Teacher Mental Health and Teaching Effect
(A Study with Special Reference to Covid Pandemic)

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Abstract

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers, school counsellors, and school employees have remained acutely focused on supporting their students and continuing to do their jobs at this time. In some cases, this may mean teaching, care-taking and continuing to work through the same challenges that anyone else is. While resources related to mental health have been front and centre for supporting students, parents, and others, less focus has been paid on maintaining the mental health of the educators who are also trying to find balance in our new way of living and remote teaching. That's why we put together some mental health tips for teachers that can help during COVID- 19. Not only the healthcare worker, teachers have been the frontliners of learning as they scrambled to make sure that learning doesn't stop. Therefore, the aims of this research paper are to explore how teachers have been affected by the lockdown with respect to their psychological well-being level and using strategies to coping it.

KeyWords: COVID-19, pandcmic, resources, educators, mental health, learning, scrambled, lockdown.

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act as we cope with life. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood and aging. When it comes to your emotions, it can be hard to know what is normal and what is not. There are warning signs that you may have a mental health problem, including:

* A change in your eating or sleeping habits
* Withdrawing from the people and activities you enjoy
* Having low or no energy
* Feeling numb or like nothing matters
* Having unexplained aches and pains
* Feeling helpless or hopeless

The emotional atmosphere in a classroom setting is important to the experiences of all students. That atmosphere is affected by the emotional stability of the teacher. A teacher with personal mental health problems can have a detrimental effect upon all of those students who are associated with him or her. According to a recent study, more than half of Britain's teachers have a diagnosed mental health problem, with 76% of education professionals experiencing behavioural, psychological or physical symptoms due to their work in the last year.

The importance of mental health of teachers- Teacher mental health issues are important because they not only have a detrimental influence on teachers themselves but also directly affect classroom outcomes. One study into this showed that 77% of teachers felt poor mental health was having a damaging effect on pupil mental health, and 85% said that it adversely affected the quality of lesson planning.Teaching is a remarkably rewarding pursuit if one is able to enable and empower learners. However, it is also about being a confident and committed teacher with a sound balance of a healthy mind and a healthy body. Nowadays, the importance of physical and mental well-being of teachers and students needs to be stressed more than ever. Education or any activity that involves an exchange of knowledge should involve a consistent focus on mental and physical wellness. Let us look at some of the crucial aspects that can guide us about focusing on the overall well-being of our teachers and students.

According to a report by National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), 20% of teachers are tensed about their job all the time. For other professionals, this number drops to

13%. Another report highlights the fact that burnout among teachers could be contagious. Teachers undergo tremendous stress to create an engaging learning experience. Creating a sound teaching plan and finally achieving the "leaming-objectives" involves many stages. At each stage, a teacher gets involved and strives to deliver to the best of his ability. In a performance- driven world, it becomes increasingly stressful to fulfil the demands of students while ticking all the deliverables in a limited timeframe.

Need of mentally relaxing environment for the teachers- A mentally relaxing environment brings in positivity. Wellness of teachers has been linked to the effectiveness of teaching. It has a positive impact on the achievement of students. The objective of all teaching activities must be a free exchange of knowledge. Students can always use scores of digital resources to seek information. However, it is the teacher who gives the correct perspective to process this information. A mentally relaxed and blissful teacher brings the much-required positive energy to the sessions. Medical researchers have discovered that in classrooms of teachers who admit higher level or burnouts, students tend to have higher levels of cortisol - a stress hormone. Similar studies have confirmed that stress suffered by teachers can be passed on to students.

Students look up to their teachers. All actions of a teacher are observed closely by students. Therefore, it is but obvious that the emotional state of a teacher affects the students in more ways than we would like to believe. A happy teacher exudes positivity which directly impacts the learning environment Whereas, a detached or disturbed teacher is likely to impair the learning environment An emotionally unsettled student may perform poorly. Therefore, it is very important to ensure the emotional well-being of teachers. The professional factors include absence of professional aptitude, occupational hazards, poor Salaries, excessive work load, insecurity of service, inadequate facilities at work place, strenuous relationship between the administrator and teachers.

The COV1D-19 pandemic and teachers- The COVID-19 pandemic has changed our understanding of the world as we previously knew it. The strong measures of social distancing and lockdown that have been applied since the beginning of the pandemic have led to significant changes in social relationships, which, for many people, have created feelings of isolation and loneliness (Smith and Lim, 2020).

Indeed, the rapid transmission ofCOVlD-19 throughout the world has had health, social, psychological, economic and, of course, educational consequences. In fact, school closure has been, on a global scale, one of the most widely used measures for helping to maintain social distancing and to decrease infections (Sheikh et al., 2020; Van Lancker and Parolin, 2020; Viner et al., 2020).

