



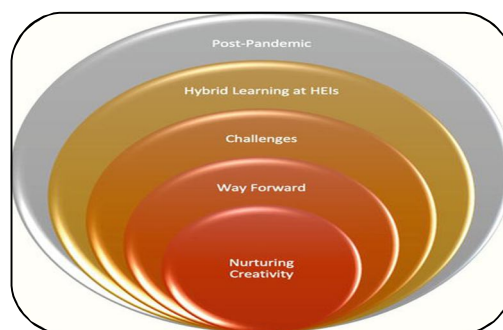
PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING IN HYBRID LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS: CHALLENGES AND COPING STRATEGIES

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ABSTRACT

Hybrid learning environments, which combine face-to-face and online modes of instruction, have become a significant feature of contemporary education. While hybrid learning offers flexibility, accessibility, and personalized learning opportunities, it also presents various psychological challenges for students. Factors such as increased screen time, social isolation, academic stress, technological difficulties, and reduced peer interaction can affect students' psychological well-being. Psychological well-being encompasses emotional stability, life satisfaction, self-efficacy, resilience, and positive interpersonal relationships. Students in hybrid learning environments often experience difficulties in balancing academic responsibilities and personal life, leading to anxiety, stress, and decreased motivation. However, effective coping strategies such as self-regulation, social support, time management, mindfulness practices, and digital literacy can help students adapt successfully. The present study explores the challenges affecting psychological well-being in hybrid learning environments and examines coping strategies that contribute to positive mental health and academic success. The findings highlight the importance of supportive educational policies, mental health interventions, and student-centered approaches to enhance well-being in hybrid educational settings.



KEYWORDS: Psychological Well-Being, Hybrid Learning, Mental Health, Academic Stress, Coping Strategies, Online Education, Student Adjustment, Resilience, Self-Regulation, Digital Learning.

INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology and the widespread adoption of online educational platforms have transformed the landscape of teaching and learning across the world. One of the most significant developments in recent years has been the emergence of hybrid learning environments, which integrate traditional classroom instruction with online learning experiences. This educational model gained considerable importance during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, as institutions sought flexible approaches to ensure continuity of education. Hybrid learning combines the advantages of face-to-face interaction with the convenience and accessibility of digital learning, offering students greater flexibility in managing their educational experiences.

Psychological well-being has become a central concern in educational research due to its direct influence on academic performance, motivation, social relationships, and overall quality of life.

Psychological well-being refers to a positive state of mental health characterized by self-acceptance, personal growth, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and positive relationships with others. Students with higher levels of psychological well-being tend to demonstrate greater academic engagement, resilience, and adaptability when facing challenges.

Although hybrid learning provides numerous benefits, it also introduces unique psychological challenges. Students must adapt to changing learning environments, manage technological demands, and maintain motivation despite reduced physical interaction with peers and instructors. The transition between online and offline learning modes can create uncertainty and increase cognitive and emotional demands. Many students report experiencing stress, loneliness, digital fatigue, and difficulties in maintaining concentration during prolonged online sessions.

Furthermore, hybrid learning requires students to develop self-directed learning skills and effective time management practices. Those who lack these competencies may struggle to meet academic expectations, leading to frustration and decreased confidence. Social interaction, which plays a vital role in emotional development and psychological well-being, may also be limited in hybrid settings, potentially affecting students' sense of belonging and social connectedness.

Despite these challenges, many students successfully adapt to hybrid learning through the use of coping strategies such as problem-solving, emotional regulation, social support, mindfulness, and effective use of digital resources. Educational institutions can also play a critical role in promoting psychological well-being by providing counseling services, fostering inclusive learning environments, and implementing policies that support student mental health.

