

ARE CHILDREN FEELING HAPPY? – “COVID 19” IMPACT OF SCHOOL CLOSURE ON CHILDREN’S FEELINGS FROM CLASS 1ST TO 8TH

Anita*
Dr. Anukrati Sharma**

ABSTRACT

The Pandemic Covid -19 adversely affect 161 countries all over the world, India is one of them, who suffered a lot. Pandemic waves one after other leads to affect 250 million students enrolled in India, which is the biggest crisis for education sector. School closure decision taken by govt. for student’s safety purpose but is this really protecting childrens or they feeling mentally ill. Physical and Mental health both are important for overall development of children. They are future of our nation. Total students enrolled in Jaipur only is 410,715(data provided by Rajasthan govt. for year 2018-19) from class 1st to 8th in govt. and private schools. The main objective of this study is to find out the impact of school Closure on student’s feeling’s as positive feeling’s (happy, motivated, joy, hope) directly leads to achieve high goals while negative feelings (anger, frustration, depression, bored, fear, anxiety) will lead to mental illness, low performance and decline overall physical development of a child.

Keywords: *Pandemic, Physical Health, Mental Health, School Closure, Feelings, Performance.*

Introduction

India is having the largest education system in the world. According to data presented by UNICEF India have 1.5 million schools, 8.5 million teachers and 250 million children studding in private and govt. organizations. From last 2 years’ many children suffer mentally due to online education system. Because, announcement of “school will be closed till next official order’s” is used as a biggest tool of risk extenuation to control over pandemic Covid -19 by State government. One of the biggest reasons is community spread of virus. There are 30 million students who can’t even access of these online classes due to low economic background. In India, first case of Covid -19 was originate in Kerala on 27 January 2020. This is the time when Indian government imposed 21 days’ nationwide lockdown on 24th march 2020. This is the first time in the history of India when world’s 2nd largest population country faced a complete lockdown for so many days. A country of 138 crore people suffered both economically and psychologically due to worldwide Pandemic. After 1st and 2nd wave of COVID -19 India is now facing the 3rd wave of this worldwide pandemic. Now this authority is pass on to states by Indian govt. that what restrictions they want to impose for safeguarding their people.

Restrictions related to Pandemic affect worldwide mostly to kids’ psychological behavior. Longitudinal data of age group 9 to 16 from China shows that students want to commit suicide because they are feeling alone and depressed. Children’s have 2 types of feeling positive and negative. Positive feelings arise when children’s find something interesting and creative but they become negative when they find things boredom and require a lot of focus and concentration. So, there is a direct relation between feelings and performance of students. Students outperform if they are happy but their performance goes down if they are feeling negative.

School Closure is the reason that Children’s are now more addict to cell phones and not liking outdoor activities. Kids are more aggressive and violent in their behavior. They are feeling frustrated and sad, even it becomes very difficult for parents also to handle this situation. Obesity is also one of the main concerns because it turns to affect their physical health as well.

* Research Scholar, University of Kota, Kota, Rajasthan, India.

** Head, Department of Commerce & Management, University of Kota, Kota, Rajasthan, India.

Debates are ongoing on the issue to closure of schools. A study reported 73% low mood, 7% anxiety, and 17% anger for students under lockdown while a slim percentage of positive feelings (5%) was also recorded (Brooks et al., 2020). A study among high school students revealed an overall report of stress (~29%), anxiety (~12%), and depression (~5%) (Moeller et al., 2020).

