



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

English Literature

STUDENT'S DEALING WITH DIFFICULT EMOTIONS: MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

KEY WORDS: mental health, anxiety, stress, suicide, depression, backlash, humiliated, rejection, failures, deterrence, solution, studies, prevent, and understand.

Subiya Ahmed

Ph.D Scholar In Jharkhand Rai University.

ABSTRACT

Mental health is an important criterion for a successful student. He needs to be stress-free and lead a life of normalcy to succeed in life. Anxiety and stress often take a toll on a student's mind, ultimately affecting their studies and their mental wellbeing. Extreme cases of disturbed mental health can lead to death as well. It has been estimated that in India, between 2019 and 2021, over 35,000 students committed suicide, and if we calculate the overall record of the world, then it is about a staggering 9.1%. This is an alarming rate, and it is on record, but there are many cases that go unrecorded. We need to assess the situation and find reasons for the growing stress and anxiety among students. This paper will shed light on the possible causes of deterrence in the mental condition of the student and the steps that need to be taken to prevent and tackle this alarming condition among students. Students all over the world face similar situations, and many are on the brink of depression. The reason behind this is yet to be ascertained, but the least we can do is prevent such outcomes. Students face enormous backlash if they fail to secure good marks. They often get humiliated, not only at school but at home as well; this needs to be checked out. We need to understand and find out the reason behind their failures and try to find solutions for them. In a world full of hatred, many foreign students face rejection, and they fail to integrate socially. This can cause anxiety and a disturbed state in the students, which in turn can hamper their studies and mental well-being in the long run.

What is Mental Health and why it is important?

WHO defines 'mental health' as the state of mental well-being that helps people handle the challenges of life, understand their capabilities, learn and grow well, and contribute to society. It is a basic human right and is crucial to personal, economic, and social development. People with good mental health are more likely to succeed in life, while those dealing with mental stress are more likely to cause self-harm and less likely to succeed.

Students belong to the category where they face enormous pressure, whether it is from home to secure good marks or at school to beat their competitors. In this rat race where everybody is running to succeed in life, the exam adds fuel to the fire. The various training institutes advertise their toppers placed at prestigious colleges. This adds additional pressure and an inner urge to gain popularity, which further makes the students anxious and stressed, ultimately affecting their mental well-being.

When a child is born, the parents want their desire to be fulfilled through their children, so they start shaping the child's mind from a very tender age. They remind them often that they have to become this and that, and most often the child is reminded of the way they are supposed to behave in an environment. In a way, they prepare the child for the future, but they do not understand that from a very tender age, they are putting pressure on the child to the extent that when they reach a certain age, it becomes toxic for them. They have to deal with various obstacles that become so overpowering that they tend to take the form of depression when they have to face failures. A child loses his self-worth and develops the tendency to doubt himself. It becomes a vicious circle for them, where they are unable to focus on their studies, putting additional pressure on themselves. The situation is even worse for the students studying abroad; they have to deal with a lot of issues and often face a lot of hardships, and some of them are as follows:

Reasons For Growing Mental Health Issues

According to a study in 2015, it was found that around 25% of undergraduates in the US dealt with mental health issues. 57% reported overwhelming anxiety, while 34% struggled with daily activities. The issues are as follows:

Financial Burden:

When it comes to higher studies, many families struggle to make ends meet owing to the enormous fee structure. Middle-class families ensure that their children succeed in their

education, so they take loans from banks with high interest rates. It puts additional pressure on their minds that they have to repay the loan.

Culture Shock:

when a person relocates, they have to adjust to their environment. There are adaptability issues; they want to blend in with the environment, but when they are unable to do so, they start lacking confidence. They become lonely and may slip into depression.

Stress/Anxiety:

this is caused by a variety of reasons; it could be the pressure to secure good marks, to beat their competitors, a feeling of isolation, ragging, blooming early love, emotional drain, and so on.

Competition:

this starts from a very early age; though healthy competition is good, if it starts overpowering you, then it can take a malicious turn as well.

Exam/Peer Pressure:

this comes under the same category, as when a student competes with others, they tend to develop pressure in their minds. Many students develop exam phobia, which ultimately affects their studies.

Social Isolation and Integration:

when students start staying abroad or simply move to another city, there is a sense of loneliness in them. Despite their attempts to blend in with the environment, they are unable to do so because of cultural differences, language barriers, caste issues, and many more. They are unable to integrate themselves into their own new, cultivated world, leading to behavioral issues.

Lack of Support System:

This is the most important category for the students who are staying away from their families. This simply means that they need a strong support system for themselves, which necessarily does not depend on finance; there are other aspects as well. Though financial support is an important factor, they also need to be supported emotionally.

What needs to be done?

Awareness and Understanding:

We need to be aware of our surroundings. If we are aware of the categories of mental illness, then it can help us in the long

run. A person sitting and studying next to us could be suffering from depression. We should assess such a situation mindfully. We should have thorough knowledge of dealing with such people.

Counseling:

A student suffering from any mental health issue should be counseled properly. There should be provisions for such situations in schools and colleges, and they should have designated people dealing with students.

Pressure Reduction:

schools and colleges should reduce pressure on students by providing innovative measures to tackle exam phobia. The evaluation process should be handled carefully, and results should be announced in a way that is not demeaning or discouraging for other students.

Minimizing The Stigma:

Mental issue attracts unwanted attention; we need to normalize this and there should be no stigma attached to it. Students out of fear and inhibition hide their true feelings; they are unable to share their issues and causes of anxiety from their peers thinking that they will be ridiculed. This thinking needs to be changed, for that a new perspective is required at all levels.

Higher Resource Allocation:

schools, colleges and the government should come up with proper planning to integrate mental illness into general health care. There should be proper health care facilities that deal with mental illness; mental counseling should be part of the general health care schedule. Along with the existing policies, like National Mental Health Policy (2014), Mental Health Care Act (2017) new policies should be implemented to deal with it more efficiently.

Emphasizing the Role of Research and Planning:

Along with other government planning, research and survey should take place on a national level to assess the situation of the students. Financial support should be given to the surveyors for proper planning and execution. Research work should form the basis for policy planning and implementation.

Lastly, physical and mental health is in our hands; we should clearly understand what is good and bad for us. No health care provider can do anything if we ourselves are not ready for it. We have to understand our priorities: apart from winning the rat race, our health is also important, and it should not take a toll on us. Living a successful life is important, but living a healthy and happy life is far more important.

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