

A Study on Mental Health of the Elementary School Students during COVID-19

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Abstract

Mental health is defined as a positive notion that refers to an individual's or a community's social, emotional, and cognitive well-being as a response to human action, behavior, attitude, thinking, desire, and perception. It's a proactive, positive term that dismisses any negative thoughts that may arise. The present study is undertaken to find out the impact of Covid-19 on the mental health of elementary school students. The researchers used a self-constructed questionnaire to collect data from the students of elementary classes of Delhi and NCR. It was found that the majority of the students faced disturbances in their mental health during Covid 19 in one or another way. It was also found that these elementary level students are aware of these areas and concepts of mental health and are able to comprehend the same.

Keywords: Covid-19, Mental Health, Elementary Students

Introduction

Mental health and wellbeing have always been a point of concern for every individual. It is said "A healthy body is a reflection of a healthy mind" and therefore various individuals - Sigmund Freud being one of them - had contributed and talked about mental health and wellbeing very comprehensively. Mental health is said to be a positive concept related to the social, emotional, and cognitive wellbeing of individuals and communities which act as a reflex to human action, behavior, attitude, thought, desire, and perception. It is a proactive, positive term and forsakes negative thoughts that may come to mind. The term mental health is increasingly being used by

psychologists, mental health practitioners' ability. Also, it is not always about severe mental disorders rather the very act of being strong, resilient, constructive, the absence of which is not generally identified or considered as a factor of being mentally unhealthy. In the ever-changing era, the distortion or disturbance in the mental health of the individual had been a prime concern.

UNESCO states that - A good quality education is the foundation of health and well-being. For people to lead healthy and productive lives, they need the knowledge to prevent sickness and disease. However, what grabs the attention is the fact that education especially in the present time's Covid -19

becomes a catalyst to mental stress. Learning disabilities, physical health problems, physiological problems, trauma, and family problems are said to be the main sources of mental health of a child. These causes can lead to further mental, emotional, and social health problems giving rise to Mental Disorder. They also create huge, unwanted stress on the child as well as the family and school. Some common disorders include Depression, anxiety, and bipolar disorder (Mental). Covid-19 has been a life-changing epidemic for everyone. The bracket of areas that it led everyone to explore was not really sound. To every individual from any section of society, it was a strenuous situation to deal with, and undeniable to say that the amount of mental trauma, stress, anxiety, and sleeplessness it brought had hampered the mental wellbeing of every individual. On one hand, where some individuals were able to overcome the effect of mental stress of Covid-19, some surely failed to do the same and are still facing the consequence of the same.

Elementary level students are the ones who should not be left behind in this case. Since the ICT sector and Online teaching-learning industry had taken over education dealing with it had been a challenge. From processing the usage of ICT tools to comprehending the learning, Virtual classrooms have contributed to the mental outburst for these children. It is also to be seen that the concern of family, monetary aspects are also a few of the stressors that these young minds go through but either are unable to detect or retrospect. There had been quite a lot of studies revolving around the same concern. However, the aim of this paper is to focus specifically on the individuals who are enrolled in the elementary stage of education (Class) registered in both private and government school set up and

had been pursuing their education via online mode and to look for the outcome of Covid-19 on their mental wellbeing

Review of related literature

Chaturvedi K, Vihwakarma D.K published a paper titled -COVID-19 and its impact on education, social life, and mental health of students: A survey (February 2021). The study presented that The Covid-19 lockdown had serious implications on mental health, resulting in psychological problems including frustration, stress, and depression. In order to explore the impacts of this pandemic on the lives of students, the researchers conducted a survey of a total of 1182 individuals of different age groups from various educational institutes in Delhi - National Capital Region (NCR), India. The article identified the following as the impact of COVID-19 on the students of different age groups: time spent on online classes and self-study, the medium used for learning, sleeping habits, daily fitness routine, and the subsequent effects on weight, social life, and mental health. Moreover, the research found that in order to deal with stress and anxiety, participants adopted different coping mechanisms and also sought help from their near ones. Further, the research examined the student's engagement on social media platforms among different age categories. This study suggested that public authorities should take all the necessary measures to enhance the learning experience by mitigating the negative impacts caused due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Kshipra M and Disha H published a paper on COVID-19 and Mental Health: A Study of its Impact on Students in Maharashtra, India