Review of Literature

Psychological behavior of children was studied by many researchers all over the world before and during Covid-19. As studied by **(Claudia Camacho-Zu-niga, 2021)** high school, graduate and post graduate students' level of energy and emotional valence are directly related with each other. **Yeasmin et al., 2020)** one study is done in Bangladesh on (5-15) year old children and find out that there is a mental disturbance among kids whose close relative suffered from Covid -19. **(Amanpreet Bhogal, B.S,2021)** done a study on black american and minority group kids and study reveal that there is mental illness among these kids after Covid-19. one another psychocological research reveal that Negative feeling leads to low performance by **(Madigan and Curran, 2020); Moeller et al., 2020; Samuel and Burger, 2019)**. Covid -19 impact a lot of emotional and mental burdon on kids **(Gavin et al., 2020; Grubic et al., 2020; Pfefferbaum and North, 2020)**. Therefore, it is a matter of utmost concern and information should be given to parents and schools for safeguarding children's mental and emotional wellbeing. Now a day's data shows that equal importance should be given to mental health as like physical health of somebody **(Pfefferbaum and North, 2020)**. Arising information show that the 2019 novel Covid sickness(Coronavirus) pandemic is a danger to emotional wellness around the world, and relieving these emotional well-being ramifications is a general wellbeing need **(Pfefferbaum and North, 2020)** The greater part of the logical writing has zeroed in on psychological well-being ramifications in grown-ups, which might be expected, in part, to the way that kids will quite often encounter milder physical side effects when tainted with COVID-19 **(Ludvigsson, 2020)**. Sentiments assume a huge part in mental prosperity of understudies consequently straight forwardly influencing all parts of their scholastic lives **(Moeller et al., 2020; Phan et al., 2019)** In particular, good sentiments (for example delight and interest) were viewed as related with understudies' consideration, fixation, commitment, and industriousness in learning exercises which decidedly associate with scholastic accomplishments **(Eccles, 2005; Moeller et al., 2020; Schiefele, 1996)** Aside from the actual unexpected problems of COVID-19 pandemic, the pandemic has likewise forced mental, enthusiastic, and social difficulties to our lives. Reports of the writing proposed that undergrads frequently experienced intensified gloomy feelings during the school conclusion (for example occasions or spring breaks) **(Van Bortel et al., 2016; Zhai and Du, 2020)** For the understudies who were far off from their companions and were encountering life in lockdown, the uneasiness level has shown a continuous increment as this mental jumble is bound to happen and deteriorate without any relational correspondence **(Cao et al., 2020; Kmietowicz, 2020; Xiao, 2020)**. Inside the beyond couple of months, comprehension of the passionate state of everyone and that of understudies has turned into the focal point of research to track down the best course of activities and general wellbeing choices **(Brooks et al., 2020; Cao et al., 2020; Zhai and Du, 2020)** It is, in this way, basic for colleges and schools to assemble mindfulness around understudies' sentiments and to engage them to direct really their sentiments and to look for help and backing during this natural fiasco.

Methodology

This study is related to psychological behavior of children. Behavior is a qualitative aspect; parents are the one who can tell us about changed behavior of their kids. Cross -sectional survey of parents of class 1st to 8th is done in Jaipur. Telephonic survey is done to know the psychological behavior of students. Assessment of kids feeling is done on weekly basis from 4th Dec. to 25th Dec. in the month of December 2022, to find out how's they feeling at the end of the week during school closure. A sample of 140 students of age group 4 to 15 from 4 different schools (3 private =1 govt.) is collected through convenience sampling method for this purpose. Their retort determines the trustworthiness of study. The response collected from respondent and analyzed using simple percentage method.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The survey was based on a questionnaire and Table 1 shows the Demographic characteristics of selected students.

Table 1: Distribution of Selected Students based on Education and Economic Status

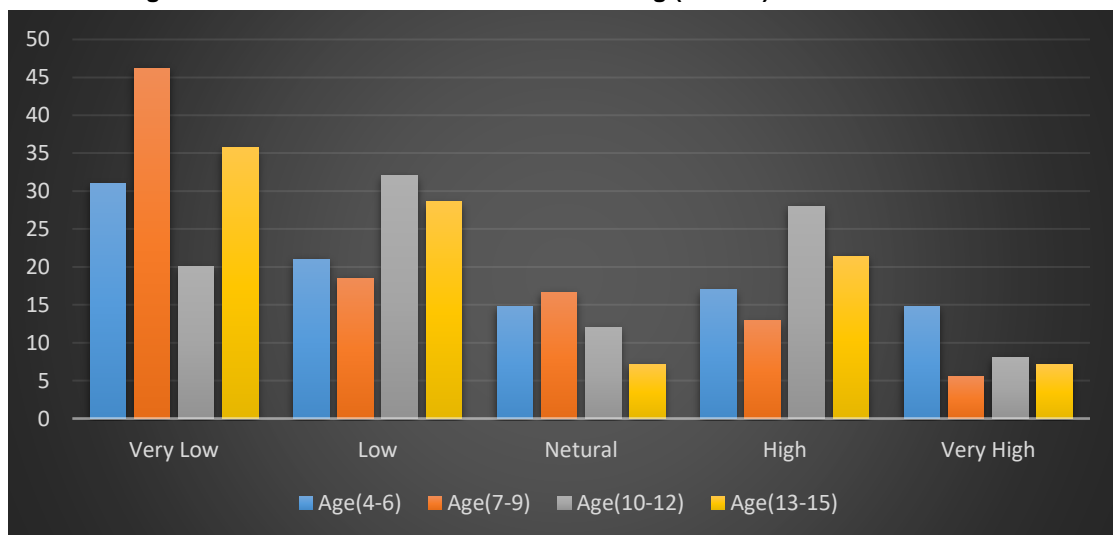
Sr. No	Characteristics	M	Range
1	Age	8.15	4 to 14
2	Education		
	First	25	
	Second	22	
	Third	20	
	Fourth	13	
	Fifth	25	
	Sixth	20	
	Seventh	10	
	eighth	5	
3	Sex		
	Male	76	
	Female	64	
4	Economic status		
	Low	38	
	Medium	72	
	High	30	