Understanding the relationship between hybrid learning and psychological well-being is essential for educators, psychologists, policymakers, and researchers. As hybrid education continues to expand globally, identifying the factors that influence students' mental health and the strategies that help them cope effectively has become increasingly important. The present study aims to explore the psychological challenges experienced by students in hybrid learning environments and examine the coping mechanisms that contribute to positive psychological well-being and academic success.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The integration of online and face-to-face learning has fundamentally altered the educational experience of students. While hybrid learning environments offer flexibility, convenience, and access to diverse learning resources, they have also introduced new psychological challenges that may affect students' overall well-being. The shift from traditional classroom settings to blended educational models requires students to adapt to multiple learning formats, technological platforms, and communication methods. These adjustments can create psychological pressures that influence students' emotional, cognitive, and social functioning.

One of the major concerns in hybrid learning environments is the increase in academic stress. Students are often expected to manage both online and offline coursework simultaneously, which can result in heavy workloads and time-management difficulties. The responsibility for self-directed learning is significantly higher in hybrid settings, requiring students to demonstrate discipline, motivation, and organizational skills. Those who struggle with these demands may experience anxiety, frustration, and reduced academic confidence.

Another important issue is the impact of social isolation on psychological well-being. Traditional classroom environments provide opportunities for peer interaction, collaborative learning, and social support. In hybrid learning environments, however, students may spend considerable time learning independently through digital platforms. Reduced face-to-face interaction can contribute to feelings of

loneliness, social disconnection, and decreased emotional support. Such experiences may negatively affect students' mental health and sense of belonging within the educational community.

Digital fatigue has also emerged as a significant challenge. Continuous exposure to screens, online meetings, virtual assignments, and digital communication can lead to physical exhaustion, eye strain, reduced concentration, and emotional burnout. Students may find it difficult to maintain engagement and motivation when learning primarily through digital devices. Excessive screen time has been associated with increased stress levels and decreased psychological well-being among learners.

Technological challenges further complicate the learning experience. Problems such as unstable internet connectivity, lack of access to appropriate devices, technical difficulties, and insufficient digital skills can create additional stress for students. These barriers may hinder academic participation and contribute to feelings of helplessness and frustration. Students from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds may face greater challenges, increasing educational inequalities and psychological strain.

The uncertainty associated with changing educational structures also affects students' emotional well-being. Frequent transitions between online and face-to-face learning modes may disrupt routines and create confusion regarding academic expectations. Uncertainty about assessments, performance standards, and future educational opportunities can contribute to anxiety and emotional distress. Students may struggle to establish stable learning habits, which can negatively influence both academic achievement and mental health.

At the same time, not all students experience hybrid learning in the same way. Individual differences such as personality traits, resilience, coping styles, social support systems, and technological competence influence how students respond to hybrid educational environments. Some students successfully adapt and even thrive due to the flexibility offered by hybrid learning, while others experience significant psychological difficulties. Understanding these variations is essential for developing effective interventions and support systems.

The need to identify effective coping strategies has become increasingly important. Coping mechanisms such as self-regulation, positive thinking, emotional management, peer support, mindfulness practices, and effective time management can help students overcome challenges and maintain psychological well-being. Educational institutions must recognize the importance of promoting these strategies and providing resources that support students' mental health.

In light of these concerns, there is a growing need to investigate the psychological well-being of students in hybrid learning environments and to understand the challenges they face as well as the coping strategies they employ. Such research can provide valuable insights for educators, counselors, and policymakers seeking to create supportive learning environments that foster both academic success and psychological health. Therefore, the present study focuses on examining psychological well-being in hybrid learning environments, with special emphasis on the challenges experienced by students and the coping strategies that facilitate positive adaptation and resilience.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the level of psychological well-being among students studying in hybrid learning environments.
2. To identify the major psychological challenges experienced by students in hybrid learning settings.
3. To investigate the relationship between academic stress and psychological well-being among students.
4. To assess the impact of social isolation and reduced peer interaction on students' mental health.
5. To explore the influence of digital fatigue on psychological well-being in hybrid learning environments.
6. To examine the role of coping strategies in maintaining psychological well-being among students.

