leadership roles in organizing academic events to assess and encourage responsible behavior and time management. Role-playing ethical dilemmas or classroom issues can help prepare teachers for real-life decision-making under pressure. Additionally, courses in educational psychology and professional ethics can include modules that discuss the emotional and ethical responsibilities of a teacher. These should be supplemented with regular feedback, personal counseling, and support groups where students can openly share their struggles and receive guidance.

By creating a culture where values are practiced, not just preached, teacher education programs can ensure that student teachers develop into competent, ethical, and mentally strong

educators. This not only enhances their personal wellness but also sets a precedent for the values they will one day instill in their students.

Conclusion

Practicing self-discipline and responsibility is not merely about personal success it is fundamental to the overall mental health and life satisfaction of student teachers. As future educators, their ability to internalize and reflect these values will directly influence the minds they shape. Embedding these practices in teacher education helps create not only competent professionals but also compassionate, mindful, and resilient individuals. Ultimately, nurturing a healthy mind leads to a healthy life a goal that begins with the practice of simple yet powerful human values.

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