Table 2: Questions asked from Respondents from 1W to 4W during the Pandemic

Sr. No.	Question	Choices
1	How's your child feel, explain in only one word	NA
2	How much active does your child feel	Very low, low, neutral, high, very high
3	Mostly your child do at home	Using phone, others
4	Your child is satisfied with the existing situation	Yes, no
5	Do you want help of some specialist	Yes, no
6	Are you educated	Yes, no
7	What is your income level	Low. Medium, high
8	what changes did you notice in your child	Explain in one word
9	Is there any special program started by school for kids?	Yes, no
10	Is there any special program started by govt. for kids?	Yes, no

Feelings of students assessed based on answers of question 1. For these choices are not given to respondents. They have to answer by themselves because choice may affect the result of study. Activeness of students were assessed by answer 2nd and question 3rd will support their answer. For statistical calculation total number of students divided in different age groups so that some conclusion can be drawn and (yes is calculated as -1, no is calculated as -0). similarly, for activeness also (neutral is considered as -0 and low = -1, very low = -2 and high = 1, very high = 2.

Figure 1: Data of Activeness of Students during (W1-W4) after School Closure



Results

Table 3: Weekly(W1-W4) Record of Feeling of Student’s Class 1st to 8th in Month of Dec 2022

Feelings	Age (4-6) W1-W4(%)	Age (7-9) W1-W4(%)	Age (10-12) W1-W4(%)	Age (13-15) W1-W4(%)	Total W1-W4(%)
Anger	8.5	18.5	4	21.4	12.8
Fear	2.1	3.7	8	7.1	4.2
Hope	2.1	1.8	4	7.1	2.8
Stress	10.6	7.4	8	21.4	10
Frustration	12.7	20.3	12	14.2	15.7
Anxiety	6.3	16.6	8	7.1	10.7
Happy	4.2	1.8	4	7.1	3.5
Sad	12.7	9.2	8	7.1	10
Tired	6.3	1.8	8	0	4.2
Bored	21.2	9.2	20	7.1	15
Worried	2.1	1.8	4	0	2.1
Depressed	4.2	3.7	8	0	4.2
Joy	2.1	1.8	4	0	2.1
Motivated	4.2	1.8	0	0	2.1

Weekly record in Table -3 shows the results that overall, most dominants feeling during school closure is frustration among all the students which is 15.7 %. 18.5 % students of age group 7-9 are feeling angry. Response shows that Primary students getting bored day by day which re 21.2%. Only a few students have positive feeling like joy (2.1%), motivated (2.1 %), happy (3.5%) and hope (2.8%) etc.

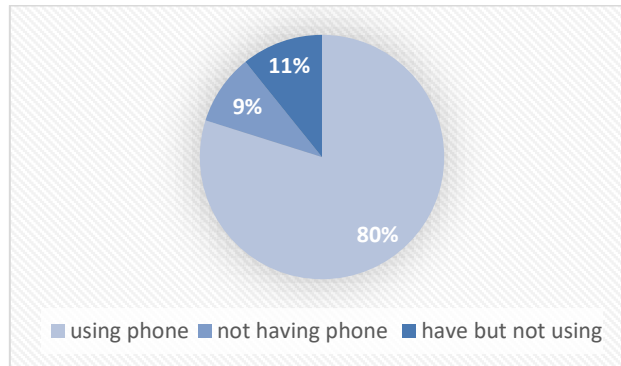


Figure 2: Shows Children using Phone for Playing Games etc. Other than Online Classes during School Closure.

There are 13 students who are not having cell phone, reason maybe they are economically poor or their parents are not educated. 15 students out of 140 still don't use phone which is very good they are associated with positive feelings (hope, happy, motivated etc.) and high to very high active but still 80% children are using cell phones and spending their time on it.

