

# Post-Pandemic School Interventions for Coping Behavioural Health Issues among Delhi Secondary Stage Learners Suggestive Guidelines for Stakeholders

CHITER REKHA\*, MEENA SHERAWAT\*\* AND M.M. ROY\*\*\*

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## Abstract

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*The main focus of this study was to examine the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the behavioural health of secondary stage learners in Delhi schools and share some suggestive guidelines with all stakeholders. Using a mixed-method approach, the study explored perceptions about behavioural changes among learners, perceived challenges and suggested interventions in post-pandemic school. The study was conducted using the survey method, by randomly selecting three hundred ninth-grade learners from six districts in Delhi using a multistage random sampling process. The study used a questionnaire and focus group discussions as tools to capture learners' perceptions and challenges. The data analysis involved the use of descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. The study delves into long-term behavioural effects necessitating medical intervention or counselling. This study plays a vital role in understanding the specific behavioural challenges of Delhi school learners during the post-pandemic period as well as addressing issues for all stakeholders by providing critical insights for tailored interventions to support student well-being.*

**Keywords:** Behavioural health, interventions, COVID-19 pandemic, mixed method

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\*Assistant Professor, Department: Curriculum and Pedagogy, DIET (South West) Ghumanhera/ SCERT, New Delhi

\*\*Assistant Professor, Department: Curriculum and Pedagogy, DIET (South West) Ghumanhera/ SCERT, New Delhi

\*\*\*Assistant Professor, Department: Curriculum and Pedagogy, DIET (South West) Ghumanhera/ SCERT, New Delhi

**INTRODUCTION**

Behavioural health is the relationship between our thoughts, feelings and actions, affecting our overall well-being and quality of life. It focuses on how our behaviours, thoughts and emotions contribute to our overall well-being. The American Psychological Association (APA) highlighted the connection between mental health and behavioural health. Behavioural health and mental health are closely intertwined.

Behavioural health encompasses a broad range of issues related to the behaviours that impact a person’s well-being, mental health, habits and actions, all of which affect their holistic well-being (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration–SMSHA).

Behaviour means the way in which a person carries out their actions. It represents our own response to things that happen to us internally or externally. It reflects our ability to

perform and express physical, mental and social activities in our daily lives. Behaviour includes a set of actions or reactions that occur in response to our stimuli or different situations. It includes a wide range of both conscious and unconscious activities in which we engage.

Behavioural health problems include a wide range of conditions that influence how a person thinks, feels and behaves, and are linked to mental health.

Such problems involve conditions that impact an individual’s thoughts, emotions and actions, influencing their behaviour and functioning. Mental health problems involve disturbances in an individual’s mental and emotional well-being, affecting their thoughts, feelings and behaviours. Behavioural and mental health problems encompass a wide range of issues that can affect individuals differently.

