

## Effect of Lockdown on Education and Health

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### ABSTRACT

The outbreak of COVID-19 affected the lives of all sections of society as people were asked to self-quarantine in their homes prevent the spread of the virus. The lockdown had serious implications on mental health, resulting in psychological problems including frustration, stress, and depression in order to explore the impact of a total of 1182 individuals of different age groups from various educational institutes in Delhi- National Capital Region (NCR), India and some local places, and some individuals. The article identified the following as the impact of COVID -19 on the students of different age groups: time spent on online classes and self-study, medium used for learning, sleeping habits, daily fitness routine and the subsequent effects on weight, social life, and mental health. Moreover, our research found that in order to deal with stress and anxiety, participants adopted different coping mechanisms and also sought help from their near ones. Further, the research examined the student's engagement on social media platforms among different age categories. 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.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, Lockdown, Education, Health, Stress, Students.

The emergence of Corona Virus disease (COVID- 19) Has led the world to an unprecedented public health crisis. Emergency protocols were implemented in India to control the spread of the virus which resulted in restrictions on all non-essential public movements (Saha et al. 2020). With the closure of educational institutions, the need for a rapid transition from Physical learning to the digital sphere of learning emerged. Online learning has been observed as a possible alternative to conventional learning However. According to a meta- analysis on e-learning (COOK 2009), It is reported that online learning is better than nothing and similar to conventional learning. To improve the e-learning experience, the education institutions are required to comply with the guidelines and recommendations by government agencies, while keeping students encouraged to continue learning remotely in this tough environment (Aucejo et al. 2020). Bao (2020) addresses five high- impact guidelines for the efficient conduct of online education.

This rapid evolution at such a large scale has influenced the students of all age groups (Hasan and Bao 2020). It is expected that the continued spread of the disease, travel restrictions and the closure of educational institutions across the country would have a

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significant effect on the education, social life, and mental health of students (Odrizola-gonzalez et al. 2020). The students from the less privileged backgrounds have experienced larger negative impacts due to the Covid-19 outbreak (Aucejo et al. 2020). Reduction in family income, limited access to digital resources, and the high cost of internet connectivity have disrupted the academic life of the students. Moreover, 1.5 billion students across the world are now deprived of basic education (Lee 2020) leading to a serious psychology impact on their health. Moreover, changes in daily routine including lack of outdoor activity, disturbed sleeping patterns, social distancing have affected the mental well-being of the students. (Cao et al. 2020) uses 7-item Generalised anxiety disorder, panic disorders and social phobia further, (ye et al. 2020) analyses mediating roles of resilience, coping, and social support to deal with psychology symptoms.

In this paper, we investigated and analysed the potential consequences of the covid-19 pandemic on the life of students. Our research shows that there is a wide gap between the government's policy aspirations and the implementation of these online education policies at the grassroots level. Moreover, our study attempts to assess the mental situation of students of different age groups using different parameters including sleeping habits, daily fitness routine, and social support. Further we analyse different coping mechanisms used by students to deal with the current situation.

### *Objective and methods*

A 19- set questionnaire was developed, which included a variety of multiple-choice questions, Likert scale and for a few questions, the respondents were allowed to enter free texts. The survey was administered using the Google Forms platform, which requires subjects to be logged in to an email account to participate in the survey; it restricted multiple entries from an individual account. The distribution of the questionnaire was conducted through the outreach of social media platforms, e-mail and standard messaging services. Clear instructions with Google form were provided to ensure the respondent must be a student who really faced the problem related with their health and education especially.

### *Study design*

a web – based survey was conducted to students through the medium of Google online platforms July 13 to July 17,2020. The online survey questionnaire contained four subgroups: (a) Participants were asked to describe their general demographics. Such as age, the region of residence.(b) Information about the daily online learning routine following the transition from offline learning in educational institutions in India: average time spent for self-study (hours)/day; medium for online study; average time spent for self-study (hours)/day.(c). Assessment of the experience of online learning to evaluate the levels of satisfaction among students. (d) assessment of health due to the change in lifestyle: average time spent on sleep (hours)/day; change in weight; average time spent on fitness (hours)/day; the number of meals/ days; also, we considered further questions about the medium of stress busters during the pandemic, cohesion with family members, etc.

This aim of this survey study is to investigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education, health, and lifestyle of students from different age-groups.

### *Statistical analysis*

In this study, we conducted a cross-sectional survey with a sample size of 1182 students from different educational institutions. A summary of demographic details in the form of numbers and percentages is provided. Mean at 95% confidence interval limit was calculated

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for learning hours for online classes and self-study, duration of sleep, time spent on fitness and sleep. Kruskal Wallis test, a non – parametric test was used to assess the significant difference in the time spent on the aforementioned activities among different age distributions. Fisher’s exact test was performed to assess the differences between respondent’s health with the variables of interest. In order to analyse the association between age categories and different variables such as change in weight, health issues faced, stress busters, etc, the Pearson chi square the was used. JMP version 15.2.1 from SAS was used for analysis. A statistically significant value of  $p < 0.05$  was considered.