(February 2021) COVID - 19 has a personal, social, and psychological impact on the mental health of students aged 16 to 25 years old, according to this study. A t-test with N= 351 students' responses gave a comparative study based on gender and background. To comprehend the pandemic's impact, a significant factor of $p < 0.5$ was used. Female students are more anxious about their health and future, and are more prone to psychological difficulties such as emotions of insecurity, powerlessness, and outbursts than male students, according to the findings. The mental health of urban students is worse than that of rural students. In male students, there is an increase in the craving for solitude, withdrawal, and self-harm. Although the benefits of a collectivistic society are undeniable, there appears to be a shift in mindset from seeing family as a source of support to seeing it as a constraint.

As a result of COVID-19, this study examines the student's responses to questions based on social and self-perception. It also goes into the nature of their adaptive techniques and how effective they are at dealing with the epidemic, isolation, and the new normal.

Khaled S and Mohammad S. published a paper on the Impact of COVID-19 on medical students' mental wellbeing in Jordan (June 2021) The impact of the pandemic on the mental health of medical students is being investigated in this prospective cross-sectional study. An online survey was used to obtain socio-demographic and academic data from students at six Jordanian medical schools. The impact of COVID-19 on life activities and methods used to manage the situation were also investigated. Mental wellness was assessed using Kessler's psychological stress scale (K10); the influence of

COVID-19 on life activities and strategies used to manage the situation was also investigated. The study enlisted the participation of 553 medical students. Men made up 40.1 percent of the population, while women made up 59.9%. COVID-19 has had an impact on students' physical fitness (73.1%), academic performance (68.4%), and social interactions (65.6%). Sixty-six percent of students were concerned about their family members' devotion, and more than half (58.4%) expressed fear about not being able to get clinical sessions and labs. Cooking, baking, and practicing a pastime were the most preferred ways for them to boost their mental health. Only 13.2 percent of the participants were likely to be healthy, and about half of the participants had a severe mental illness. According to the report, half of our medical students suffer from serious mental illnesses, with physical fitness, exercise, and studying being among the most negatively impacted components of the COVID 19 epidemic. It is suggested that steps be done to reduce student stress, which could have negative consequences.

Calderon J.V presented an article on U.S. Parents Say COVID-19 Harming Child's Mental Health (February 2020). The article states that three in 10 parents say their child's emotional, mental health is suffering now. 33% can wait "as long as necessary" before a child's mental health suffers. Nearly three in 10 (29%) say their child is "already experiencing harm" to their emotional or mental health because of social distancing and closures. Another 14% demonstrate their kids are moving toward their cutoff points, saying they could proceed with social removing a couple of more weeks until their emotional well-being endures. While children make up relatively fewer

cases among confirmed COVID-19 patients in the U.S., these survey results suggest that pandemic response measures are taking a toll on the wellbeing of some. The results are based on interviews with more than 1,200 parents of children in grades kindergarten through 12 whose school is closed to in-person instruction. 97% of guardians say their youngster's school is right now shut. The sample is drawn from Gallup's probability-based online panel. By looking at the output few of the measures were also highlighted such as Collaboration between schools, families, community leaders and health officials will stand quite critical to support children's needs in and out of school.

Shweta S. and Deblina R. published a paper on the Impact of COVID-19 and lockdown on the mental health of children and adolescents: A narrative review with recommendations (August 2020) This work aims to provide a narrative review of several papers linked to the mental health of children and adolescents affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the implementation of statewide or regional lockdowns to limit infection spread. Fear and worry have spread over the world as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak and lockdown. Children and adolescents have experienced both short-term and long-term psychosocial and mental health consequences as a result of this phenomenon. Many vulnerability factors, such as developmental age, educational position, pre-existing mental health conditions, being economically disadvantaged, or being isolated due to infection or fear of infection, determine the quality and severity of impact on children. During the COVID-19 epidemic, researchers did a review and gathered papers and warnings on mental health issues affecting children and adolescents. They chose articles and categorized them thematically. They organized their

primary findings into the topical categories of influence on young children, school and college students, children and adolescents with mental health difficulties, economically disadvantaged children, quarantine and separation from parents, and international organization advisories. They've also made suggestions in response to the above.

