



EFFECTS OF COVID 19 ON MENTAL HEALTH OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

COVID 19 has posed many challenges to educators, professionals, parents especially students. The lockdown has imposed serious implications on mental health, resulting in psychological problems including frustration, anxiety, stress, and depression to students. Those already dealing with serious mental health conditions have become vulnerable to changes. This article focuses on identifying the impact of COVID 19 on the students of similar age groups: such as time spent on online classes, eye stress, sleeping habits, and the subsequent effects on social life and mental health. Mental health in higher education has been an increasing concern. The COVID-19 pandemic situation has brought this vulnerable population into renewed focus. This study aims to conduct a timely assessment of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health of college students. The data were analyzed through quantitative and qualitative methods. In order to explore the impacts of this pandemic on the lives of college students, a survey was conducted of a total of 146 students of Mount Carmel College from Bangalore. Moreover, our research assesses to deal with mindset of students, their stress and anxiety, how students are adopting different coping mechanisms. Further, the research examines the student's engagement on social media platforms and how they are trying to cope with it. This study suggests that public authorities should take all the necessary measures to enhance the learning experience by mitigating the negative impacts caused due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Key words: COVID 19, mental health, anxiety, stress and Pandemic.

INTRODUCTION

Mental health issues are one of the major hindrances to the academic success of students. One of the crucial factors for students to succeed is motivation, concentration and social interactions these would be highly influenced by their distinctive mental status. College Students are always at a brink of experiencing new things after stepping out of school in a unique and different way. These budding years provide them an opportunity to transit from young buds to a responsible adult. In today's world there is a high expectation built on them creating an unnecessary burden with lot of pressure built within.

WHO states India to be one of the most depressed countries in the world as children and teenagers aged between 10-19 years are suffering from depression. It is shocking to know there is one suicide attempt every three seconds and one death recorded every forty by youth. These statistics are alarming to take necessary precautions and cognize the fact that mental health among students would be the next crisis to deal with

(california, 2018)A majority of students expressed their anxiety on how they feel on a normal basis. 60 % of this population feel overwhelmed with anxiety and 30% feel very low and sad for no reason. Attending college has turned out to be as a stressful event to deal with. This is accompanied by many reasons such as separation from families, multitasking, academic pressure and family responsibilities. Young Minds reported that 83% of young respondents agreed that the pandemic worsened pre-existing mental health conditions, mainly due to school closures, loss of routine, and restricted social connections

The COVID-19 pandemic has shattered not the physical health but also mental capability of people by creating new stresses including fear; worry for one self and for the loved ones. This constraint on physical movement and social activities has bought a radical lifestyle changes recent documentation of virus outbreaks and pandemics are related to infection, fears, boredom inadequate information, economic crisis and other stigmas much of the current literature on psychological impacts of COVID-19 has emerged from the earliest hot spots in China. Although several studies have assessed mental health issues during epidemics, most have focused on health workers, patients, children, and the general. As highlighted in multiple recent correspondences, there is an urgent need to assess effects of the current pandemic on the mental health and well-being of college students The aim of this study is to identify major stressors associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and to understand their effects on college students' mental health. This paper documents the findings from surveys conducted in a Bangalore city.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(sumithra pokhrel, 2021) The COVID 19 Pandemic has created major havoc in the education system in India. In this paper the author focuses on the need of the hour to innovate, implement an alternative education system and assessment strategies .This study focuses on unlocking keys through digital learning and providing a comprehensive report on online teaching methodologies

(Nicholas Grubic, 2021) In this paper the author assess the mental health impact of covid 19 on general public by heightening their prevalence from moderate to severe depressive and anxious cases among the general public by reflecting their increased effects of uncertainty and fears This paper stress on importance of further research and immediate solutions to support a vulnerable student population will help mitigate the overall global mental health burden associated with this period of extraordinary disruption and uncertainty