“In some ways, the COVID-19 era seems like exactly the right time to educate students on how to manage the intense sadness, isolation, and anxiety they are felling. But during the horrible natural experiment called coronavirus, is that the right message to send to students-to push through hardship, bounce back from failure, and come out stronger? Or should it be about empathy, compassion, and getting through this time in one piece?”

### DISCUSSION

The outbreak of covid-19 has upended the lives of all parts of the society. One of the most immediate changes introduced was the closure of educational institutions to slow the Transmission of the virus. In order to prevent further interruption of studies, new teaching methods for the online delivery of education were introduced (Johnson et al., 2020, Di Pietro et al.,2020). However, these measures can have long-term consequences on the lives of students (Cohen et al. 2020). Therefore, there is a strong need to record and study the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education, health, social life of the students, and demonstrate results about its subsequent effect on their daily routine amid travel restrictions. The findings indicate that the time spent by students on online classes did not comply with the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Human Resources Development (MHRD) (Department of School Education & Literacy Ministry of Human Resource Development 2020). Limited class Interaction and inefficient time tables significantly affected the satisfaction levels among students. The peer-to-peer impact in the school environment motivates individuals to work hard and learn social skills, which may not be possible in an online setting. Moreover, the biggest challenge for online learning in the requirement of efficient digital infrastructure and digital skills for both students and teachers.

Further, this study analyses the impact of different factors to measure stress levels among students. Alarmingly, 51.4% of respondents reported that they did not utilise their time during the period of lockdown. Furthermore, sleeping habits, daily fitness routines, and social interaction significantly affected their health conditions. The government agencies imposed measures such as social distancing and restrictions on travel, but they did not take into account the health implications. Although these measures are necessary to regulate safe conditions, there is no strategy to safeguard the psychological impact due to the covid-19 pandemic. Our research also explores the different coping mechanisms used by students of different age groups. Moreover, we analysed various digital social media tools used by students as a self-management strategy for mental health. Our statistical analysis addresses key concerns related to online education and health due to the covid-19 pandemic.

### *Opinions and recommendations*

Once the COVID-19 pandemic ends and educational institutions re-open, the concerned authorities should continue to invest in online education to enhance learning experience. They should carefully analyse the issues experienced during sudden transition to online learning and prepare for any future situations. Proper training of educators for the digital

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skills and improved students-teacher interaction must be conducted. For disadvantaged students, availability of digital infrastructure with proper internet availability and access to gadgets must be ensured to avoid any disruption to their study.

Due to the situation in covid-19, many students are likely to suffer from stress, anxiety, and depression, so it is necessary to provide emotional support to students. Future work in this direction could be to analyse the association of different stress busters on the mental health of the students. Moreover, guidelines should be created to anticipate the needs of the vulnerable student population. Improved healthcare management would ensure the delivery of mental health support. The current position of the world is very critical in this scenario as no one knows about the transmission of the virus and how it might be stopped. According to Currie et al. (2020), COVID-19 is one of the most critical challenges for mankind and affecting global health after the 2nd world war. Unfortunately, despite best efforts to set up a supportive remote learning experience, evidence is emerging to show that school closures have resulted in actual learning losses.

### *Limitations*

There are some limitations to our study that should be noted. The first limitation is the sampling technique used. It relies on digital infrastructure and voluntary participation that increases selection bias. The imposed travel restrictions limited the outreach to students who do not have access to online learning. Second, the study is obtained from one specific area, given the lockdown orders and the online medium of classes, we expect these results to be fairly generalizable for schools and universities nationwide. Another limitation of this study is the cross-sectional design of the survey, there was no follow-up period for the participants.

## **CONCLUSION**

In this study, our findings indicated that the covid-19 outbreak has made a significant impact on the mental health, education, and daily routine of students. The covid-19 related interruptions highlight key challenges and provide an opportunity to future evaluate alternative measures in the education sector. The new polices and guidelines in this direction would help mitigate some of the negative effects and prepare educators and students for the future health crisis. In general, there was a negative impact on behaviours, lifestyle and mental health and virtual education was perceived as necessary in making up for the loss of face-to-face experiences. Students' mental health and educational needs have been affected by the current pandemic and health care educational facilities must respond to these needs to ensure students continue to receive the support they need. The rapid and unplanned change to teaching and learning in the online format brought by COVID-19 has likely impacted many, if not all, aspects of university students' lives worldwide. To contribute to the investigation of this change, this study focuses on the impact of the pandemic on student well-being, which has been found to be as important to student lifelong success as their academic achievement. The COVID-19 pandemic has had far-reaching consequences on the physical and mental health of individuals as well as the health of economies across the globe. While young people may be less susceptible to severe forms of the illness, suffering milder symptoms, lower morbidity, and better prognosis compared to adults.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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