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MENTAL HEALTH AND HUMAN WELLBEING IS DEVELOPING A SCIENTIFIC FRAMEWORK FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL RESILIENCE

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Understanding the Brain, Emotions and Social Foundations of Resilience

Mental health is an essential dimension of human wellbeing. It influences how individuals think, respond to challenges, maintain relationships and participate in society. In contemporary life, increasing work pressure, academic competition, economic uncertainty, social isolation and constant digital engagement have made psychological wellbeing an important public concern. Understanding mental health therefore requires more than an examination of individual behaviour; it also requires attention to the brain, emotions and the social environments in which people live.

Wellbeing and behavioural science offer valuable perspectives for understanding how individuals respond to stress and develop psychological resilience. Together, these disciplines help explain how brain functioning, emotional regulation, sleep, behaviour and social relationships contribute to mental wellbeing.

The Brain, Stress and Emotional Regulation

The human brain plays a central role in processing emotions, interpreting experiences and responding to stressful situations. When individuals encounter pressure or uncertainty, the body's stress-response systems become active. The hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis is one of the important systems involved in this response. While short-term stress responses can help individuals adapt to immediate challenges, prolonged exposure to stress may affect emotional balance, concentration, sleep and everyday functioning.

The prefrontal cortex, amygdala and hippocampus are among the brain regions involved in emotional processing, memory and responses to stress. Their functioning is influenced by biological processes as well as personal experiences and environmental conditions. This makes emotional regulation an important part of psychological resilience.

Understanding Psychological Resilience

Psychological resilience refers to the capacity to adapt, recover and maintain functioning when faced with adversity, change or stressful experiences. It should not be understood as an individual's ability to remain unaffected by difficulties. Rather, resilience develops through a combination of personal capacities, learning, supportive relationships and favourable social conditions.

Research on neuroplasticity demonstrates that the brain can change in response to experience, learning and practice. This provides an important scientific basis for understanding how emotional responses and behavioural patterns may develop over time. Practices that encourage self-awareness, emotional regulation, problem-solving and positive coping may contribute to resilience. However, resilience is not determined by brain functioning alone. Family support, educational opportunities, workplace conditions and community relationships also influence how individMentakluals manage difficult circumstances.

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Sleep, Cognitive Functioning and Mental Wellbeing

Sleep is closely connected with mental and cognitive functioning. Adequate sleep supports attention, memory, learning and emotional balance. Insufficient or irregular sleep may make it more difficult to concentrate, manage emotions and respond effectively to everyday challenges.

Modern lifestyles often disturb healthy sleep patterns through long working hours, academic pressure, excessive screen use and irregular daily routines. These factors demonstrate that sleep is not simply an individual responsibility; it is also connected with social and institutional practices. Educational institutions, workplaces and families can contribute to healthier routines by recognising the importance of rest and balanced schedules.

Social Relationships and Psychological Health

Human beings develop and function within social relationships. Family connections, friendships, peer groups and community participation can provide emotional support, a sense of belonging and opportunities to share experiences. Supportive relationships may help individuals cope with stress and reduce feelings of isolation.

Conversely, social exclusion, discrimination, family conflict, unemployment and economic insecurity may create conditions that place additional pressure on psychological wellbeing. A sociological understanding of mental health therefore highlights the importance of social support systems and inclusive institutions. Promoting wellbeing requires creating environments in which individuals feel respected, connected and supported.

Towards Evidence-Based Preventive Approaches

Preventive approaches to mental health should combine scientific understanding with practical action. Schools and colleges can introduce age-appropriate emotional literacy, stress awareness and life-skills education. Workplaces can encourage balanced schedules, supportive management and healthy working environments. Community programmes can promote social participation, awareness and access to appropriate support services.

Mindfulness-based practices, physical activity, healthy sleep routines, supportive social interaction and structured psychological education are among the approaches that have been studied for their potential contribution to wellbeing. Their effectiveness may vary according to individual needs and circumstances. Preventive programmes should therefore be guided by credible evidence, evaluated through appropriate wellbeing indicators and connected with professional support and referral systems when required.

Conclusion

Mental health and psychological resilience are shaped by the interaction of brain functioning, emotional experiences, behaviour and social conditions. Wellbeing helps explain the biological processes involved in stress, memory and emotional regulation, while psychology and behavioural science contribute to understanding coping, learning and adaptation. Sociology adds an essential dimension by examining the influence of family, education, employment, inequality and community life.

A scientific framework for psychological resilience must bring these perspectives together. The objective

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should not only be to help individuals manage stress but also to create supportive environments that strengthen human wellbeing. Preventive mental health initiatives, informed by research and grounded in social realities, can contribute to healthier individuals, stronger communities and a more resilient society.

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