7. To determine the relationship between self-regulation skills and psychological well-being.
8. To suggest effective interventions and support mechanisms for promoting mental health in hybrid educational settings.

Hypotheses

H1: There is a significant relationship between hybrid learning challenges and students' psychological well-being.

H2: Academic stress is negatively associated with psychological well-being among students in hybrid learning environments.

H3: Social isolation significantly affects the psychological well-being of students.

H4: Digital fatigue is negatively related to students' psychological well-being.

H5: Effective coping strategies are positively associated with psychological well-being.

H6: Students with higher levels of self-regulation demonstrate better psychological well-being than students with lower levels of self-regulation.

H7: Social support significantly contributes to positive psychological well-being in hybrid learning environments.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The growing adoption of hybrid learning has attracted considerable attention from researchers interested in understanding its effects on students' psychological well-being. Studies indicate that while hybrid learning offers flexibility and accessibility, it also presents various psychological challenges that can influence mental health and academic performance.

Ryff (1989) conceptualized psychological well-being as a multidimensional construct including self-acceptance, personal growth, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and positive relationships. This framework has been widely used to assess mental health outcomes in educational settings. Research suggests that educational environments significantly influence these dimensions of well-being.

Garrison and Kanuka (2004) highlighted the educational advantages of blended and hybrid learning models, emphasizing their ability to combine the strengths of face-to-face and online instruction. However, they noted that successful implementation requires strong learner engagement and institutional support. Without adequate support systems, students may experience stress and reduced satisfaction with learning experiences.

Martin and Bolliger (2018) found that student engagement plays a crucial role in online and hybrid learning success. Their study demonstrated that meaningful interaction with instructors and peers contributes to increased motivation, satisfaction, and psychological well-being. Reduced interaction, on the other hand, was associated with feelings of isolation and disengagement.

Son et al. (2020) examined the psychological impact of digital learning during the COVID-19 pandemic and reported increased levels of anxiety, stress, and loneliness among students. The study emphasized that abrupt transitions to technology-mediated learning environments created emotional and psychological challenges, particularly for students lacking adequate support systems.

Aristovnik et al. (2020) conducted an international survey examining students' experiences during pandemic-related educational changes. Their findings revealed that concerns regarding academic performance, uncertainty, technological difficulties, and social isolation significantly affected students' mental health. The study emphasized the importance of psychological support services in educational institutions.

Dhawan (2020) explored opportunities and challenges associated with online and hybrid learning. The study found that while digital education enhanced accessibility and flexibility, it also created challenges related to technological infrastructure, learner motivation, and mental well-being. Students frequently reported stress arising from excessive screen time and difficulties maintaining concentration.

Research by Wang et al. (2021) demonstrated that resilience and adaptive coping strategies significantly predicted positive psychological outcomes among students engaged in remote and hybrid learning. Students who effectively managed stress and maintained social connections reported higher levels of psychological well-being.

Further studies have shown that mindfulness practices, emotional regulation techniques, and peer support networks contribute positively to mental health in educational settings. Students who engage in proactive coping strategies tend to demonstrate greater resilience, improved emotional stability, and enhanced academic performance.

The literature suggests that hybrid learning environments present both opportunities and challenges. While flexibility and accessibility can enhance educational experiences, factors such as academic stress, social isolation, technological barriers, and digital fatigue may negatively affect psychological well-being. Effective coping strategies and institutional support play a vital role in promoting positive mental health outcomes among students.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study adopts a quantitative descriptive research design to examine psychological well-being in hybrid learning environments and identify the challenges and coping strategies experienced by students. The descriptive survey method is considered appropriate because it enables the systematic collection of information regarding students' psychological experiences, perceptions, and behavioral responses within hybrid educational settings.

The study focuses on students enrolled in colleges and universities where hybrid learning models are implemented. The target population includes undergraduate and postgraduate students from various academic disciplines. A representative sample is selected using a stratified random sampling technique to ensure adequate representation of different educational levels, genders, and academic backgrounds.

