

ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH IN INDIA: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

Dissertation Submitted to



The IIHMR University, Jaipur

for the partial fulfillment for the award of the degree of Master
of Business Administration (MBA)

in

Hospital and Health Management/Pharmaceutical Management/Development
Management

by

Spoorthi V

Under the Supervision and Guidance of

Dr. Seema Mehta

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DECLARATION BY STUDENT

I hereby declare that this dissertation titled **Adolescent mental health in India: a systematic review** is the bonafide record of my original researchwork. I declare that it has not been submitted to any other university or institution for the award of any degree or diploma. Information derived from the published or unpublished workof others has been duly acknowledged in the text.

(Signature)

Name of Student

Date

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that Ms. Spoorthi V in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of MBA (Hospital and Health Management)/ from the IIHMR University, Jaipur has successfully completed her/his internship at HCL foundation during May 01- June 05, 2023.

Place:

Date:

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that dissertation titled **Adolescent mental health in India: a systematic review** is a record of the research work undertaken by (Name of Student) in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of MBA (Hospital and Health Management)/MBA (Pharmaceutical Management)/MBA (Development Management) from the IIHMR University, Jaipur under my guidance and supervision and his/her approach to the research study has been sincere, scientific, and analytical.

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ABSTRACT

TITLE: Adolescent mental health in India: a systematic review

SUBMITTED BY: Spoorthi V

GUIDED BY: Dr. Seema Mehta (Mentor), Dr. Chethana Thirthahalli (Organization Mentor)

INTRODUCTION:

Adolescents are young people who are typically between the ages of 10 and 19 years old. They may experience rapid physical growth, changes in their hormones, and changes in their thinking and decision-making abilities. Adolescence is a crucial period of physical, emotional, and social development.^[1] In India, adolescent mental health is influenced by a complex interplay of factors such as poverty, limited access to education, gender disparities, social inequalities, and cultural norms. COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of addressing the mental health needs of adolescents in India. There is also a need to address mental health issues among adolescents as a part of India's efforts to achieve the SDGs; Goal 3, Target 3.4.^[2] The National Mental Health Policy in India also aims to promote mental health, prevent mental illness, provide access to affordable and quality mental health care services, and protect the rights of people with mental illness. This study aims to explore existing research on Adolescent mental health in India, shedding light on key findings and identifying relevant factors. The primary purpose of this review to synthesize and analyze relevant studies and identify key patterns, gaps, and recommendations for future research and interventions. The recommendations will focus on prevention, early intervention, and skill-building, aiming to help adolescents differentiate between mental illness and disorders, address risks, and improve overall well-being and functioning.

OBJECTIVES:

- 1.To identify the underlying issues associated with adolescent mental health in India.
2. To analyze the existing interventions on adolescent mental health in India.

METHODOLOGY:

To answer the research questions, a systematic review was conducted with respective inclusion and exclusion criteria. Systematic sampling was performed to collect the secondary data, where all research materials from the past 15 years were included.

14 articles shortlisted after identifying 20 articles which were well within the inclusion criteria), over one month of study. Exceptionally, 14 articles and 2 journal articles are included as well.

Keywords used: Adolescence, Adolescents, Young people, Mental Health, India, Disorder, help-seeking, interventions, health services, prevalence.

CONCLUSION:

Adolescent mental health in India is a complex issue that requires a comprehensive approach. This systematic review provides a synthesis of the current evidence base, highlighting key findings, gaps, and recommendations for future research and practice. By addressing the mental health needs of Indian adolescents, we can foster their well-being, promote their academic and social success, and contribute to a healthier and more productive future generation. The studies revealed that future research should focus on exploring interventions, and fostering collaboration among researchers, policymakers, educators, and mental health professionals.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A research project acts as a link between real world experience and theoretical knowledge. I would like to express my sincere gratitude and heartfelt thanks to IIHMR university for giving me this opportunity to conduct my dissertation and research work. The development and execution of the project required a great deal of direction and support from several people, and I count myself lucky to have received it during this work. My explicable gratitude goes to my university mentor, Dr. Seema Mehta, Professor, IIHMR university, Jaipur for her constant guidance. I feel highly elated to keep on the timeline of my records to my organization mentor Dr. Chethana Thirthahalli, HCL foundation, Noida for her unwavering dedication to teaching and her approachability throughout my time as an Intern. Her constant encouragement helped me perform this research study in a very smooth manner. It was an honor to be granted such an opportunity. I am thankful to all for their support for my dissertation work.

