

Manoday: A School Based Mental Health Intervention Program

Amruta Bhuskute

Smt. Binzani Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Nagpur

The present study describes a 120 Hours School-Based mental Health Program for that helps in addressing mental health issues in high-school students. During the course of designing a 120 Hours School-Based mental Health Program, Investigator explored multiple activities and practices. MANODAY, an outcome of this comprehensive analysis, based on two major constructs i.e. 1. Character Strengths Development, and 2) Panchkosh Vikas. Investigator extracted various intervention activities from pool of resources studied. Manoday covers key components like Physical Exercise, Mindfulness – Meditation - Art & Music Activities, Parental Engagement, Learning from Real-Life Idols, Group Discussion. It is further divided into 03 segments Personal routine Activities, Weekly Activities, and Sessions at Schools. This Intervention program is feasible for implementation and practically can be adaptable into academic calendar of the school, which makes it more viable and efficient.

Key Words: Mental Health Intervention, School-Based, High-School Students, Character Strengths & Virtues, Panchkosh Vikas

A human transacts through different stages of life. Birth to childhood was a period of new challenges and victory, from maturation to learning. When a kid gradually turns into 'a teenager' and leave his child-like marks, this phase is said to be extremely difficult and dramatic. Teenagers concentrate on developing their independence during adolescence, exploring new experiences and expanding their wings to fly as far as possible (Pruitt, 2000). According to research & literature, Adolescence is a time for impulsive and wild rides. Teachers and parents who work with this group have one question to answer: 'What are the perfect circumstances that should be given to teenagers in order to bring out the best in them?' This requires customization for every adolescent; there is no one-size-fits-all approach. The two main entities in an adolescent's ecological system that they deal with for an extended period of time are their family and school. Thus, these two institutions

have the potential to stimulate adolescent mental development (Deb, Bhadra, Sunny, & Sahay, 2020).

Mental health of adolescent students

Adolescents from urban area is an important sample employed for varied number of research studies. The main concern of these researchers and professionals working around adolescents is their mental health. The reason behind this concern is nothing else but the psychopathologies which are seen flooded on adolescent. Psychopathologies like depression, interpersonal issues, low self-esteem, generalized anxiety, behavioural misconduct, etc., are observed in multiple research studies (Bansal & Barman, 2011, Bharati & Kumar, 2022). These studies have also raised alarms as they talk about the damaging effect on kids' emotional, psychological, mental wellbeing. Also, there is greater likelihood that these issues may

eventually grow into serious mental health problems. Therefore, in order to produce morally grounded and holistically sound young minds, great efforts must be made to change the environments in which adolescent collects social, intellectual, interpersonal, and familial experiences. This will surely alter their mental up brining and well-being to save them from greater risks of mental illness.

It is clear that during the past few decades, modernization, socio-cultural shifts, and technology breakthroughs have significantly affected children's and teenagers' mental frameworks, ideas, behaviours, and attitudes. According to the last census (Census Report, 2011), 21.9% of Indians are in the adolescent age group. Report of Working Group on teenagers for 10th Five Year Plan for Government of India has commented about the mental health status of adolescents in India. It has tried to fetch nation's attention towards this distressing situation indicating the worrying future in coming years. This subset of the Indian population was not clearly recognized.

Adolescent mental health intervention

World Health Organisation has recommended that adolescents who experience psychological and behavioural issues must be able to access psychosocial therapies that are universally administered. These therapies not only prevent and lessen psychological & behavioural issues but also foster positive mental health by preventing and reducing aggressive, disruptive, and oppositional behaviours, mental disorders, sadness, grief and anxiety, and suicidal conduct. It is also suggested that focus of mental health interventions should be cognitive, social, emotional modifications. This might involve elements like stress management, problem-solving, emotional regulation, mindfulness, and interpersonal skills (WHO, 2020)

Govt. of India has also devised various programs to address mental health issues in children and adolescents. National Mental Health Program and Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karykram has provided direction, support, infrastructure, and trained manpower to respond to the present scenario (Roy & Rasheed, 2015, Kaur & Sharma, 2023). There are few mental health intervention programs to lessen the breadth and width of academic, social, psychological, interpersonal, and intrapersonal problems and enhance personal competence.

