


**A STUDY ON LEVEL OF STRESS AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS DURING COVID -2019**
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**Abstract:**

*The covid19 crisis has rapidly become the most significant and important public health crisis of our times. It has particularly impacted students due to cancellation of college and having to adjust to online learning and anxiety about their future, as well as prolonged social isolation. All these factors has likely to cause significant stress and anxiety. The prevalence and severity of covid19 associated anxiety and stress in high school students and undergraduate (UG) college students during the period of the Covid19 pandemic. At the same time mental health issues are the leading impediment to academic success. Mental illness can affect students' motivation, concentration, and social interactions—crucial factors for students to succeed in higher education. COVID-19 is a newly discovered infectious Coronavirus that became pandemic. Since disease outbreaks can have mental health consequences, which explored the perceived stress level among students during the Coronavirus Disease.*

*The COVID-19 pandemic has brought into focus not only students' lives but also the mental health of various affected populations. It is known that the prevalence of epidemics accentuates or creates new stressors including fear and worry for oneself or loved ones, constraints on physical movement and social activities due to quarantine, and sudden and radical lifestyle changes. A recent review of virus outbreaks and pandemics documented stressors such as infection fears, frustration, boredom, inadequate supplies, inadequate information, financial loss, and stigma which has greater impact on student's life style as well.*

**Keywords:** *Covid-19, Stress management, anxiety level of student's health and precautionary measures health initiative, motivations and health safety.*

**Introduction**

The novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has been declared by the World Health Organization as an international public health emergency. Owing to its high infectivity, countries all over the world implemented nationwide lockdowns with the hope of flattening the epidemic curve. Around the world, this has led to the closure of schools and colleges in over 150 countries affecting the education of nearly 1 billion children ([Sahu, 2020](#)). India faced total lockdown from 24th March 2020 onward and even though a phased re-opening of public services has since then been attempted, most educational institutions including schools and colleges remain closed without a clear view regarding their re-opening. This has created severe crisis in the education sector for students as well as educators regarding continuation of educational services, conducting assessments and catering to the needs of special education and vocational rehabilitation. This paper discusses the various psychosocial issues mental stress level that have emerged leading to academic stress amongst children and adolescent students and its potential to lead to short and long-term psychological morbidity.



### Objective of the study

- To understand about covid Impact on education sector
- To analysz impact of covid on students academics
- To understand how covid infected stress level of students
- To study challenges faced by students during pandemic

### Limitations of the study

To our knowledge, this is the first effort in documenting the psychological impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on a representative sample of college students in the thane city via a virtual interview survey method in the middle of the pandemic. However, several limitations should be noted. First, the sample size for our interview survey was relatively small compared to typical survey-only studies; however, the survey interview approach affords the capture of elaboration and additional clarifying details, and therefore complements the survey-based approaches of prior studies focusing on student mental health during this pandemic. Second, the sample used is from limited colleges and findings may not generalize to all college students. However, given the nationwide similarities in colleges transitioning to virtual classes and similar stay-at-home orders, we expect reasonable generalizability of these findings.

### Scope of the study

Future work could focus on more deeply probing the relationships between various coping mechanisms and stressors. Additionally, further study is needed to determine the effects of the pandemic on students' mental health and well-being in its later phases beyond the peak period. As seen in the case of health care workers in the aftermath of the severe acute respiratory syndrome outbreak, there is a possibility that the effects of the pandemic on students may linger for a period beyond the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic itself.

### Research method and data collection

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 and stress level. This paper documents the findings from online surveys conducted in Degree colleges thane city about 195 students and also collected data from secondary sources like journal magazines ,newspaper ,articles and e – sides.

Following social, mental and physiological issues faced by students

### Concerns for One's Own Health and the Health of Loved Ones

A vast majority of the participants (177/195, 91%) indicated that COVID-19 increased the level of fear and worry about their own health and the health of their loved ones. Over one-third of those who showed concern (76/177, 43%) were worried about their families and relatives who were more vulnerable, such as older adults, those with existing health problems, and those who are pregnant or gave birth to a child recently. Some of the participants (26/177, 15%) expressed their worry about their family members whose occupation increased their risk of exposure to COVID-19 such as essential and health care workers. Some participants (19/177, 11%) specifically mentioned that they were worried about contracting the virus.

