



# A LITERATURE REVIEW OF ISSUES RELATED TO MENTAL HEALTH OF TEACHERS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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**Abstract:** The Covid-19 pandemic hits the whole world and affects all the nations and territories. Schools were closed due to national lockdown, social distancing, restrictions and compulsory quarantine in the country to combat the corona virus. The emergence of covid-19 pandemic negatively affects the socio economic conditions of the people across the world, but in human history this pandemic has created the largest disruption in the educational system. Low budget private schools and institution are also affected by this pandemic resulting into permanently shut- down of the same. The private school teachers who lost their services are looking for an alternate job for the survival of their families. The Covid-19 has placed substantial demands on the teachers. Teachers who are experts in face to face teaching faced a lot of challenges in adopting and handling the digital teaching. These different restrictions and major health crisis adversely associated with the mental health of teachers. As a result of this life threatening virus teachers experiences significant stress which was associated with poorer mental. A comprehensive literature was reviewed by the researcher from different databases and relevant studies selected for final review which are published after the outbreak of covid-19. The purpose of the present paper is to see the impact of Covid-19 on the teacher's mental health and its correlated issues in Indian context.

**Keywords:-Covid -19, Teachers, Mental health, Issues and Suggestions.**

## **Introduction**

The teaching profession is considered the most prestigious among all the profession of the universe, while the work of the teachers is more responsible and hectic. Before Covid-19 pandemic education in India is conducted largely in traditional mode but after the pandemic the whole education system is changed and transferred to virtual learning in the country. The new situation generate uncertainty among the whole population including teachers. People lost their work, faced financial crisis and often had to quarantine themselves from their loved ones due to lockdown and restrictions imposed by the govt to break the chain of

the deadliest virus. This situation leads the people susceptible to depression and anxiety (Jakubowski & Dominik 2021).

This unprecedented changes created new socio-economic challenges and difficulties for educational institutions and teachers. (Kumar 2021). Even though the virtual learning resources are commonly used in the educational institution, especially at higher level of education, but the new reality of totally online classes may affect the teacher's mental health. this occur because the change arise in an abruptly short period of time, without proper training for the use of digital training and in some institutions there is a lack of appropriate equipment's for online classes.

The professional dynamics and family was entirely altered by Covid -19 pandemic. Fear of losing the life, fears for the future and health of one's family, social isolation and personal issues has negatively impact the lives of the people. Like all other employees teachers also worked from their home and held responsible to carry on the education to the virtual space (Jakubowski & Dominiki 2021).

Although in distance education teachers teaches through an online mode but those courses are prepared by a team of professionals and experts who are friendly with technology and responsible for creating materials in an accessible format as well as visually attractive. In this context teachers faced lot of challenges related to online teaching learning (Cobucci 2021).

### **Mental Health**

Mental health refers to intellectual, psychological, emotional and behavioural well-being. It influence how people reflect, feel and behave. A person is said to be mentally healthy if he is able to make healthy choices, calm down during stress, make friendly relationship with others and able to cope with other problems of the life. In every sphere of life mental health is necessary both for children's and adults. It is as important for overall health as physical health of an individual. If someone is experiencing economic crisis, having extra work load, and more concerned about others may experience poor mental health which leads to depression, anxiety and stress and affect the mental health.

Since the widespread of covid-19 pandemic teachers had to teach through online mode, and are confronted with various psychological symptoms. Etxebarria et al. (2021) in their study revealed that majority of the teachers shows the symptoms of tension anxiety and depression. They also found that age, gender, job stability and level of education had significantly affect the mental health of teachers, They further argued that if we want the quality of teaching we have to safeguard the mental health of students as well as teachers. (Etxebarria, 2021). Recent studies revealed that during the closure of schools teachers have suffered from stress as they have to record the lessons and provide online materials to the students in a short period of time. (Basser et.al. 2020). This stress causes sleep disturbance, unhappiness and symptoms of depression due to hectic schedule of recording the lessons every day and teaching from home. (Ng, 2007).

## Reviews of researches

**Kumar (2020)** revealed that both the general community and healthcare workers are affected during this deadliest disease, but found that symptoms of depression and anxiety were more in healthcare workers, further he suggested that online consultation services should be provided to these patients.

**Iharake et al. (2022)** summarized in their study that children's and college students are more worried, depressed and fatigued during this pandemic. Various risk factors are associated with the poor mental health of students such as living in far flung areas, having low income social background and a healthcare worker.

**Courtney et.al (2021)** researched that during this pandemic the most challenging aspects for teachers: are internet connection problem and virtual classes; but the cooperation from colleagues and administration were the most helpful.

**Saliva et al. (2021)** examined that high percentage of depression worry and anxiety was found among teachers and suggests that it is the need of the hour to take care of mental health issues of teachers.