Date:

Place: IIHMR University, Jaipur

Ms. Spoorthi V

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ABBREVIATIONS

COVID-19: COronaVirus Disease 2019

LGBTQIA+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer/Questioning. Asexual+

STDs: Sexually Transmitted Diseases

RTAs: Road Traffic Accidents

ADHD: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

WHO: World Health Organization

ASHAs: Accredited Social Health Activist

UNICEF: United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

GAD – Generalized anxiety disorders

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Adolescents are young people who are typically between the ages of 10 and 19 years old. They may experience rapid physical growth, changes in their hormones, and changes in their thinking and decision-making abilities. Adolescence is a crucial period of physical, emotional, and social development.^[1] During this time, a lot of teenagers struggle with specific mental health issues, which can have a significant negative effect on their wellbeing and course in life. Adolescents make up about 21% of India's population (243 million).

Adolescent mental health in India is impacted by a huge number of factors such as academic stress, rapid urbanization, changing family structure, gender inequality, social injustice, and cultural norms. Because of socioeconomic factors, cultural influences, and restricted access to mental health resources, underprivileged adolescents in India face additional difficulties. Certain target groups, including adolescents from low-income backgrounds, marginalized communities, LGBTQIA+ individuals, and those who have experienced trauma, often encounter heightened stressors and are at increased risk of mental health issues. There is an urgent need to develop and implement programs that effectively address mental health concerns.

Adolescents represent the future of the country. Therefore, ensuring their well-being is crucial for India's social, political, and economic progress. Adolescent mental health protection is a pressing issue that has drawn a lot of attention, especially considering the COVID-19 pandemic, which has highlighted the significance of attending to their mental health needs.

The purpose of this study is to review the literature on the mental health of adolescents, highlight key findings, and identify relevant factors.

The systematic review aims to provide a thorough analysis on adolescent mental health in India. This review aims to identify patterns, trends, and critical factors associated with outcomes for mental health among Indian adolescents by synthesizing and evaluating a wide range of studies. It also seeks to identify knowledge gaps by evaluating the effectiveness and accessibility of interventions.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

BROAD RESEARCH OBJECTIVE –

To review articles and ongoing projects to understand the issues faced by adolescents with respect to their mental health in India.

SPECIFIC RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

- 1.To identify the underlying issues associated with adolescent mental health in India.
2. To analyze the existing interventions on adolescent mental health in India.

CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A total of 14 research papers were examined in this systematic review. The papers examine various aspects of adolescent mental health in India. They highlight the prevalence and impact of mental health issues among adolescents, including the challenges they face such as academic stress, peer pressure, substance abuse, and the influence of social media. The papers emphasize the importance of early identification and intervention, as well as the need for increased awareness, education, and de-stigmatization of mental health problems. They also discuss the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on adolescent mental health and provide recommendations for policymakers, healthcare professionals, educators, parents, and communities to address these issues. The papers stress the need for comprehensive strategies, collaboration between stakeholders, and the integration of mental health services into existing healthcare systems. Overall, they call for a holistic approach to improve the mental health outcomes of adolescents in India.

TITLE	AUTHORS	PUBLISHED ON	SUMMARY
Adolescent mental health: Issues, challenges, and solutions.	Naresh Nebhinani and Shreyance Jain	January 2019	The paper highlights the importance of mental health, considering biological, psychological, and environmental factors. Key challenges include academic stress, peer pressure, substance abuse, and social media. Cultural norms, gender disparities, and socioeconomic factors also affect mental health. The paper suggests increasing awareness and education, reducing stigma, and involving parents, educators, and healthcare professionals. Early identification and intervention are crucial. Technology can be both a stressor and a tool for intervention, with e-mental health and online support networks being potential solutions. Successful initiatives are discussed, and collaboration among stakeholders is stressed. The paper concludes by emphasizing the need for innovative service delivery and a holistic approach to

			address adolescent mental health.
Health behaviors & problems among young people in India: Cause for concern & call for action.	Singh Sunitha and Gopalkrishna Gururaj.	August 2014	The authors discuss the health issues faced by young people in India, including physical and mental health concerns ^[5] They highlight the prevalence of problems like obesity, undernutrition, STDs, RTAs, tobacco, and alcohol use, as well as common mental health issues leading to stress and suicide. They stress the urgent need for action from policymakers, healthcare providers, and educators. The authors suggest a comprehensive approach involving targeted health education programs, policies to reduce access to harmful substances, and initiatives promoting physical activity and healthy diets. They also emphasize the importance of addressing social determinants of health like poverty, gender inequality, and lack of education. In conclusion, the authors call for a multi-sectoral approach, continued research, and evidence-based interventions to improve the well-being of young people in India.
Impact of COVID-19 and lockdown on mental health of children and adolescents: A narrative review with recommendations	Shweta Singh, Deblina Roy, Kritika Sinha, Sheeba Parveen, Ginni Sharma, and Gunjan Joshi	2020	This research paper explores how the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns affect the mental health of children and adolescents. It discusses their unique vulnerabilities, including disrupted routines, limited social interactions, and increased stress. The paper emphasizes early identification and intervention to prevent long-term effects. It also addresses the impact of school closures, online learning, and increased screen time. Recommendations include creating supportive home environments, promoting communication, and implementing stress reduction strategies. Integration of mental health services and school-based interventions are suggested, with

