



A study of mental health of secondary education in India

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Abstract:

Twenty first century is an era of acute modernization. Media and communication technology influence or affect all spheres of education at school level particularly. The school environment is an optimal context to provide mental health services. Media throws abundant cross-cultural exposure to the students, and at times, so called; social media leads students to the evils of maladjustment, loneliness, addictedness and loss of socio-emotional support. Students who feel socially isolated or emotionally upset are less likely to learn and achieve to their full potential. Mental health is not simply the absence of mental illness, but the ability to cope with difficult circumstances. Researches reveal that children with better mental health do better academically and socially. Hadfield defined, "mental health is the full and harmonious functioning of the whole personality". Bernard defined, "mental health is the adjustment of individuals to themselves and the world at large with maximum of effectiveness, satisfaction, cheerfulness, socially considerable behavior and the ability of facing and accepting the realities of life". For efficient functioning of the individual one should not only possess sound bodily health but also sound mental health. In contemporary society, mental health has become a major problem affecting almost every person. Therefore, it is important to study mental health and suggest remedial measures to enhance the same among high school students.

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Keywords: *Mental Health, Secondary education.*

Introduction:

Health is an Indispensable quality in human being. It has been described as soil from which the finest flowers grow. Health indicates psychosomatic well-being of an individual and is a broader concept which includes physical, social and mental health. Mental Health has been reported as an important factor influencing individual's various behaviors, activities, happiness and performance. J.C. Colman calls the modern age as age of stress. Today we find an atmosphere of anxiety, chaos and disturbed state of mind surrounding us. Generally, people think that the persons who are not suffering from any other diseases are called healthy but it is not true according to W.H.O., but according to world health organization absence of disease is not a sign of physical and mental fitness but physically, mentally and socially, healthiness is a real healthiness. Global mental health refers to the international perspective on varied aspects of mental health and has been defined as "the area of study, research and practice that places a priority on improving mental health and achieving equity in mental health for all people worldwide"

Adolescence is a transitional phase between childhood and adulthood, characterized by a number of cognitive, emotional, physical, intellectual, and attitudinal changes as well as by changes in social roles, relationships, and expectations. While it is a phase of tremendous growth in preparation of adults' roles and skills to sustain pressures and challenges, it is also a transition phase that can increase risk of various, psychological disorders, adjustment problems, and suicidal tendencies.

According to the National Mental Health Survey of India (2015–2016), the prevalence of psychiatric disorders among adolescents (13–17 years) is around 7.3%. Approximately 40%–90% of "adolescents

with depression” have a comorbid psychiatric disorder such as anxiety disorders, conduct disorders, substance abuse, or personality disorders. Suicide is a leading cause of death among young people, leading to death of at least 25% of deaths in adolescent boys and 50%–75% in adolescent girls. Therefore, there is a need for a positive and promote mental health among adolescent youths, to ensure a smooth progress of adolescents to their adult life.

Children spend more time in school than in any other formal institutional structure. As such, schools play a key part in children's development, from peer relationships and social interactions to academic attainment and cognitive progress, emotional control and behavioral expectations, and physical and moral development. All these areas are reciprocally affected by mental health. There are studies in India, showing a higher (44.1%) prevalence of depression among higher secondary school students. According to the burden of mental disorders across the states of India (2017), one among every seven people in India had a mental disorder, ranging from mild to severe.

Mental Health comprises positive behaviour, mind activities, feelings, emotions, etc. which is difficult for people to always keep on the right track. Secondary school students can easily way off because at this age, their mind gets disturbed by the stress and storm of external and internal dilemmas. Students are facing many problems due to mental health issues in India. The last few years have been very challenging for developing countries like India. Recent pandemics, natural and unnatural disasters, and differences in personal and professional relationships have deeply affected mankind. These events have had a very profound effect like depression, stress, anxiety, fatigue, etc., among peoples. So, in the contemporary era, students are facing various problems like sleeplessness, social disorder, emotional instability, suicidal attitude, fear of deteriorating social status, etc. Bhatia(2020) highlighted that “The proportion of the contribution of mental disorders in India has almost doubled since 1990 and it leads one out of every seven Indians in 2017 with a variety of mental disorders”

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Self-care means taking the time to do things that help you live well and improve both your physical health and mental health. This can help you manage stress, lower your risk of illness, and increase your energy. Even small acts of self-care in your daily life can have a big impact.

