


Chapter 6

Exploring Mental Health Challenges in Education and the Application of Technological Solutions

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the intersection of mental health challenges in education and the transformative potential of technological solutions to address them. With the rising prevalence of mental health issues among students and educators, particularly in high-pressure academic environments, the integration of digital tools such as artificial intelligence, mobile applications, and virtual support platforms offers innovative ways to enhance emotional resilience, manage stress, and foster student well-being. The research examines how technology can provide personalized support, promote inclusive learning, and create accessible mental health resources, particularly for underserved communities. This work highlights the potential of EdTech innovations to mitigate mental health challenges while addressing ethical considerations such as privacy, equity, and digital accessibility. The findings emphasize the need for a balanced approach that combines technological advancements with traditional support systems to create a sustainable and inclusive educational environment.

1. INTRODUCTION

As teachers and education leaders, we become students of people of all ages. Understanding how individuals function, behave, and think is relevant to everything we do in our positions. A person's mental health, the way they are coping with emotions and environments, directly impacts their ability to achieve and thrive academically (Kihara, 2024). This provides insights into our exploration of challenges within education as they relate to mental health and potential technological applications. The number of students with identified mental health challenges is growing and has resulted in increased awareness (Shafik, 2024a). The final causes of this increase depend on various factors; however, we know that society has

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more awareness and understanding of the rationales behind mental health issues. Various circumstances and locations are potential contributors to increased rates of identified mental health challenges (Silva et al., 2024). We believe that increasing your awareness of these issues and understanding potential linkages to mental health in those you serve will be useful. Our purpose for presenting is to offer educators and policymakers points to consider around your work. The themes of politics, transformative leadership in education, and technology as an enabler or oppressor are pervasive in these presentations as well (Georgousopoulou et al., 2024).

The mental health of educators and student groups is of utmost concern for many reasons. Individuals who struggle with mental health tend to exhibit more problematic behaviors, including decreased motivation, refusal to go to school or college, lower academic performance, and overall dissatisfaction. Unsurprisingly, these individuals are also more susceptible to negative long-term effects. Many of these problems are only exacerbated if the educators themselves are the affected group. With the technological advancements that society is currently facing, digital solutions have never been better (Bamford et al., 2024). Ventures involving the use of smart and assistive technology to solve and assist with mental health challenges have been on the rise and have shown promise within the mental health community. Therefore, in addition to reviewing existing studies on this important issue, this study has two primary objectives: to examine concerns about the current status of educators' and students' mental health and to explore possible solutions in the form of technological applications. This information is invaluable for a number of stakeholders, including policymakers, universities, educational organizations, research institutions, and businesses, as they all have an interest in maintaining a healthy and balanced educational program (Rong, 2024). In this chapter, three general dispositions have emerged: (1) Technology has a cultural impact tied to mental health; whose responsibility is this? (2) the value of teacher practice and education leadership, and the importance of examining the mindsets of the communities we serve and who we are as policy developers, and (3) Best practices are best until they are not. A continuous cycle of examining current practice and being open that we are educating our children for futures that have not yet been fully realized. It is from the first and second dispositions and the themes embedded in the chapter we have received that we enter into a dialogue focusing on mental health. For this chapter, we will be focusing on the technology enabler and how it can be a tool in understanding mental well-being.

1.1. Background and Rationale

School is not only a place to foster young people's knowledge and skills development, but it should also be a critical space to promote maturity and facilitate the development of the kind of citizens that will contribute to society. Mental health challenges that some students experience at school present significant implications for this developmental process and are a growing concern in schools worldwide (Taylor et al., 2024). Over the last few decades, through changes in societal attitudes and policies surrounding mental health, there have been considerable changes in the prevalence and awareness of issues around young people's mental health. Some of this focus has spilled over into policy and attention within the fields of education, as the school has been identified as a place to provide initial access for young people to these kinds of services. A few key indicators demonstrate the scale of the issue (Magotra & Vidya, 2024). In any given classroom, there will be, on average, three students suffering from a diagnosable mental health condition, and mental health disorders in teenagers will become one of the leading causes of morbidity and mortality in the world by 2030, usually demonstrated as causes of marginalization are the same as mental health causes depending on application and context, as illustrated in Figure 1 (Jiang et al., 2024).

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