(jacob french, 2021) This research paper focuses on impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on higher education. A survey was conducted on around 1500 students at one of largest public institutions in the United States using an instrument designed to recover the causal impact of the pandemic on students' current and expected outcomes. It is shown that Due to COVID-19: 13% of students have delayed graduation, 40% have lost a job, internship, or job offer, and 29% expect to earn less at age 35. Moreover, these effects have been highly heterogeneous It reveals that economic and health related shocks induced by COVID-19 vary systematically by socioeconomic factors and constitute key mediators in explaining the large (and heterogeneous) effects of the pandemic.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

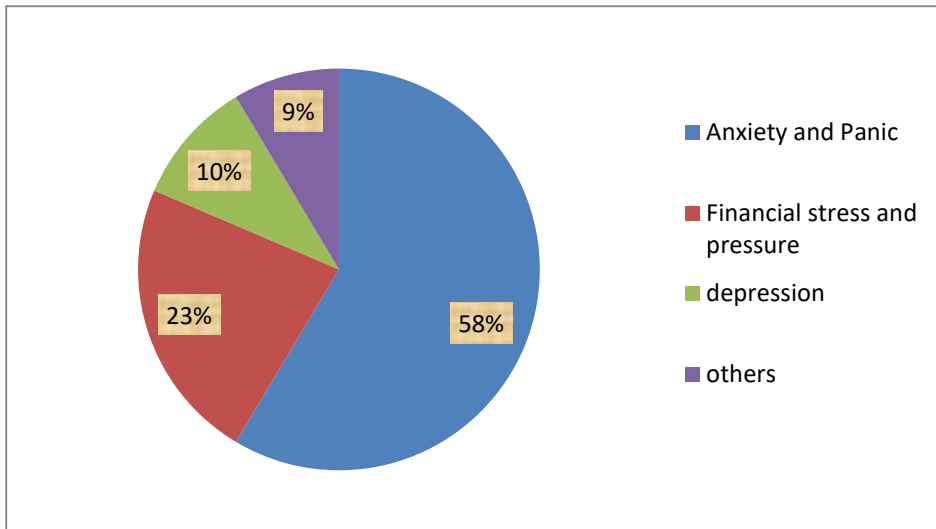
The study undertaken being empirical in nature, the data for the purpose is obtained through questionnaire method from students of Mount Carmel College Bangalore. The published sources like reference works, research publication, and government report or reports from other survey institutions etc., relating to research are also taken into consideration

OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the effect of COVID 19 on mental health of college students
2. To analyse the effectiveness of digital learning and its holistic impact on students
3. To determine the measures to be taken to overcome their uncertainties

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

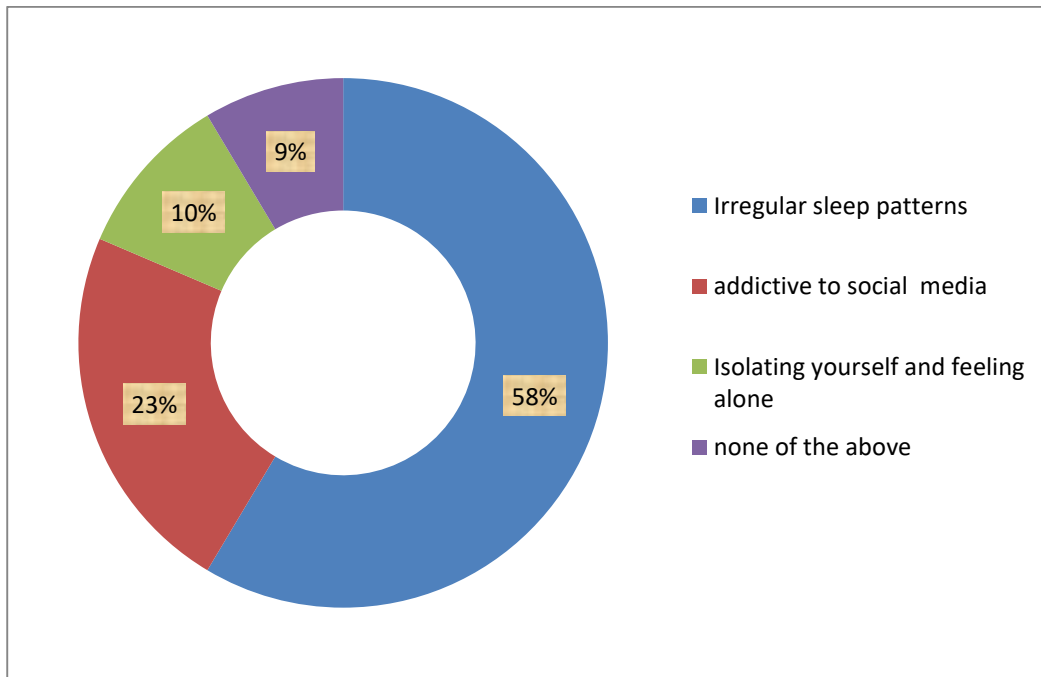
1. Specific challenges faced during lockdown