Here are some self-care tips:

- **Get regular exercise.** Just 30 minutes of walking every day can boost your mood and improve your health. Small amounts of exercise add up, so don't be discouraged if you can't do 30 minutes at one time.
- **Eat healthy, regular meals and stay hydrated.** A balanced diet and plenty of water can improve your energy and focus throughout the day. Pay attention to your intake of caffeine and alcohol and how they affect your mood and well-being—for some, decreasing caffeine and alcohol consumption can be helpful.
- **Make sleep a priority.** Stick to a schedule, and make sure you're getting enough sleep. Blue light from devices and screens can make it harder to fall asleep, so reduce blue light exposure from your phone or computer before bedtime.
- **Try a relaxing activity.** Explore relaxation or wellness programs or apps, which may incorporate meditation, muscle relaxation, or breathing exercises. Schedule regular times for these and other healthy activities you enjoy, such as listening to music, reading, spending time in nature, and engaging in low-stress hobbies.
- **Set goals and priorities.** Decide what must get done now and what can wait. Learn to say “no” to new tasks if you start to feel like you're taking on too much. Try to appreciate what you have accomplished at the end of the day.
- **Practice gratitude.** Remind yourself daily of things you are grateful for. Be specific. Write them down or replay them in your mind.
- **Focus on positivity.** Identify and challenge your negative and unhelpful thoughts.
- **Stay connected.** Reach out to friends or family members who can provide emotional support and practical help.

According to Malhotra et al., the prevalence rate of mental health issues in children and teenagers in India was determined to be 23.33% in school and 6.46% in the community. Aside from these studies, the

National Mental Health Survey 2016 found that teenagers had a 7.3% prevalence of illness, distributed equally across boys and girls. However, it was greater in metropolitan metro areas, and the prevalence of anxiety issues was 3.6%, with depression-related conditions at 0.8% .

Children and adolescents need to be nurtured, and it is the responsibility of all parties involved, parents, educators, the government, legislators, and society at large to support their mental health. Failure to address adolescent mental health disorders has long-term implications on one's physical and emotional well-being, as well as limits one's ability to lead a satisfying adult life. There is enough evidence to support the inclusion of mental health education where the integration can promote children's and teenagers' positive mental health if it is founded on evidence-based practice.

School children face many issues, including the inability to seek help when they need it, the inability to trust others, particularly if they have had negative experiences at home, and their unwillingness to disclose problems in school for fear of being victimized. Other obstacles could include a lack of a designated physical setting, non-cooperation from school administration, infrequent availability of a counselor on campus, and a lack of privacy. School children experiencing anxiety and depression can have a significant impact on school attendance and academic performance. Whenever children are identified as having potential mental health issues, they are frequently referred to mental health professionals for treatment. Though well-intentioned, this strategy is ineffective mainly if families encounter obstacles, including language barriers, high cost, insufficient transportation, or job inflexibility that prevents them from keeping consultations. Schools and other learning environments can meet children's and teenagers' mental health and psychosocial well-being requirements, especially in emergencies.

Given the growing concerns and prevalence of mental health problems among school children in India, the current review is imperative. The necessity for a thorough examination of the mental health problems in school children in India cannot be overstated. The intense academic pressure, cut-throat competition, and societal pressures faced by school children in India make it crucial to comprehend the extent of their struggles and their impact on their overall well-being. Conducting a systematic review will enable us to gather and examine existing research to gain a holistic understanding of the mental health challenges confronted by school children in India. Through this study, we aim to gain invaluable comprehension of the unique mental health obstacles encountered by school students in India. By doing so, we can pave the way for tailored interventions and support structures to be established. This research is crucial in

equipping policymakers, educators, and mental health experts with the knowledge to prioritize and tackle mental health concerns in schools.

Furthermore, the results of this comprehensive analysis have the potential to raise awareness among parents and caregivers, empowering them to identify mental health red flags in their children and seek prompt assistance when necessary. This study was initiated due to the pressing concern of mental health among school-going children in India. These young individuals are faced with a multitude of challenges and pressures that have the potential to impact their well-being significantly. We must gain a thorough understanding of these issues through a systematic review to address and mitigate their effects. By comprehending the scope and nature of these challenges, we can develop targeted interventions and support systems backed by evidence and tailored to the unique needs of these school children, ultimately promoting their holistic development.

Conclusion:

Mental health is very important factor for high school students as they are in the turning point of their life in academic aspect and personal aspect. Mentally disturbed students may become a burden to the school and society. This study reveals that the high school students have moderate level of mental health. The educational programme such as yoga, meditation, cultural activities etc should be planned in such a way to improve mental health among students. This study goes against the findings of Ramesh Singh Bartwal who found that there was no significant difference between rural and urban students in their mental health. But this study reveals that there is significant difference. It may be due to the fact that rural areas are naturally calm, quiet and problems are less compared to urban areas. This study may find some usefulness in the field of education and can serve as a database for further research.

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