			involvement from community organizations. The paper emphasizes the importance of community engagement and collaboration to address the mental health of young people. ^[6]
Improving child and adolescent mental health in India: Status, services, policies, and way forward.	Md Mahbub Hossain and Neetu Purohit.	July-August 2019	This research paper focuses on child and adolescent mental health in India, discussing existing services, policies, and strategies for improvement. It highlights the prevalence and impact of mental health issues among young people and reviews available services and initiatives. The paper identifies barriers like stigma, lack of professionals, and limited awareness. Proposed policy interventions include community-based programs, strengthened child protection laws, and mental health education in schools. ^[7] Recommendations include hiring and educating mental health professionals, integrating services into primary healthcare, and conducting research for evidence-based interventions. Culturally appropriate interventions, guidelines, and protocols are also emphasized. The paper underscores the need to address gaps in policies, services, and awareness to enhance the mental health of children and adolescents in India.
Mental Health Interventions among Adolescents in India: A Scoping Review	Devika Mehra, Theophilus Lakiang, Nishtha Kathuria, Manish Kumar, Sunil Mehra, and Shantanu Sharma	February 2022	The research paper comprehensively reviews adolescent mental health interventions in India, addressing their types, effectiveness, and the prevalence of mental health issues among Indian adolescents. It emphasizes the need for rigorous evaluation, cultural adaptation, and tailored frameworks to improve intervention outcomes. The authors highlight the importance of collaboration among researchers, policymakers, and community

			organizations. The paper concludes by emphasizing the significance of addressing mental health issues in Indian adolescents and utilizing the review's insights to inform future research and effective interventions. ^[8]
A Study of Psychiatric Morbidity and Substance Use Pattern among the Adolescents Attending Department of Psychiatry of a Tertiary Hospital in North-eastern India	Udayan Majumder, Senjam Gojendra, Ningombam Heramani, and Rajkumar Lenin Singh.	May 2019	The research paper investigates the prevalence of psychiatric disorders and substance use among adolescents seeking treatment at a tertiary hospital in North-eastern India. The study reveals a significant burden of psychiatric morbidity, with participants experiencing various mental health disorders. It also examines substance use patterns, highlighting the co-occurrence of substance use and mental health issues. ^[9] The findings provide valuable insights into the mental health challenges faced by adolescents in the region. The paper emphasizes the need for early identification, intervention, and appropriate management of these conditions. The research contributes to understanding the local context and can inform targeted interventions and treatment approaches. It underscores the importance of addressing mental health and substance use among adolescents in North-eastern India for improved outcomes.
India's response to adolescent mental health: a policy review and stakeholder analysis.	Kallol Roy, Sachin Shinde ¹ , Bidyut K. Sarkar, Kanika Malik, Rachana Parikh, Vikram Patel.	January 2019.	The research article examines how India addresses the mental health needs of adolescents by evaluating government policies and stakeholder involvement. It identifies strengths and gaps in the response to adolescent mental health, highlighting key policy documents and initiatives. Integration of mental health services within healthcare systems and community-based interventions are emphasized. The analysis underscores the importance of collaboration among

			stakeholders for policy implementation, service delivery, and awareness raising. A multi-sectoral approach and evidence-based interventions are recommended, with a call for continued investment, capacity building, and advocacy to bridge policy gaps and support adolescents with mental health challenges.
Adolescent Health: Present Status and Its Related Programmes in India. Are We in the Right Direction?	Gopalakrishnan, Sivagurunathan, R. Umadevi, R. Rama, and S.	March 2015.	The research paper examines the state of adolescent health in India and evaluates existing programs targeting their health needs. It covers various aspects including physical well-being, sexual/reproductive health, nutrition, substance abuse, and mental health. The paper critically assesses the strengths, weaknesses, and gaps in current programs and highlights the importance of addressing social determinants of health. A holistic and multi-sectoral approach is recommended to effectively address adolescent health needs. The paper raises questions about the direction of adolescent health programs and emphasizes the need for concerted efforts to improve the current state of adolescent health in India, including effective implementation of mental health services.
Prevalence of child and adolescent psychiatric disorders in India: a systematic review and meta-analysis.	Savita Malhotra and Bichitra Nanda Patra	2014	The authors conduct a review of existing studies to explore the prevalence of psychiatric disorders among children and adolescents in India. ^[12] They focus on conditions such as depression, anxiety, ADHD, conduct disorders, and substance use disorders. The review indicates that these disorders affect a significant number of young people across different regions of India, leading to a heavy burden on individuals, families, and society. The authors stress the importance of increasing awareness, early