In the above diagram it shows the specific challenges faced the respondents during lockdown with anxiety and panic being one of the biggest problems by them where 80% of the respondents selected it. Financial stress and pressure faced by their parents and themselves has also been a major troublesome followed by depression and other problems

2. Developed one alarming habit during lockdown

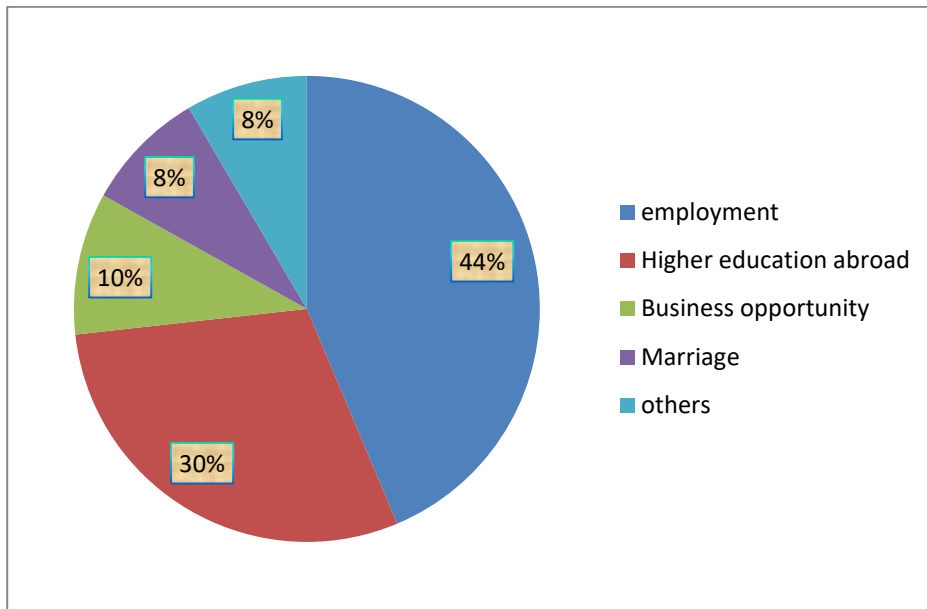
	Frequency	Percent %
Irregular sleep patterns	110	58
Addictive to social media	25	23
Isolating yourself and feeling alone	8	10
None of the above	2	9
Total	145	100



In the above survey it shows one habit that respondents developed during lockdown which is alarming such as Irregular sleep patterns, addiction to social media, Isolating themselves and feeling alone. Due to high usage of mobile and social media it is petrifying to know that 70% of the respondents have developed irregular sleep patterns, while 40% agree about their addiction to social media and 30% Isolate themselves and feel alone.

