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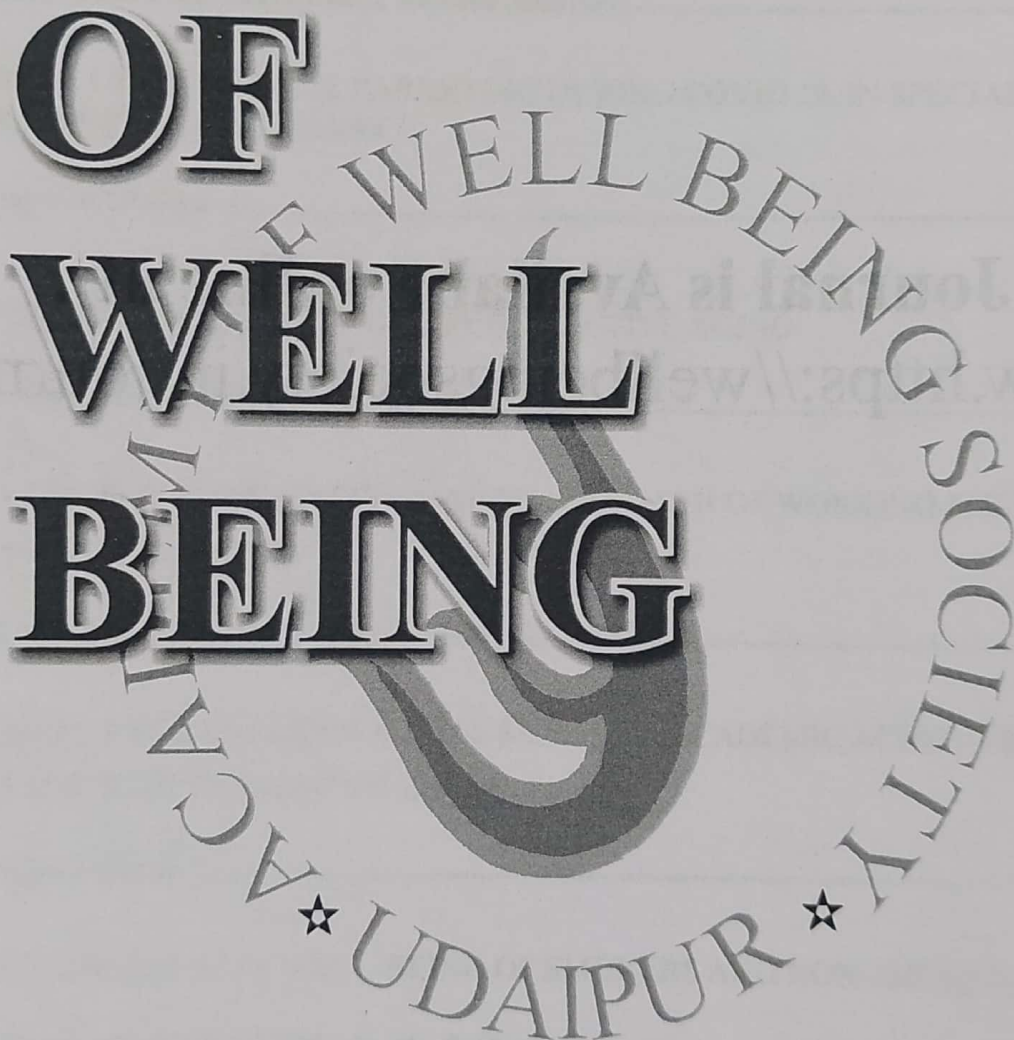
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ROLE OF EMOTIONAL PARENTING DURING COVID 19: IN SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CHILDREN

*Dr. Varsha Sharma**

ABSTRACT

COVID 19 pandemic has adversely affected all of us with lots of questions and with a challenge to adjust with this 'NEW NORMAL'. Children are the most sensitive and curious members of our family, who always have lots of questions and queries in their young minds. Global outbreak of CORONA has also affected their mental health in many ways. Present paper is an effort to critically chalk out the issues related to children's mental health during this pandemic. The major issues related to mental health of the young ones are stressful home environment, blocked face to face interaction, home schooling boundaries, restricted indoor physical activities, increased screen time etc. These can be deal up effectively by Create Healthy and Happy Home Environment, Open discussion time with your children, Relax, rest and revive your creativity, Organise online classes with your face to face home schooling, Never left your child's online activity unattended, Activate the skills of your child's school discipline to self discipline. Thus with a change in our mindset and by the key of positivity, we will be able to deal up this mental lockdown state.

KEYWORDS: EMOTIONAL PARENTING, COVID-19, CHILDREN, MENTAL HEALTH

INTRODUCTION

The outbreak of COVID 19 resulted into closure of schools round the globe. It compelled the education system to shift from offline to online learning mode. But amidst this procedure children of the family are separated from their face to face interaction with the outer world.

