

# **THE CHALLENGE OF RETURNING TO FACE-TO-FACE TEACHING PROCESS IN PRESENT EDUCATIONAL SCENARIO WITH RESPECT TOPSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING OF SCHOOL TEACHERS**

**Dr. Mita Howladar**

Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Jadavpur University, Kolkata-700 032, West  
Bengal, India

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## **ABSTRACT**

Teaching is considered to be a highly stressful career, and teachers' wellbeing play an important role in the educational scenario with respect to teacher burnout, teacher satisfaction and achievement. The nature of teacher wellbeing is complex and is largely theoretical, but there are some universal factors that may contribute to the psychological functioning of teachers. The aim of the present article is to discuss the theoretical foundations of wellbeing and issues associated with it in the teaching profession. The article also highlights the preventive activities which can be carried out to support the wellbeing of people working in the face-to-face teaching process.

**Keywords:** School Teachers, Psychological wellbeing, Teaching Process.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Teachers are regarded as competent when they are not only the effective tutors but also they display a high level of personal maturity and possess expertise on multidisciplinary subjects. These demands begat the stress level of the practicing teachers. Those within the teaching profession are burdened with high level of social responsibility, and teaching itself is associated with a high risk of loss of both physical and mental health. In addition, tension in schools can interfere with the teaching and educational processes, thus undermining the efforts of both students and teachers. Other risk factors such as physical condition, personality and intelligence or temperament, as well as several contextual factors such as time pressure, discipline problems, lack of resources, lack of professional recognition, lack of support and the diversity of tasks which are associated to the work-life balance and individual characteristics have also been noted (Kokkinos, 2007). Although

positive teacher-student relationships are an important factor in student learning, behaviour and achievement in the modern school environment are also another important factor (Roorda, Koomen, Spilt, & Oort, 2011). Teacher wellbeing has a strong influence on a number of educational aspects, and it is an important factor in the teacher-student relationship for the wellbeing of the environment.

The quality of relationships in a school has a strong influence on the wellbeing of teachers and their ability to cope with the many and varied stresses that are the hallmarks of the profession. Teacher attitudes have been found to make a difference to their ability to respond effectively to the challenges they face (Roffey, 2012). However, the concept of general teacher wellbeing is quite atypical. The present study investigates the significance of this wellbeing and how it relates to the teaching profession. The study also examines how wellbeing can be enhanced.

## **TEACHERS WELLBEING WITH RESPECT TO PSYCHOLOGICAL SCHOOL, AND PEDAGOGICAL ASPECTS**

A new field of Psychology which is known as positive psychology has emerged and the aim of this field is to define the characteristics associated with a good life, or a life of optimum quality; the name wellbeing has been given to these characteristics. The theoretical model of psychological wellbeing established by Ryff (1989) presents it as positive psychological health, including positive evaluations of oneself and one's past life, a sense of continued growth and development as a person, and the belief that one's life is purposeful and meaningful. Wellbeing is also influenced by the quality of relationships with other people, the capacity to manage one's life and world, and one's sense of self-determination.

The term subjective wellbeing refers to one's affective and cognitive self-assessment of life in terms of emotional reactions and cognitive judgements of satisfaction. Developing socio-psychological wellbeing within schools can be seen as an active, collaborative process in which the relationship between individuals and their environment is constantly constructed and modified.

Accordingly, pedagogical wellbeing is formed in the core processes of the work of the teacher, i.e., the performance and development of the teaching-learning process, manifested as planning classroom activities, interacting with pupils, performing evaluations, and choosing and developing instructional tools. The degree of pedagogical wellbeing attained by the teacher may either hinder or promote the attainment of pedagogical goals, and therefore serves as a regulator. Wellbeing is an important factor in quality, performance and productivity. Higher levels of teacher wellbeing are associated with less sick leave and lower supply teacher costs. Teacher happiness

levels have a knock-on effect on students: Emotionally-exhausted teachers may use reactive and punitive responses that contribute to foster negative classroom climates and student-teacher relationships.