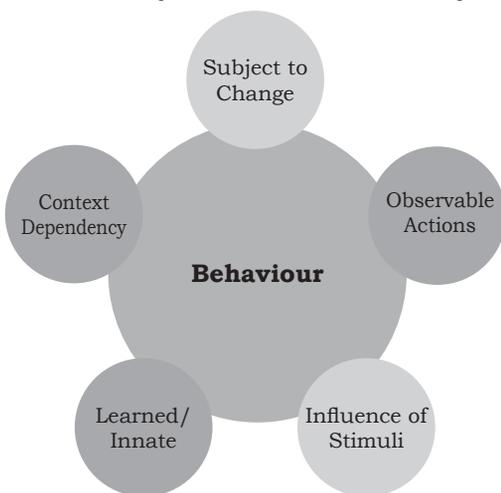


Fig. 1: Characteristics of Behaviour

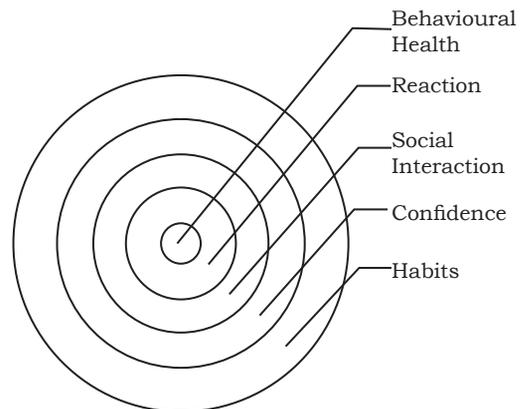


Fig. 2: Components of Behavioural Health

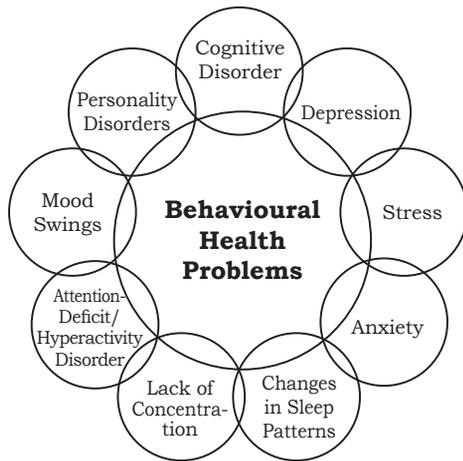


Fig. 3: Behavioural Health Problems

### **The Need and Importance of Healthy and Good Behaviour for Learners:**

Good behaviour is the first step towards the development of school learners, as it impacts their academic performance, personal growth and overall well-being.

- **Emotional Well-being:** A positive and supportive school environment fosters emotional resilience. When learners feel an inclusive identity, connectedness, encouragement from teachers and peers, they experience reduced emotional distress and improved mental health (Thapa et al., 2013).
- **Social Relationships:** Positive behaviour helps learners develop, and maintain strong and meaningful friendships with their friends, teachers and family members. Healthy social connections contribute to a more inclusive, cooperative and supportive learning atmosphere.
- **Prevention of Mental and Behavioural Issues:** Encouraging good behaviour from an early stage can prevent future mental health and behavioural problems. Early interventions that focus on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) have been shown to reduce behavioural issues and contribute to long-term emotional well-being (Patel et al., 2007).
- **Improved Focus and Concentration:** Learners who demonstrate positive behaviour tend to have better focus, attention and cognitive control. Participation in SEL programmes has been linked to greater classroom engagement and improved cognitive skills (Diamond, 2023).
- **Reduced Absenteeism and Dropout Rates:** A strong behavioural foundation supports regular school attendance and sustained engagement in learning. Studies indicate that a positive school climate and behavioural interventions lower absenteeism and dropout rates (Kearney, 2023).
- **Enhanced Decision-making Skills:** Behavioural health directly influences learners' ability to make sound decisions. Learners with good mental health are better equipped to make positive decisions regarding their education, relationships and future plans.

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted normal routines that are important for student development, such as sleep schedules, eating habits, time management and social interactions. Research findings by Wang et al. (2021) highlight the importance of school climate in providing emotional support and the potential long-term consequences of pandemic-disrupted school life on learners' behavioural health. A study by Lodes et al. (2020) confirms that social isolation resulting from lockdown measures is associated with increased feelings of loneliness among school learners. Loneliness is a major risk factor for a variety of behavioural health issues, including depression and anxiety, which can adversely impact learners' psychosocial development. In this context, research by Sharma et al. (2020), published in the *Indian Journal of Psychiatry*, looked at the psychological impact of social isolation on adolescents during the pandemic. Increased risks of behavioural health issues, including loneliness and emotional distress, were observed among school learners. The increasing reliance on digital devices for education and social interaction emerged as a matter of concern.

Similar research findings were found in a study conducted by the Centre for Media Studies (CMS, 2022), which revealed that screen time patterns and behavioural health

problems among school children in Delhi have increased digital dependence and have implications for mental and behavioural health. Efforts to mitigate long-term effects on behavioural and mental health are explored, including studies that assess the effectiveness of interventions and coping strategies employed in schools. These interventions aim to reduce long-term effects on learners' behaviour and mental health.

A study conducted by DIET Ghumenhera explored behavioural and mental health challenges of learners after the COVID-19 pandemic. The study found a pressing need to address specific challenges faced by school learners in Delhi, including academic stress, social isolation, digital dependency and inequalities in mental health support (C. Rekha et al., 2024).

Thus, after studying all the above research studies, it was found by the investigators that the scope of research on mental health and behaviour of learners in the schools of Delhi remains limited. This research emphasises the need for further strategies to understand the behavioural health problems in learners and implement targeted interventions for their well-being in the post-pandemic period.