1. There is an urgent need to plan longitudinal and developmental studies, as well as to implement an evidence-based elaborative plan of action, to address the psychosocial and mental health needs of vulnerable children and adolescents during and after the pandemic.
2. Access to mental health support services for children and adolescents must be improved in order to provide strategies for developing good coping mechanisms throughout the current crisis.
3. Policies with direct and digital collaboration networks of psychiatrists, psychologists, pediatricians, and community volunteers are thought vital for this innovative child and adolescent mental health policies.

Brooke Stafford Brizard published a paper on Student Mental Health During the Pandemic: Educator and Teen Perspectives (2020). This paper investigates the findings of Ed Week Research Center surveys of high school students and instructors conducted in the winter of 2021 in order to assess the pandemic's influence on students' mental health.

Over 70% of 2,000 high school students said they are having more troubles at school now than they were in January 2020, according to a poll of 2,000

students. Approximately three-quarters of Black (77%) and Latinx (77%) pupils reported an increase in issues, compared to 68 percent of whites and 66 percent of Asian American kids. Students from low-income families (76%) reported an increase more frequently than students from more affluent families (67 percent). More than eight out of ten LGBTQ students reported additional issues, compared to 69 percent of other pupils of heterosexual students. Nearly three-quarters of students in full-time remote and hybrid settings said they had more challenges, compared to only approximately two-thirds of kids who went to school in person.

1. When high school teachers were asked to look back, 93 percent reported their kids are having greater troubles in school (either remotely or in-person) now than they were in January 2020. In comparison, students make up 72 percent of the population.
2. Nearly two-thirds of high school teachers thought their pupils' moods were worse during in-person or virtual class than before the outbreak. Only 37% of students, on the other hand, shared this sentiment.
3. Eighty-six percent of high school principals stated their schools provided mental health services or activities before and throughout the pandemic. Only around two-thirds of high school pupils are enrolled in college.

Changwon S and Sudeep H published a paper on Effects of COVID-19 on College Students' Mental Health in the United States: Interview Survey Study (2020) This research intends to provide a timely assessment of the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on college students' mental health. To

further understand the consequences of the epidemic on students' mental health and well-being, researchers conducted interviews with 195 students at a large public university in the United States. The COVID-19 epidemic caused 138 (71%) of the 195 pupils to experience higher stress and anxiety. The higher levels of stress, anxiety, and depressed thoughts among students were attributed to a variety of stresses. Fear and worry about their own health and the health of their loved ones (177/195, 91 percent), difficulty concentrating (173/195, 89 percent), disruptions to sleeping patterns (168/195, 86 percent), decreased social interactions due to physical distancing (167/195, 86 percent), and increased concerns about academic performance (159/195, 82 percent) were among the negative effects of the pandemic. Participants sought aid from others and assisted themselves to cope with stress and worry. The COVID-19 pandemic has a negative influence on higher education due to the long-term pandemic situation and onerous measures such as lockdown and stay-at-home directives. Our findings indicate the urgent need to create interventions and preventive methods to address college students' mental health.

Need of the Study

Covid-19 has affected the majority of the people. Let it be physically, emotionally, financially, and even mentally. Individuals' mental health got affected the most during this time. If we talk about students, their surroundings, learning style, working style, almost every aspect of social life has been changed. From traditional ways of learning to online-based learning, there has been a drastic change in their learning styles. There is a need to conduct this type of research so as to know how

many students are dealing with mental health issues. There has been a lot of research and work signifying the effect of Covid-19 on mental health. This paper stands different as it deals with studying and looking into mental health during Covid-19 of elementary school students of South-West Delhi covering different private schools in specific.

