PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AND DIGITALIZATION OF EDUCATION

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Abstract:

Stress, worry, and depression—the three most common types of mental health issues among the general population—have become more prevalent as a result of the communicable COVID-19, which has precipitated an unrecoverable worldwide health disaster. The purpose of the current research is to comprehend the state of digital education in India and to address the mental health needs of students. It also aims to investigate how psychological well-being helps to address issues with students' mental health. The current study is qualitative, and it analysed several newspapers and important studies. The results demonstrated that the pandemic has accelerated the trend of digital learning. With programmes like Swayam Prabha, e-pathshala, VidyaDaan, SMILE, the central and state governments have developed numerous projects. It was further discovered that the learners psychological well-being offers a lot of promise for aiding them in coping with different mental health challenges. The development psychological well-being in students can be demonstrated as a preventative measure that enables them to engage online fully and contributes to the reduction of their mental health concerns.

Keywords : **Psychological well-being, digitalization, education, digital education, mental health**

1.0 Introduction:

The contagious illness Covid-19 has caused a social upheaval and brought about an unrecoverable learning disaster in the educational system. How pupils study in formal educational institutions has changed as a result of the pandemic. The abrupt outbreak led to a statewide lockdown, which forced the closure of all educational facilities and forced pupils to stay at home. Learning has been wholly suspended for students across the nation due to the elimination of all physical interaction and discontinuity in course study. Millions of Indian schools and higher educational institutions have worked to convert their physical classrooms to online settings in order to ensure that "learning never gets disrupted" for the young learners during the lockdown crisis. Numerous

learning options are available on the internet. It is democratic in its approach and accessible across all geographical boundaries. It surpasses traditional classroom instruction, especially when it comes to enabling learners to pursue home-based education during national lockdown crises. It has emerged as the most important option, playing a vital role in developing fundamental life skills and offering educational opportunities through various digital applications for students all throughout the nation. Online education has already supplanted all other forms of formal education, but some of its inherent constraints have made it exclusive and contributed to a number of mental health issues among students. Several instances of kids and instructors having terrible experiences on internet platforms were documented throughout the pandemic. Additionally, it was discovered that students are more prone to engaging in various health-risk behaviours, suffering from mental trauma and despair, and developing suicidal tendencies as a result of online bullying and absences from online classes. In this context, the current study aims to look into the current state of online education in India, to study the many health issues that students may encounter while pursuing an online degree and also to know the ways in which psychological well-being of the individuals can be maintained which will eventually lead to a sound mental state.

2.0   Research Questions :

- What are the components of psychological well-being which are helping an individual to lead a mentally stable life ?
- How is the digitalization of education growing in India ?
- What are the threats digital education is causing to the individual's mental & physical health ?
- How an individual can maintain his psychological well-being thus in this era of digital education.

3.0   Objectives of the study

The present study tries to study the concept of psychological well-being along with its components. It also tries to understand the digitalization of education in India with special reference to the post covid-19 pandemic. It also intends to examine the role of psychological well-being in relation to digitalization of education.

4.0   Method and Design

The present study involves a qualitative approach. In this different newspapers and journal articles were reviewed and analysed to see the relationship between psychological well-being and digitalization of education.

5.0   Psychological Well-Being

Psychological well-being is the capacity to realize one's own abilities cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively, make a contribution to one's community and to have the skills of developing and maintaining healthy relationships. Psychological well-being has two important faces – the first one, the extent to which an individual experience positive emotions and feelings of happiness. This aspect of psychological well-being is known as subjective well-being (Diener 2000). Subjective well-being is an important part of psychological well-being but it is not complete in itself. The second aspect of psychological well-being is the extent to which we understand that what we are doing with our lives have some meaning and purpose.

5.1   Types of Psychological Well-being

Psychological well-being is basically of two type

i)   **Hedonic Well-Being –** It consist of the subjective feeling of happiness.

It consist of two components namely – affective component (high positive emotions & low negative emotions) and cognitive component (satisfaction with life). It is proposed that an individual experiences happiness when positive affect and satisfaction with life are both high (Carruthers & Hood, 2004).

ii)   **Eudemonic Well-Being** – it consist of the purposeful aspect of psychological well-being.

