



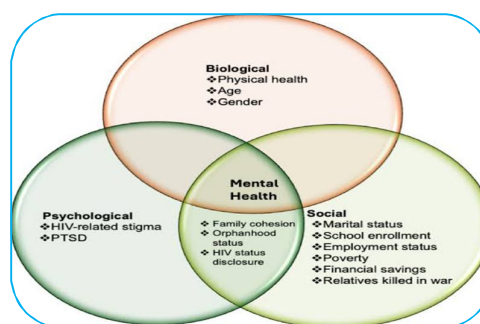
DETERMINANTS OF MENTAL HEALTH AMONG STUDENTS

Dr. Rekha Nagshetty

Guest Lecturer, Department of Psychology ,
Gulbarga University Kalaburagi.

ABSTRACT

Mental health is a vital component of the overall well-being and academic success of students. Various factors influence the mental health status of students, including academic pressure, family environment, peer relationships, socioeconomic conditions, lifestyle habits, and the increasing use of digital media. The present study focuses on identifying and examining the major determinants of mental health among students and their impact on psychological well-being. The study is based on secondary sources of data collected from books, research articles, journals, reports, and online resources. Findings indicate that stress, anxiety, lack of social support, unhealthy lifestyle patterns, financial difficulties, and excessive exposure to social media are among the significant factors affecting students' mental health. Conversely, positive family relationships, supportive educational environments, physical activity, and effective coping strategies contribute to better mental health outcomes. Understanding these determinants is essential for developing preventive measures and promoting a healthy and supportive learning environment. The study emphasizes the need for collaborative efforts by parents, teachers, educational institutions, and policymakers to enhance students' mental well-being and ensure their holistic development.



KEYWORDS: Mental Health, Students, Determinants, Academic Stress, Psychological Well-Being, Social Support, Lifestyle Factors.

INTRODUCTION:

Mental health is an essential component of overall well-being and plays a vital role in the academic, social, emotional, and personal development of students. In the contemporary educational environment, students face numerous challenges arising from academic pressure, competition, family expectations, social relationships, financial difficulties, and the rapid expansion of digital technology. These factors significantly influence their mental health and can affect their ability to learn, adapt, and achieve their full potential.

The transition from childhood to adolescence and young adulthood is accompanied by various physical, emotional, and psychological changes. During this period, students are particularly vulnerable to mental health problems such as stress, anxiety, depression, loneliness, and low self-esteem. The prevalence of these issues has increased considerably in recent years, making student mental health a major concern for educators, parents, policymakers, and health professionals.

Mental health among students is determined by a combination of biological, psychological, social, environmental, and educational factors. Family support, peer relationships, socioeconomic status, academic workload, lifestyle habits, sleep patterns, social media usage, and access to mental

health services all contribute to shaping students' psychological well-being. Positive determinants promote resilience, self-confidence, and emotional stability, whereas adverse conditions can lead to psychological distress and impaired academic performance.

The modern educational environment, characterized by increased competition and technological advancements, has brought both opportunities and challenges to students' mental health. While digital resources and social connectivity provide support and learning opportunities, excessive screen time, cyberbullying, and social isolation may negatively affect psychological well-being. Therefore, understanding the various determinants of mental health among students is essential for developing effective interventions and creating supportive educational environments.

A comprehensive understanding of these determinants can help educational institutions, families, and society promote positive mental health and prevent the development of mental disorders among students. By addressing the factors that influence mental well-being, it is possible to foster healthier, more productive, and emotionally resilient student populations.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Mental health problems among students have emerged as a significant concern in contemporary educational settings. Increasing academic demands, competition, family expectations, financial pressures, social challenges, and excessive use of digital technology have contributed to rising levels of stress, anxiety, depression, and other psychological difficulties among students. These problems adversely affect academic performance, interpersonal relationships, physical health, and overall quality of life.

Although mental health is influenced by multiple factors, there is considerable variation in how different determinants affect students' psychological well-being. Biological, psychological, social, environmental, and educational factors interact in complex ways, making it necessary to understand their individual and combined influence. In many cases, lack of awareness, social stigma, inadequate support systems, and limited access to mental health services further aggravate these issues.

Despite growing recognition of student mental health concerns, there remains a need for a comprehensive examination of the determinants that contribute to positive and negative mental health outcomes among students. Understanding these determinants is essential for designing effective preventive measures, promoting emotional well-being, and creating supportive educational environments.

Therefore, the present study seeks to investigate the various determinants of mental health among students and to examine how these factors influence their psychological well-being and overall development.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Aim

The primary aim of the study is to examine the various determinants of mental health among students and to understand their influence on students' psychological well-being and overall development.