			detection, and intervention for child and adolescent psychiatric disorders. They also highlight the need for effective strategies and interventions to address these mental health issues and promote the well-being of young individuals.
Youth & mental health: Challenges ahead	Rakesh K. Chadda	October 2018	The article explores the difficulties adolescents face regarding their mental health. He states that the prevalence of mental health problems is increasing among the youth. He believes that various factors such as academic pressure, societal expectations, technology, and changes in family dynamics contribute to these challenges. The article also addresses the barriers that prevent young people from accessing mental health services, such as the stigma, lack of awareness about available support, and limited resources. Early detection, timely intervention, and the presence of appropriate support systems to effectively address youth mental health issues is important. In conclusion, the author calls for a comprehensive approach to youth mental health by collaboration among different stakeholders such as healthcare professionals, educators, policymakers, and families. He concludes by stressing the need for tailored interventions, improved mental health knowledge, and efforts to eliminate stigma to create a nurturing environment for adolescents.
Innovative Mental Health Initiatives in India: A Scope for Strengthening Primary	Apurva Kumar Pandya, Komal Shah, Ajay Chauhan, and Somen Saha.	February 2020	The authors discuss ideas to improve mental health services in India, emphasizing the need for effective care considering the high prevalence of mental health challenges.^[12] They address gaps in the current infrastructure, suggesting integration into primary healthcare, training primary care providers, and

Healthcare Services.			utilizing digital technologies for remote access. Community involvement, awareness campaigns, and educational programs are recommended to reduce stigma. Establishing community mental health centers and involving non-specialist healthcare workers like ASHAs is proposed. Robust data collection and research are highlighted for evidence-based policymaking. Integration into primary care, digital technologies, community participation, involvement of non-specialist healthcare workers, and prioritizing data collection and research are essential for improving access to mental healthcare in India.
SMART Mental Health Project: process evaluation to understand the barriers and facilitators for implementation of multifaceted intervention in rural India.	Abha Tewari, Sudha Kallakuri, Siddhardha Devarapalli, David Peiris, Anushka Patel and Pallab K. Maulik	February 2021.	The project aimed to evaluate the implementation of a comprehensive mental health intervention. The evaluation identified challenges such as limited community knowledge, stigma, and lack of resources. ^[13] It emphasized the importance of training healthcare providers and community health workers, engaging with the community, and establishing partnerships. Technology, like mobile health applications, was found to be helpful. Recommendations include community engagement, awareness campaigns, referral pathways, integration into primary healthcare, and continuous monitoring and evaluation. The findings provide insights to enhance mental health services in similar settings by addressing awareness, stigma, capacity building, and collaboration among stakeholders.
Prevalence of mental health problems among rural adolescents	Eslavath Rajkumar, Grace Jacob Julia, N. V. Sri	OCTOBER 2022	The study aimed to determine the prevalence of mental health issues in rural adolescents. The researchers conducted a systematic review and meta-analysis of existing studies to analyze the data. Their findings

in India: A systematic review and meta-analysis	Lakshmi K., P. K. Ranjana, Mahesh Manjima, Rajanala Ruchitha Devi, Dubey Rukmini, George Christina, John Romate, Joshua George Allen, John Abraham, and Anieta Merin Jacob		indicated that mental health problems, including depression, anxiety, and behavioral disorders, were common among rural adolescents in India. The study highlights the need for increased support and resources for mental health services in rural areas. ^[14] Targeted interventions and programs should be developed to address the mental health needs of this population. The research provides valuable insights to inform policymakers, healthcare professionals, and organizations working to improve the well-being of rural adolescents in India.
Safeguarding adolescent mental health in India (SAMA): study protocol for codesign and feasibility study of a school systems intervention targeting adolescent anxiety and depression in India	Siobhan Hugh-Jones, N Janardhana, Hareth Al-Janabi, Poornima Bhola, Paul Cooke, Mina Fazel, Kristian Hudson, Prachi Khandeparkar, Tolib Mirzoev, Surendran Venkataraman, Robert M West, and Pavan Mallikarjun.	APRIL 2022	The study aims to develop and test an intervention for anxiety and depression among Indian adolescents. ^[15] The researchers emphasize the importance of involving stakeholders in the design process. They seek to alter the intervention to local needs and context. The study will assess feasibility and acceptability, collect data, and gather participant feedback. The researchers aim to improve mental health outcomes for adolescents and contribute to their protection and promotion. The intervention will be implemented within the school system. The study's findings will provide valuable insights for addressing anxiety and depression among Indian adolescents in schools.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Methodology:

Study Design: Systematic Review

Setting: India

Study Population: The study population for analysis would be adolescents (aged 10-19 years) in India.