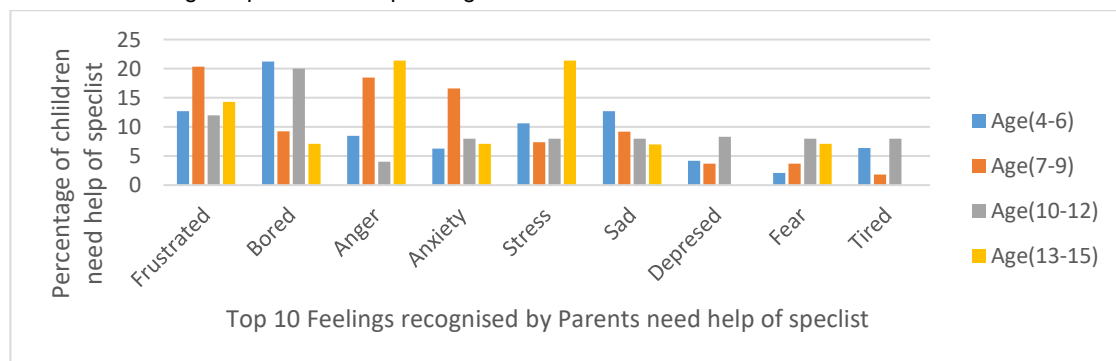


Figure 3: Based upon Respondents Response Children need Help from Specialist

Parents feel that their children need special treatment from doctor because of their changed behavior, which is asked in questionnaire in Q. -5 and Q. -8. This is revealed from the study that age group 4-6 and 7-9 need special take care of as they are more mentally disturbed than age group 10-12 and 13-15. Frustration, boredom, Anger, Anxiety and stress will lead to savior health issues if not cured timely.

Conclusion

School Closure decision adversely affect the behavior of children. Children are feeling mentally ill and this illness will lead to serious physical health issues also. Current study reveal that Children’s are not liking outdoor activities now because from last 2 years their life changed completely. Now they are becoming cell phone addict, they are liking to play only online games as 80% respondents agree that their children want to use cell phones only. Based on the study it is also revealed that till now government and schools have not started any special program for helping out children. This is the time when together they should take steps to save children’s future. weekly study finds out that children with positive feelings are only 2.1 %, these are students who may be self-motivated or student belong to joint family. As association between family type and feelings are not a part of this study. Based on results of study, it can be said that govt. has to use school closure decision as a last weapon not the 1st thing that can safeguard children. Educational institutions have to take face a lot in near future regarding performance of children as mental health and performance are directly related to each –other. Most affected children are age group 4-6 and 6-9 according to results. children are not happy with their current situation. Study also finds out Top -5 negative feelings. Frustrated, Anger, boredom, anxiety and stress.

References

1. Baloran, E.T., 2020. Knowledge, attitudes, anxiety, and coping strategies of students during COVID-19 pandemic. *J. Loss Trauma* 1–8.
2. Brooks, S.K., Webster, R.K., Smith, L.E., Woodland, L., Wessely, S., Greenberg, N., Rubin, G.J., 2020. The psychological impact of quarantine and how to reduce it: rapid review of the evidence. *Lancet*.
3. Cao, W., Fang, Z., Hou, G., Han, M., Xu, X., Dong, J., Zheng, J., 2020. The psychological impact of the COVID-19 epidemic on college students in China. *Psychiatr. Res.* 112934.
4. CuidaTuMente, 2020. <https://tec.mx/es/cuida-tu-mente>. Ebesutani, C., Regan, J., Smith, A., Reise, S., Higa-McMillan, C., Chorpita, B.F., 2012. The 10-item positive and negative affect schedule for children, child and parent shortened versions: application of item response theory for more efficient assessment.
5. *J. Psychopathol. Behav. Assess.* 34 (2), 191–203. Eccles, J.S., 2005. Subjective task value and the Eccles et al. model of achievement related choices. In: *Handbook of competence and motivation*, pp. 105–121.
6. Galante, J., Dufour, G., Vainre, M., Wagner, A.P., Stochl, J., Benton, A., Jones, P.B., 2018. A mindfulness-based intervention to increase resilience to stress in university students (the Mindful Student Study): a pragmatic randomised controlled trial. *The Lancet Public Health* 3 (2), e72–e81.
7. Gall_e, F., Sabella, E.A., Da Molin, G., De Giglio, O., Caggiano, G., Di Onofrio, V., Orsi, G.B., 2020. Understanding knowledge and behaviors related to CoViD–19 epidemic in Italian undergraduate students: the EPICO study. *Int. J. Environ. Res. Publ. Health* 17 (10), 3481.
8. Gavin, B., Lyne, J., McNicholas, F., 2020. Mental health and the COVID19 pandemic. *Ir. J. Psychol. Med.* 1–7.
9. Grubic, N., Badovinac, S., Johri, A.M., 2020. Student mental health in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic: a call for further research and immediate solutions. *Int. J. Soc. Psychiatr.*, 0020764020925108
10. Pfefferbaum, B., North, C.S., 2020. Mental health and the Covid-19 pandemic. *N. Engl. J. Med.*