3. Worried about future plans

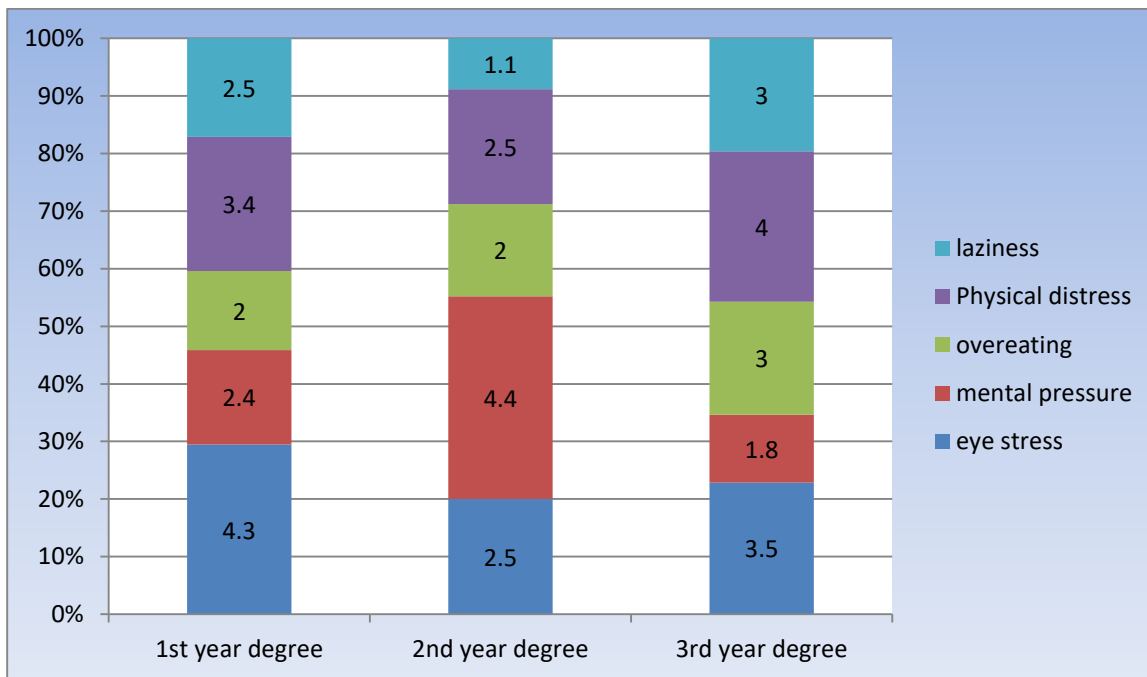
	Frequency	Percent %
Employment	69	44
Higher Education Abroad	39	30
Business opportunity	16	10
Marriage	3	8
Others	18	8
Total	146	100



In the above data it is clear that employment opportunity (47.3%) is a major troublesome to students to meet their financial crisis. As most of the degree students would choose a career option to explore outside world. Today’s scenario has deployed employment, lack of skills being an added disadvantage government should focus on enhancing student skills and securing their future. It is followed by breaking down their dream of higher education abroad (26.7%), where most of countries are in economic crisis and not entertaining outsiders. Business opportunity has also taken a back seat due to lack of economic activities and platforms available.