### Difficulty with Concentration

A vast majority of participants (173/195, 89%) indicated difficulty in concentrating on academic work due to various sources of distraction. Nearly half of them (79/173, 46%) mentioned that their home is a distractive environment and a more suitable place to relax rather than to study. Participants mentioned that they were more prone to be interrupted



by their family members and household chores at home. Other factors affecting students' concentration were lack of accountability (21/173, 12%) and social media, internet, and video games (19/173, 11%). Some (18/173, 10%) stated that online classes were subject to distraction due to lack of interactions and prolonged attention to a computer screen. Additionally, monotonous life patterns were mentioned by some to negatively affect concentration on academic work (5/173, 3%).

### **Disruption to Sleep Patterns**

A majority of participants (168/195, 86%) reported disruptions to their sleep patterns caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, with over one-third (38%) reporting such disruptions as severe. Half of students who reported some disruption (84/168, 50%) stated that they tended to stay up later or wake up later than they did before the COVID-19 outbreak. Another disruptive impact brought by the pandemic was irregular sleep patterns such as inconsistent time to go to bed and to wake up from day to day (28/168, 17%). Some (12/168, 7%) reported increased hours of sleep, while others (10/168, 6%) had poor sleep quality.

### **Increased Social Isolation**

A majority of participants answered that the pandemic has increased the level of social isolation (167/195, 86%). Over half of these students (91/167, 54%) indicated that their overall interactions with other people such as friends had decreased significantly. In particular, about one-third (52/167, 31%) shared their worries about a lack of in-person interactions such as face-to-face meetings. Others (9/167, 5%) stated that disruptions to their outdoor activities (eg, jogging, hiking) have affected their mental health.

### **Concerns about Academic Performance**

A majority of participants (159/195, 82%) showed concerns about their academic performance being impacted by the pandemic. The biggest perceived challenge was the transition to online classes (61/159, 38%). In particular, participants stated their concerns about sudden changes in the syllabus, the quality of the classes, technical issues with online applications, and the difficulty of learning online. Many participants (36/159, 23%) were worried about progress in research and class projects because of restrictions put in place to keep social distancing and the lack of physical interactions with other students. Some participants (23/159, 14%) mentioned the uncertainty about their grades under the online learning environment to be a major stressor. Others (12/159, 8%) indicated their reduced motivation to learn and tendency to procrastinate.

### **Disruptions to Eating Patterns**

COVID-19 has also negatively impacted a large portion of participants' dietary patterns (137/195, 70%). Many (35/137, 26%) stated that the amount of eating has increased, including having more snacks since healthy dietary options were reduced, and others (27/137, 20%) addressed that their eating patterns have become inconsistent because of COVID-19, for example, irregular times of eating and skipping meals. Some students (16/137, 12%) reported decreased appetite, whereas others (7/137, 5%) were experiencing emotional eating or a tendency to eat when bored. On the other hand, some students (28/195, 14%) reported that they were having healthier diets, as they were cooking at home and not eating out as much as they used to.

### **Changes in the Living Environment**

A large portion of the participants (130/195, 67%) described that the pandemic has resulted in significant changes in their living conditions. A majority of these students (89/130, 68%) referred to living with family members as being



less independent and the environment to be more distractive. For those who stayed in their residence either on- or off-campus (18/130, 14%), a main change in their living environment was reduced personal interactions with roommates. Some (9/130, 7%) mentioned that staying inside longer due to self-quarantine or shelter-in-place orders was a primary change in their living circumstances.

#### **Financial Difficulties**

More than half of the participants (115/195, 59%) expressed their concerns about their financial situations being impacted by COVID-19. Many (44/115, 38%) noted that COVID-19 has impacted or is likely to impact their own current and future employment opportunities such as part-time jobs and internships. Some (21/115, 18%) revealed the financial difficulties of their family members, mostly parents, getting laid off or receiving pay cuts in the wake of COVID-19.