The 2020-2021 academic year was unlike any other. After nationwide school closures during the spring of2020, schools reopened in the fall using combinations of in-person, hybrid, and remote learning models. Teachers had to adapt to unexpected conditions, teaching in unprecedented ways, using synchronous and asynchronous instruction, while also being challenged to establish connections with students, families, and colleagues. Health concerns added to the mix as some teachers went back to in-person education during the height of the pandemic. As a result, teachers' levels of stress and burnout have been high throughout these unusual pandemic times, raising concerns about a potential increase in teacher turnover and future teacher shortages.We find that, during the pandemic, teachers have become less certain that they would work a full career in the classroom. In March 2020, 74% of teachers reported that they expected to work as a teacher until retirement, while 9% said they did not expect to, and 16% did not know. In contrast, in March 2021,69% of teachers reported they expected to work as a teacher until retirement, while 9% reported they did not expect to, and 22% said they did not know.

The COVID-19 pandemic and teachers' motivation- The COVID-19 pandemic has kept children and teachers out of school for almost two academic sessions now. Teachers have struggled to adapt to the change, but also gained a lot-they were resilient, overcame their fear

of technology, learnt new tools, innovated widely, connected and collaborated with peers, and made time for professional development. Our education system needs to capitalise on these gains and support teachers to make these gains sustainable. Bringing children back to school, closing the learning gap, and ensuring their social and emotional well-being is a tall order for the system, and especially for teachers. Creating an enabling environment will go a long way in making this happen.

March 2020 will forever be known in the education community as the month when almost all the world's schools shut their doors" (Winthrop, 2020, para. 1). In response to the COVID-19 school closings, teachers all over were required to shift gears immediately to respond to students' and families' needs with synchronous and asynchronous virtual instruction. Teachers literally responded overnight to teach in new' modalities. They have filmed themselves conducting experiments, hosted Zoom show-and-tell with Kindergarteners, prepared materials for students with variable Internet access, and even demonstrated concepts outside students' screen doors. There is no question that teachers of all grade levels, content areas, and in all sectors of education are capable of incredible things. They have truly risen to this occasion.

Therefore, it is imperative that teachers, teacher educators, policymakers, and others advocate on behalf of teachers. Guidelines for reopening schools, for example, should weigh equally the concerns of teachers and community members. This work is hard but impactful on every level of society. Now, more than ever, we must be mindful of the outsized expectations that may be placed on teachers, and the resourcing necessary to support them. Anything less would undermine teacher emotions, agency, and identity, and their capacity to take action on behalf of their most beloved commitments. The professional knowledge, practical experience, and voices of teachers should not be discounted, lest teachers be left disregarded and disposable.

Coping Strategies During the COVID-19 Pandemic-The COVID-19 pandemic is evolving, and other challenges seem ahead. Future research might include efforts to understand the perceptions and willingness of teachers to get vaccinated against COVID-19 and the psychological impact of returning to face-to-face teaching which, in countries such as Spain, has already increased educators' discomfort.Providing further information on the COVID-19 pandemic is highly needed to get a wider picture of today's "new normal" education and to develop supportive strategies to enhance educators' well-being in future pandemics or emergency confinements.

Teaching is an essential task that had to carry despite the COVID-19 pandemic. The closure of educational institutions, the adoption of remote online education, and other factors including teachers' technological illiteracy and students increased psychosocial and educational demands, had a potential toll on teachers' mental health. Given the novelty of this pandemic, and the limited research in Latin American countries, this study assessed teachers' mental health as well as the coping strategies of teachers. Focusing on teachers, and closely examining the series of factors associated with their mental health, will also help raise awareness and actions to reduce the series of inequalities that the COVID-19 pandemic has shown across many countries in the world.

Conclusion- Though teachers found creative ways to teach, they often improvised without a lot of planning. With schools reopening, giving teachers more say in curriculum design, planning timetables and the method of teaching will go a long w-ay in improving teacher motivation as well as performance. The pandemic has shown us that teachers with more experience put greater effort into reaching students. Governments can take advantage of their rich experience and commitment by giving teachers more control over the teaching and learning process. Teachers have a good understanding of their developmental needs and the gaps in their skill set. Instead of centrally planned one-way training modules, states and the education ministry can create a bouquet of courses for teachers to choose from. It will also benefit our policymakers to ask teachers what support they want and challenge teachers with

innovative content. Our education system needs to capitalise on these gains and support teachers to make these gains sustainable. Bringing children back to school, closing the learning gap, and ensuring their social and emotional well-being is a tall order for the system, and especially for teachers. Creating an enabling environment will go a long way in making this happen.

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