COVID 19 pandemic unknowingly created a stressful environment for the families through many ways. It invited the worries about health of family members, pressure of going out for the work, maintain job performance from work from home culture, partial unemployment, deduction in salaries, closures of school colleges, overburdened with the children's new demand for home schooling and many more. Stressful home environment act as a stressor for children's social emotional skills, amplifying socio emotional disparities across children (Moroni et al 2019)

**Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Mohanlal Sukhadia University, Udaipur, Rajasthan.*

You may have encountered some questions like: When schools will reopen? When will I go out to play in the park with my friends? When will you take me out for shopping? Can my favourite cartoon get infected from CORONA? , while dealing with your young ones.

Research from Oxford University has shown that primary school children are displaying more signs of emotional and mental health issues during lockdown (fenews.uk, 18 June, 2020)

Restricted social interaction has also increased the problems. Blake et al (2003) stated that children who better understand emotional cues in a social environment may develop superior social skills and form more positive peer relationships. Observing such upcoming issues the present paper initiates an effort to critically understand the different issues.

Objective

Critically evaluate the issues related to the mental health of children during COVID 19 and suggesting strategies for parents and other stakeholders to deal with them.

Major Issues Related To Children Mental Health During Pandemic-

🕒 **Stressful Home Environment**

Sudden change in our lifestyle due to the COVID 19 our home environment became stressful. In this stress provoking situation when we are unable to predict our future outcomes, we unknowingly created a stressful home environment which have an adverse effect on the young ones

🕒 **Blocked Face to Face Interaction**

Restricted outdoor movements have created another mental issue for the children as they are limited into home space only. Researches revealed that face to face interaction is far better than online interaction as it includes the non verbal communication and healing touch too.

🕒 **Home Schooling boundaries**

Due to the journey of Lockdown 1.0, 2.0, 3.0, 4.0 and finally to Unlock 1.0 all the schools are being closed in all over the country. This created a new demand on the parents to provide the school environment at home. Children are no doubt desperately

waiting for their schools to reopen. But we are not sure of this as we are ready for this or not. This confusing state also creates stress for children.

🕒 **Restricted Indoor Physical Activities**

Children always love to play outdoor games, but due to present condition they are compelled to be in the homes only. The indoor games provide less opportunity for the physical activity.

🕒 **Increased Screen Time**

During lockdown there is a significant increase in the screen time of children (ET Bureau, 15 June, 2020) just because of Online classes, video lectures, online games, online entertainment activities etc. Exaggerated screen time is directly related to eye problems and some psychological issues. More hours of screen time are associated with lower wellbeing in those aged 2yrs. to 17 yrs. Nauert (2018)

Effective Strategies for the Mental Health Boost up

We are puzzled today due to the CORONA spread but if we will change our mindset then we will be able to find out the solution of the problems in corona itself. As Create Healthy and Happy Home Environment, Open discussion time with your children, Relax, rest and revive your creativity, Organise online classes with your face to face home schooling, Never left your child's online activity unattended, Activate the skills of your child's school discipline to self discipline.

🕒 **Create Healthy and Happy Home Environment**

Take notice on the communication what you do in the family as it can enhance or degrade the level of social environment of your family. Think before you interact with your children as your child is very sensitive. Your each word means a lot for them.

🕒 **Open discussion time with your children**

If possible take out time from your daily schedule specially for the open discussion with your ward. Have a healthy discussion regarding their classes, outbreak corona, future outcomes whatever they want to discuss with you. Only listening to them patiently will relax their curiosity.

🕒 **Relax, rest and revive your creativity**

Children can not go out it doesn't mean that their creativity can not grow, its our duty as a parent to provide them a platform to develop and enhance their creativity skills. So

relax and make a strategy to do things with creativity, ask your children to help and give ideas, and respect their suggestions.

🕒 **Organise online classes with your face to face home schooling**

we have to find a way out to merge the online classes and your home schooling together as this will only fill the lacuna of school face to face class teaching. Spare time and sit by them during their online classes and try to explain the same concepts later.

🕒 **Never left your child's online activity unattended**

we agree on the fact that in the present scenario in order to continue our formal education we have to switch over to online classes but we should always take notice on the online activities of our child as the online activity should only be for work purpose not for non work purpose.

🕒 **Activate the skills of your child's school discipline to self discipline**

What the children is missing during lockdown is the school discipline, this is great time to initiate and enhance the self discipline habits in our young ones. It will add values to their learning and in overall development of their personality.

Conclusion

The role of emotional parenting is very important in the present era as COVID 19 will go away some time but we should take notice that it should left our young ones with optimism and hope so that they can maintain their resilience and excel in their lives with wellbeing and happiness.

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