


IMPACT OF VIRTUAL LEARNING ON MENTAL HEALTH OF STUDENTS.

Dr. Cindrella D'Mello

Associate Professor, St. Teresa's Institute of Education

Abstract :

"Learning never stops." This phrase become truly a reality, when the world was halted by the onset of the coronavirus, teachers across the globe were one with the frontline workers assuring that education doesn't stop and that each student learns every day. The virtual model of learning thus became the norm of educational institutions. For teaching and assessment, various online tools were used to ensure maximum efficiency of learning and teaching. As technology-aided us in times of need, it brought with it some hardships, long hours staring at the screen, minimum social interaction, anxiety, depression, and so on. Thus, it becomes necessary to consider the various implication that technology and virtual learning imposes on students and teachers. The main aim of this study was to focus upon the impact of virtual learning on the mental health of students. The data was collected from Grade 9 students of the SSC board school in Mumbai. The descriptive survey method was used for the present study. The findings of the study indicated that: 52.63% of boys and 47.37% of girls sometimes felt confident while handling academics when online classes started, which indicates, students found it difficult to adapt to virtual learning in the beginning but slowly have evolved to find it familiar and easy. 57.89% boys and 42.11% girls have Never felt low in the lockdown period which indicates that the mental health of the students has not been affected. 34.2% of students sometimes felt the pressure of piling academic tasks in the lockdown period.

Keywords : *Virtual learning, mental health*

Copyright © 2022 The Author(s): This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial use provided the original author and source are credited.

Introduction :

The Covid-19 Pandemic resulted in schools shutting across the globe. Globally, over 1.2 billion children were out of the classroom. As a result, there was a dramatic shift in education from the offline to the online digital model of learning. Technology helped shaped the teaching-learning process and various technological tools aided the process as well for instruction delivery, management of the course, and assessment. It is crucial to understand the impact of Virtual Learning on students and teachers to comprehend the situation as are still in the mode of Virtual Learning. Virtual learning influences all individuals, educators, and students alike. For many students, with the introduction of virtual learning, their mental health is deteriorating with time. For others, the impact of virtual learning and the pandemic has triggered new changes in mental health and how they perceive learning.



One of the primary roles of education is socialization, however with the introduction of Online schools the opportunity to socialize has decreased. Students feel lonely, unmotivated and are often discouraged without regular social interaction. Research has shown that social isolation can cause higher rates of negative outcomes on the mental and physical well-being of an individual.

The lack of social isolation leads to increased stress and anxiety. Students may feel heightened anxiety about keeping up with their online assignments, other students may experience difficulty in concentrating in class and on the study material, students may feel hopeless, and may not be able to cope with their studies. The ability to maintain good mental health is crucial for students as it will determine the success rate of the student in school and also in their personal lives. Yet, the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) study included that up to 60% of students don't receive adequate mental health care because of stigma and lack of services, a need that is exacerbated by the difficulty to receive services in-person due to the complications of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Students need the support of their educators and their peers in these difficult times. It becomes significant to study and to be familiar with the aspect of mental health and how it has an impact on students. Once we are familiar with this aspect, we can help students and suggest remedies for them. This will also help educators to identify students who need assistance and are confronting these issues. Only with adequate knowledge, educators will be able to help a lending hand to students. Educators will be aware of how to carry on classroom discourse, how much work the students can do in a day, are the students participating in class and are imbibing with what is taught in class, how much the student can cope, this will help educators to shape a better classroom experience for students and not burden students with work, the best potential will be tapped with the knowledge gained.

statement of the problem

A study of the Impact of Virtual Learning on Mental Health of Students of Standard IX of a Secondary School of the State Board.

Operational Definitions :

Virtual Learning: A virtual learning environment in educational technology is a web-based platform for the digital aspects of courses of study, usually within educational institutions.

Mental Health: Students' condition concerning their psychological and emotional well-being. The mental health of students was studied w.r.t the factors such as anxiety, work completion, nervousness, worries, feeling low, interest, distractions, motivation, concentration, etc.

Aim of the study :

To Assess the Impact of Virtual Learning on the Mental Health of Students.