Data are collected through standardized psychological scales and structured questionnaires. Psychological well-being is measured using an established well-being assessment instrument, while challenges related to academic stress, social isolation, digital fatigue, and technological difficulties are assessed through specially designed survey items. Coping strategies are measured using a validated coping inventory that evaluates problem-focused coping, emotional regulation, social support, and self-management behaviors.

The data collection process involves obtaining informed consent from participants and ensuring confidentiality and anonymity. Participants complete the questionnaires either online or in person, depending on institutional accessibility and participant preference. Ethical considerations are maintained throughout the study to protect the rights and well-being of all participants.

Descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage are used to summarize demographic characteristics and major study variables. Inferential statistical techniques, including correlation analysis, t-tests, ANOVA, and regression analysis, are employed to examine relationships among psychological well-being, learning challenges, and coping strategies. Statistical analysis is conducted using appropriate software packages to ensure accuracy and reliability.

The methodology provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the psychological experiences of students in hybrid learning environments and identifying factors that contribute to positive

mental health and successful adaptation. The findings are expected to offer valuable insights for educators, counselors, and policymakers seeking to enhance psychological well-being and educational effectiveness in contemporary learning environments.

Tools and Techniques

The present study employed standardized psychological assessment tools and structured questionnaires to collect relevant data regarding students' psychological well-being, challenges experienced in hybrid learning environments, and coping strategies used to manage these challenges.

- **Psychological Well-Being Scale:** A standardized Psychological Well-Being Scale based on Ryff's multidimensional model was used to assess participants' levels of self-acceptance, personal growth, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and positive relationships.
- **Hybrid Learning Challenges Questionnaire:** A self-constructed questionnaire was developed to assess challenges associated with hybrid learning. The questionnaire included items related to academic stress, technological difficulties, social isolation, digital fatigue, time management issues, and learning engagement.
- **Coping Strategies Inventory:** A standardized coping strategies inventory was used to measure students' use of problem-focused coping, emotional regulation, social support seeking, self-management, and resilience-building strategies.
- **Personal Information Schedule:** A demographic information sheet was used to collect data regarding age, gender, educational level, academic discipline, and duration of participation in hybrid learning programs.

The questionnaires were administered through online and offline modes depending on participant accessibility. Necessary instructions were provided to ensure accurate and reliable responses.

Sampling Method

The study utilized a **stratified random sampling method** to ensure adequate representation of students from different academic disciplines and educational levels. Stratified sampling was considered appropriate because the population consisted of diverse groups of students engaged in hybrid learning environments.

The target population included undergraduate and postgraduate students enrolled in colleges and universities that adopted hybrid learning models. The population was divided into strata based on academic level and field of study. Participants were then selected randomly from each stratum to maintain proportional representation.

A sample of **200 students** was selected for the study. The sample consisted of male and female students from arts, science, commerce, engineering, and professional courses. The use of stratified random sampling enhanced the representativeness of the sample and improved the generalizability of the findings.

Statistical Analysis

The collected data were coded, tabulated, and analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques. Both descriptive and inferential statistical methods were employed.

Descriptive Statistics:

- Frequency Distribution
- Percentage Analysis

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- Mean
 - Standard Deviation

Inferential Statistics:

- Pearson Product-Moment Correlation
- Independent Sample t-Test
- One-Way ANOVA
- Multiple Regression Analysis

The statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS software. The level of significance was fixed at 0.05 for testing the hypotheses. These techniques helped in examining relationships among psychological well-being, hybrid learning challenges, and coping strategies.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The analysis of the collected data revealed several important findings regarding psychological well-being in hybrid learning environments.

The results indicated that a considerable proportion of students experienced moderate levels of psychological stress associated with hybrid learning. Academic workload, frequent transitions between online and face-to-face learning, and technological difficulties emerged as major sources of stress among participants.

The findings showed a significant negative relationship between academic stress and psychological well-being. Students reporting higher levels of academic pressure demonstrated lower levels of emotional stability, life satisfaction, and overall psychological health.