Inclusion criteria:

- Articles published in the last fifteen years and reporting interventions that targeted adolescent mental health were included.
- Types of studies: programs/interventions designed to promote/improve positive mental health among adolescents were included in this review.
- The primary outcomes of interest were mental health and well-being benefits, including indicators of positive mental health such as self-esteem, emotional well-being; negative mental health such as depression, anxiety, psychological distress; and well-being such as social participation, empowerment, communication, and social support.
- Different existing mental health programs in India.

Exclusion criteria:

- Reports, conference papers, commentaries, editorials, clinical studies, and studies that are still in the formative phase were excluded from this study.
- Studies that were not written in English.
- Studies that were not conducted on humans.

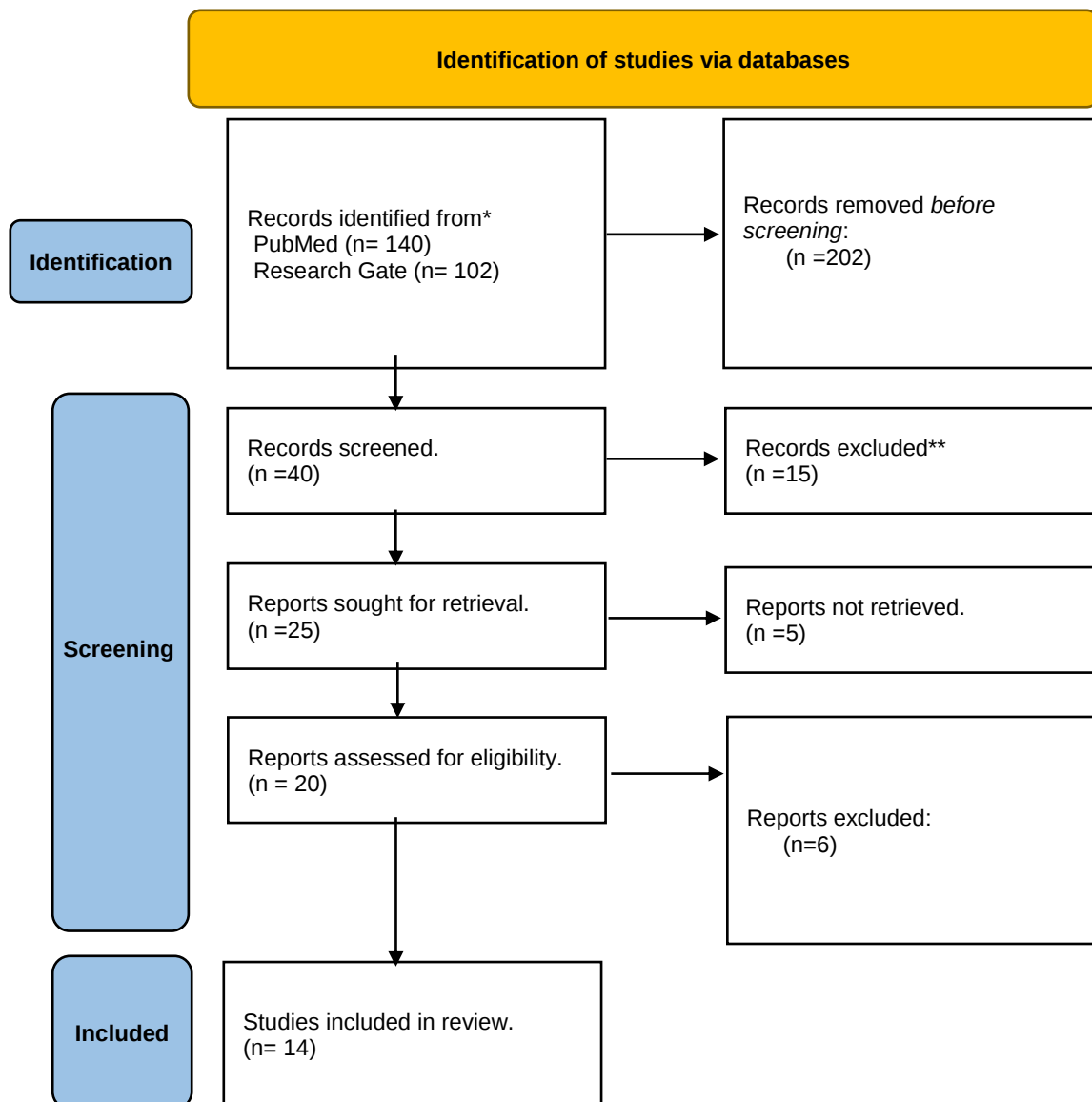
Duration of study: 3 months

Sampling techniques: The data has already been collected through various research papers available in the last 15 years.

Data collection method: The study will make use of secondary data that is currently accessible and will take specific information that might be used to design a mental health program for adolescents. It would not involve direct data collection from Individuals.

