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"An Assessment of Mental Health Awareness among the Youth (A Case Study of University Students)"

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ABSTRACT:

Many young people say they live good lives, but more and more are facing problems with their mental health. Sadly, not all of them get the help they need. Mental health is really important for everyone, especially when we're growing up. But we're not sure how to help young people with their mental health or how to encourage them to ask for help.

This research wants to find out how the world, governments, and groups that help people can work together to make sure young people have the information and support they need for good mental health. We'll talk to young people about what mental health problems they face, and we'll look at what's being done locally and globally to help them. The goal is to understand what resources and support systems are out there and how easy they are for young people to access.

KEYWORDS: Mental Health, Youth, Awareness

INTRODUCTION:

Mental health is a big worry for public health because it affects how people feel and think. It's a problem for many people worldwide, with over 450 million people affected. Mental health and mental illness are often mixed up, but they're different. Mental health is about how we feel overall and how we handle life's challenges. Mental illness is when someone has a diagnosable condition that changes how they think, feel, or act.

Health is really important for our well-being. It affects us individually, in our communities, and even globally. Different things can affect our health, like diseases or where we live. We can think of these effects in three ways: Micro, Meso, and Macro. For instance, the recent Corona virus pandemic affected individuals, their communities, and countries all over the world. Health is connected to lots of other things too, like personal growth, human rights, and how well economies

do. The World Health Organization talks about these connections in its constitution.

1. "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

2. The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, and political belief, economic or social condition.

3. The health of all peoples is fundamental to the attainment of peace and security and is dependent upon the fullest co-operation of individuals and States".

In the last twenty years, more kids and teenagers around the world have been having mental health issues. It's become a major reason why they might have trouble doing things. Between 10% and 20% of kids in school may have mental, emotional, or behaviour problems that can be diagnosed. These problems can show up in different ways, like acting out or feeling sad. Some common problems are being disruptive, having trouble paying attention, or not following rules. Disorders commonly share in young people are depression, stress, anxiety, mood swings, obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD). These disorders have resulted in the rise of suicide, addiction, depression among the youth. It is worth noting that depression is a significant cause of death among teenagers across the world.

Mental health problems really affect how kids and young people grow up. They can have trouble doing well in school, focusing, and making friends relationships. Mental health issues also make it hard for them to go to school regularly, and sometimes they even leave school early. Because of these problems, it's been important for thirty years to focus on kids' mental health around the world. Back in 1986, the World Health. Organization said it was important for governments to help kids and teenagers with their mental health.

Purpose of the Study:

This study aimed to see if young people are able to get help for mental health issues and if a public health campaign could help university students in India. The goal was to check how much university students know about mental health and if teaching them about it online could improve their awareness and willingness to seek help.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Definition of Mental Health and Mental Health Disorders:

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines mental health as a state where individuals can realize their potential, handle life's challenges, work productively, and contribute to their community (WHO, 2014). This aligns with their broader definition of health as not just the absence of disease, but a state of overall well-being. Good mental health involves how we think, feel, and behave, and everyone experiences ups and downs in mental health as they navigate life's challenges

(DeSalvo & Levi, 2019. Mental disorders, also known as mental illnesses, involve abnormal thoughts, emotions, behaviors, and relationships with others. Examples include schizophrenia, depression, and substance abuse disorders. While mental health refers to well-being and coping ability, mental illness is a diagnosable condition. It's important to recognize that mental health exists on a continuum, just like physical health.

Social determinants:

The link between health and social factors has been extensively researched. In simple terms, people who are socially isolated or disadvantaged tend to have poorer health. Societies where people are more connected tend to be healthier, with lower rates of death. Numerous studies have shown that having strong social connections is linked to better health (Putnam, 2001). Many authors have reviewed the evidence on the factors—personal, social, and environmental—that influence mental health and mental illness.