The study also identified the need to address specific challenges faced by school learners in Delhi, including academic stress, social isolation, digital dependence and inequalities in mental health support. While the

existing research provides valuable insights, its scope in examining the broader impact on learners' mental and behavioural health in the schools of Delhi remains limited. In contrast, this research emphasises the need for further strategies to understand the problems of learners and to implement targeted interventions for their well-being in the post-pandemic period.

### **NEED AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY**

There is no doubt that learners' behavioural health plays a vital role in their mental health and overall development. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about several changes in the behavioural patterns of learners. Understanding learners' perspectives on these changes is essential to know their long-term effects. The aim of this research is to explore learners' opinions and the extent to which they agree with these behavioural changes. A review of research studies conducted in India and internationally, such as (Ghosh et al., 2020) highlights the urgent need to address the long-term behavioural health challenges faced by learners post-pandemic. Singh et al. (2020) found that learners' anxiety and mental health problems increased due to the shift to online learning and prolonged time at home.

After an in-depth literature review, it was found that the research on behavioural health of learners in the schools of Delhi is limited. Behavioural health is the foundation

of children's present and future, and it is necessary to address this research gap to develop effective interventions and support systems tailored to the needs of Delhi's school-going population.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To study learners' perceptions and challenges related to behavioural health post-COVID.
2. To study the measures taken by schools to help learners cope with behavioural health issues after COVID-19.

### **Operational Definition**

#### ***Behavioural Health***

In this research, behavioural health in learners refers to their overall well-being, encompassing 18 key components that influence their academic, social and emotional development. These include personal hygiene awareness, adaptive learning habits, study time management and shifting school attendance patterns. It also covers handwriting dynamics, posture stability and challenges in practical subjects like mathematics and science. The transition back to offline learning, book preferences and digital dependency significantly impact learning behaviours. Embracing virtual education, social interactions, peer collaborations, gaming preferences and screen time impact learners' emotional and social well-being. Furthermore, positive transformations, behavioural

dynamics, coping skills and overall happiness with personal life contribute to their mental resilience and academic engagement in the post-pandemic era.

### ***Research Design***

A survey method was adopted, incorporating qualitative and quantitative methods to capture changes and problems related to behavioural health.

### ***Sample for the Study***

The study used multistage random sampling. Out of 13 districts of Delhi, 6 districts were randomly selected. From each selected district, 6 schools of the Directorate of Education (DoE) were randomly selected and then 50 learners of Class 9 were also selected randomly from the selected school. This process resulted in a total sample of 300 learners (6 districts × 6 schools per district × 50 learners per school).

### ***Tools for the Study***

This research collected data from learners using questionnaires and focus group discussions. The questionnaire consisted of 18 behavioural health-related questions, which included closed-ended and open-ended questions. The questionnaire focused on 18 behavioural health aspects of learners, such as personal hygiene awareness, study habits, school attendance, study time management, change in handwriting, ability to sit for long hours, understanding of practical subjects, preference for

online and offline study, inclination towards books, dependence on digital devices, acceptance of virtual education, social interaction, cooperative behaviours, sports preferences, effects of screen time, positive changes, behavioural changes and personal life satisfaction, related changes and challenges. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with learners to know their perception about behavioural problems and their treatment after the pandemic, and to check the accuracy of the answers obtained from the questionnaire. In the research study, data obtained from the closed-ended questions were analysed using percentages, while responses from open-ended questions and focus group discussions were analysed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis was conducted by finding the common patterns and themes found in the responses.

### ***Delimitations***

This research was limited to studying the long-term behavioural effects that may require medical intervention or necessary counselling to treat the learners, such as aggression, lack of social interaction, digital addiction, etc., caused by the pandemic (COVID-19) on the psychological well-being of learners. Short-term effects of COVID-19 that had an immediate outcome on the behavioural health of learners were not included in the research.

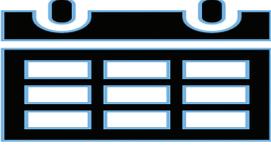
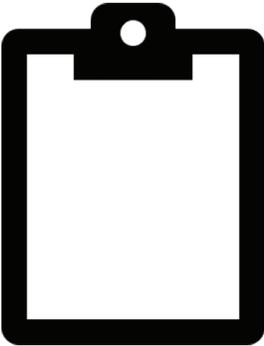
**DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

The study focuses on factors known to contribute to learners’ behavioural health that impacted post-COVID.