Study Tool: A web-based search was conducted through PubMed and Research Gate were used to identify the studies using various combinations of search terms (adolescent mental health in India).

Fig 3.1 PRISMA 2020 flow diagram for new systematic reviews



3.2 Key Research questions –

1. What are the underlying issues associated with mental health of adolescents in India?
2. What are the various types of adolescent mental health interventions?

3.3 Operational Definition:

“Adolescence is the transitional phase of growth and development between childhood and adulthood. The World Health Organization defines an adolescent as any person between the ages of 10 and 19. Intervention is an action taken to improve a medical illness or disorder”.^[18]

CHAPTER 4: RESULT

According to UNICEF, India has the largest adolescent population in the world, with approximately 253 million adolescents. This group faces a lot of issues that result in them having detrimental impact on their mental well-being. This systematic review examined 14 research papers related to adolescent mental health in India. These papers provided insights into various aspects of adolescent mental health, including the prevalence and impact of mental health issues, underlying issues, and existing interventions.

According to the National Mental Health Survey of India 2015-2016, conducted by R. Srinivasa Murthy and his team, approximately 13.7% of the population in India, which amounts to around 150 million people, required mental health care. The survey revealed that nearly 80-85% of individuals with mental health problems were not receiving any treatment. This treatment gap was particularly pronounced in rural areas and among disadvantaged populations. The survey also found that the prevalence of mental health disorders was higher among females than males by 2.4%. A meta-analysis estimated that the global prevalence of any mental disorder among children and adolescents is 13.4%. Another meta-analysis reported that 6.5% of the community and 23.3% of school children and adolescents in India have psychiatric disorders.

Common mental health issues faced by adolescents in India include depression, GAD, substance abuse, ADHD, and internet addiction and a few of the underlying issues were found to be academic stress, parental expectations, changing family structures, gender inequalities, social injustice, cultural factors, peer pressure, substance abuse, social media influence. Gender norms and inequalities prevalent in Indian society has a negative impact on Adolescent's mental health. Socioeconomic and gender disparities, caste discrimination, and marginalization of certain communities can contribute to increased stress, trauma, and mental health issues among adolescents belonging to disadvantaged groups.

Some of the gender disparities in mental health of adolescents include the following.

Table 4.1. Gender disparities in mental health.

CHARACTERISTICS	FEMALE	MALE
Prevalence: Depression and Anxiety	More common	
Prevalence: Conduct disorder		More common
Prevalence: Substance abuse		More common
Expression of symptom: Sadness	More common	
Expression of symptom: Aggression		More common
Trauma and violence	Psychological consequence is more due domestic violence and sexual harassment.	

Due to the frequent intersectionality of risk factors like gender and socioeconomic disparities, an individual may face compound issues with respect to their mental health.

The COVID-19 pandemic also had a huge impact on the mental health of children and adolescents. The widespread closures of schools and colleges have had a negative impact on over 91% of the world's student population and the vulnerabilities include increased isolation, disrupted routines, and heightened anxiety. The burden associated with depressive and anxiety disorders tends to increase during childhood and peak in adolescence and early to middle age (10-29 years). Gender factors include urbanization, changing family structures, gender inequality, social injustice, and cultural norms that also contributed to the mental health problems of adolescents. The influence of social media and peer pressure also emerged as important contributors to mental health problems among adolescents. It is worth noting that most mental disorders begin before the age of 25, with the majority emerging between 11 and 18 years old.

Mental illness left untreated has its own short term and long-term consequences.

Table 4.2 Short- and long-term consequences of untreated mental illness.

Short-term consequences	Long-term consequences
Academic difficulties: Mental health struggles can lead to lower academic performance.	Impaired educational and career outcomes: Continued struggles might lead to limiting the opportunities for personal growth, employment, and financial stability.
Social Isolation: This makes it tough for adolescents to take part in social activities, form friendships, and maintain healthy relationships with their peers.	Relationship difficulties: Difficult to establish healthy relationships, including friendships, romantic partnerships, and family connections.
Increased risk-taking behaviors: like substance abuse, self-harm, or engaging in unsafe sexual practices	Chronic mental health disorders: such as depression, anxiety disorders, bipolar disorder, or substance use disorders.
Physical health problems such as headaches, stomachaches, fatigue, and difficulties with sleep.	Increased risk of physical health problems such as cardiovascular disease, obesity, and immune system disorders.
Emotional distress: feelings of sadness, anxiety, irritability, or anger.	Higher likelihood of engaging in risky behaviors such as substance abuse, self-destructive behaviors, or involvement in criminal activities.

The papers provided recommendations for interventions to address these issues and emphasized the need for collaboration among policymakers, healthcare professionals, educators, parents, and communities. The existing interventions discussed in the reviewed papers focused on early identification, intervention, awareness, education, and de-stigmatization of mental health problems among adolescents. The need for comprehensive strategies and the integration of mental health services were emphasized to improve outcomes. Cultural adaptation and evaluation of interventions were also highlighted as important considerations.