Social isolation was found to be another major challenge affecting students. Participants who reported limited interaction with peers and instructors experienced greater feelings of loneliness and reduced psychological well-being. The lack of regular face-to-face communication negatively influenced students' sense of belonging and emotional support.

Digital fatigue emerged as a significant predictor of reduced psychological well-being. Excessive screen time, prolonged online classes, and continuous exposure to digital devices contributed to mental exhaustion, reduced concentration, and increased stress levels.

The study also found significant positive relationships between coping strategies and psychological well-being. Students who frequently used problem-solving approaches, emotional regulation techniques, effective time management, and social support networks reported higher levels of psychological well-being and academic satisfaction.

Regression analysis indicated that coping strategies significantly predicted psychological well-being even after controlling for academic stress and technological challenges. Resilience, self-regulation, and social support emerged as the strongest protective factors.

Gender and educational level differences were observed in certain dimensions of psychological well-being; however, these differences were not substantial across all variables. Students with stronger digital literacy skills and better adaptation to technology reported fewer psychological difficulties.

The findings suggest that while hybrid learning environments present several psychological challenges, effective coping strategies and supportive educational systems can significantly enhance students' mental health and well-being. The results emphasize the need for educational institutions to implement mental health programs, counseling services, and student support initiatives that foster resilience, social connectedness, and adaptive coping skills in hybrid learning contexts.

DISCUSSION

The present study examined psychological well-being in hybrid learning environments with particular emphasis on the challenges faced by students and the coping strategies they employ. The findings reveal that hybrid learning offers substantial educational benefits while simultaneously creating psychological demands that influence students' mental health and academic experiences.

One of the major findings of the study is the significant negative impact of academic stress on psychological well-being. Students in hybrid learning environments often experience increased responsibility for self-directed learning, time management, and academic performance. The necessity to adapt to both online and face-to-face instructional formats can create additional pressure, leading to stress, anxiety, and emotional exhaustion. These findings are consistent with previous research indicating that academic stress is a major determinant of students' psychological adjustment in technology-mediated learning environments.

The study also highlights the influence of social isolation on psychological well-being. Although hybrid learning facilitates educational continuity and flexibility, reduced face-to-face interaction may weaken social relationships and decrease feelings of connectedness. Students who reported lower levels of social interaction experienced greater loneliness and reduced emotional support. Social connectedness remains a crucial factor in maintaining mental health and fostering positive educational experiences.

Another important finding relates to digital fatigue. Continuous engagement with online classes, assignments, and digital communication platforms contributes to cognitive overload and emotional exhaustion. Excessive screen exposure may reduce attention, motivation, and learning satisfaction, ultimately affecting students' overall psychological well-being. These findings support existing literature emphasizing the psychological consequences of prolonged technology use in educational contexts.

The study further demonstrates the positive role of coping strategies in promoting psychological well-being. Students who actively utilized problem-solving skills, emotional regulation techniques, social support networks, and effective time-management practices reported higher levels of well-being. Resilience and self-regulation emerged as particularly important protective factors that help students adapt successfully to hybrid learning demands.

The discussion suggests that psychological well-being in hybrid learning environments is influenced by a complex interaction of academic, technological, and social factors. While hybrid learning provides flexibility and accessibility, institutions must address associated psychological challenges to ensure students' holistic development and educational success.

PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study have important implications for educational psychology, counseling, and student support services. First, the study emphasizes the need to consider psychological well-being as an essential component of educational effectiveness. Academic achievement and mental health are closely interconnected, and students' emotional experiences significantly influence learning outcomes.

Second, the results highlight the importance of developing psychological resilience among students. Educational institutions should incorporate programs that strengthen emotional regulation, stress management, self-efficacy, and adaptive coping skills. Such interventions can enhance students' ability to manage academic pressures and technological challenges effectively.