Gaps in Mental Health Education for University Students:

It's widely recognized that mental illnesses are one of the top causes of disabilities among young people. By age 25, many young adults experience their first mental illness, which if unattended to, can lead to long-term negative effects. Over the past decades, mental health experts have branded gaps in mental health education that, if taken care of, could significantly reduce mental illness prevalence among students. These gaps cover promotion, prevention, intervention, care, research, and evaluation, and can be tackled through strategic frameworks.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Research objectives:

1. Evaluate how much young people know about mental health.
2. Increase public awareness about mental health promotion for teenagers and young adults.
3. Identify common mental health issues affecting young people.
4. Create a supportive environment where young people feel comfortable discussing mental health and seeking help.
5. Examine how digital media and social platforms influence young people's awareness of mental health.
6. Assess the effectiveness of current mental health awareness programs and initiatives aimed at young people.

UNIVERSE:

The Universe for this study would be Under graduate and Post graduate students from The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Parul University and Alakh Prakash Goyal Shimla University from all faculties.

SAMPLE:

The sample size is 50 students

RESEARCH APPROACH:

The study will employ qualitative research approach. Qualitative will give detailed descriptions and explanations of the phenomenon studied.

SAMPLING METHOD:

This study used a probability sampling method, andSimple random sampling method was used researcher has randomly selected the respondents from the population for the data collection. This also helps ensure efficiency and effectiveness.

RESEARCH DESIGN:

The qualitative research design is advantageous in that it gives the researcher a chance to gains more detailed and rich data in the form of comprehensive written descriptions or visual evidence, such as photographs.

Tool of Data Collection:

The study was carried out by Structured Questionnaire method as a tool of data collection.The questionnaire comprised of both the types of question.

Collection of the data:

Primary data:

 Questionnaires

Secondary data:

 Websites

  Books

  Previous Studies

Major Findings:

After completing this study, it's clear that most of the respondents, 56% (n=28), are female, while 44% (n=22) are male. This means that the majority of the people in our study are female.

Moreover, most of the respondents, about 80% (n=40), are between the ages of 18 and 25. Only 16% (n=8) are over 25, and a small 4% (n=2) are below 18 out of the total 60 respondents.

Additionally, the research shows that 96% (n=48) of the respondents know what "Mental Health" means, and 4% (n=4) have some idea about it, out of the total 50 respondents. This means that everyone in the study has at least some understanding of "Mental Health."

The respondents were also asked to explain "Mental Health" in their own words:

1. Mental health is about the overall wellbeing of a person, including their psychological and social aspects.
2. Mental health is the condition of our mind.

3. Our health depends on our mindset, thoughts, and emotions.

4. It's a state of mental wellbeing that helps people deal with life's challenges.

In trying to find out what types of Mental Health issues are the respondents are aware of, it has been noted that, 4% (n= 2) respondents are familiar with the Depression and 10% (n= 5) respondents are familiar with stress and 2% (n=1) respondents are familiar with anxiety and 84% (n=42) respondents are familiar with all the types of Mental Health issues out of 50 respondents.

Following up to the above, 76% (n= 38) respondents have experienced Mental health issues and 12% (n= 6) respondents have not experience any Mental Health issues and 12% (n=6) respondents are not sure.

The research has also stipulated that, the 22% (n= 11) respondents are very comfortable discussing Mental health issues and 36% (n= 18) respondents are somewhat comfortable discussing Mental Health issues and 36% (n=18) respondents are not comfortable discussing Mental Health issues and 6% (n=3) respondents have not discuss any Mental Health issues out of 50 respondents.

This study also looked at the availability of resources tackling Mental health, and a majority of 52% (n= 26) respondents are aware of a few resources available on Mental Health issues, 22% (n= 11) respondents are aware of several resources on Mental health issues, and 20% (n=10) respondents are not aware of any resources available on Mental Health issues, and 6% (n=3) respondents have not looked for any resources available on Mental Health issues out of 50 respondents.

Furthermore, a majority of 76% (n= 38) respondents think Mental Health is extremely important to the overall wellbeing and 20% (n= 10) respondents say Mental Health is important and 4% (n=2) respondents say that Mental Health is not important at all out of 50 respondents.