Various types of adolescent mental health interventions include therapy, psychoeducation, school-based programs, community interventions and digital interventions.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Adolescents experience a lot of challenges daily that have a detrimental impact on their mental well-being. Adolescents experiencing mental health issues may exhibit persistent feelings of sadness, loss of interest, changes in appetite and sleep patterns, difficulty concentrating, and even thoughts of self-harm or suicide. The systematic review on adolescent mental health in India provides a comprehensive overview of the underlying issues associated with mental health and the existing interventions in this population. The review highlights the significance of addressing mental health issues among adolescents due to various key factors such as academic stress, urbanization, changing family structures, gender inequality, social injustice, cultural norms, peer pressure, substance abuse, and the influence of social media. The emphasis on academic performance and competition can lead to increased stress and anxiety and they often feel the burden of meeting parental and societal expectations due to this. This pressure can contribute to feelings of stress, inadequacy, and low self-esteem. Adolescents experience peer pressure to fit in, participate in social norms, and engage in risky behaviors. Rapid urbanization and changing family dynamics can impact the emotional support and stability available to adolescents. These changes can contribute to feelings of loneliness, insecurity, and emotional distress. Socioeconomic disparities, caste discrimination, and marginalization of certain communities can contribute to increased stress, trauma, and mental health issues among adolescents belonging to disadvantaged groups. Some of the socioeconomic disparities in mental health include access to resources such as quality healthcare, therapy, and medications. Environmental Factors like living in poverty, experiencing unstable housing situations, or lacking strong social support systems can increase stress levels and contribute mental health issues. Limited access to quality can affect an individual's ability to gain necessary skills, pursue fulfilling careers, and improve their socioeconomic status. Employment and financial stress can create chronic stress and financial strain. These factors contribute directly to the mental health of adolescents belonging to vulnerable populations. Unaddressed adolescent mental health issues can have significant societal and economic implications such as long-term impact on individuals and strain on healthcare systems. The demand for mental health services may increase, requiring additional resources, specialized professionals, and infrastructure to meet the growing needs. Untreated mental health could also impact the functioning of interpersonal relationships, it may lead to increased stigma and existing discrimination.

The papers also highlight the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on adolescent mental health and provide recommendations for multiple stakeholders, including policymakers, healthcare professionals, educators, parents, and communities. The review of literature chapter summarizes 14 research papers, and it tells the importance of early identification, intervention, awareness, education, and de-stigmatization of mental health problems.

The reviewed research papers collectively suggest the need for comprehensive strategies to address adolescent mental health in India. Collaboration and integration of mental health services are identified as crucial components of effective interventions. The importance of raising awareness, reducing stigma, and involving multiple stakeholders is emphasized to promote mental health and well-being among adolescents. One common factor that was found in these papers was the stigma around mental health in the community. Stigma affects many adolescents and their willingness to seek help. This may be due to lack of awareness and understanding mental health issues in India. Many people, including adolescents themselves, may not recognize the signs and symptoms of mental health problems or may attribute them to personal weakness or character flaws. This may also be due to cultural and social norms, fear of discrimination and judgement. Mental health issues are often seen as a taboo subject and are associated with shame and disgrace. There is also gender-related stigma that adds up to the challenges faced by adolescents. Boys may feel pressured to conform to traditional notions of masculinity, which discourage emotional vulnerability and seeking help for mental health concerns. Addressing the stigma surrounding mental health among adolescents in India requires a multi-faceted approach like public awareness campaigns, school-based interventions, and community support and involvement.

Individual or group therapy sessions with trained mental health professionals to address specific mental health concerns, improve coping skills, and promote emotional well-being.

Psychoeducation aims to reduce stigma, increase awareness, and promote early intervention.

Implementing mental health programs within school settings to address the unique needs of adolescents. These interventions can include awareness campaigns, stress management workshops, and peer support programs. Engaging with community organizations, NGOs, and volunteers to provide mental health support and resources to adolescents in their local communities. These programs aim to improve access to mental health services, particularly in underserved areas. Utilizing digital platforms, mobile applications, and online resources to deliver mental health interventions and support. A comprehensive and multidimensional approach is often necessary to address the complex and interconnected factors influencing adolescent mental health in India.

5.1 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

The availability and quality of data on adolescent mental health in India makes it difficult to obtain a comprehensive and standardized data set for analysis.

Heterogeneity of studies can pose challenges in synthesizing the findings and drawing meaningful conclusions, language barrier as few valuable studies published in regional languages had to be excluded.

Publication bias and limited research fundings to conduct adequate comprehensive reviews.

