

Comparative Study

Impact of Covid-19 on Psycho-Social Wellbeing of Males and Females: A Comparative Analysis

Kanishka Goel^{1*}, Dr. Poonam Devdutt²

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to explore gender differences in psycho-social wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing on the experiences of males and females. A total of 100 participants, consisting of 50 males and 50 females, were surveyed using a questionnaire designed to assess their psycho-social challenges during the pandemic. The study employed descriptive statistics to calculate the mean and standard deviation for each group, followed by an independent two-sample T-test to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between the two groups. The results indicated that the mean psycho-social wellbeing score for males was 1.88 (SD = 1.36), while for females, it was 2.46 (SD = 1.39). The T-test yielded a T-statistic of -2.11 with 98 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.037, suggesting a statistically significant difference between the two groups. Females reported higher levels of psycho-social distress compared to males. This study concludes that the psycho-social impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was more pronounced among females, highlighting the need for gender-sensitive support mechanisms in addressing mental and social health challenges during global crises. Further research is recommended to understand the underlying factors contributing to these gender disparities.

Keywords: Covid-19, Males, Females, Psycho-Social Wellbeing, Gender

COVID-19

COVID-19 was an infectious disease with initial cases identified in Wuhan, Hubei province, China toward the end of December 2019 and has caused a pandemic worldwide. COVID-19 was earlier named as Severe Acute Respiratory Disease 2(SARS-CO-V2), but World Health Organisation renamed the disease as COVID-19. By the end of March, 2020 almost 205 countries reported the Covid-19 disease. The virus had affected almost 700,000 cases and had led to 33,000 deaths by then. It has been one of the fastest growing pandemic in the last two decades.

Signs and symptoms

- Muscle pain
- Fatigue
- Runny nose

¹PhD Scholar, Centre for Psychology and Human Behaviour, Shobhit deemed to-be University

²Professor and Director, Centre for Psychology and Human Behaviour, Shobhit deemed to-be University

*Corresponding Author

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- Fever
- Dry cough
- Respiratory disease syndrome

SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING

Socio-Psychosocial well-being refers to the state of emotional, mental, and social health of an individual. It is a broad concept that includes various aspects of human life, including happiness, personal growth, life satisfaction, social functioning, self-esteem, and a sense of purpose in life. Socio-Psychosocial well-being is influenced by several factors, including environmental factors, genetics, and life experiences, such as education, family and peer relationships, employment, and physical health. Positive socio-psychosocial well-being allows individuals to maintain positive relationships, effectively cope with stress.

GENDER

It refers to the socially constructed roles, expressions, behaviours, and identities of girls, women, boys, men, and gender diverse people. It influences how people act and interact with each other, how people perceive themselves and each other and to distribute power and resources in society.

Objectives

- To study the impact of COVID-19 on psycho-social wellbeing of Males.
- To study the impact of COVID-19 on psycho-social wellbeing of females.
- To make comparative analysis of impact of COVID-19 on both the genders.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Carvalho Aguiar Melo, M., & de Sousa Soares, D. (2020) in their study on how social distancing has impacted mental health during COVID-19 pandemic concluded that there was high level of depression and anxiety that prevailed due to social distancing.

Lyons, Z., Wilcox, H., Leung, L., & Dearsley, O. (2020). In their research on impact of COVID-19 on mental being of Australian students highlighted medical students were under stress regarding their studies and career.

Saladino, V., Algeri, D., & Auriemma, V. (2020). in their research on social and psychological impact of COVID-19 concluded that college students, children, health workers were most exposed to PTSD, stress, anxiety and other psychological problems.

Bou-Hamad, I., Hoteit, R., & Harajli, D. (2021). In their research on social wellbeing, life satisfaction, health worries in Lebanon people concluded that young adults and individuals had higher concern about their social wellbeing. People with children had more health worries.

Kim, H. H. S., & Jung, J. H. (2021). In their study on psychological distress and social isolation during pandemic concluded that social isolation led to the poor mental health.

Krendl, A. C., & Perry, B. L. (2021). In their study on impact of COVID-19 on older adult's mental and social wellbeing living in sheltering concluded that older adult's mental health was negatively affected by the pandemic. They felt lonely, depressed.

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Bhat, B. A., Khan, S., Manzoor, S., Niyaz, A., Tak, H. J., Anees, S. U. M., ... & Ahmad, I. (2020) in their study on impact of COVID-19 on psychological health, economic and social life of people of Kashmir concluded that COVID-19 negatively impacted psychological wellbeing of students, front line workers, elders, people living in stressful conditions.

Chaturvedi, R., Lui, B., Aaronson, J. A., White, R. S., & Samuels, J. D. (2022). conducted research on how COVID-19 led to complications in male and females and concluded that males were at higher risk of getting hospitalized than females. Males were at higher risk of respiratory track failure due to hypertension, obesity and cardiovascular diseases.

Dubey, S., Biswas, P., Ghosh, R., Chatterjee, S., Dubey, M. J., Chatterjee, S., ... & Lavie, C. J. (2020). In their study on COVID-19 impact on psychosocial wellbeing concluded that lockdown can produce the feeling of anxiety, depression can also lead to hoarding, paranoia, acute stress.

Groarke, J. M., Berry, E., Graham-Wisener, L., McKenna-Plumley, P. E., McGlinchey, E., & Armour, C. (2020) in their research on the loneliness in UK during covid-19. The findings revealed that the UK public was concerned about the mental health due to lockdown. Also, more than one quarter of the sample population was classified as lonely, suggesting that lockdown policies have had a negative impact on public survey.

