

The Study of Psychological Factors Across Different Occupations During COVID-19 Lockdown

Leen Verma^{1*}, Ria Aggarwal²

ABSTRACT

If we start being honest about our emotions, our experiences and our mental health instead of pretending they don't exist, then we will live a better life than we already are living. People during the 2020 pandemic had traumatic life experiences, some lost their loved ones, some came back from death beds, some were stuck alone in some other countries for months, and some were isolated from their own families in their own houses. This year was not easy for anyone, people realized that their physical mental health both are equally important. The awareness of mental health leads to people taking care of themselves by engaging in different activities to relax themselves. Being productive during lockdown was not the aim but being able to sustain the lockdown was more important. The present research was conceptualized to understand how the mental health of different occupations in India have been affected during the COVID-19 Lockdown. A survey was conducted on a sample of 312 people. The psychological factors like stress, hygiene, depression, mood state and happiness were studied across occupations like student, service, business, homemaker and retired. The results show that Students and Homemakers are the most depressed, unhappiest and experience negative emotions.

Keywords: *Psychological Factors, Occupations, Covid-19, Depression, Mood-State*

The COVID-19 Pandemic has taken almost all the countries down, it has been spreading at an extremely fast rate all over the world. The virus started from a wet market in Wuhan, China in December 2019. It is a respiratory disease and is contagious, spreads through coughing, sneezing and normal exhalation.

On 13th March, a lot of schools and colleges around the country were shut down for the students till 31st of march as social distancing and isolation is extremely necessary and the only safety measure to stop the transmission of COVID-19. Soon organizations also started allowing work from home to at least half of the employees to decrease the number of people in the workplace and on the streets. From this day the series of lockdowns in the country started and the whole country went into quarantine.

¹BSc. Applied Psychology (Hons), Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies, Faridabad, Haryana, India

²Master of Psychology, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi, India

*Corresponding Author

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Mental health was never given importance and any discussion on related issues were ignored. The Pandemic changed the population's perception, this time when the situation was at its worst, people started talking about their feelings, emotions, moods etc.

During the lockdown people realized that mental health is as equally important as physical health. Talking about their emotions is a strong and important act.

Therefore, the aim of this research is to study some psychological factors on different occupations during this lockdown, quarantine period in India. The people of different occupations were observed experiencing different emotions, some were bored, scared, anxious, extremely careful and some were happy, spending time with their family, etc. The study was conducted to know what the general population felt about themselves and the situation around them. How has this pandemic, lockdown affected the people from different occupations.

We are social beings and staying in isolation or lockdown can have different effects on our mental health, understanding the same can help in outlining interventions to deal with such situations in the future and now.

LITERATURE REVIEW

(Sheela Sundaresan, 2020) studied the anxiety levels of university students in Malaysia during the covid 19 pandemic. Sample size was 983, most of the respondents showcased high levels of anxiety. It was found that remote online teaching, financial constraints and uncertainty about the future were the major reasons associated with high levels of anxiety.

(Usama Rehman, 2021) explores the psychological distress experienced by the indian population during the epidemic. The results suggested that students and healthcare professionals experienced high stress, depression and anxiety.

(Sherrill W. Hayes, 2020) studied the relationship between stress, burnout and remote working during pandemic. The results suggested that due to work from home the stress experienced by the participants had increased and so did the work-related burnout levels.

(Lijun Kang, 2020) studied the mental health of medical workers in Wuhan, China who were dealing with COVID-19 patients, the workers were facing a lot of pressure and high risk of developing the disease.

(Robert G. Maunder, 2006) studied the long-term psychological effects on health care workers (HCWs) during SARS outbreak. 769 health care workers from 13 different hospitals in which 9 Toronto hospitals who treated the patients completely and 4 Hamilton hospitals who could not treat completely, were given a survey about the stress the faced while and after the outbreak. The result indicated that Toronto HCWs experienced higher burnout, psychological distress and post-traumatic stress as compared to Hamilton HCWs.