## THE DETERMINANTS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING

Teacher wellbeing is influenced by environmental, biological and social factors, as well as psychological factors and those related to the activity itself. Of these, the psychological factors appear to play the most important role, and these are described below.

The factors determining teachers' wellbeing can be divided into risk factors and protective factors. Occupational stress and burnout can play an important role as risk factors. The work of a teacher demands the performance of many duties which can influence stress level. Work activities, place in the hierarchy, career path, relations between employees or general organization in the workplace and the level of work-life balance can all act as potential work stressors. Stress has a strong influence on various work outcomes, including workplace engagement, job satisfaction and attrition. Teacher stress can also have personal consequences including absence, burnout, physical and emotional distress, reduced self confidence and self-esteem, damaged personal relationships and even suicide.

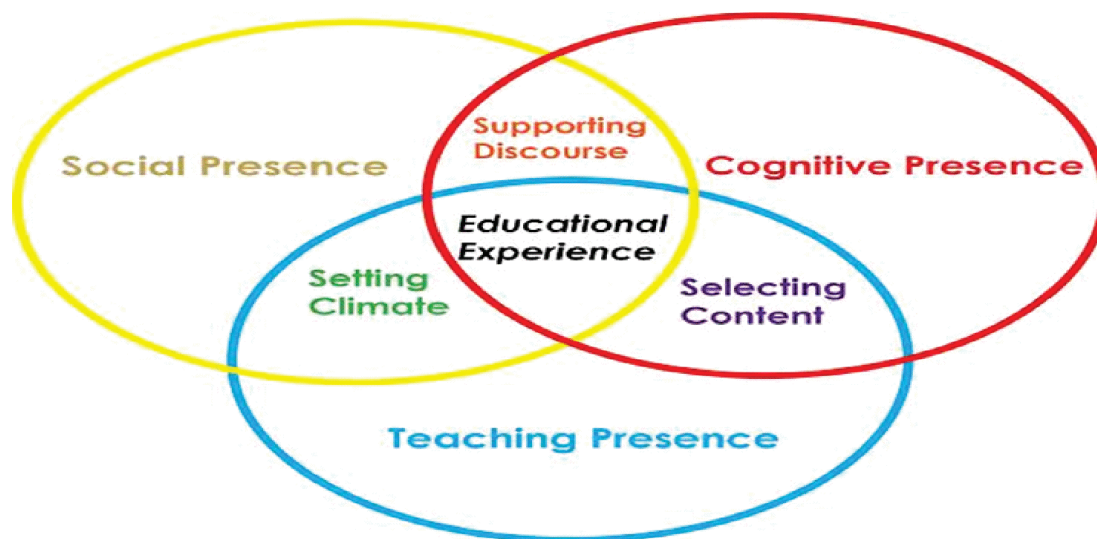


**Fig. 1 Educational experience is a core factor of good teaching process.**

One of the most neglected aspects of teacher training is the need for thorough preparation in the interpersonal skills that are needed by teachers in modern schools. Interpersonal skills in the teaching profession include communication, positive motivation, effective and positive body language and humour. Effective communication between teachers

and students needs to be performed at the level of understanding of the student, which can be difficult if each student has a different level of learning and understanding. Effective and positive body language employs to make a long-lasting impression in the minds of students and to draw them into a discussion in education typically produce positive learning. According to Jennings and Greenberg (2009), another essential social-emotional skill for teachers is empathy, not only for the personal wellbeing of the teacher but also to improve student learning. Empathetic teachers have a more positive self-image, are more self-disclosing to their students and respond more to students feelings. Thus, empathy serves as a way to understand the diverse perspectives or the complex emotions of others. It also helps a teacher to improve teaching strategies and encourage more effective work practices.

Another important factor influencing the psychological wellbeing of teachers is self-efficacy. Studies show that a belief in one's self-efficacy negatively correlates with psychological tension, burnout and depression, and positively with pro-health behaviors. Another important aspect concerned with maintaining good psychological health as a teacher is respecting work-life balance.