4. Problem faced while meeting the standards on online classes on a daily basis

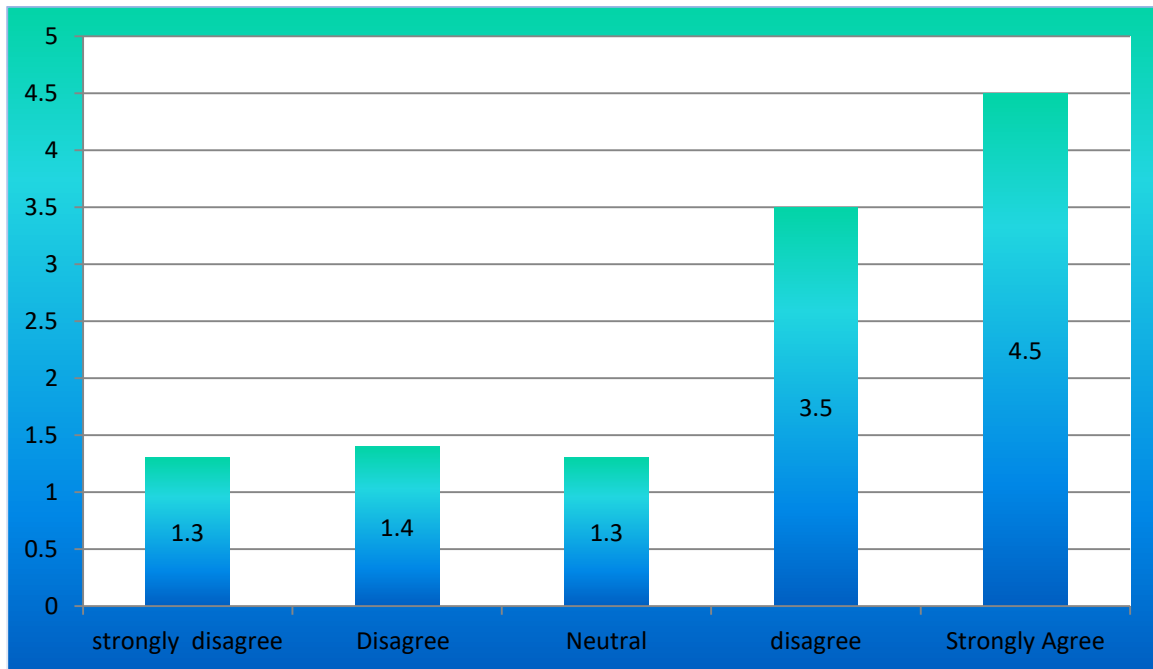
categories	Eye stress	Mental pressure	Over eating	Physical distress	Laziness
1st year degree	4.3	2.4	2	3.4	2.5
2nd year degree	2.5	4.4	2	2.5	1.1
3rd year degree	3.5	1.8	3	4	3



Above bar graph reveals problems faced by the students to meet the online classes on a daily Basis. 1st year students display 30% of the respondents face eye stress , whereas 15% respondents are facing mental pressure, with 10% get accustomed to overeating ,20% observe a physical distress and 13% feel lazy . 2nd year students display 20% of the respondents face eye stress , whereas 32% respondents are facing mental pressure, with 12% get accustomed to overeating ,20% observe a physical distress and 10% feel lazy. 3rd year students display 21% of the respondents face eye stress , whereas 8% respondents are facing mental pressure, with 11% get accustomed to overeating ,22% observe a physical distress and 20% feel lazy.

5. Irregular announcements of exams and delaying of results has affected mental health

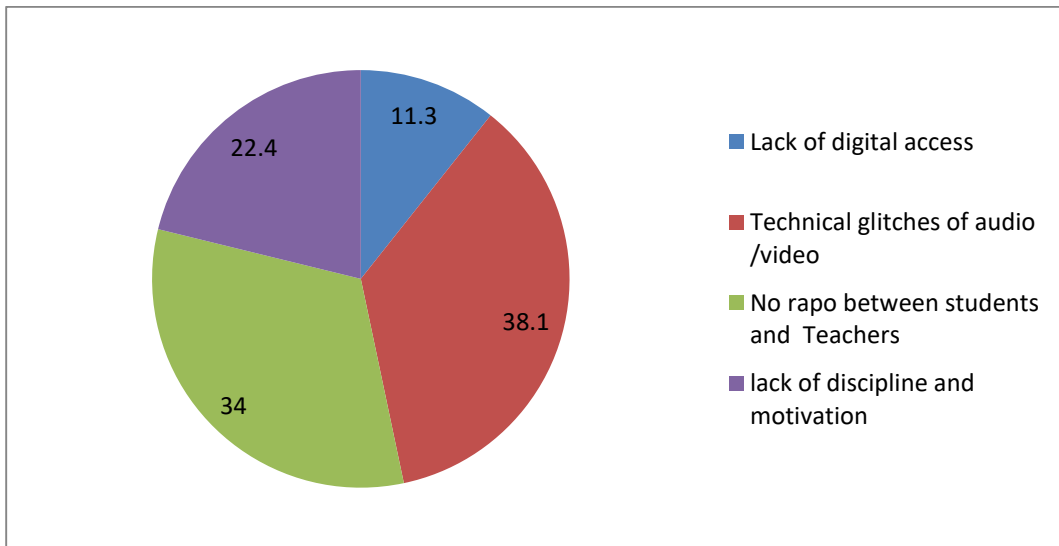
	Frequency	percent
Strongly disagree	15	1.9
disagree	20	2.1
Neutral	10	1.1
Agree	30	9.8
Strongly Agree	71	84.1
Total	146	