**Handevaraj, Ghani, and Nasir (2021)** suggests that Govt should take steps in helping the students to provide required devices like laptop smart phone and tabs, which are the basic requirement for attending the online classes and to provide proper access of internet who are living in remote and hilly area especially in this critical pandemic.

**Katriona et al. (2021)** in their study highlight the impact of Covid-19 severe restrictions on vulnerable population and found that these restrictions severely affects the mental health and well-being of children, youngster and those with Autism Spectrum disorder.

**Chaturvedi et al. (2021)** revealed that Covid 19 pandemic severely affects the mental health of students, has made substantial impact on the educational system and hampers the daily routine of students. This Covid-19 disruptions challenges the teachers and administration to provide substitute measures in educational context. The novel advisories and policies would prepare the students and teachers for the better mental health in future.

**Aristovnik et al. (2021)** revealed that students felt distractions and felt more loneliness during online learning as compared to face to face or traditional education. Social isolation and sadness raised the depression.

**Etxebarria et al. (2021).** In their study found that gender age, job stability, parental status of child and their educational level increased the level of depression and anxiety among the teachers. Furthermore they emphasised more on the improvement of mental health of teachers for better teaching learning process.

## Issues associated with mental health of Teachers

- **Online Teaching:** After the Covid 19 outbreak Govt ordered the teachers to start online classes by using application like zoom, Google meet, teacher kit, Google classroom. Although online learning is not a new concept as many of the institution are already using online method for teaching before

Covid 19 outbreak. But in India every teachers is not techno savvy and find difficulty in delivering the content through online mode. This transition from traditional learning to online mode has raised questions for the teachers about their capability to cope up with the existing technology. Those teachers who are living in rural and tribal areas are totally unaware about online education. Also, many schools and educational institutions do not have resources to facilitate online learning instantly. Due to this many of the teachers feel frustrated and under constant pressure which directly deteriorate their mental health.

- **Students:** Whole education is centred on the students. The emotional environment of the classroom directly influence the experiences of the students. Students are coming from different areas and background. Question arises in the minds of teachers are: what about those students who do not have access to internet facilities or laptops or smart phone at home? Is it possible to do practicals and several other courses like music and art through online mode? Teachers during Covid -19 pandemic are unable to balance among students with good technology facilities and those who have zero facilities, and this imbalance leads to tension and anxiety among teachers affecting their mental health.
- **Parents:** In India many of the school fall in the hilly areas. Parents are illiterate they are not aware about new technology even some of them are unable to use the smart phones also they cannot afford the digital devices like computer or mobile. In those areas internet facilities are unavailable or the connection is poor. Parents are worried about their child's learning. Teachers had faced lot of problems in bringing the students in the same class who have all facilities and those deprived students who cannot afford. Parents constantly raised question to teachers only not the government. So there is stress on teachers both form govt as well as parents.
- **Evaluation and Assessment:** With the arrival of covid-19 teachers are worried about the online teaching, and many universities suspended their exams. This transition from traditional learning to online learning impacted the evaluation and assessment systems. Conducting online exams for those courses which are designed for face to face learning is also a challenging task for teachers. Students as well as teachers are worried about the about the procedure of conducting online exams as it is very difficult for teachers to monitor the process and taking online and to ensure that students are not copying during the online exams. Teachers have to set the paper, evaluate and made result and listens the students grievances from home along with his or her personal activities. This constant pressure of work and balancing between work and family especially for female teachers leads to depression, anxiety which directly weakens the mental health of teachers.

## SUGGESTIONS

After the Covid -19 pandemic there is increased stress level among the lives of many teachers with new methods of teaching and other personal issues. The researcher gave some suggestion for improving the mental health of teachers.

- The teachers set boundaries between health and work and take care of their mental health. The govt should provide technology devices to those students who cannot afford and provide internet connectivity to those areas which are far flung areas.
- Teachers across the globe are unprepared for teaching via online mode and unable to support the continuity of teaching process digitally because of limited technological skills. The Govt should provide training for the professional growth of teachers in digital competency. The teachers can also signup for different online courses, webinars or watches videos on YouTube to enhance their digital skills and adopt both online as well as offline teaching methods. This will provide confidence and make your professional journey more comfortable.
- Teachers should share their problems with their colleagues or family member whenever you feel overwhelmed. It is important for the teachers to stay emotionally and socially connected with other peoples.
- By recognising the signs like depression, burnout, persistent headache, hopelessness and anxiety the teachers should seek medical or psychological support for active and joyful life.

## Conclusion

There is need to balance between online and face to face teaching learning process. The head of the educational intuitions build supportive cultures in the school and reduced teacher's burden. The students and parents should also cooperate with teachers, whenever necessary they can interact with teachers. Teachers, students, parents and society should understand each other and solve their problems collaboratively. Online mode of teaching should be used without any stress. Otherwise the mental health of the teachers is affected.

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