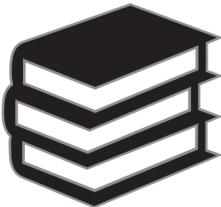
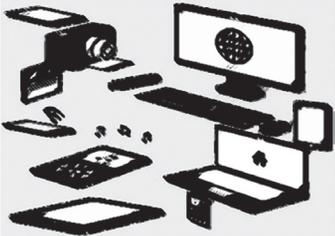
Student behaviour includes learners’ perceptions of their self-awareness, study habits, their social relationships, writing skills, etc.

**Table 1: Dimensions of student behaviour**

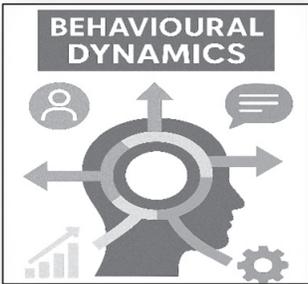
S. No.	Items	Data Analysis
1.	Awareness of Personal Hygiene 	A majority of 67 per cent of the learners were more conscious about their personal hygiene. The 19 per cent of learners noted a slight increase in their alertness. The 8 per cent of learners said that their alertness remained the same as before. Only 6 per cent of learners reported being less conscious of personal hygiene than before the pandemic.
2.	Adaptive Changes in Study Habits and Learning 	Nearly half (49 per cent) of the learners felt that their study habits had improved. The 10 per cent of learners sensed that there was no change in their study habits, 23 per cent of learners perceived a decrease in their study habits and 18 per cent of learners reported facing interruptions in their study habits after the COVID-19 pandemic. This showed that (23 per cent + 18 per cent) = 41 per cent of learners felt their study habits were disturbed.
3.	Shifting School Attendance 	The 45 per cent of the learners reported that their attendance declined compared to the pre-pandemic levels. In contrast, 35 per cent reported that there was no change in attendance pattern since COVID-19. While only 20 per cent reported an increase in attendance compared to the time before the pandemic. When asked about the reason for low attendance in group discussions, learners explained that now they have online options available. Another reason cited was that they tend to get fatigued quickly at school, feeling physically and mentally drained from attending school continuously throughout the week, hence opting to take one or two breaks.

4.	Study Time Management	<p>The 48 per cent of the learners reported an improvement in their own study time management. While 23 per cent of the learners did not experience any considerable change in their own study time management. This shows that their pre-pandemic study routines or time management strategies have remained relatively consistent. Almost one-third of the learners (29 per cent) reported that their study time management became chaotic. When we discussed in focus group discussions, how learners increased their study time, many of them reported that they actively adopted new methods or strategies to enhance the way they managed their study time. For example, breaking up study sessions, using productivity apps, calendars and study aids on electronic devices and experimenting with different ways of taking notes.</p>	
	5.	Handwriting Dynamics Shift	<p>Approximately one-fourth of the learners (26 per cent) recorded an escalation in their handwriting speed. The majority, almost 39 per cent of the learners, indicated a decrease in their handwriting speed. This showed that learners faced challenges or witnessed a reduction in their handwriting speed after the COVID-19 pandemic. The 35 per cent of the learners stated that there was no impact on their handwriting speed.</p>
		<p>They said, “Due to online classes, we were dependent on the internet, Google, etc., and study material was easily available, and due to convenience, we do not feel like writing by hand. Writing by hand seems boring as writing for too long hurts our hands, we feel better when we write less”.</p>	

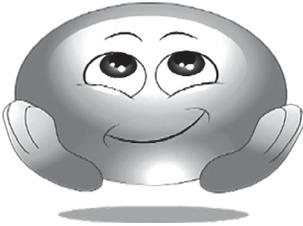
6.	<p>Prolonged Sitting and Posture Stability During Exams and Study Sessions</p>	<p>Learners were asked about sitting for prolonged periods without any break, maintaining the same posture for a long time (3 hours) while studying or taking exams after the pandemic. About 31 per cent of the learners mentioned that they were comfortable studying or taking exams with no break in the same place and posture for prolonged periods. The majority, nearly half of the learners (49 per cent), found it challenging to sit in the same place and posture for an extended period. This indicated that learners faced difficulties or discomfort in maintaining a stationary position for a prolonged period of time.</p>
		