Adolescent mental health is influenced by various contextual factors such as cultural, socioeconomic, and regional variations. These factors need to be considered during the review process, but the interpretation and generalization of findings across different contexts can be challenging.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION.

6.1 SUMMARY

The systematic review on adolescent mental health in India revealed significant issues and challenges faced by adolescents in the country. Academic stress, peer pressure, substance abuse, social media influence, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic were identified as key factors affecting adolescent mental health. The papers emphasized the need for increased awareness, education, and de-stigmatization of mental health problems among adolescents, parents, educators, and healthcare professionals. The prevalence of mental health issues among adolescents, the challenges, and the potential solutions to address these issues by collaborative efforts involving policymakers, healthcare professionals, educators, parents, and communities. The need for comprehensive strategies, early identification, intervention, awareness, education, and de-stigmatization of mental health problems among adolescents was emphasized. Existing interventions focused on various aspects of adolescent mental health, with an emphasis on cultural adaptation, evaluation, and collaboration among stakeholders. However, there is a need for further research and evaluation of these interventions to determine their effectiveness and scalability. Additionally, the papers examined the state of mental health services, policies, and programs for adolescents in India, identifying gaps and making recommendations for improvement.

In conclusion, improving the mental health outcomes of adolescents in India requires a holistic approach that addresses the underlying issues, promotes awareness, and ensures the availability of appropriate interventions and support systems.

6.2 Recommendations:

Based on the findings of the systematic review, several recommendations can be made to improve adolescent mental health in India:

- **Strengthening mental health services:** By enhancing the availability and accessibility of mental health services specifically tailored to adolescents such as increasing the number of trained mental health professionals, establishing mental health clinics in schools and communities, and providing culturally sensitive and age-appropriate interventions.
- **Integration of mental health into education systems:** Collaborative efforts between education authorities and mental health professionals should be encouraged to integrate mental health education and support programs into the school curriculum. This can include promoting mental well-being, stress management techniques, and early identification of mental health issues.

- Awareness and de-stigmatization campaigns: Launching public awareness campaigns to reduce the stigma associated with mental health is crucial. These campaigns should target various stakeholders, including parents, teachers, healthcare providers, and the broader community.
- Enhancing support networks: Building strong support networks involving parents, families, peers, and community organizations can play a vital role in promoting adolescent mental health. Encouraging open communication, fostering positive relationships, and providing platforms for peer support can help adolescents navigate challenges and seek help when needed.
- Research and evaluation: Continued research and evaluation of adolescent mental health interventions are necessary to ensure their effectiveness and cultural adaptation. Investing in research initiatives can provide valuable insights into the unique challenges faced by Indian adolescents and guide the development of evidence-based interventions.
- Policy development and implementation: Policymakers need to prioritize adolescent mental health by developing and implementing policies that address the specific needs of this population. This includes allocating sufficient resources, integrating mental health into primary healthcare systems, and establishing guidelines for mental health promotion and prevention programs.

Specific to school going adolescents,

- Implementing a school based mental health programs helps in early identification and intervention for adolescents. These programs can include mental health education, awareness campaigns and skill-building workshops.
 - Mental health literacy refers to the knowledge, understanding, and awareness of mental health and mental illnesses within a community or population. It encompasses the ability to recognize signs and symptoms of mental health problems, understanding risk factors and protective factors, knowing how to seek help, and being aware of effective treatments and strategies for maintaining good mental health. Conducting mental health literacy awareness campaigns that target adolescents, parents, teachers, and the broader community can help reduce stigma and increase mental health literacy.
 - Providing training to teachers and school staff on recognizing and responding to mental health issues can enhance their ability to support students. This training can focus on identifying warning signs, providing initial support and early identification and interventions.
- Establishing collaborations between schools and healthcare providers can improve access to

mental health services for adolescents.

- Peer support programs can create a safe space for adolescents to discuss their mental health concerns with their peers. It can also help in reducing stigma and promoting help-seeking behavior among adolescents.
- Tele-health services: Leveraging technology can overcome geographical barriers and improve access to mental health support. It enables adolescents to receive counseling or consultations remotely, reducing the stigma associated with visiting mental health facilities in person.

In conclusion, the systematic review highlights the importance of addressing mental health issues among Indian adolescents and provides a valuable summary of the underlying issues and existing interventions. By implementing the recommended strategies and engaging multiple stakeholders, it is possible to improve the mental health outcomes of adolescents in India, ultimately contributing to their overall well-being and the nation's social, political, and economic progress.

6.3 Ethical considerations:

The study involves the analysis of publicly available secondary data from research papers.

The study does not involve direct participation from the participants and therefore does not pose ethical risk to the study population.

However, the study considers the ethical issues associated with confidentiality and privacy. The available data is used only for research purposes and will not involve sharing it with third parties. I acknowledge that original data sources and authors are given due credits to avoid plagiarism.

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