

MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES IN POST PANDEMIC WORLD

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Abstract

Mental health issues in post pandemic world Covid 19 pandemic and lockdown has brought about a sense of fear and anxiety around the globe. This situation has led to short term as well as long term psychosocial and mental health implications for children and adolescent. The Pandemic itself has caused much worry, stress, and grief. These stressors can cause acute symptoms to appear for people who may experience pre-existing mental health Challenges.

This paper deals with importance of mental health, Different types of health, factors affecting community health and wellbeing, stress factors in the Pandemic, Demographic of different level of students who got majorly impacted Remedies to overcome mental health issues, components of different initiatives taken by the government of India, different ongoing activities, Initiatives for redressal of student's grievances and road ahead.

Keywords: -Covid-19, mental health, Post pandemic situation, stress, challenges.

The psychological impact of the Pandemic has highlighted the vulnerability of people and the need for additional mental health support around the world. The Pandemic has heightened the demands for mental health Services with fear, isolation, and the loss of lives.

People are experiencing increased anxiety, depression, loneliness, and sadness because of the fear of infection, death, losing family Members, losing income or livelihoods or being socially isolated and separated from loved ones.

According to the World Happiness Report 2021, Mental health is one of the biggest casualties of the Pandemic and resulting lockdowns.

Children's mental state has also been affected by forced confinements. Moreover, children including adolescents are at particular risk during the Pandemic. The closer of schools combined with restrictions on movement has limited the scope for children to interact and access learning opportunities.

WHAT IS HEALTH: -

Health refers to a state of Physical, social, mental, and emotional well-being and not merely a state of absence of illness or disease.

Different types of health: -

- 1) Physical Health,
 - 2) Social Health,
 - 3) Mental Health,
 - 4) Emotional Health.
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- 1) Physical Health: - When a person is free from illness/injury and aware of and follow physical fitness routine nutritious diet hygiene habits.
 - 2) Mental Health: - The state of well-being when a person is able to cope with the stresses of daily life and continue to be productive and is able to contribute to his community if mental well-being is impacted, it impacts all other aspects of health physical, Social and emotional.
 - 3) Social Health: - Ability to interact well with other personal, society, contribute to society to collaborate and have satisfying personal relationships.
 - 4) Emotional Health: - Ability to control manage and express emotions comfortably.

REASONS OF REDUCING COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELL-BEING: -

1. Violence, Natural disasters, Pandemic etc.
2. Displacement
3. Poverty
4. Work stress
5. Injustice and discrimination

6. Poor housing conditions
7. Conflicts within family and community
8. Social Excursion and isolation.

STRESS FACTORS AMONG THE STUDENTS DURING THE PANDEMIC: -

- 1. Changing in teaching and learning patterns:** -Sudden declaration of lockdown results in closer of school and colleges. Teaching learning went from offline to online mode. In the beginning it was very difficult for the students to adjust with this new online mode. Students were in anxiety, depression and fear and this definitely affected their mental health.
- 2. Difficulties in learning:** -Paradigm shifter to offline to online mode and it is very difficult for the students to cope up with the new online teaching patterns.
- 3. Sense of isolation:** -Strict lockdowns rules, fear of spreading Corona virus, government made this policy that no one will go out of the home. So, there was a sense of isolation among the students and that also caused the mental health of the students.
- 4. Cut off from games and play time:** -In the lockdown period schools were closed no social gathering, students were not able to go out of their home, they were totally cut off from games and play time.
- 5. Family income/employment fears:** -During the Pandemic major factor for mental stress was family income. Those who were earn daily, their income stopped. Many people lost their jobs and this leads to mental health issues.
- 6. Death in family:** - Many people lost their lives due to Corona virus. Sudden death of near and dear once taken the students in the great shock, which affected the mental health of the students.
- 7. Fear of disease:** -During first and second waves of Corona virus this disease spread rapidly and many people lost their lives. Everyone was in the fear of disease this affected the mental health of the students.
- 8. Exam Results:** - Exam results badly affected in the Pandemic. Many students did not appear for the Examination, many could not cope up with online teaching and got failed in the examination. Students were worried about future and lost their mental health.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF INDIAN STUDENTS WHO GOT IMPACTED IN PANDEMIC

Class	Number of Students
Class 1 to 5	12 Crore Students
Class 6 to 8	6.4 Crore Students
Class 9 to 11	6.3 Crore Students
HEI	3.75 Crore Students

MAJOR INITIATIVES TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA: -

Honourable HRM emphasized on the need to Provide psychosocial support.