Methodology

The researchers have used the survey method in which a self-constructed questionnaire is used consisting of 15 closed-ended questions. With the help of the analysis of statistical data collected by the survey, the effect of Covid-19 on the mental health of the students has been interpreted in the form of the table and the graph. The population is of students of elementary classes of Delhi NCR, particularly of South-West Delhi and the sample size is 25 students of different private schools including both male and female.

Objectives

1. To study the effect of Covid-19 on Anxiety of Elementary level students.
2. To study the effect of Covid-19 on Sleeplessness of Elementary level students.
3. To study the effect of Covid-19 on Stress of Elementary level students.

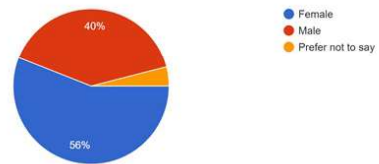
Research questions

1. What effect does Covid-19 have on the Anxiety of Elementary level students?
2. What effect does Covid-19 have on the Sleeplessness of Elementary level students?
3. What effect does Covid-19 have on the Stress

of Elementary level students?

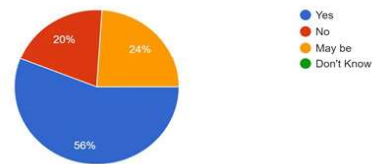
Data interpretation and analysis

Gender
25 responses



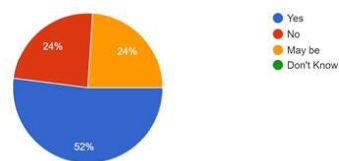
Out of 25 responses, 40% of students were male, 56% of students were females, and 4% of students did not prefer to reveal their gender. So, the data interpretation below will be based on the percentage of gender provided.

In the last few months, I often have felt the fear of getting affected by Covid-19.
25 responses



As per the responses, it is clearly visible that 56% of the elementary level students felt the fear of getting affected by Covid-19, 24% of the elementary level students were unsure about the same, and 20% of the elementary level students felt no fear of getting affected by Covid-19. Since the majority number of the students responded in the favour of the statement, it can be concluded that the interpretation supports the level of anxiety and stress in elementary level students providing insight into their mental health being affected by Covid-19.

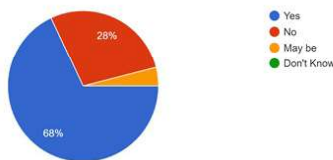
Social media posts regarding pandemic affects me.
25 responses



As per the responses, it is clearly visible that 52% of the elementary level students got affected by social media posts on Covid-19, 24% of the elementary level students being unsure about the same, and 24% of the elementary level students not getting affected by social media post regarding Covid-19. Since the majority of the students responded in favor of the statement, it can be concluded that the interpretation supports the level of anxiety in elementary level students providing insight into their mental health being affected by Covid-19.

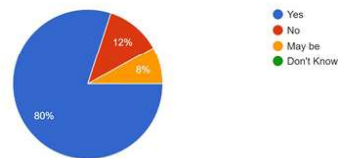
themselves for not being able to maintain a relationship with others during Covid-19, 24% of the elementary level students were confused about the same, 28% of the elementary level students did not found fault within themselves for not being able to maintain a relationship with others during Covid-19 and the rest 4% not knowing about the same. Since the majority of the students responded in the favour of the statement, it can be concluded that the interpretation supports the level of anxiety in elementary level students providing insight into their mental health being affected by Covid-19.

I have lost interest or pleasure in daily activities which I used to do when there was no lockdown. 25 responses



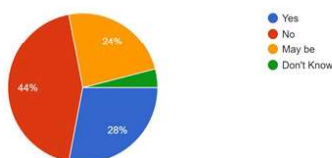
As per the responses, it is clearly visible that 68% of the elementary level students have lost interest in daily activities which they used to do when there was no lockdown, only 2% of the elementary level students are unsure about the same and 28% of the elementary level students did not lose interest in the same. Since the majority of the students responded in the favour of the statement, it can be concluded that the interpretation supports the level of anxiety in elementary level students providing insight into their mental health being affected by Covid-19.