(Michael G. Wheaton, 2011) studied the anxiety people were facing due to the H1N1 Swine Flu Pandemic. It was a survey-based research conducted on 315 college students and the results indicated that health anxiety, contamination fears and disgust sensitivity were the predictors of anxiety at the time of the pandemic.

(Goodwin,2011) studied the psychological responses to H1N1 Swine flu pandemic. Sample size was 328 out of which 180 subjects from Malaysia and 148 from Europe filled the

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survey. The result indicated psychological responses like change in transportation usage, change in goods purchasing, increased anxiety and some respondents were concerned about their health.

(Abdulkarim Al-Rabiaahab, 2020) studied the stress levels in medical students because of the MERS-Cov. The sample size was 174 students at a university teaching hospital in Saudi Arabia out of which female students had higher stress levels as compared to males.

METHODOLOGY

Tools used

The following Questionnaires were used in the survey:

- Mood test- PANAS- developed by David Watson in 1988 (20 items)
- Happiness- Subjective Happiness Scale- developed by Sonja Lyubomirsky in 2007 (4 items)
- Depression- PHQ 9- developed by Janet B.W. Williams in 1990s (9 items)
- Symptoms of stress test- developed by Elkin A in 1999 (12 items)
- Hygiene- Hygiene knowledge, attitude and practice scale. (7 items)

A google form was created using the above-mentioned questionnaires, it was circulated among the subjects with the help of social media apps and the responses were collected.

Hypothesis

H₁- Business and service people will be more stressed and depressed as compared to other occupations.

H₁- Students, home-makers and retirees will have a high score in happiness, and positive mood as compared to other occupations.

H₁- All the occupations will have high score in hygiene

Sample:

The sample size was 312.

- Males: 134
- Females: 183

Based on occupations:

Student: 98

Homemaker: 53

Service: 60

Business: 59

Retired: 42

Convenience and snowball sampling was used.

The survey form was open to all the people, no age or gender constraints were there.

Therefore, there was no set age-range. The survey was filled by school students, university students, youth, middle-aged people and retired-old people as well.

Design and Procedure

The present study is designed to be survey-based, A google form was created using five questionnaires and a section of demographic details. The data was collected using convenience and snowball sampling and was circulated for two weeks. Total of 312

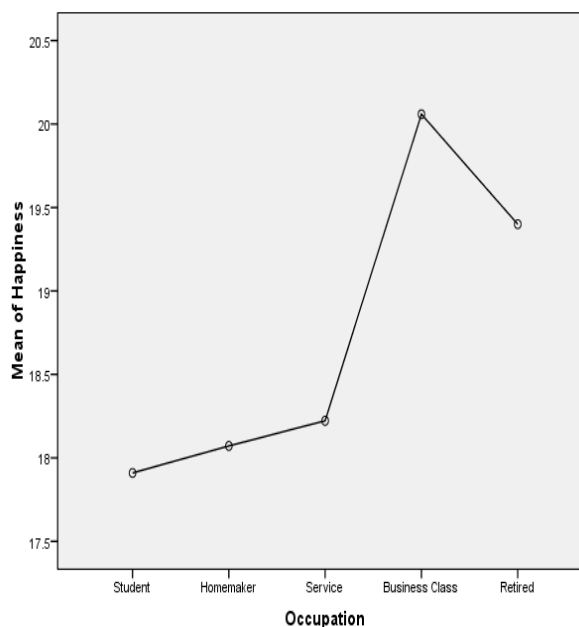
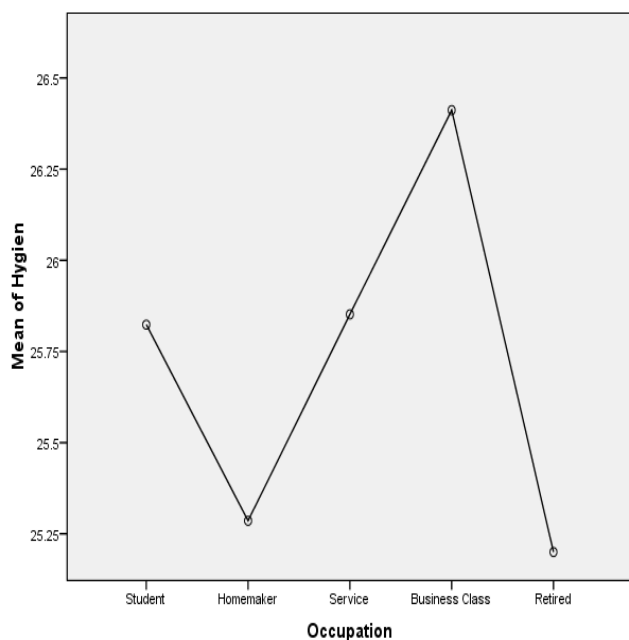
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responses were recorded. No age bar was set so that everyone was encouraged to volunteer and participate in the survey and data could be collected from different levels of occupation including students and home makers, working class and retired people.