Objectives

1. To study the concept and importance of mental health among students.
2. To identify the major biological, psychological, social, and environmental determinants affecting students' mental health.
3. To examine the impact of academic stress and educational pressures on students' psychological well-being.
4. To analyze the role of family environment and parental support in promoting positive mental health.
5. To investigate the influence of peer relationships and social interactions on students' emotional well-being.
6. To study the effects of socioeconomic factors on the mental health of students.

7. To assess the impact of lifestyle factors such as sleep patterns, physical activity, and digital media usage on mental health.
8. To understand the prevalence of common mental health problems such as stress, anxiety, and depression among students.
9. To explore the importance of counseling services and support systems in maintaining students' mental well-being.
10. To suggest measures and strategies for promoting positive mental health and preventing psychological problems among students.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Numerous studies have emphasized that mental health is a crucial determinant of students' academic success, social adjustment, and overall quality of life. Researchers have identified several biological, psychological, social, and environmental factors that influence the mental well-being of students.

World Health Organization (WHO, 2022) reported that mental health disorders among adolescents and young adults are increasing globally, with anxiety and depression being among the leading causes of illness and disability. The report highlighted the importance of supportive family environments, healthy lifestyles, and access to mental health services in promoting psychological well-being.

Ryff (1989) proposed the concept of psychological well-being and identified dimensions such as self-acceptance, autonomy, environmental mastery, positive relationships, purpose in life, and personal growth as essential components of mental health. These dimensions have been widely used to understand the factors contributing to students' well-being.

Diener (2000) emphasized subjective well-being and suggested that life satisfaction, positive emotions, and social support significantly influence mental health. According to the author, students with strong interpersonal relationships and positive self-perceptions tend to exhibit better psychological adjustment.

Bandura (1997), through the theory of self-efficacy, explained that individuals who possess confidence in their abilities are more capable of coping with stress and overcoming challenges. High self-efficacy has been associated with lower levels of anxiety and greater emotional resilience among students.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) introduced the ecological systems theory, which highlights the influence of family, school, peer groups, and broader social environments on individual development. The theory suggests that mental health is shaped by interactions among multiple environmental systems.

Beck (1976), in his cognitive theory, demonstrated that negative thought patterns and distorted beliefs contribute to depression and anxiety. Positive thinking and adaptive coping strategies, therefore, play an important role in maintaining mental health.

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) developed the transactional model of stress and coping, emphasizing that stress results from an individual's perception of environmental demands and available coping resources. Effective coping mechanisms help students manage academic and personal pressures more successfully.

Keyes (2002) proposed the concept of flourishing and argued that mental health involves not merely the absence of illness but also the presence of emotional, psychological, and social well-being. Students who experience a sense of belonging and purpose are more likely to achieve positive mental health outcomes.

Twenge (2017) highlighted the impact of excessive digital media use and social networking on the psychological health of adolescents. Increased screen time, reduced face-to-face interaction, and sleep disturbances were found to be associated with higher levels of anxiety and depression.

The reviewed literature indicates that students' mental health is determined by a complex interaction of personal characteristics, family support, academic pressures, social relationships, socioeconomic conditions, and lifestyle factors. These findings underscore the need for comprehensive

interventions and supportive educational environments to promote positive mental health among students.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study on "**Determinants of Mental Health Among Students**" is descriptive and analytical in nature. The study aims to identify and examine the various factors influencing the mental health and psychological well-being of students.

1. Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive research design to analyze the different determinants affecting students' mental health. The design facilitates a systematic understanding of the relationship between various psychological, social, educational, and environmental factors and mental well-being.

2. Nature of the Study

The study is primarily qualitative and based on secondary data. It seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the major determinants of mental health among students and their implications for educational and personal development.

3. Sources of Data

The study is based on secondary sources of information. Data have been collected from:

- Books on psychology, education, and mental health.
- Research articles published in national and international journals.
- Reports and publications of the World Health Organization (WHO).
- Government reports and educational documents.
- Online databases and scholarly sources.
- Conference proceedings and review articles related to student mental health.

4. Population of the Study

The population of the study comprises school and college students whose mental health is influenced by various biological, psychological, social, and environmental factors.

5. Variables of the Study

The study considers the following variables:

- **Dependent Variable:** Mental health and psychological well-being of students.
- **Independent Variables:** Academic stress, family environment, peer relationships, socioeconomic status, lifestyle habits, sleep patterns, physical activity, digital media usage, and access to counseling and support services.

6. Method of Data Collection

Information has been collected through an extensive review of books, journals, research papers, reports, and electronic resources. Relevant literature has been analyzed to identify the major determinants associated with students' mental health.

7. Method of Analysis

The collected information has been analyzed using descriptive and interpretative methods. Findings from previous studies and theoretical perspectives have been synthesized to understand the factors influencing mental health among students.