5.2   Components of Psychological Well-being

Professor Carol Ryff's gave the model of Psychological Well-being in which she discussed six components of well-being. They are-

i)   **Self acceptance –**

Self acceptance is the ability where an individual accepts himself/herself as he/she is i.e. he/she knows that they have strengths & weaknesses both. An individual with high self acceptance have positive attitude towards oneself, accepts   his/her good and bad qualities and has a positive feeling towards his/her past life. Whereas an individual having low self-acceptance is dissatisfied with oneself, is always troubled with his past life experiences and he/she wants to be different what they are at present.

ii)   **Personal Growth –**

Personal growth refers to the ability where one is willing to change and open to new experiences as required by the situations. Persons with strong personal growth have a feeling for continuous development. They try to learn new things and thus sharpen their potentials as required by the new situations. Persons having weak personal growth are mostly stagnant at a point. They do not feel any need of change in their behavior. They are not able to develop new attitudes and behaviours.

iii) Purpose in Life

Purpose in life refers to the ability of a person where one knows his goal and is always striving to achieve that. People having strong purpose in life are always directed to their goal. They try to learn things which will help then in achieving that goal. They feel meaning in their present and past life.

They have their own aim and objectives of life. Whereas people with weak personal growth do not have any meaning in life, they may have few or no aim and often feel directionless in their life.

iv) Positive Relations with others

This ability is very important for an individual so as to be a social being. We need to connect to people, to be able to communicate with them. The ability of care, trust & supportive relationships is an important element of psychological health. One with strong positive relations is very caring warm and trustworthy in relationships. They are very concerned about the welfare of others. They have qualities of empathy, affection and intimacy and one with weak relations are mostly isolated. They have very few friends and they often shows trust issues with others. They do not compromise to sustain relationships.

v) Environmental Mastery

This refers to the ability of having knowledge, skills and abilities which are needed to solve day to day life problems. Person with high environmental mastery try to control and manage environment with his/her ability. He/she is able to make decisions, according to the need and values. They are not slaves of situations but creators of new avenues and opportunities as per the demand of the environment. Whereas person with low environmental mastery lack a sense of control over the external world. They are seen frustrated with the environmental situations. They find it difficult to manage the day-to-day life challenges.

vi) Autonomy

Autonomy means believing in oneself and to be able to make one's own decisions. High Autonomy shows the ability of independence in thought and act. The one with high autonomy is able to resist the social pressure. He/she do not think too much about the others while taking decisions. Whereas people with low autonomy are mostly thoughtful about the other while doing something. They rely on other's judgements in taking some decisions. They always think about the expectations and evaluations of others.

6.0   Digitalization of Education

With the advent of the technology we are going in a phase of radical development. Smartphones, internet, laptop, have become a way of life to expand our horizons, to fulfill the curiosity of our children and to cope up with the charging world we are bound to use this technology in our education system, in return which has lead a way for digitalization of education. Digitalization of education means integration of digital technologies into education system. This has led to a new phase of learning which involves many advanced

techniques like online courses, online exams, digital textbooks, virtual classes, animation etc. According to the data by the UNESCO Learning Portal, 2020 about 87% of the world's student population by the Covid-19 pandemic has been compelled to be quarantined or be in lockdown. The Covid-19's uncertainty has compelled the education system to adopt to the changing scenario & for that the best option was to introduce digital technologies in the traditional education system. The education system in India has taken many initiative to cope up the challenges faced by the Covid-19 pandemic.

6.1   Initiatives taken by Central Government for Digitalization of Education

The central government of India has taken many initiatives to cope up amid this coronavirus pandemic and also strength some of its existing digital education platforms. The detailed description of some of its programmeses are as following –

i)   NROER (National Repository of Open Education Resources)

NROER is a comprehensive digital repository of resources which is for school education, NROER has been developed by CIET (Central Institute of Educational Technology) & NCERT (National Council of Educational Research and Training) in collaboration of MHRD and Department of School Education & Literacy. NROER has a number of educational resources in the form of video, images, audio, document & interactive in many subjects and in different Indian languages for Primary, Secondary and Senior Secondary classes. It is a collaborative platform where the teachers can use the existing content and also they can create new e-content.

ii)   DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing)

DIKSHA is an initiative of National Council of Educational Research & Training (NCERT) Ministry of Education, Government of India. It was formally launched by Hon'ble Vice President of India on 8th Sep. 2017. It is a free educational platform which has educational resources for both teachers and students for extensive learning. Here the teachers can share their expertise in the form of lesson plans, videos, audios, questionnaire etc. through the national platform- Vidyadaan. Vidyadaan has the tagline of "Share for your care" with an aim to promote individuals and organizations for sharing their knowledge, skills and expertise for enhancing the quality of education which in return will enhance   quality learning.