Objectives of the Study :

1. To study the impact of Virtual Learning on the Mental Health of the students.
2. To study the impact of Virtual Learning on the mental health of the students based on gender.
3. To compare the impact of Virtual Learning on the mental health of the students based on gender.



Methodology of the Study :

For the present study, the researcher has used the 'Descriptive Survey' method to carry out the research.

Tools (Rating Scale): The researcher constructed a 5-point rating scale for the present study. The tool consisted of 15 items. Each item had the options as Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, and Never.

Sample :

For the present study, the data was collected from 60 students of Grade 9 studying in Our Lady of Health, Sahar, Mumbai by Ms. Danica D'Souza.

Sampling Technique :

The researcher has used the purposive sampling technique. The purposive sampling method is a method of generating a sample-based solely on the researcher's discretion and interpretation of the target group, as well as the nature of the analysis. People who only meet the study criteria and end objectives are chosen in this sampling process, and the rest are excluded.

Analysis of Data :

The researcher has used the 'Graphical Analysis' and 'Descriptive Analysis' techniques and has made use of Pie Charts and Joint Bar Graphs to represent the collected data and to describe the finding. After the data was collected, the responses were tabulated by assigning a value to each response. The score for each student was calculated.

Findings of the study :

1. 7.9% of students Never felt confident about handling academics online whereas 50% of students Sometimes felt confident about handling academics. 5.26% boys and 10.53% girls Never felt confident in handling academics when online classes started respectively. This suggests that with the commencement of online classes most of the students do not feel completely confident about handling their academic work. This is a result of this quick transition where students did not get a chance to adapt to the virtual learning process.
2. 10.5% of students Often felt the pressure of piling academic tasks in the lockdown period, 2.6% of students Always felt the pressure of piling academic tasks in the lockdown period. The gender comparison showed 31.58% boys and 36.84% girls Sometimes felt the pressure of piling academic tasks in the lockdown period. This suggests that students have not felt academically pressured with tasks in the lockdown period. This can be a result of having excess time at home during the lockdown period to focus on the classwork and complete their assigned homework and assignments on time.
3. 44.7% of students have Never felt nervous, anxious or on the edge during the lockdown period, 26.3% of students have Sometimes felt the same. The gender comparison depicts: 57.89% of boys and 31.58% of girls have Never felt nervous, anxious, or on the edge during the lockdown period. This suggests that most students have not had feelings of nervousness and anxiety during the lockdown period. This can be attributed to several



factors, supportive home environment, stable home environment, supportive parents and peers, supportive school culture, stable home income, and a feeling of security and stability at home.

4. 44.7% of students have not been able to stop or control their worry in the lockdown period, 36.8% of the students have Sometimes not been able to stop or control their worry in the lockdown period. The gender comparison depicts that, 47.37% of boys and 42.11% of girls have never been able to stop or control their worry in the lockdown period. This suggests that most of the students have been able to keep their worries and anxious feelings in control during the lockdown period. This can be attributed to several factors such as students may have a supportive home environment where they can talk to their parents, or the school has provided students with a supportive environment where they can approach the teachers or authority in times of distress.
5. 50% of students have Never felt low in the lockdown period, 13.2% of students have Sometimes felt low in the lockdown period, 5.3% students have Often and Always felt low in the lockdown period respectively. The gender comparison depicts that, 57.89% of boys and 42.11% of girls have Never felt low in the lockdown period. This suggests that most of the students have not been feeling low in the lockdown period. This can be attributed to several factors such as a supportive home environment, stable home environment, supportive parents and peers, supportive school culture, stable home income, and a feeling of security and stability at home.
6. 39.5% of students Sometimes found the online classes difficult to cope with, 10.5% of students Often found the online classes difficult to cope with, 5.3% of students Always found the online classes difficult to cope with. The gender comparison depicts that 5.26% of boys and 5.26 girls Always found the online classes difficult to cope with. This suggests that most of the students found it difficult to cope with online learning. The reason for this could be a quick transition from offline to online mode of learning, which did not offer enough time for students to adjust to the online mood of learning. It may also be a result of a lack of technological knowledge on the part of the students to operate certain software and application which are used during online learning.

conclusion :

Online Learning is becoming the new normal for most institutions around the globe. COVID- 19 has given institutions an impetus to explore this mode of instruction and teaching in developed as well as developing countries. It has helped educators and students alike to become familiar with technological tools that can have a positive impact on the teaching-learning process. According to one comprehensive analysis of the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic on people's mental well-being, many parts of the population have suffered negative effects on their mental health.