A working group was set up by MHRD to monitor and promote mental health and well-being of students and to provide psychosocial support.

Consultation with experts and Stakeholders: -

Experts from field of counselling education, mental health, child and adolescent psychology are members of the working Group. Wide Consultation with Stakeholders held.

This Program is called as Manodarpan.

NEED OF MANODARPAN PROGRAM: -

1. *Strong linkages:* - Strong linkages are needed between education and health- physical, mental and emotional.
2. *Schools and Colleges:* - Schools and colleges to become places for promoting physical health and mental well-being.
3. *ICMR Report:* - ICMR Report shows that 10- 13% of children and adolescents in India are dealing with mental health concerns.
4. *WHO Report:* - As per WHO Report 56 million individuals worldwide treated for depressive disorders likely to increase after COVID-19 Pandemic.
5. *Counsellors in Schools:* - Counsellors are very essential in every school and colleges specially during Pandemic it is a much-needed thing.
6. *Identify psychosocial Stressors:* - It is very important to identify the concerns of Students such as loneliness, isolation, stress, anxiety, peer pressure body image, self-doubts etc and have focused programs in schools and colleges to address them.
7. *Aatma Nirbhar Bharat:* - Manodarpan is a part of Prime Minister Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan- a Stimulus package to revitalize Indian economy including empowering human capital and increasing productivity and efficiency post Covid-19 outbreak.
8. *Announced by FM:* - Announced as part of series of tranches for Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan by Finance Minister.

COMPONENTS OF GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES: -

- 1. Webpage:** - Webpage on MHRD website- Advisory, motivational posters, practical tips, podcast, FAQs etc.
- 2. Advisory:** - Guidelines for Schools/colleges students, teachers and parents to promote mental well-being.
- 3. Toll-Free helpline:** -National toll free, tele counselling helpline, voluntary services of more than 5000 counsellors confirmed and 100 counsellors mapped with IVRS for 1st phase.
- 4. Counselling Resources:** - National database and directory of counsellors and counselling services.
- 5. Resource Centres:** - Handbook on 21st century life skills for students to face real life challenges, manual on mental health and various other resource materials such as videos, posters, comics, flyers, podcasts etc.
- 6. Online Chat:** -Interactive online chat, platform for contact, queries, and counselling through interactive app.
- 7. Webinars:** -Webinars, audio- visual resources, videos posters, comics flyers and podcasts.
- 8. Integration with school curriculum:** - To address psychological needs and concerns of children in an integrated manner as part of school curriculum and processes as a preventive measure.
- 9. Effective policy:** - It facilitate advocacy, research and training for effective policy on mental health support and well-being of children and youth for holistic development.
- 10. Platform for National and regional consultation:** - To create linkages between states, institution, organizations for Sharing of insights researchers experiences and learning to increase awareness and building community for mental well-being of students.

ONGOING ACTIVITIES: -

NCERT: -

Counselling services- Counselling services for school children since April 2020 on phone/email.

Alternate calendar- Includes how to deal with stress and anxiety.

Sahyog: - Live telecast of live interaction sessions on Sahyog- guidance for mental well-being of children on swayam prabha channel.

Guidelines: - For online learning and cyber safety include how to handle stress.

Nishtha: - Online module for Nishtha program to train teachers on handling mental well-being issues.

ROAD AHEAD: -

Early Identification: - Early Identification of cognitive, emotional and behavioural changes in students.

Prevention: - Through positive school/ colleges ethos, curriculum and activities promoting mental health and well-being.

Specialist Support: - Access to Specialist support.

Training: - Capacity building of faculty Counsellors and support staff.

Life skills: - Focus on programs of life skills, stress Management, emotion regulation etc.

Positive parenting: - Focus on positive parenting and effective family- school partnership for enriching positive mental health and well-being.

Awareness: - Awareness and sensitization on mental health.

Holistic Report Card: - Holistic report Card as per draft of New NEP 2020 to reflect intervention mental as well as physical well-being.

CONCLUSION: -

Mental health issues in post pandemic world Covid 19 pandemic and lockdown has brought about a sense of fear and anxiety around the globe. This situation has led to short term as well as long term psychosocial and mental health implications for children and adolescent. The Pandemic itself has caused much worry, stress and grief. These stressors can cause acute symptoms to appear for people who may experience pre-existing mental health Challenges.

Government has taken great initiatives to reduce the mental health problems of the students by different ongoing activities redressal of students grievances and Road ahead.

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