iii)   e-Pathshala : Learning on the Go

E-Pathshala is a joint initiative of Ministry of Education, Government of India, CIET and National Council of Educational Research & Training (NCERT) to display all educational resources. It includes digital textbooks, videos, instructional materials, audiobooks and more. This program was started in 2015 and is part of Digital India Campaign. The resources of this portal are very easy to use as one can download them through the mobile app and use it later for reading. The main aim of this program was to connect the students & educators with information & learning materials. The digital textbooks from class 1 to 12 are available on this portal.

iv) SWAYAM – (Study Webs of Active-Learning for Young Aspiring Minds)

The SWAYAM initiative was launched on 9th July 2017 by Ministry of Education, Government of India under Digital India to provide free access to advance education & skill sector courses. It is Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) platform which provide educational opportunities to a large number of college & university students. SWAYAM was developed by Ministry of Education & AICTE – (All India Council for Technical Education) with the help of Microsoft. SWAYAM platform has more than 2000 course from class 9 to post-graduation. SWAYAM operate MOOC's learning resources in four ways-e-Tutorial, e-content, Discussion forums and self-assessment.

v) SWAYAM PRABHA – The 32 Educational DTH Channels

SWAYAM PRABHA is 32 DTH channels programme which is telecasted 24x7 with an aim to provide high quality educational content. It is telecasted with the help of GSAT-15 satellite. These DTH channels cover various courses of post graduate and undergraduate level in various disciplines which are designed by IIT's, UGC, NPTEL, IGNOU, NCERT, NIOS etc.

vi) e-PG Pathshala

e-PG Pathshala is an initiative of the MHRD under its National Mission on Education through ICT (NME-ICT) being executed by the UGC. High quality and curriculum based e-content in 70 subjects across all disciplines of social sciences, arts, fine arts & humanities, natural and mathematical sciences, linguistic and language has been developed by the subject experts working in Indian Universities and other R & D institutes across the country. The prime objective is to meet curriculum and course content requirement for every post-graduate learner.

6.2 Initiatives taken by State Government's for Digitalization of Education

Apart from the Central Government of India initiatives, different states have come up with programmes which promote digital education and this gained momentum after the outbreak of coronavirus. The U.P. Government under Mission Prerna Ki e-pathshala ensured student learning and teacher professional development through digital means. As a part of this programme teacher-to-student Whatsapp group were formed in most of the schools. Department of Education also uploaded 4000+ videos on DIKSHA so that students can be benefited. These videos were also uploaded on Departments Youtube channel so that students those who do not have downloaded DIKSHA app can also be benefited. The department's website PRERNA has a treasure of e-content both for teachers and students. All the textbooks are made available on the website of UP SCERT under the banner of e-potli. The government also gave a slot of 1.5 hrs on Doordarshan UP for the students during which educational content was broadcasted for students those who do not have access to smartphones. Schools department has pooled in resources and services from a strong network of national & global organizations like Central Square Foundation, Sesame workshop India, Pratham, Khan Academy, Google, Whatsapp, The Teacherapp, UNICEF.

The government of Rajasthan on April 13, 2020 started a project named SMILE. In this they aimed to provide online course and classes to all government schools in the state through various digital platforms and social media. Every day, students and teachers received video content via whatsapp. Curriculum videos have been curated for grades 1-12 by the department. For each topic, a module of 4 to 5 videos has been curated with 30-40 mins of content from free and publicly accessible sources. A team of subject experts from SCERT reviews this content. Using the links students and teachers can access the content. Under the 10 Prashan Challenge students in Grade 10 & 12 received ten practice questions each day on board papers.

In Bihar an online learning initiative named 'Mera Doordarshan – Mera Vidyalaya' has played a significant role in continuing students learning process throughout the lockdown and uncertainty regarding reopening of schools. In addition, an app called Vidyavahini Bihar has been developed that contains e-textbooks for classes I-XII. On the Mobile app, "Mera Mobile-Mera Vidyalaya" different digital learning materials development by the state were made available.

7.0 Impact of digital education on the physical & mental health

Long hours of online classes and more screen-time is causing many harms on physical & mental health of students. Some of them are listed below –

A) Impact on physical health

i) Lack of physical exercise -

In digital education students are bound to live in the confinement of their homes thus their physical activities are restricted. This causes losing of muscles mass and thus adding fat to it which affect their physical growth. Physical activities also maintain level of calcium and vitamin D in the body and its restriction will lead to deficiency of these essential components.

ii) Poor ergonomics –

At school students are provided with proper furniture to sit & write but at home they lay here & there on sofa & bed & take their online classes which is the main reason behind back pain and poor posture.

iii) More screen-time –

Students are mostly dependent on computer & smartphones for their classes and assignments which increases their screen-time. This leads to dry eyes, strain on eyes, loss of vision, eye-defects etc.

iv) Deficiencies of Vitamin D & Calcium –

Lack of sunlight exposure and poor diet leads to calcium & vitamin D deficiency. Child shows symptoms of muscles cramps, tearing of muscles etc. in severe deficiency cases.

v) Obesity –

As the child spend long hour on computer & smartphone he/she lacks physical exercise which leads to obesity, fatness, heart diseases, diabetes etc.