8. Scope of the Study

The study focuses on understanding the major determinants of mental health among students and emphasizes the significance of psychological, social, educational, and environmental factors. It also

highlights the need for preventive measures and supportive educational practices for enhancing students' well-being.

9. Limitations of the Study

- The study is based solely on secondary data and does not involve primary data collection.
- The findings are dependent upon the availability and reliability of existing literature.
- Individual differences and cultural variations among students may influence mental health in ways that are not fully captured in the study.
- The study does not focus on any specific age group or geographical region.

10. Ethical Considerations

The study is based on published sources and follows ethical standards by ensuring proper acknowledgment of authors, reports, and research findings. No personal or confidential information has been used in the study.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The analysis of the available literature and secondary data reveals that mental health among students is influenced by a combination of biological, psychological, social, educational, and environmental factors. The major findings of the study are as follows:

1. Academic Stress as a Major Determinant

Academic workload, examinations, competition, and pressure to achieve high grades were found to be significant contributors to stress, anxiety, and emotional exhaustion among students.

2. Influence of Family Environment

Supportive family relationships and positive parenting practices contribute to better psychological well-being, whereas family conflicts, neglect, and excessive expectations negatively affect students' mental health.

3. Role of Peer Relationships

Healthy friendships and social support enhance self-esteem and emotional stability. Conversely, social isolation, bullying, and peer pressure increase the risk of anxiety and depression.

4. Impact of Socioeconomic Status

Financial difficulties and lack of resources were found to create stress and insecurity, thereby adversely affecting students' emotional and psychological well-being.

5. Lifestyle Factors and Mental Health

Adequate sleep, regular physical activity, balanced nutrition, and healthy daily routines were associated with better mental health outcomes, while unhealthy lifestyles increased psychological distress.

6. Effect of Digital Media Usage

Moderate use of digital technology facilitates learning and communication; however, excessive screen time and social media exposure were linked to increased stress, sleep disturbances, and depressive symptoms.

7. Psychological Factors

Self-esteem, self-efficacy, resilience, and coping skills play a crucial role in maintaining positive mental health. Students possessing these qualities were found to manage stress more effectively.

8. Importance of Educational Environment

A positive and supportive school or college environment promotes emotional security and academic motivation. Lack of support from teachers and institutions may contribute to mental health problems.

9. Prevalence of Common Mental Health Problems

Stress, anxiety, depression, loneliness, and low self-confidence emerged as the most common psychological issues experienced by students.

10. Need for Counseling and Support Services

The findings indicate that access to counseling services, mental health awareness programs, and supportive interventions significantly contributes to the prevention and management of psychological problems among students.

MAJOR FINDING

The study concludes that students' mental health is determined by the interaction of multiple factors rather than a single cause. Academic pressures, family and peer support, socioeconomic conditions, lifestyle habits, and access to mental health resources collectively influence psychological well-being. Therefore, a holistic and supportive approach is essential for promoting positive mental health among students and ensuring their overall development.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the study indicate that mental health among students is a multidimensional phenomenon influenced by a wide range of biological, psychological, social, educational, and environmental factors. Academic stress, family environment, peer relationships, socioeconomic status, lifestyle habits, and digital media usage emerged as major determinants affecting students' psychological well-being.

The study reveals that excessive academic pressure and competition often lead to stress, anxiety, and emotional exhaustion. At the same time, supportive family relationships and positive peer interactions act as protective factors that enhance emotional resilience and self-esteem. Socioeconomic conditions also play a significant role, as financial insecurity and limited resources may contribute to psychological distress among students.

Furthermore, healthy lifestyle practices such as regular physical activity, adequate sleep, and balanced nutrition were found to promote better mental health outcomes. In contrast, excessive use of social media and digital devices may increase feelings of loneliness, anxiety, and depression. The findings also emphasize the importance of counseling services, mental health awareness programs, and supportive educational environments in preventing and managing mental health problems among students.

The reviewed literature and analyzed findings support the view that mental health is not merely the absence of mental illness but a state of emotional, psychological, and social well-being that enables students to cope effectively with daily challenges and achieve their full potential.

CONCLUSION

Mental health is an essential component of students' overall development and academic success. The present study concludes that the mental health of students is determined by the interaction of various personal, familial, social, educational, and environmental factors. Academic stress, family support, peer relationships, socioeconomic status, lifestyle behaviors, and access to mental health services significantly influence psychological well-being.

The study highlights the need for a holistic approach to promoting mental health among students. Educational institutions, families, communities, and policymakers should work collaboratively to create supportive and inclusive environments that foster emotional resilience and psychological well-being. Early identification of mental health problems, effective counseling services, mental health education, and awareness programs are essential for preventing psychological distress and improving the quality of life of students.

Therefore, promoting positive mental health should be regarded as a shared responsibility and an integral part of the educational process to ensure the healthy growth, academic achievement, and overall well-being of students.

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