

To study the well- being, burnout and quality of life of teachers amidst COVID-19 pandemic

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ABSTRACT

The outbreak of COVID-19 is the most dreadful historical event. It forced everybody to change their lifestyle. For the educators a technological revolution has begun. Teachers are forced to struggle and create a balance between technology, students, their parents and household chores apparently affecting their mental well-being. The present research focuses on studying the well-being, burnouts and quality of life of the educators amidst COVID – 19. A sample of 100 teachers in age range of 25-40 years was taken. The findings of the research revealed a significant positive correlation between well-being and quality of life and significant negative correlation with the personal accomplishment domain of burnout. The research implies that the educators have very well adopted the new change thus coping with the technological revolution. Government as well as the administrators of the institutions should design a compulsory and specialized remote and online teaching faculty training programs making the teachers skilled in it.

Keywords: COVID-19, Teachers, Well-Being, Burnout, Quality of Life, Technological Revolution

“Opportunities to find deeper powers within ourselves come when life seems most challenging.”
- Joseph Campbell

The COVID-19 pandemic, also known as coronavirus disease is a disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS-COV2) CORONAVIRUS-2 which spreads through droplets from nose and mouth. This disease was first detected in December 2019 when the whole world was busy preparing for New Year’s Eve. On 30th January 2020, WHO declared it as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHIEC). On March 22, 2020 India witnessed a lockdown (Janata Curfew) of 21 days as ordered by Mr. Narendra Modi. All the educational institutions are shuttered since then. The whole hierarchy of educators in education sector, from administrators to policymakers to teachers have started trying to cope up with the situation. The only option left with teachers was to ‘work from home’ shifting from their ‘Chalk and Duster’ teaching to ‘Mouse and Screen’ teaching or online technology. Our teachers took it as a challenge and started learning how to use the technology for imparting education as rightly said by Nelson Mandela, “it always

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seems impossible until it is done.” They refused to give up and embraced the adversity as a chance to learn something new. But every positive side has a negative side. While trying to create a balance between internet connectivity, students, their parents, and household chores, and sometimes compromising on their family time, anxiety has started to build up affecting their mental health. Study done by Gautam & Sharma (2020) found out that amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, most of the teachers are not trained for the effective use of web resources for teaching, even the liability of online classes will further increase stress as they are not trained in using electronic gadgets and online resources. As a result, their burnouts may increase affecting their mental well-being. Well-being is an essential part of life and together burnout as well as Quality of Life together may have some effect on the Quality of Life of the educators.

Well-being

According to Shin & Johnson (1978) well-being refers to a global assessment of a person's quality of life according to his own chosen criteria. Sen (1990) define well-being as “being well”, in other words to be healthy, well-nourished and educated, and to have the freedom of choice to choose what one can become and can do. The department of health of UK (2009) define well-being as a “positive state of mind and body, ability to feel safe and cope with a sense of connection with people, communities and the wider environment.”

In a study by Burke et al., (2007) relation between burnout and emotional and physical well-being of teachers was studied. Psychological burnouts were found to be strong predictors of emotional and physical well-being.

In another study by Skaalvik, & Skaalvik, (2018) teacher's perception about work demands and job resources available in schools and teacher well-being was studied. Work demand was found to be negatively related to well-being, whereas job resources available were found to be positively related to well-being.

Burnout

The term ‘burnout’ was first used by Freudenberger (1974) in psychology. He defined burnout as “inability to work effectively, as a consequence of prolonged and extensive job-related stress.” Maslach (1982) defined burnout “as a psychological syndrome involving emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and a diminishing sense of personal accomplishment that occurred among various professionals who work with other people in challenging situations.” The first dimension, Emotional exhaustion (EE) refers to the feelings of stress (long-lasting fatigue) from excessive work demands. Second dimension, Depersonalisation (DP) refers to as a detached or apathetic attitude towards work in general and the people with whom one works, thus, losing interest at work. Third dimension, Personal Accomplishment (PA) refers to the thoughts of not being efficient, reduced feelings of successful achievement and attainment in one's work and work place.

In a study done by Bermejo et al., (2013) the effect of work demands, personal resources, and job resources on teachers well-being was studied. The work demands and resources revealed significant effects on burnout and well-being.

Another study by Carmona et al., (2019) on secondary school teachers studied the prevalence of teachers' burnout syndrome, in its three dimensions. Secondary school teachers were found to be at a high risk of developing burnout syndrome.

Quality of Life

Quality of Life (QOL) is an integral part of every individual's life and is studied globally. According to Keith et al., (1994) Quality of Life may be defined as "individual's reactions and perceptions of life experiences." Life experiences may be positive or negative which results from the definition of good life for a person or a group. WHO (1995) defines Quality of Life as "an individual's perception of their position in life in the context of the culture, and value systems in which they live and are compatible to their goals, expectation, standards and concerns."

Hagerty (2001) defined Quality of Life as "the quality of a person's whole life, it is not just elements which are separate." Quality of Life is now measured in every sphere of life ranging from economy and health sector to the field of education and is implying many positive changes, thus, improving the Quality of Life of an individual as well as society.

Research on the relationship between quality of life and job satisfaction done by Cimete et al., (2003) revealed that job satisfaction and quality of life of nurses were significantly affecting each other. The less the job satisfaction, the poor is the quality of life of nurses.

Another research by Damasio et al., (2012) was done on school teachers to study the impact of meaning of life on their psychological well-being and quality of life. It revealed that meaning of life greatly influenced the quality of life of the teachers as well as their well-being.

Purpose

The purpose of the present research is to study the well-being, burnout and quality of life of teachers during COVID-19 pandemic.