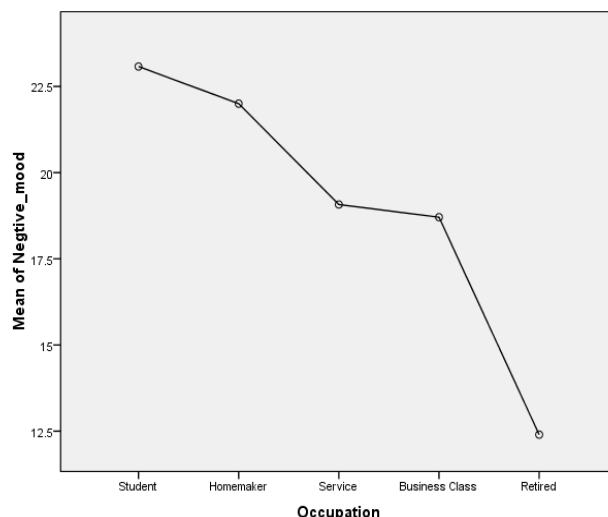
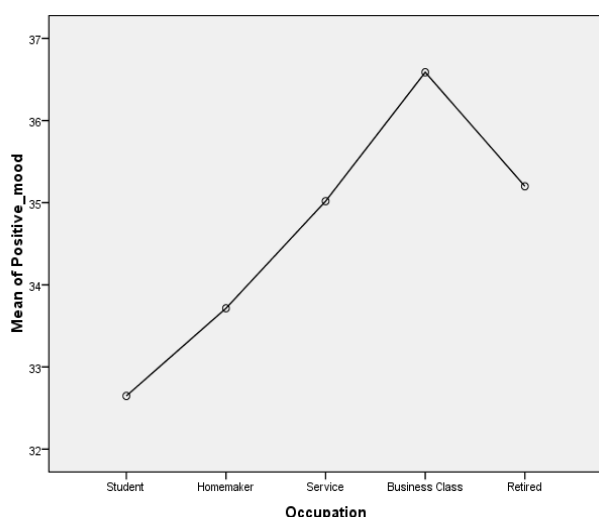
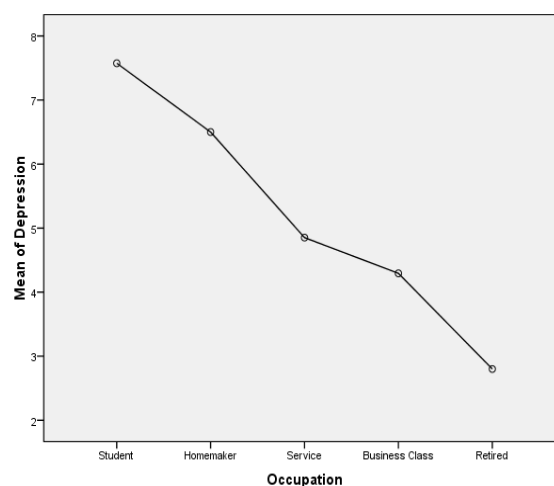
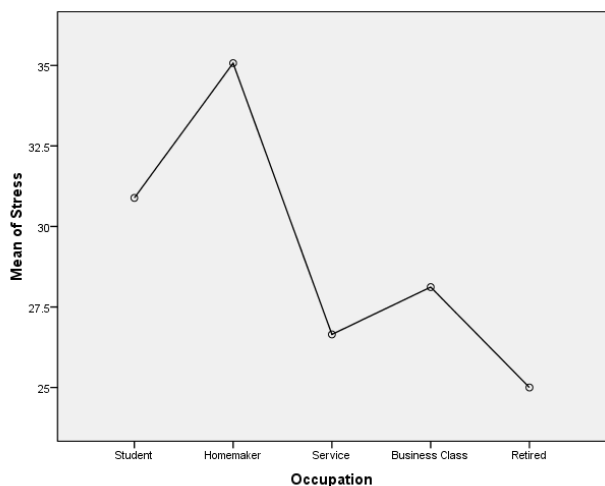
RESULTS