Khan, A. A., Lodhi, F. S., Rabbani, U., Ahmed, Z., Abrar, S., Arshad, S., ... & Khan, M. I. (2021). In their study on impact of pandemic on psychological wellbeing of Pakistani general population concluded that there was poor wellbeing in the people residing in Sindh, especially women. There was unemployment and absence of coping mechanisms.

Sepúlveda-Loyola, W., Rodríguez-Sánchez, I., Pérez-Rodríguez, P., Ganz, F., Torralba, R., Oliveira, D. V., & Rodríguez-Mañas, L. (2020). In their research on how social isolation due to COVID-19 impacted the mental health of older people concluded that social isolation negatively affected the older people. They had poor sleep quality, anxiety and depression.

METHODOLOGY

Sample population

The study includes 100 participants from 20 years of age and above. Both males and females are included. The sample consists of 50 males and 50 females. Sampling has been done from Meerut district of Western Uttar Pradesh.

Tools

Quantitative research design was used in the study, for which a scale was developed by the researcher which was validated by professionals in the field of psychology.

The questionnaire has been developed for study COVID-19 pandemic. The questionnaire measures the impact of COVID-19 on

1. Social wellbeing
2. Psychological wellbeing

It is a 4 point scale questionnaire ranging from “very much to not at all”

For each question mark “Very much” if you are sure, it is true for you and “To great extent” if you think it is true, but not that much. Similarly mark “Somewhat” if it is true, but you are not absolutely certain. Mark “Very little” if the question holds very little significance for you and “Not at All” if the question is false for you.

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Procedure

The process of collection of data involved randomly choosing 50 males and 50 females above the age group of 20 years old and above. Participants were provided brief overview about the purpose of the study i.e. to see how COVID-19 has impacted socio-psychological wellbeing of different genders. Instructions were read out and participants were assured that their responses will be kept confidential and will only be used for research purpose only.

The questionnaire that was developed by the researcher was given to the participants and they were asked to mark on the block that they thought suited their situation the best. The questionnaire included Lickert-type questions to understand the impact of covid-19 on their socio-psychological wellbeing. After the collection of data debriefing section was conducted this included thanking participants for giving their valuable time and contact number was given for any question and concern. The collected data was securely kept and plan for data analysis was prepared. The result analysis was done and results were reported.

RESULT

Table 1. Scores of Males

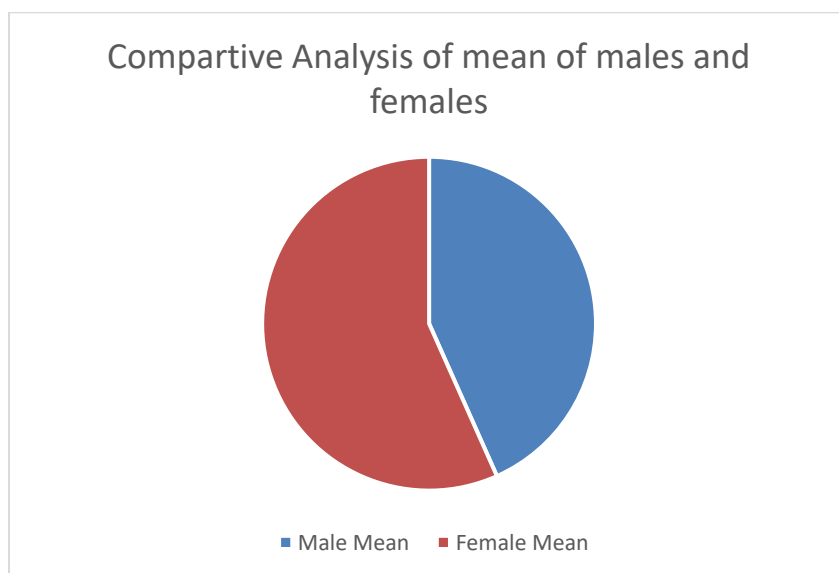
| Descriptive Statistics | Score |
|------------------------|-------------|
| Mean | 1.882105263 |
| Standard Deviation | 1.356774732 |

Table 2. Scores of Females

| Descriptive Statistics | Score |
|------------------------|-------------|
| Mean | 2.461052632 |
| Standard Deviation | 1.386422487 |

Table 3. Inferential Statistics (T-Test Scores)

| Statistics | Score |
|-------------------|--------------|
| T-Test Value | -2.110360694 |
| Degree Of Freedom | 98 |
| P-Value | 0.037373554 |



DISCUSSION

The statistically significant p-value of 0.037 suggests that males and females experienced the psychological and social effects of the COVID-19 pandemic differently. Females reported higher psycho-social distress, as indicated by their higher mean scores. This finding aligns with broader research that suggests women may have faced unique challenges during the pandemic, such as increased care giving responsibilities and emotional burdens. The slightly higher standard deviations in both groups reflect the variability in individual experiences, which may have been influenced by various personal and situational factors.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that there is a significant difference in how males and females perceived the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their psycho-social wellbeing, with females reporting higher levels of distress. These results highlight the need for targeted interventions and support systems that address gender-specific challenges, especially during global crises like pandemics. Further research is recommended to explore the underlying causes of these gender disparities and to develop effective strategies to mitigate their impact.

Practical Implications

- Try connecting with others: Good relationships are important for mental as well as social well-being. Try keeping in touch with friends, spending time with loved ones. It will help in building up of self esteem, sharing positive experiences and provide emotional support.
- Be kind: Doing nice things for others helps people to understand that they have the power to make a difference in the world. It also makes one feel happier and to have positive emotions. People can try volunteering, or raising money for charity or helping neighbors.
- Be mindful: Individual should pay attention to the present moment. There numerous other individual differences such as emotional intelligence, optimism, empathy, life management skills etc. are also very important for their well being.
- Learn new skills: Learning new skills can help individual feel more positive.
- Be physically active: Being physically active can help improve individual's well-being.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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