B) Impact on Mental health

i) Addiction –

Due to dependence on digital devices for seeking information students are spending long hours on them, they become so addicted to it that often check their phones & computers without knowing that they have become addicted to it.

ii) Social Disconnect –

Internet has reduced the physical distance but increased the emotional distance. People are busy & happy in their virtual reality thus the social relationship gets hampered. The bonding among the family members, among the parents & children, among the siblings had reduces which has caused a formality in relationships.

iii) Reduce Face-to-Face interactions

In this new system of education the one-to-one interaction of teaches & student is reduced thus making students more individualistic and introvert. Individuals are not able to express their feelings to the other person.

iv) Lack of concentration -

Students are most of the time in virtual reality in digital education thus their focus and concentration has become minimum. He/she do not remember concepts & information for long as he/she thinks that all information in just a click away.

v) Anxiety -

The child is working on its own in digital education only with limited guidance from the teacher this leads to thoughts of uncertainty regarding the direction of work, thus resulting to anxiety among the students.

vi) Loneliness –

Social interactions are cut down in digital education. At home also everyone is busy in oneself thus a loneliness is felt by the child. In extreme cases child because detached from the family & likes to live in his own confinement thus leading to depression.

vii) Change in sleep pattern –

Uneven working hours causes change in sleep pattern which leads to many mental & physical problems.

8.0 Ways to improve psychological well-being

i) Connect with other people –

Psychological well-being is promoted by good relationships as it inculcate a sense of belonging & sense of self-worth, opportunity to share positive experiences & give emotional support. This can be done by taking time each day to be with your family, arranging day outs with friends, having lunch with colleagues, giving voluntary services at any school, hospital or community centre, making use of technology to be in touch with friends & family.

ii) Be physically active –

Being physically active not only boost physical health but also improves the mental health by enhancing sense of self, assisting in setting and achieving objectives or challenges, produces alterations in brain chemistry that assist in elevation of mood. So a person should try to engage himself/herself in some physical activity.

iii) Learn new skills –

According to research acquiring new skills can improve the mental health by increasing sense of purpose & self-worth, enhancing self-confidence & making it easier to interact with others. There are many ways & methods to incorporate learning in one's life. Some of the methods which can be used are – learning to cook, working on DIY projects, enrolling in some new course, taking new hobbies etc.

iv) Give to others –

Many studies have shown that acts of giving & kindness can improve psychological well-being by giving a sense of purpose & self-worth which creates happy sentiments and a sense of satisfaction and facilitates social interaction. This could be done by expressing gratitude to others for acts of kindness, by being concerned towards family & friends, spending time with loved ones, providing assistance to a friend on DIY projects and volunteering in social work.

v) Paying attention to the present moment –

One's mental health can get better by focusing on here & now concepts. It includes everything which is around oneself i.e. one's body, ideas and feeling. Some psychologists consider it as mindfulness. Life can be more enjoyable & self-aware when we practice mindfulness. It positively changes the approach of life.

vi) Creating Purpose –

Its important to live a meaningful life it we want to improve our psychological health. Our mission may not be making the world a better place but to be a kind person. Purpose should be meaningful, it is not to be something big and mighty.

9.0 Conclusion

Finally, it can be said that, in the middle of the coronavirus lockdown crisis, online education has shown to be a blessing. It provides pupils with a wide range of educational options. It guarantees learning from any location while keeping social distance. Both the central and state governments have given their support to the educational institutions so that students can continue their study. However, a number of difficulties connected to students' mental health have surfaced as a result of the inherent constraints of online learning. Students who are pursuing education through various digital applications have shown signs of stress, anxiety, and depression, which puts them at risk for various health-risk behaviours and suicide. The studies have shown that psychological well-being has the ability to help reduce these mental health issues. Stress, despair, and burnout are a few psychological health issues that can be mitigated by fostering various approaches. The current study therefore calls on parents and other educational participants to take the necessary actions to improve and maintain students' psychological well-being in order to improve and maintain their educational participation, accomplishment, inspiration, and learning power on the one hand, and also to promote positive mental health and happiness on the other hand, in this era of digital education.

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