School-based intervention program: Need and necessity

Comprehensive school-based mental health programs are suggested by WHO where it is expected that School will have all sort of health (including mental health) facilities for all grades Report in 1994 titled as "Mental Health Programs in School, " emphasised that these school-based mental health programs should provide a safe and supportive environment and support school-family-community interaction (Hendren, Birell, Weeison, & Orley, 1994, Suryaputri & Mubasyiroh, 2022, Additionally, it has been claimed that the goal of school-based intervention is to give children an experience that will improve their capacity to deal with stress and disadvantages in their environment as they get older (Anderson, 2007). Currently, schools are the ideal places to create and administer mental health intervention programs with support of the community and families. It is the most social-educational institution for student mental health intervention. Secondly, schools are safe place for students as good as family system which have long lasting, profound effect on students' development.

The idea of what constitutes a good school has modified recently when UNICEF emphasized the idea of child-friendly education. Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) are

expected to bring about a significant transformation in the definition of what schools are for and how they might impact social change through their existing and future student-led initiatives as well as the connections they have with the community and families (The Child-Friendly Schools, 2009).

Currently, kids' life skills and psycho-social competency are not adequately developed in the school curriculum. The ability to manage the rigors and difficulties of daily life is known as psycho-social competence. The formal education curriculum lays a strong focus on closing the knowledge gap between fundamental skills and abilities that are needed globally. Life skills education is still being pursued with limited success, but it does not have the necessary funding or time to be implemented—possibly as a result of the focus on academic achievement alone. It is a reality that not even parents realize their children need this kind of non-academic training and capacity building to succeed in the real world and to face it.

Not only are teenagers an important component of every community, but they are also the citizens of the future. In order for a society to be robust and fully operational, we must begin working long in advance to remove obstacles and enhance children's inner potential as well as the internal workings of any given social structure. Anybody who advances in life through formal schooling must complete their education, which lasts for about 18 years and six to seven hours a day. Combining all of the time students spend in school is this. Additionally, the impact of school climate and culture is immense, and pupils easily adapt to any new practice or change when their peers do. Early adolescent intervention of this nature will undoubtedly increase students' chances of success in life, future endeavours, and making the most use of their abilities and

resources. It will also lessen family stress and improve their quality of life.

Need for the study

Above references fairly suggest that there are few groups and people are contributing in this direction. But it is noteworthy that these efforts are either put in scattered manner or it was done for very short time span or it had not been evaluated empirically. Hence, we lack in practical, objective, investigational approach while recording the effect of various trainings-practices-interventions institutionalized to improve psychological & behavioral state of high school students. We always see schools organizing check-ups camps to spread awareness about ways to improve physical health. But this is the high time we also initiate regular psychological health check-up with scheduled follow up and monitoring. Early identification of any kind of psychological or behavioral issue could be resolved and probably curb for life time by inculcating life skills in students. There are multiple resources and guidelines that are available about students' mental health and skills they need to develop to fight with age-appropriate challenges. But, still there is no practically possible and feasible solution is being exercised in school campus (Raman & Thomas, 2023). Hence, there was a need to design such an intervention program which will address students' mental health issues and develop skills and capacities in students so that they will grow as mentally strong individuals.

Objectives

This research study has established a model intervention program to be carried out in each and every school with few modification (based on intervention needs identified after students' mental health evaluation). It sets a practical outline for such a school-based program that could be undertaken across the regions with few regional and cultural additions and inputs.

This will surely lead to a making and implementation of a policy with reference to students (children & adolescents) mental health analysis. It emphasizes the need for remedial intervention at least once before they move to higher education, their careers and adulthood.

Hence, this research study has –

- a. Assessed psychological and behavioral issues in high school students,
- b. Identify the areas for intervention
- c. Designed modules to be implemented in school setting with an aim to alleviate psychological and behavioral issues in high school students,
- d. Prepare a manual of Manoday School Based Mental Health Intervention Program

Moreover, if this kind of school-based intervention, if get materialized into the policy and accomplished in practice, may change in upsurge the schooling system, dynamic efforts towards mental health intrusions, family system and society at a large - present and future, too.

Method

Part 1 - In the first phase of the research study, investigator did a review of programs and activities practiced for addressing psychological and behavioral problems in High-School Students.

Search Strategy

The method used for review process was based on the guidelines from the Crocharne Collaboration Handbook for Systematic Reviews. There are varied evidences regarding how adolescent students can be helped to deal with psychological and behavioral issues at that age, but all these efforts are not available in the form of published Research Studies. Moreover, there

are living resources in the forms of personnel and organizations who are not only experimenting rigorously but also witnessing the impact of the same. Hence, literature from electronic database, grey literature like Books, Govt. & NGO's Reports, Unpublished work, and opinions by Experts in the field was reviewed during the process.