## DIFFERENT WAYS FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING OF TEACHERS

### *Improve the Planning system*

As schools reopen, there could be a million things on our mind on how to engage with students and help them with the transition. Make a list of all our tasks and activities for the day or week early on. Use a day planner or notebook to plan our week. Set small goals and take appropriate breaks. It will help us to manage our time properly and alleviate the stress of having too many unplanned things to do.

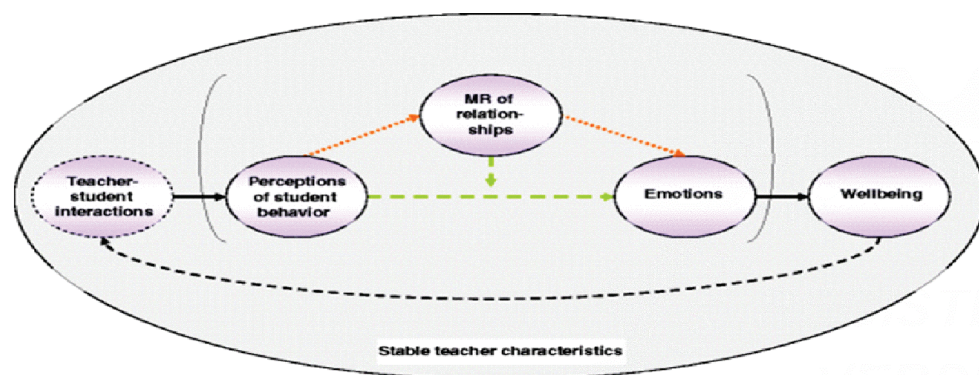


**Fig.2. Face to face relationship develops wellbeing.**

### **Limitation of our work**

The COVID-19 pandemic has enhanced the stress levels in the lives of many teachers since they had to adopt a new way of teaching; They also had to cope up with personal health and family issues. Whether we are teaching online or in the classroom, we are continuously taking care of students' needs throughout the day. Make sure to set boundaries to have 'me' time, be with family, or enjoy what we like to do. One easy way to create boundaries is by paying attention to how we feel during our daily activities and listen to cues that may tell us that something is not working for us. We can manage some dedicated time in which we prepare for our teaching and other time when we are not. If we feel that others are not respecting these boundaries, think of ways that we can gently and respectfully have a conversation with them, sharing what we know about the importance of protecting one's mental health and how our boundaries help me to do that.

### **All are vaccinated**

Get vaccinated when it's our turn. Getting vaccinated will protect us from severe COVID-19 infections, hospitalizations and death can alleviate the safety concerns of being back in schools. It will also protect our family, our students and their families. One should also take precautions after vaccination.

### **Awareness regarding expectations**

This is a crucial time when one should do the adjustment with the changing circumstances and one should learn to manage the things properly. One should never pressurise oneself to provide the same learning experiences which one was practicing before the pre-lockdown period. The teaching professionals should learn to accept the changes carefully. As we move on, the school community will learn and adapt the changing circumstances.

### **Acquire new skills and adaptation of present situation**

Teachers, across the globe, were largely unprepared to support the continuity of learning mostly because of limited digital skills. Acquiring and mastering new skills will help me in the professional journey and will provide greater confidence and comfort in work. We can sign up for online courses, virtual workshops, webinars, or watch videos to enhance our digital skills and adapt to alternative teaching methods. Remember to appreciate the skills that we already have.

### **Be kind to ourselves**

If one feels overwhelmed in the teaching process, one should share his/her feelings with

another teacher, friend or family member. Having a conversation with our supervisor or senior school leader will help them understand and offer support. Remember, a healthy relationship will have a positive influence on the children we are teaching.