Third, counseling and mental health support services should be integrated into hybrid educational systems. Regular psychological counseling, peer-support groups, and wellness programs can help students address feelings of anxiety, loneliness, and stress. Early identification of psychological difficulties may prevent the development of more serious mental health concerns.

Fourth, educators should adopt student-centered teaching approaches that promote engagement, collaboration, and social interaction. Creating opportunities for meaningful communication among students and instructors can strengthen social support and foster a sense of belonging.

The findings suggest that digital well-being should become an important focus of educational planning. Institutions should encourage balanced technology use, provide digital literacy training, and promote healthy online learning habits to minimize digital fatigue and enhance psychological health.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Despite its contributions, the present study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings.

The study was limited to a specific sample of students from selected educational institutions, which may restrict the generalizability of the results to broader populations. Students from different cultural, geographical, and educational backgrounds may experience hybrid learning differently.

The research employed a cross-sectional design, which captured psychological well-being at a single point in time. Consequently, causal relationships between hybrid learning challenges and psychological well-being could not be established conclusively.

The study relied primarily on self-report questionnaires for data collection. Participants' responses may have been influenced by personal biases, social desirability, or inaccurate self-perceptions, which could affect the accuracy of the findings.

Certain potentially influential variables, such as socioeconomic status, family environment, personality traits, prior mental health conditions, and institutional support systems, were not examined in detail. These factors may significantly influence students' psychological experiences in hybrid learning environments.

Additionally, rapid technological advancements and evolving educational practices may alter students' experiences over time, limiting the long-term applicability of the findings.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future studies should include larger and more diverse samples from different educational institutions, regions, and cultural contexts to improve the generalizability of findings and provide a broader understanding of psychological well-being in hybrid learning environments.

Longitudinal research designs are recommended to examine changes in psychological well-being over time and to better understand causal relationships between hybrid learning experiences and mental health outcomes.

Future researchers may investigate the role of individual difference variables such as personality traits, emotional intelligence, resilience, self-efficacy, and motivation in influencing adaptation to hybrid learning environments.

Comparative studies between fully online, hybrid, and traditional classroom learning models may provide deeper insights into the psychological advantages and disadvantages of different educational approaches.

Further research should explore the effectiveness of specific psychological interventions, including mindfulness training, counseling programs, resilience-building workshops, and peer-support initiatives, in promoting student well-being.

Researchers may also examine the impact of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and adaptive learning systems on students' psychological health and educational experiences.

Future investigations should focus on developing evidence-based educational policies and mental health programs that support students' psychological well-being while maximizing the benefits of hybrid learning environments.

CONCLUSION

The present study examined psychological well-being in hybrid learning environments, focusing on the challenges faced by students and the coping strategies that help them adapt successfully. The findings indicate that hybrid learning has become an important educational model in contemporary society, offering flexibility, accessibility, and opportunities for personalized learning. However, the transition between online and face-to-face learning environments also presents significant psychological challenges that influence students' mental health and academic performance.

The study revealed that academic stress, social isolation, technological difficulties, and digital fatigue are major factors affecting psychological well-being among students in hybrid learning settings. These challenges can lead to increased anxiety, reduced motivation, emotional exhaustion, and lower levels of life satisfaction. At the same time, the findings demonstrate that students who possess effective coping skills such as self-regulation, resilience, problem-solving abilities, social support utilization, and emotional management tend to experience higher levels of psychological well-being.

The results emphasize the crucial role of educational institutions in promoting student mental health. Providing counseling services, fostering supportive learning environments, encouraging social interaction, and implementing mental health awareness programs can significantly improve students' psychological adjustment. Educators should also focus on developing students' digital competencies and self-directed learning skills to help them manage the demands of hybrid education effectively.

Psychological well-being is a critical component of successful learning in hybrid educational environments. While hybrid learning presents various challenges, appropriate coping strategies and institutional support can help students maintain positive mental health and achieve academic success. The study highlights the need for continued efforts to create balanced, inclusive, and psychologically supportive learning environments that promote both educational achievement and overall well-being.

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