#### **Increased Class Workload**

The effect of COVID-19 on class workload among the college students was not conclusive. Although slightly over half of participants (106/195, 54%) indicated their academic workload has increased due to COVID-19, the rest stated the workload has remained the same (70/195, 36%) or rather decreased (19/195, 10%). For those who were experiencing increased workloads, nearly half (51/106, 48%) thought they needed to increase their own efforts to catch up with online classes and class projects given the lack of in-person support from instructors or teaching assistants. About one-third of the participants (33/106, 31%) perceived that assignments had increased or became harder to do. Some (6/106, 6%) found that covering the remainder of coursework as the classes resumed after the 2-week break to be challenging.

#### **Depressive Thoughts**

When asked about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on depressive thoughts, 44% (86/195) mentioned that they were experiencing some depressive thoughts during the COVID-19 pandemic. Major contributors to such depressive thoughts were loneliness (28/86, 33%), insecurity or uncertainty (10/86, 12%), powerlessness or hopelessness (9/86, 10%), concerns about academic performance (7/86, 8%), and overthinking (4/86, 5%).

#### **Suicidal Thoughts**

Out of 195 participants, 16 (8%) stated that the pandemic has led to some suicidal thoughts with 5% (10/16) reporting these thoughts as mild and 3% (6/16) as moderate. There were 6 participants (38%) that attributed their suicidal thoughts to the presence of depressive thoughts. Other reasons were related to academic performance (1/16, 6%), problems with family as they returned home (1/16, 6%), and fear from insecurity and uncertainty (1/16, 6%).

#### **Technology Challenges**

Online learning is not that much feasible due to lack of technology advancement and connectivity issue. All the students are not much techno friendly. This may create problem and cause lack of interest in learning.

#### **Coping Mechanism and measures during COVID-19**

To cope and handling with stress and anxiety imposed by COVID-19, college students reported seeking support from others but were mainly using various self-management methods.

#### **Self-Management**

The majority of the participants (105/138, 76%) with increased stress due to the outbreak of COVID-19 explained that they were using various means to help themselves cope with stress and anxiety during the pandemic. Some (24/105,



23%) relied on negative coping methods such as ignoring the news about COVID-19 (10/105), sleeping longer (7/105), distracting themselves by doing other tasks (5/105), and drinking or smoking (2/105). Approximately one-third (30/105, 29%) used positive coping methods such as meditation and breathing exercises (18/105), spiritual measures (7/105), keeping routines (4/105), and positive reframing (2/105). A majority of the participants (73/105, 70%) who used self-management mentioned doing relaxing hobbies including physical exercise (31/105), enjoying streaming services and social media (22/105), playing with pets (7/105), journaling (5/105), listening to music (4/105), reading (2/105), and drawing (2/105). Finally, some participants (15/105, 14%) stated that they were planning activities (eg, drafting to-do lists) for academic work and personal matters as a self-distraction method.

### Seeking Support from Others

Approximately one-third of the participants (47/138, 34%) mentioned that communicating with their families and friends was a primary way to deal with stress and anxiety during COVID-19. Some explicitly stated that they were using a virtual meeting application such as Zoom frequently to connect to friends and family.

**Motivational Activities:** Motivational activities include Video movies web series somewhere help towards mental stability among students especially high Grade (class ) students.

**Yoga and Meditations:** During pandemic Yoga and Meditation activities also contributed through mental peace and help to make balancing life style at certain extended.

### Findings and conclusion

College students comprise a population that is considered particularly vulnerable to mental health concerns. The findings of this study bring into focus the effects of pandemic-related transitions on the mental health and well-being of this specific population. The findings suggest a considerable negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on a variety of academic-, health-, and lifestyle-related outcomes. By conducting online survey interviews in the midst of the pandemic, we found that a majority of the participants were experiencing increased stress and anxiety due to COVID-19.

The Covid19 pandemic has resulted in an extremely high level of stress and mental health morbidity in both high school and especially college students. There is a high prevalence of depression and anxiety in students, and this is more pronounced in girls.

These findings are in line with recent studies in China that also found concerns relating to health of oneself and of family members being highly prevalent among the general population during the pandemic. Difficulty in concentrating, frequently expressed by our participants, has previously been shown to adversely affect students' confidence in themselves which has known correlations to increased stress and mental health. In comparison with stress and anxiety in college students' general life, it appears that countermeasures put in place against COVID-19, such as shelter-in-place orders and social distancing practices, may have underpinned significant changes in students' lives. For example, a vast majority of the participants noted changes in social relationships, largely due to limited physical interactions with their families and friends.

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