Semi-Structured Interviews –Investigator decided to conduct Semi-Structured Interviews of the Personnel belonging to Schools, Educational Institutes, Non-Governmental Organizations along with Teachers, Educationalist, Mental Health Practitioners who worked in the area of adolescent mental health and co-curricular reforms. To select among them, following inclusion criteria was adapted.

According to the inclusion criteria, Instigator conducted Interviews of Total 21 personnels (Teachers (N= 3), Management Officials (N=3), Educational Thinkers (N=3), Coordinators of NGOs (N=2), Mental Health Practitioners (N=3) conducted.

Part 2 – In the second part of the research study, it was very crucial to select and device the activities to be included in the school-based intervention program. After the extensive review of all the available sources, Investigator identified the theoretical foundations for developing an Intervention Program. Second concern was related to sorting out the activities. Child Bureau of U. S. Department of Health & services (Capacity Building Centre for States, 2018) in its report on ' (Change and implementation in practice: Intervention selection and design/adaptation' (2018) narrates what a well defined intervention program can be. It underlines that while designing an intervention program, one should keep in mind 03 factors i.e. Fit, Feasibility and Practicality. All such activities are then identified and listed down.

Results

In the 2nd part of this research study, Investigator explored multiple sources to gather information about various activities practiced by various schools, educational institutes and different NGOs working in the field of education. Expert's opinion as well as Investigator's own experience and knowledge regarding ways to enhance mental health of school going children was also taken into consideration.

Findings of Descriptive Review Process: Total 45 resources which includes 21 Books, 08 Policy Documents & Manuals, 16 Research Studies were integrated to establish theoretical foundation and drew common elements for 120 Hours School-Based Mental Health Intervention Program.

Extract of Semi-Structured Interviews: Investigator collected the data regarding Programs and Activities that can be implemented in School Set Up as a part of Mental Health Intervention Program from different personnel working specifically in the field of education, adolescent's mental health, behavioral science and concerned issues.

Theoretical Foundations and Key Components for Intervention Program

On the basis of these findings and review of literature previously done, theoretical foundations and activities/modules were listed as follows-

a. Character strength & virtues

Positive psychology is a new field of inquiry within modern psychology that emerged two decades ago, with an exclusive emphasis on understanding the nature of happiness and well-being. While working on tenants of positive psychology, Martin Seligman, with his colleague Christopher Peterson developed Values In Action Inventory of Strengths (VIA-IS) and it became very popular among researchers. It is a

systematic and comprehensive approach to the study of character strengths informed by all the major and lesser-known spiritual traditions of the world which include Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Sufism, Upanishads, Yoga, and many others. Resultantly, they came up with Handbook of Character Strengths & Virtues in the year 2004 (Carr, 2004).

VIA Classification is a classification of positive traits in people (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). The emphasis is on classifying psychological ingredients of goodness in human beings across cultures, nations, and beliefs, rather than prescribing what humans "should" do to be good or improve themselves. Handbook of Character Strengths & Virtues depicts 06 Virtues (Wisdom, Humanity, Courage, Justice, Temperance and Transcendence) 24 Character Strengths.

b. PanchKosh Vikas

The National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage (NCF-FS 2022) is a wonderful document that says many things. One of those things is about Panchakosha Vikaas (or the development of the five sheaths) in section 1.2, pg 19. Theory of Panchkosha is elucidated magnificently in Taittiriya Upanishad through the way of dialogue between guru Varun and his son Bhrigu. Panchkosha theory is based on two words panch + kosha. Panch means five and Kosha mean sheaths, layers, covers etc. The five-fold development of human beings is to attain all-round refinement of human personality, known as Panchkosh namely Annamay Kosh (Physical Development); Pranmay Kosh (Vital Development); Manomay Kosh (Mental Development); Vigyanmay Kosh (Cognitive Development); and Anandmay Kosh (Spiritual Development), all of which have to start from the earliest stages of development and learning. This human self is an amalgamation

of five sheaths and the human behaviour is the function of these various layers.

During the conversations with the School Management Officials and Teachers, Investigator gathered good amount of information about how this intervention program's 120 hours schedule could be made practically possible. Hence, after exploring the plentiful activities, investigator aligned 32 such activities in 03 separate sections, i.e. Personal Routine, Weekly Activities and Sessions at School and 09 key components. It has been seen that these activities are practically feasible and fit for 120-Hours School-Based Mental Health Intervention Program.