Hypothesis

1. There will be no significant difference in well-being & quality of life of teachers
2. There will be a negative correlation between well-being & burnout
3. There will be negative correlation between quality of life & burnout

METHODOLOGY

Sample

In this research total of 100 teachers participated from Meerut. Out of 100 subjects 92 were female and 8 were male teachers. The age range of the subject was 25-40 years.

Measures

The following standardized tests were administered:

1. **The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (WEMWBS)** -WEMWBS is a 14 positively framed items, self-report scale designed to assess well-being of individuals. It was developed by Tennant, Hiller, Fishwick, Platt, Joseph, Weich, Parkinson, Secker & Brown (2006). Respondents were asked to rate each item on a 5-point rating scale ranging from 1(None of the time) to 5(All the time). Items were summed up to obtain total score ranging from 14 to 70.
2. **Maslach's Burnout Inventory – Educators Survey (MBI-ES)** – MBI-ES is also a self-report questionnaire measuring burnout of teachers in their job and was developed by Maslach, Jackson & Schwab (1996). It has a total of 22 items from three subscales namely - Emotional Exhaustion (EE), Depersonalisation (Dp) and Personal Accomplishment (PA). MBI views both the sides of burnout as it includes

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both positive items related to PA and negative items related to EE and Dp. Responses were made on a seven-point scale ranging from 0 to 6 with anchors as Never, A few times a year or less, Once a month or less, A few times a month, Once a week, A few times a week, Every day.

3. **World Health Organisation Quality of Life (WHOQOL-BREF)** –WHOQOL-BREF (WHO, 1996) is a brief version of WHOQOL-100 having statements in six domains. Domain 1& 3 and 2 & 6 are merged making only 4 domains for WHOQOL-BREF namely (1) Physical Health (2) Psychology (3) Social Relationships (4) Environmental Health. It is a 26-item self-report measure used to assess the Quality of Life on all four domains. Responses were taken on a 5-point scale.

Procedure

The participant subjects were well-informed about the purpose of the research. The questionnaires generated through Google forms using standardised psychological tests were administered to participants. Each participant was assured about the confidentiality of the information and was thanked for the co-operation.

RESULTS

Correlations were worked out to find the relation between the variables (well-being, burnout and quality of life) among teachers.

Table: 1 Mann Whitney U Test correlation among the scores, N=100

	Well-being	Emotional Exhaustion	Depersonalisation	Personal Accomplishment	Quality of Life
Well-being	1				
Emotional Exhaustion	.119	1			
Depersonalisation	-.151	.860**	1		
Personal Accomplishment	-.318**	.489**	.705**	1	
Quality of Life	.393**	.195	-.037	-.344**	1

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

DISCUSSION

The study reveals that there is no significant effect of COVID 19 on well-being and quality of life of teachers. There is a significant negative correlation between well-being and personal accomplishment domain of burnout ($r = -.318, p < 0.01$). The results also reveal that quality of life of teachers also has a significant negative correlation with personal accomplishment domain of burnout ($r = -.344, p < 0.01$). The above stated hypothesis stands proved.

Initially there was a lot of resistance among the educators in using virtual world technology. In research by Sundari et al., (2020) done on woman educators quality of work life balance during COVID, in the month of April, the results showed that they were struggling to cope up with the situation and had a very poor quality of life because of long working hours of online teaching. Research was done by Alves et al., (2020) to study the effect of COVID on well-being of the Portuguese teachers. This research was done in the month of May. It revealed that the well-being of the teachers had moderately reduced due to threat of their job future in COVID as well as due to some difficulties that teachers are facing in virtual

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teaching. It will become high in further stages of lockdown as the government as well as the administrators are trying to keep their teachers motivated by helping them with connectivity issues and other problems.

With time the intensity of any disease decreases and the factor of adaptability play a key role in it. The researchers conducted by the research scholar in the months of April and May revealed that the mental well-being of teachers was very bad (Alves et al., 2020), resulting in poor quality of life, and they were at a high risk of developing burnout syndrome. Before COVID the Quality of Life of teachers was moderate as the administrators of the institutions were managing their Job Satisfaction (Alves et al., 2020).

The well-being and quality of life of teachers after about five months amidst COVID is better as the adaptability factor of human has taken its seat.

CONCLUSION

Change is a universal truth and is constant in life. Humans are well acquainted to adapt the change since Stone Age till now. COVID - 19 had brought a technological revolution forcing educators to choose virtual teaching as the only option. The state of mind for every individual is different while using the technology. Despite facing hardships in dealing with their teaching, family life and dealing with society educators are high with spirits. The teachers have become familiar to use the technology, and now at this stage Unlock-5 family has become their important support factor. The parents of the students getting online lessons as well as students have become used to such teaching. This research reveals that virtual classes have become 'a boon' in facing such an adverse situation though the importance of 'going to school environment teaching' can never be denied. Software professional and application developers have done a great job amidst COVID. Many teaching applications like ZOOM, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet, etc. have made it easy to teach as well as being taught. Educators have even started using animations and graphic teaching from home also. Students have the option of referring to the recorded lectures as and when they feel like. Before COVID also virtual teaching was used by educators but was not given much importance. The need of the hour is that every Indian should become used to the technology. Virtual teaching, having many student interactive tools like animation, graphics should become an important part of teaching curriculums and most of the teaching should be based on this pattern. Teachers are "the frontliners of education". And they need to be trained to face all adverse situations like COVID.

The population of teachers had fewer male teachers. With more male teachers as participants, gender correlation can be studied further.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interest.

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