7.	<p>Impact on Practical Subjects like Mathematics and Science</p>	<p>More than one-third of learners (36 per cent) reported that the use of new online tools and simulations increased their participation and understanding of subjects like mathematics and science. Only 18 per cent of the learners observed consistency in the effectiveness of learning or studying these subjects. The 46 per cent of learners expressed that their learning was disrupted and diminished due to the unavailability of resources for the use of laboratory equipment and practical experiments. This highlights a major challenge faced by learners in the absence of physical access to essential resources, which are important for certain subjects.</p>
		
8.	<p>Comfort with Online Study After the Resumption of Offline Classes</p>	<p>The 42 per cent of learners mentioned that they were comfortable with both online and offline classes, highlighting their willingness in adapting to different learning environments. Nearly, 39 per cent of learners reported that they were comfortable only with the offline classes. This showed that the learners continue to consider offline classes important for their learning.</p>
		

<p>9.</p>	<p>Preferences of Books for Study</p> 	<p>Nearly half (48 per cent) of learners preferred books for study or learning after the COVID-19 pandemic; 40 per cent decreased their preferences, opting for other digital or online options; and 12 per cent reported no change in their reliance on books. During a group discussion, learners said that they like to read books because:</p>  <p>“Reading from an online screen causes pain in eyes and headaches, but reading from a book is easier and helps us understand quickly. We can keep the book with us forever”.</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>Dependency and Addiction on Digital Devices</p> 	<p>The majority of learners (74 per cent) acknowledged an increased dependency on digital devices for studying after COVID-19, while 18 per cent maintained their previous habits and a smaller percentage (8 per cent) of learners reported no change in their reliance on digital devices.</p> <p>The 51 per cent of learners reported that they felt very much addicted to the excessive use of digital devices (mobiles, laptops, etc.) after the COVID-19 pandemic. The 17 per cent of learners firmly stated that they did not become addicted at all, whereas 32 per cent admitted that they were addicted to some extent.</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p>Embracing Virtual Education</p> 	<p>Online classes emerged as the most preferred alternative among learners, with 41 per cent expressing their preference. This highlighted a strong inclination towards virtual learning environments, driven by flexibility, accessibility and interactive features they offer. Social media platforms, including YouTube, Facebook and WhatsApp, gathered significant popularity as alternatives to offline classes, 32 per cent of learners considering them effective.</p>

		<p>Television was found as a less preferred alternative, with only 14 per cent of learners indicating it as a suitable option. Mobile SMS emerged as the least favoured alternative, with only 13 per cent of learners considering it viable.</p>
<p>12.</p>	<p>Social Interactions</p> 	<p>The 41 per cent of learners reported an increase in both personal and social interactions among companions and family members after the COVID-19 pandemic. The 44 per cent of learners reported a decrease in both personal and social interactions among companions and family members after the COVID-19 pandemic. The 15 per cent of learners mentioned consistency in both personal and social interactions among companions and family members after the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>
<p>13.</p>	<p>Collaboration with Peers</p> 	<p>A majority of 44 per cent felt that there was an increase in cooperation, reflecting an adaptive approach to collaborative efforts in the post-pandemic period.</p> <p>The 26 per cent of learners shared the same patterns, indicating stability in their collaborative interactions. However, 14 per cent of learners reported a heightened sense of reservation or distance. However, 16 per cent of learners reported quarrelling and discord.</p> <p>The data showed that 30 per cent of learners (16 per cent (fighting and discord) + 14 per cent (more reserved or distant) = 30 per cent) indicated potential social challenges, either experiencing discord within the group or managing their interactions and preferring a more reserved or distant approach.</p>
<p>14.</p>	<p>Games Preferences</p> 	<p>The highest percentage of learners, 37 per cent, preferred playing online games. The 29 per cent of learners still prefer offline games and sports.</p> <p>The 20 per cent expressed an equal preference for both online and offline sports.</p> <p>The 14 per cent of learners did not prefer any type of game.</p>