This intervention program, then named '*Manoday Intervention Program*'.

Design of the 120 Hours School-Based Manoday Mental Health Intervention Program-

Segment 1 –	1. Self-Affirmations
Personal Routine Activities	2. Physical Activity 3. Mindfulness Meditation 4. Purposive Reading 5. Sow your aspiration
Segment 2- Weekly Activities	a. Parivar ka Upanishad – Time for Collective Wisdom b. Pitara - Express Yourself c. Art Therapy
Segment 3- Sessions at School	<i>Mandatory Activities –</i> a. Exercise b. Energy Boosting c. Meditation d. Language of Silence e. Prayer <i>Variable Activities-</i> a. Theme Based Activities for Development of Character

Strengths-
b. Group Discussion or Case Study
c. Audio-Visual Screening
d. Guest Lecture
e. Feedback or Open Interactions

(*Comprehensive Manual of Manoday – A School-Based Mental Health Intervention Program is available online on www.itsaboutkids.online*)

Discussion

One of the major objectives of this research study was to design a 120-hours School-Based Mental Health Intervention Program which fits in school set-up for the implementation and assessment. Extensive research in this regard has given following insight to Investigator-

A School Based Intervention Program should be monitored from School, through Interventionist or School Counsellor

Such an intervention program should be time-bound, feasible to be implemented without hampering school's academic calendar and yearly activities

Well-defined activities and modules would increase the efficiency of the implementation of the intervention program

Intervention should be designed with 360° approach and there must be activities to be practiced at home as well as in school

Intervention program should engage parental participation and support from family members

Physical exercise, Yog Practice, Meditation, Art Activities are always sidelined due to the pressure of academic performance, though it yields benefits to it. These dimensions of other-than-academics activities must be the part of the intervention program

- It would be better if the intervention program is not spread in entire academic session, it may hamper regular practices by participants and timely follow-up. It is better if intervention program starts and finish in the span of not more than 5 months.

Manoday Intervention Programs covers all these points. Comprehensive Manual of Manoday – A School-Based Mental Health Intervention Program has detailed description of all the segments and activities. This structured format makes it more easy to implement and monitor. The best part of this intervention design that it engages participants at school as well as home time, also, it extends the scope for the interventionist to modify or rearrange the activities which is best suitable in the given situation

It is believed that 'Manoday' is not a final and foremost solution for the psychological and behavioral issues in students. It is not an end, but the beginning of journey to find more refined, and dynamically tested Intervention Program for School Set-Up. Moreover, other researchers can come up with the similar model of Intervention for other establishments where we see students gathering in huge number.

There is a good scope for Researchers, Counselors and Interventionist to take this model further for the different students' groups in different settings with different demographic characteristics in following way-

- To study effect of Manoday Intervention Program on Students with Low Academic Performance
- To study effect of Manoday Intervention Program on for Girls and Boys Students Separately (Gender Specific)
- To study effect of Manoday Intervention Program in a Residential Set-up for 4-6 weeks

- To study effect of Manoday Intervention Program on students from marginalized society
- To study effect of Manoday Intervention Program on Students of other establishments like academic Institutions, NGOs
- To study effect of Manoday Intervention Program on Academically High Achiever Students facing Psychological & Behavioral Issues

Extensive research on implication of Manoday Intervention Program in different set-ups with different parametric will furnish the dynamic influence it may have on students facing psychological and behavioral issues. It will not only enhance the generalizability of this Intervention Program, but also add value to its efficiency and effectiveness to deal with various adolescents' issues.

Conclusion

Manoday – a School Based Mental Health Intervention Program which is based on theory of Development of Character Strengths & Virtues and Panch Kosh Vikas is a practically feasible to be implemented in school set-up and aims at helping students with psychological and behavioral issues. This intervention program is segmented into 03 types of activities which are 1) Personal Routine Activity, 2) Weekly Activities, 3) Sessions at School, including key components like Physical Exercise, Mindfulness Meditation & Yog, Co-Curricular Activities, Art & Music Activities, Parental Engagement, Learning from Real-Life Idols, Group Discussion, Purposive Reading etc. Manoday Intervention Program Manual also depicts all the activities and rational behind it in well-defined manner.

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Amruta Bhuskute, PhD., Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Smt. Binzani Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Nagpur, Maharashtra, India Contact: e-mail: amritagokhale@gmail.com