I worry too much about my close ones getting affected by Covid-19. 25 responses



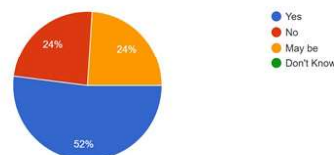
As per the responses, it is clearly visible that 80% of the elementary level students worry too much about their close ones affected by Covid-19, only 8% of the elementary level students are unsure about the same and 12% of the elementary level students do not worry about their close ones getting affected by Covid-19. Since the majority number of the students responded in favor of the statement, it can be concluded that the interpretation supports the level of anxiety in elementary level students providing insight into their mental health being affected by Covid-19.

I always find fault within myself for not being able to maintain relationships with others during Covid-19. 25 responses



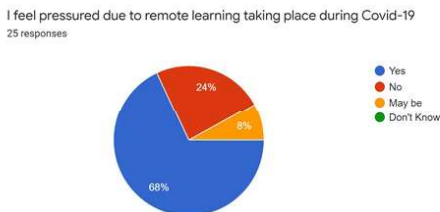
As per the responses, it is clearly visible that 44% of the elementary level students did found fault within

I have often failed to concentrate on my studies during this Covid-19 situation. 25 responses

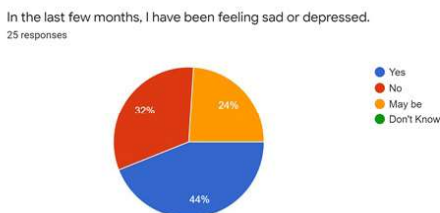


As per the responses, it is clearly visible that 52% of the elementary level students often failed to

concentrate on their studies during the Covid-19 situation, 24% of the elementary level students was able to concentrate on their studies during the Covid-19 situation and 24% of the elementary level students are unsure about the same. Since the majority of the students responded in favor of the statement, it can be concluded that the interpretation supports the level of stress in elementary level students providing insight into their mental health being affected by Covid-19.

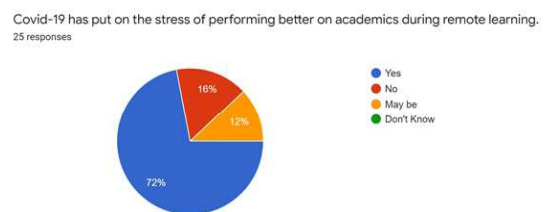


As per the responses, it is clearly visible that 68% of the elementary level students felt pressured due to remote learning taking place during covid-19, 24% of the elementary level students did not feel pressured due to remote learning taking place during covid-19, and 8% of the elementary level students being unsure about the same. Since the majority of the students responded in favor of the statement, it can be concluded that the interpretation supports the level of stress in elementary level students providing insight into their mental health being affected by Covid-19.

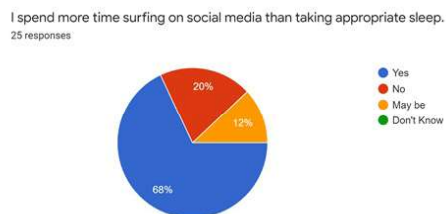


As per the responses, it is clearly visible that 44% of the elementary level students have been feeling sad

or depressed, 32% of the elementary level students did not feel sad or depressed and 24% of the elementary level students are not sure about the same. Since the majority of the students responded in favor of the statement, it can be concluded that the interpretation supports the level of stress in elementary level students providing insight into their mental health being affected by Covid-19.



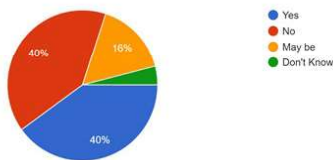
As per the responses, it is clearly visible that 72% of the elementary level students agree that Covid-19 has put on the stress of performing better on academics during remote learning, 16% of the elementary level students do not agree with the statement and 12% of the elementary level students are unsure about the same. Since the majority number of the students responded in favor of the statement, it can be concluded that the interpretation supports the level of stress in elementary level students providing insight into their mental health being affected by Covid-19.