This study has also shown that 86% (n=43) respondents contemplate that social media has both positive and negative impacts on Mental Health and 6% (n=3) respondents say social media has a positive impact on Mental Health is important and 6% (n=3) respondents say that social media has a negative and 2% (n=1) respondent says that social media has no impact on Mental health out of 50 respondents.

It has also been indicated by the study that, 32% (n=16) respondents say that the leading cause of low Mental Health is Academic pressure and 28% (n=14) respondents say that leading cause of low mental health is family expectations and 8% (n=4) respondents say that substance abuse is the leading cause of low mental health and 32% (n=16) respondents say that Lack of moral support is the leading cause of Mental health out of 50 respondents.

The data collected has also shown that a majority of 60% (n=30) respondents occasionally feel the pressure to conform to society expectations 20% (n=10) respondents frequently feel the pressure to conform to society expectations and 12% (n=6) respondents never felt the pressure conform to society expectations and 8% (n=4) respondents are not sure if they have felt the pressure

to conform to society expectations or not out of 50 respondents.

This enquiry has also shown that a majority of 70% (n=35) respondents want the define inclusion of mental health education in the school curriculum and 26% (n=13) respondents want the inclusion of mental health education in the school curriculum to some extent and 4% (n=2) respondents think the inclusion of mental health education in the school curriculum is not necessary out of 50 respondents.

Nonetheless a majority of 30% (n=15) respondents would rather source support from professionals 24% (n=12) respondents source support from friends and 26% (n=13) respondents source support from their families and 8% (n=4) respondents would rather source support online and 12% (n=6) respondents would rather not seek support from anywhere out of 50 respondents.

The study at hand has also shown that a majority of 17% (n=34) respondents' potential barriers in seeking help is lack adequate information and 22% (n=44) respondents potentials barrier to seeking help is knowing where to turn to and 9% (n=18) respondents' barriers to seeking help is being closed up and 4% (n=2) respondents' potential barriers to seeking help is inadequate number of mental health personnel out of 50 respondents.

Furthermore, an outstanding 50% (n=25) respondents occasionally face stigma when dealing with mental health issues 14% (n=7) respondents frequently face stigma when dealing mental health issues and 22% (n=11) respondents never face stigma and 14% (n=7) respondents are not sure if they have faced stigma or not out of 50 respondents.

The respondents were also asked how they think that society can better support young individuals dealing with mental health challenges and some of the responses were:

1. Introducing activities for youth
2. Providing therapists
3. By offering some guidance and counselling
4. Having campaign on how one can care for his mental health Promoting morals to youth
5. Establishing social support groups
6. helping parents nurture their children, educating young people to understand and manage their emotions, spread awareness.
7. Limiting stigmatization
8. Society can better support young individuals dealing with mental health challenges by providing accessible and stigma-free mental health resources and support networks.

CONCLUSION:

Mental health awareness among young people has improved a lot lately. People are starting to realize how important it is to take care of their mental well-being, and efforts have been made to reduce the shame around mental health problems. But there's still a lot to do to make sure young

folks can get the help and support they need for their mental health.

Many things contribute to mental health issues in society. Things like pressure at school, family expectations, not having enough support from others, biological factors, traumatic events, constant stress, using substances, and differences in how much money people have all play a part. Understanding these reasons is important for making plans to help and support people better.

There are a bunch of things that make it hard for young people to get good mental health care. Some of these are the shame and discrimination that can come with it, not knowing enough about mental health, not being able to easily get to mental health services, not having enough money, and how culture affects it. To fix these problems, we need to do a lot of different things like teach people, get everyone involved, and change some rules.

Social media can be good for talking about mental health, but it can also make things worse. Seeing all the perfect stuff other people post can make you feel bad about yourself. And bullying and being mean online can make mental health problems worse. We need to find ways to use social media in good ways and help people deal with the bad stuff, like teaching them how to use it right and making places online where they can get support.

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