Online Learning has brought many obstacles with it to parents, educators, students, and the administration. Restricted technical infrastructure and capability, socioeconomic factors, a lack of experience conducting evaluation and supervision in an online mode, increased workload for teachers and education workers, and incompatibility with some subject matters have all been identified as challenges. Preparation, lesson delivery, course content, communication, student-teacher interaction, and student engagement are also other important solutions. It thus becomes the duty of parents and educators alike to help students who are vulnerable in times like these. Educators



should create an open environment in which the students feel safe to address their worries and concerns. Educators should also take into account how the workload can harm the students. Teachers along with the administration should shoulder this responsibility and create a schedule in which the student does not feel overburdened with the amount of academic work assigned. Every educational institution should have a therapist that can be accessed by the students. All this will help in creating a richer learning experience for the students.

References :

1. Abdullah, A. S., Abirami, R. M., Gitwina, A., & Varthana, C. (2021). Assessment of Academic Performance with the e-mental health interventions in virtual learning environment using Machine learning Techniques: A Hybrid approach. *Journal of Engineering Education Transformations*, 34(SP ICTIEE), 79-85.
2. Aggarwal, Y. P. (2010). *The Science of Educational Research: A Source Book*. Kurukshetra: Nirmal Book Agency.
3. Aschbrenner, K. A., Pratt, S. I., Bond, G. R., Zubkoff, L., Naslund, J. A., Jue, K., ... & Bartels, S. J. (2019). A virtual learning collaborative to implement health promotion in routine mental health settings: protocol for a cluster randomized trial. *Contemporary Clinical Trials*, 84, 105816.
4. Best, J. W. & Kahn, J. V. (2010). *Research in Education* (10th Ed). New Delhi: Pearson Education.
5. Kothari, C. R. (1987). *Research Methodology- Methods and Techniques*. New Delhi: Vishwa Prakashan. P.40
6. Rhonda Wilson & Catherine Hungerford (2015) Mental Health Education and Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) in Pre-registration Nursing Degrees: Follow the Leaders?, *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, 36:5, 379-387, DOI: 10.3109/01612840.2014.1002647
7. Sharma, R. (2007). *Educational Research and Statistics*. Navprabhat Printing Press. Patparganj Delhi. P.66
Sharma, R. (2013). *Major Trends in Educational Research*. Kanishka Publishers. New Delhi.
8. Sockalingam, Sanjeev MD, FRCPC, MPHE; Rajaratnam, Thiyake MSc; Zhou, Carrol MD; Serhal, Eva PhD, MBA; Crawford, Allison MD, PhD; Mylopoulos, Maria PhD Building Mental Health Capacity: Exploring the Role of Adaptive Expertise in the ECHO Virtual Learning Model, *Journal of Continuing Education in the Health Professions: Spring 2021 - Volume 41 - Issue 2 - p 104-110* doi: 10.1097/CEH.0000000000000349

Webliography :

1. https://jolt.merlot.org/Vol11no2/Nguyen_0615.pdf
2. http://article.nadiapub.com/IJEL/vol2_no2/5.pdf
3. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0165178120307009>
4. [http://ijmer.in/issues/volume9/volume9-issue5\(8\)](http://ijmer.in/issues/volume9/volume9-issue5(8))
5. <https://journals.sagepub.com/action/cookieAbsent>



6. <http://www.mecs-press.net/ijeme/ijeme-v9-n2/IJEME-V9-N2-2.pdf>
7. <https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/jg8fr/download>
8. <https://gradcoach.com/what-is-research-methodology/>
9. <https://towardsdatascience.com/sampling-techniques-a4e34111d808>
10. <https://www.guide2research.com/research/types-of-research-design>
11. <https://www.guru99.com/what-is-data-analysis.html>
12. <https://up-za.libguides.com/c.php?g=485435&p=4425510>

Cite This Article:

Dr. Cindrella D'Mello, (2022). Associate Professor, St. Teresa's Institute of Education. Aarhat Multidisciplinary International Education Research Journal, XI (I),205-210.