As the above survey it is known that respondents strongly agree (84.1%) that irregular announcements of exams and delaying of results has jeopardized them.(9.8%) respondents agree the same while 1-3% of the respondents tell it has not affected them

6. Since you are dealing with online classes for a long time what do you see as a biggest hurdle

	Frequency	Percent %
Lack of digital access	13	11.3
Technical glitches of audio/video	49	38.1
No rapo between students and teachers	42	34
Lack of discipline and motivation	25	22.4
Total	146	100



Findings

1. 80% of the respondents feel that the major challenge that they are facing today due to COVID 19 and other uncertain circumstances is anxiety and panic.
2. 58% of respondents feel that they have developed one alarming habit of Irregular sleep patterns while 23% say that they have highly addicted to usage of social media
3. 44% of the respondents agree that one future problem haunting them the most is employment as they are huge downfall in IT Sector and other arenas
4. 30% of respondents are worried about their future plan of studying abroad
5. Most respondents feel that they are experiencing few physical and psychological disturbances such as eye stress, over eating, mental pressure, physical distress and laziness
6. Over 84% of the respondents show their anxiety towards irregular announcements of exams and delay of results as they are worried about the future
7. 50% of the respondents agree that technical glitch over audio/.video is a major obstacle they were facing while dealing with online classes
8. Respondents agree online teaching has not helped to develop holistically it has not provided them an complete environment to grow, prosper and fulfil their dreams yet this seems to be temporary students should be encouraged to stay fit mentally and physically.

Suggestions

1. Minimising screen time would be a better option to turn off unnecessary contradictions.
2. Setting aside a specific time for physical activity would better mental health
3. Manifesting your visions and goals, and keeping a gratitude journal will help you to see all that you have in your life at this present moment, and leave you feeling grateful and content.
4. Take up a social cause like helping others who are less fortunate. Helping others elevates our self-esteem and adds to our resilience.
5. Set realistic goals- you may need to revisit your goals or move the timelines of achieving them. Break your goals into small achievable targets and slowly move towards it
6. It is important to stay connected during these periods with a quick catch up on family or friendly or loved ones to express their feelings of being overwhelmed, confused or uncertain at times
7. You can also write a diary or use creative arts to let go of your pent up emotions
8. As teachers , parents and as a society it is important to fill in the positivity and strength in minds of students to face any situation

CONCLUSIONS

This paper helps us to know the mental pressures students are facing due to lockdown and Alternative education system. Though the basic amenities of providing education to students is fulfilled it has not developed them holistically instead they are undergoing anxiety and panic to a largest extent because of the uncertainty in their exams, results, future employment opportunities. While the whole world is facing the pandemic crisis it is important to be aware of the happenings and motivate students to concentrate on their mental health as well. Educators, parents are carrying a huge responsibility of showering their kids with enough amount of love, care kindness and positivity during this time. Government should take necessary measure to upscale the students calibre, skill sets provide new measures, plans and opportunity to outbreak this crisis and come out in flying colours.

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