<p>15.</p>	<p>Screen Time Impact</p> 	<p>The combined percentage (26 per cent + 35 per cent = 61 per cent) of ‘very often’ and ‘sometimes’ responses, respectively indicated the prevalence of aggressive and irritable behaviour because of screen time. Therefore, a majority (61 per cent) of learners reported experiencing some level of aggression or irritability because of screen time after the COVID-19 pandemic. The 20 per cent of learners did not experience an increase in aggressive or irritable behaviour. The 19 per cent of learners reported no increase in aggressive behaviour despite the screen time.</p>
<p>16.</p>	<p>Positive Transformations</p> 	<p>The 21 per cent of learners reported that they experienced the most positive change in self-awareness. The 36 per cent showed adaptability and flexibility as their most positive behavioural attributes. The 25 per cent of learners experienced the most positive change in the development of their coping mechanisms after the pandemic. This indicated that learners had successfully developed strategies to manage stress and challenges, which leads to better mental well-being. A small percentage of learners (18 per cent) regarded self-confidence as the most positive behavioural trait that they had developed.</p>
<p>17.</p>	<p>Behavioural Dynamics</p> 	<p>Nearly half, 49 per cent of learners reported that their behaviour improved since the COVID-19 pandemic. The 26 per cent of learners acknowledged a decline in their behaviour. Small proportion of learners, that is 25 per cent did not see any noticeable changes in their behaviour.</p> <p>Regarding behavioural dynamics, 39 per cent of learners acknowledged ongoing behavioural problems post-COVID-19 pandemic. A substantial number (42 per cent) reported no lingering behavioural issues, suggesting resilience and successful adaptation. About 19 per cent of learners highlighted potential ongoing uncertainties.</p>

## 18. Happy with Personal Life



The 44 per cent of learners reported that they were very happy with the changes in their personal behaviour after COVID-19. They said that they were doing yoga, meditation, etc., during and after the pandemic, and the positive impact that they felt in their personal lives were adjustment and adaptation. While 27 per cent of learners were somewhat happy with the changes, almost one-third of learners (29 per cent) indicated that they were not satisfied or happy with the changes in their personal behaviour, which causes problems, such as anger.

### RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The study provides a comprehensive analysis of student behaviour post-COVID-19, highlighting the profound and varied impacts of the pandemic on different dimensions of student life, including self-awareness, study habits, social relationships, writing skills and more. The increased awareness of personal hygiene among 67 per cent of learners highlights the lasting impact of the pandemic on daily habits. This finding is consistent with broader observations that the pandemic has heightened health consciousness globally. Wang et al. (2021) emphasised on the role of school environments in promoting health and well-being, which disrupted during the pandemic, necessitating a shift in the way health education is delivered.

In study habits, where 49 per cent of learners reported improvement, 18 per cent faced disruptions. Similar results were also obtained from the research results done

by Sharma et al. (2020) on how disruptions to academic routines impacted learners and the research emphasised the need for individual support to adapt to the new learning environment. In the area of time management, the research found that 48 per cent of learners experienced an increase in management skills, while 23 per cent maintained consistency and 29 per cent were struggling. This variability draws attention to time management in organising study routines.

Handwriting is very important for learners as it is essential for cognitive development and expression, it cannot be ignored under any circumstances. Changes in handwriting speed, where 26 per cent of learners reported an increase in speed, 39 per cent of learners experienced a decrease and 35 per cent of learners did not see any effect. The physical act of writing is often overlooked in digital education. Postural comfort and stability, while sitting for long periods of time was

found challenging for 49 per cent of learners. Increased screen time highlights physical and mental stress in children. This finding matches the research findings of Loades et al. (2020), who reported an increase in physical discomfort and its negative impact on the overall well-being of learners.

The disruption in practical subjects, such as Mathematics and Science for 46 per cent of learners in the research highlights the importance of their practical learning experiences. If we look at online and offline learning, the research results show learners' adaptability to online and offline learning modes with 42 per cent being comfortable with both and 39 per cent preferring offline classes, indicating flexibility on the part of learners. However, 40 per cent of learners preferring digital options over books shows a significant shift, raising questions about the long-term effects of digital dependency.

The reliance on digital devices for learning increased across the board, with 74 per cent of learners acknowledging increased use of digital devices. These findings are in line with the findings of a study conducted by CMS (2022) that found a correlation between increased screen time and behavioural health challenges, highlighting the urgent need to address digital dependency. A mixed scenario of social interactions emerged, with 41 per cent of learners acknowledging that they experienced

increased interactions, 44 per cent of learners acknowledging that they experienced reduced interactions and 30 per cent of learners reporting that they faced potential challenges.

The findings reflect the complex social dynamics in the post-pandemic period, which is in line with the social isolation highlighted by Loades et al. (2020) for learners' psychosocial development and mental health. The positive behaviour changes were found in learners with 49 per cent of learners reported improved behaviour, 36 per cent reported increased adaptability and 25 per cent of learners reported improved coping mechanisms. However, ongoing challenges for 39 per cent of learners indicate a need for continued support. In the nuanced emotional landscape, 44 per cent of learners expressed satisfaction, 27 per cent were partially satisfied and 29 per cent were dissatisfied. This reflects the varied emotional responses due to the pandemic.