As per the responses, it is clearly visible that 68% of the elementary level students did spend more time surfing on social media than taking appropriate sleep, 24% of the elementary level students did not

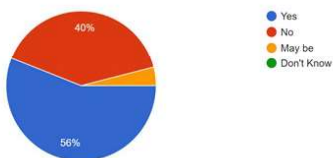
spend more time surfing on social media rather than taking appropriate sleep and 12% of the elementary level students being unsure about the same. Since the majority of the students responded in favor of the statement, it can be concluded that the interpretation supports the level of sleeplessness in elementary level students providing insight into their mental health being affected by Covid-19.

I have sleep disturbances due to the worry about getting affected by Covid-19.
25 responses



As per the responses, it is clearly visible that 40% of the elementary level students had sleep disturbances due to the worry about getting affected by Covid-19, 40% of the elementary level students did not have sleep disturbances due to the worry about getting affected by Covid-19, 16% of the elementary level students being confused about the same and 4% not knowing on the same. Since the elementary level students showcased the same percentage for both yes and no, it can be concluded that the effect of Covid 19 on sleep disturbance is half and half in elementary level students.

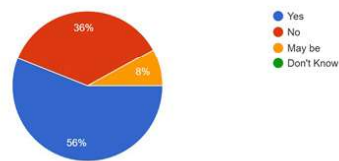
Feeling afraid, as if something awful might happen leads to sleeplessness.
25 responses



As per the responses, it is clearly visible that 56% of the elementary level students felt afraid as if something awful might happen which leads to sleeplessness, 40% of the elementary level students are not afraid about the same and only 4% of the

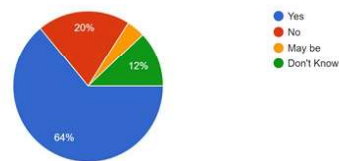
elementary level students are unsure about the same. Since, the majority number of the students responded in favor of the statement, it can be concluded that the interpretation supports the level of sleeplessness in elementary level students providing insight into their mental health being affected by Covid-19.

I find sleeping the best escape from the issues of Covid-19.
25 responses



As per the responses, it is clearly visible that 56% of the elementary level students find sleeping as the best escape from the issues of Covid-19, 36% of the elementary level students do not agree with the statement and 8% of the elementary level students are unsure about the same. Since the majority number of the students responded in favor of the statement, it can be concluded that the interpretation supports the level of sleeplessness in elementary level students providing insight into their mental health being affected by Covid-19.

Thinking of death of closed ones during Covid-19 leads to sleeplessness.
25 responses



As per the responses, it is clearly visible that 64% of the elementary level students are not able to sleep properly thinking of the death of closed ones, 20% of the elementary level students sleep properly and 12% of the elementary level students do not know about the same. Since the majority of the students responded in favor of the statement, it can be

concluded that the interpretation supports the level of sleeplessness in elementary level students providing insight into their mental health being affected by Covid-19.

After interpreting the three different aspects of mental health - anxiety, sleeplessness, and stress on the basis of the whole data, it can be concluded that the majority of the students did face disturbances in their mental health during Covid 19 in one or the other way.

Also, it presented that these elementary level students were aware of these areas and concepts of mental health and were able to comprehend the same.

Suggestions

Based upon the data analysis and interpretations following suggestions to different educational stakeholders can be given -

1. Constant contact of all the stakeholders (parents, teachers, principals, administrators, peers, and students themselves) associated with the students should be there.
2. School administration should provide regular counseling sessions for the students
3. Parents must take care of the balanced diet taken by the students.
4. Parents should keep a check on whatever a child is doing on social media.
5. Teachers must be given proper training so as to identify and cater to the needs of children.
6. Students should take care of their sleeping

patterns and parents should keep checking on the same.

7. Moral and life skill education should be given to students so as to keep them motivated throughout.

Delimitations

1. The study is delimited to private schools of Delhi NCR
2. The study is delimited to elementary class (6th to 8th) students.
3. The study is delimited to only 4 aspects of mental health.
4. The study is delimited to 25 students only (male and female)

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