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Hygien	Between Groups	11.917	4	2.979	.573	.682
	Within Groups	1590.707	306	5.198		
	Total	1602.624	310			
Happiness	Between Groups	82.468	4	20.617	1.297	.271
	Within Groups	4862.593	306	15.891		
	Total	4945.061	310			
Stress	Between Groups	1323.116	4	330.779	2.597	.036
	Within Groups	38975.180	306	127.370		
	Total	40298.296	310			
Depression	Between Groups	525.576	4	131.394	4.077	.003
	Within Groups	9860.662	306	32.224		
	Total	10386.238	310			
Positive_mood	Between Groups	456.715	4	114.179	1.800	.129
	Within Groups	19411.227	306	63.435		
	Total	19867.942	310			
Negtive_mood	Between Groups	1362.022	4	340.506	5.555	.000
	Within Groups	18758.125	306	61.301		
	Total	20120.148	310			



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INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

We can clearly interpret from the figures that during the COVID-19 Lockdown:

1. Hygiene factor has been the highest in people who handle business, Students and individuals in the Service sector are close behind.
2. Business based people and Retired individuals were high on the happiness score during the lockdown.
3. The Home-makers and Students are the most stressed staying at home all this while.
4. Similarly, Students and Home-makers are high on depression scores as compared to the other occupations/ subjects.
5. On the affective component service sector employees have high scores on the positive mode and as seen above Students and Home-makers were highest on the negative mood.

The pandemic and the lockdown had different effects on different people but from these results on a whole we can say the unhappiest were students and home-makers, the happiest were the business class people and retired individuals.

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Next, from the ANOVA table we can observe the following:

1. The difference between the mean of Depression, Stress and Negative Affect is significant.
2. Whereas, the difference between the mean of Hygiene, Happiness and Positive mood is not significant because the values were quite close to one-another. But the minor difference can be seen in the mean graphs

Hypothesis (Rejected/Accepted)

Following were the hypothesis statements:

1. Business and service people will be more stressed and depressed as compared to other occupations.

•The hypothesis got *rejected* for both the business and service people.

2. Students, home-makers and retirees will have a high score in happiness, and positive mood as compared to other occupations.

•The hypothesis was *rejected* for students and home-makers whereas it stands *true* for the retired people.

3. And, all the occupations will have high score in hygiene

•The hypothesis was *rejected* as the score was not high for all the occupations.

CONCLUSION

We can conclude by saying that the lockdown that was implemented in India due to the pandemic, had different results on the population. Hygiene scores were high and mostly similar for all the occupations. Depression scores were low but mostly same for all the occupations.

Students and Home-makers were the unhappiest as compared to all the other occupations probably due to less social interaction, constant online learning and increased house chores. The retired individuals and the business people were happy and experienced positive emotions this could be due to the time they got to spend with their families and less workload in the lockdown days. The service sector employees experienced positive emotions but were highly stressed as well, reason could be the work from home policy and constant pay cuts.

Limitations

- Sample Size is small (312), higher the sample size, higher the accuracy and the results can be generalized with high sample size.
- Number of responses based on the various occupations could have been more and equal in comparison.
- The study can be based on gender as well instead of occupations and age groups.
- Location based results can also be reproduced from the same research.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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