## **Educational Implications and Suggestive Guidelines**

### ***Curriculum Changes to Promote Holistic Well-being***

The research results suggest that integrating topics addressing self-awareness, personal hygiene and healthy study habits into the curriculum to promote holistic well-being can lay the foundation for

sustained positive behavioural changes in learners. These topics should not only focus on physical health aspects but also on the initiatives on mental health awareness, in order to create a comprehensive well-being and support system.

### ***Integrating Diverse Learning Styles to Engage Learners***

Recognising different responses to online and offline learning by accommodating diverse learning preferences among learners, providing flexibility in study options and accommodating disruptions in study habits. Hence, by adopting the modus operandi of an inclusive educational approach, educational institutions can meet the individual needs of their learners, ensuring a supportive and effective learning environment.

### ***Improving Writing and Handwriting Skills***

Research results indicate that due to online reading, learners' writing and handwriting skills have decreased, which is not a good sign for their development. There is a need to promote writing habits, improve handwriting and increase speed, and improve writing skills. Parents need to work with teachers in schools in this area, which contributes to improve both the behavioural and motor skills, and emotional development in learners.

### ***Creating a Supportive Examination Environment***

Creating a supportive and conducive examination environment is important to reduce stress and anxiety in learners. Stress is more severe after the pandemic due to the option of online examination and other reasons. Therefore, exploring alternative examination formats and implementing stress reduction strategies can make learners feel more positive. Schools and teachers need to work more in this direction.

### ***Addressing Practical Learning Challenges***

Ensuring availability of resources (for practical subjects) to teachers and parents, and providing additional support to learners facing disruptions should be done to address practical learning challenges, such as increased aggression or isolation, depression, etc., in order to reduce stress.

### ***Balance Online-Offline Learning***

Research results suggest that teachers today need to offer flexible, hybrid learning environments and digital literacy to balance online and offline learning to channelise learners' study habits in the desired positive direction.

### ***Promoting Responsible Use of Technology***

Teachers and parents need to integrate digital literacy programmes to address digital dependency and addiction in learners. This can be done

by educating them about the potential mental health impacts of excessive screen time and encouraging them for a responsible use of technology, which is essential for a healthy digital environment.

### ***Promoting Positive Social Interactions***

It is very important for learners to develop socially. Research results have found that learners have an increased tendency to be isolated and lonely, which hinders their social development. Therefore, teachers need to involve their learners in collaborative projects to promote positive social interactions, address challenges in group dynamics and provide platforms for them to discuss and deal with social and emotional challenges.

### ***Addressing Emotional Well-being***

Teachers need to acknowledge and celebrate learners' positive behavioural changes, establish counselling services, and create a stigma-free environment for mental health discussions. These are important steps in promoting emotional resilience and well-being in learners.

### ***Encouraging Mental and Behavioural Health Conversations***

Encouraging mental health conversations requires teachers to recognise cultural changes, promote open conversations about behavioural health challenges, and establish safe spaces for mental

health discussions, where learners can speak confidently with teachers and parents without fear.

### ***Using Peer and Professional Support***

Teachers can implement peer mentoring programmes for learners as needed, ensure they have access to professional mental health support, encourage regular check-ups and reach out to them to build a strong support system for the learners facing behavioural and mental health challenges.

### ***Teacher Training in Counselling***

Educational institutions must provide teacher training to all their in-service and pre-service teachers in order to identify and address behavioural health challenges, equip teachers with skills to understand and facilitate mental health of students and promote an empathetic learning environment.

### ***Promoting Resilience***

The curriculum needs to include workshops on resilience, adaptability and stress management, and empower learners with practical skills for their mental well-being.

## **CONCLUSION**

The synthesis of behavioural health findings paints a vivid picture of the evolving student experience post-COVID, calling for a paradigm shift in educational approaches. The insights from the study reveal challenges and opportunities, urging

educational institutions to embark on a holistic journey that goes beyond academic boundaries. Further research is needed to understand the other related challenges faced by learners, especially in regions like Delhi being the

capital of India, differs from other states in many ways. Hence, it is important to act on the research findings to implement targeted interventions for learners' personal wellness in the post-pandemic period.

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