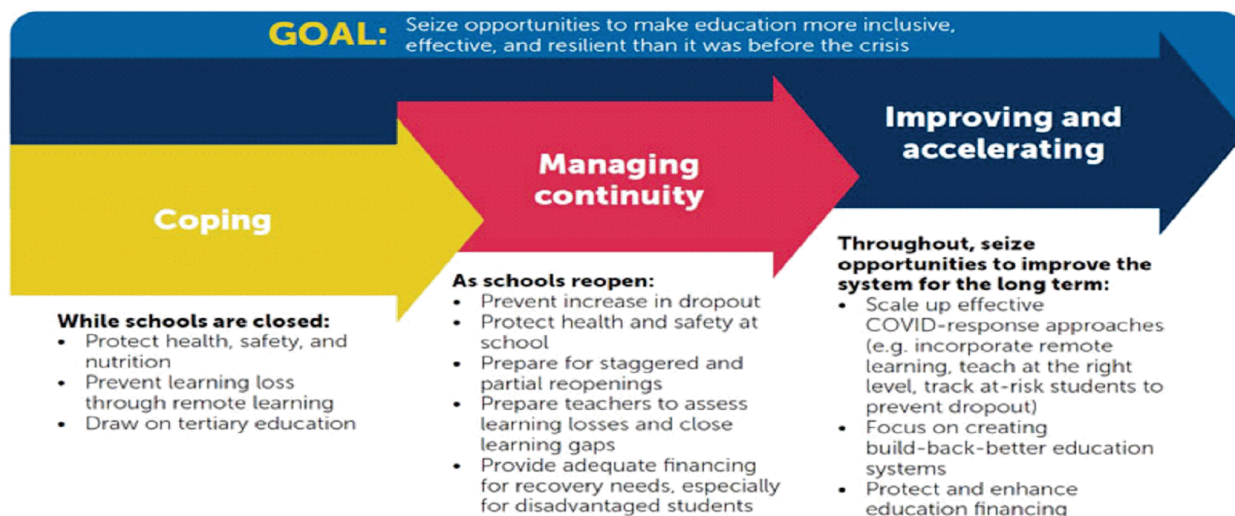


**Fig.** Different dimensions which related to wellbeing of the education system.

### Stay socially connected

We can keep ourselves physically apart to limit the spread of the virus, but it is important that we stay emotionally and socially connected with our friends, family and colleagues. Celebrate happy occasions over video calls, engage in virtual working groups or join online book clubs. When seeing others, prefer outdoor activities, and use masks when required by our local health authorities.

### Get our body moving

Physical activity is proven to be a powerful fighter to navigate stress and anxiety. With regular exercise, we can feel more energetic throughout the day, sleep better at night, have sharper memories and feel more relaxed and positive about ourselves. Even a short 10 minutes brisk walking boosts our mood and can give an enormous sense of well-being. Hence, we should engage ourselves in various physical activities.

### Mental health support

Take care of our mental health and well-being and seek mental health support if the signs of depression, anxiety, and burnouts are found. Feeling tired and unhappy is not the same as being depressed. The major signs of depression, anxiety, burnout, and other mental health problems that

need specialized mental health attention include fatigue and sleep problems, rapid heart rate and breathing, feeling of danger, changes in appetite and weight loss, hopelessness, persistent headaches and pain, and digestive problems that do not get better. These symptoms, if not treated, can prevent us from having a joyful and active life. Recognizing these signs and seeking medical or psychological support is the first step to help us feel better and even prevent other serious medical conditions.

## CONCLUSION

It is worth mentioning some preventive initiatives that encourage a positive approach in the field of education, and that focus on the teacher as well as on the student. Positive Education is defined as education for both traditional skills and for happiness. The preventive program focuses on how teachers can use personal skills in their personal and professional lives. Another approach to fostering more positive teacher practice is visible wellbeing described as an instructional leadership that integrates the three separate fields of positive education, visible thinking and visible learning. It provides a way for instructional leaders to help teachers adopt pedagogical practices that enhance the wellbeing of students. The wellbeing of the teacher can be seen as a necessary element of general wellbeing in education.

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