



MENTAL HEALTH OF STUDENTS IN COVID 19. A CROSS SECTIONAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted the mental health of individuals globally, with students being one of the most vulnerable groups. This cross-sectional study aimed to analyze the prevalence of mental health issues among medical students during the pandemic and explore their coping mechanisms. A total of 140 medical students participated in the survey, with data collected from November 2024 to March 2025 through pre-structured questionnaires distributed via Google Forms. The study revealed a high prevalence of mental health issues, with 25% of participants reporting moderate to severe depression, 34.2% experiencing moderate to severe anxiety, and 36.4% suffering from stress. Loneliness, sleep disturbances, and anger issues were also notably prevalent, affecting 32.1%, 33.8%, and 30% of the respondents, respectively. Despite these challenges, 62.9% of participants reported successful coping with these symptoms post-pandemic, suggesting that adequate coping mechanisms, such as social support and telehealth, played a vital role in managing mental health. The findings underscore the need for continued mental health support for students, particularly in crisis situations, and highlight the potential of virtual mental health resources in providing accessible care.

KEYWORDS :**INTRODUCTION**

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on the mental health of individuals worldwide. With widespread uncertainty, isolation, and stress, many people have experienced heightened levels of anxiety, depression, and other psychological disorders. The public health crisis has disrupted daily life, exacerbating pre-existing mental health conditions, and creating new challenges for individuals and healthcare systems alike. Social distancing measures, lockdowns, and concerns about illness have contributed to increased feelings of loneliness and helplessness, particularly among vulnerable populations such as the elderly, frontline workers, and those with pre-existing mental health conditions. Additionally, economic instability, job losses, and the strain on healthcare resources have further compounded these issues.

Research has shown that the pandemic has led to significant mental health distress, with studies reporting higher rates of anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress symptoms in various populations⁽¹⁾ (Xiong et al., 2020; Galea et al., 2020). Furthermore, the closure of support services and difficulty accessing healthcare has led to a reduction in available treatment options for many. However, the crisis has also highlighted the resilience of individuals and communities, as well as the potential for telehealth and virtual support systems to mitigate some of the negative impacts on mental well-being.

Aim And Objectives

To analyse the prevalence of mental health issues of students in covid 19

To analyse the coping up with mental health issues

Methodology

Study Design: Cross - sectional study

Study Population: 140 medical students

Study Period: November 2024 - march 2025

Sample Techniques: Convenient sampling

Inclusion Criteria : All medical students who responded to the questionnaire

Exclusion Criteria: Those who did not give consent and incomplete/missing data

Ethical Consideration: Informed consent was taken

Data Collection : Data collection was done using pre tested and pre structured questionnaire. Google forms were sent to all students and asked to be filled.

Data Analysis And Interpretation: Data was entered using Microsoft Excel 2016 spreadsheet. Summarization and analysis of data were carried out by using IBM SPSS Software version 20(licensed). Descriptive Statistics: Frequency, percentage. Inferential Statistics: Chi - square test.

RESULTS

Out of 140 ppl that responded

85 were male 60.7 %

55 were female 39.3%

Figure: 1

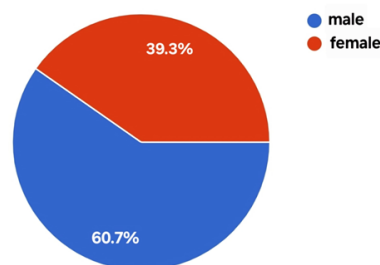


Figure: 1 shows gender distribution of the people that responded

Maximum were of the age group 19 to 24 years (82 i.e 58.6%)

35 members suffered moderate to severe depression 25%

48 members suffered moderate to severe anxiety 34.2%

51 members suffered moderate to severe 36.4%

45 members experienced moderate to severe loneliness 32.1%

47 had moderate to severe sleep disturbances 33.8%

42 members had moderate to severe anger issues 30%

However 62.9% (88 members) were able to cope up with these symptoms after covid 19

Table:1

Gender	Frequency	Percent
13 -18	12	8.6
19 - 24	82	58.6
25 - 30	39	27.9

30 - 35	7	5.0
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Table:1 Shows Distribution Among Age Groups.

19 to 24 age group are noted to be most affected

DISCUSSION

The survey responses provide valuable insights into the mental health impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on a sample of 140 individuals. The distribution of participants included 60.7% males (85 individuals) and 39.3% females (55 individuals), with a significant majority (58.6%) in the 19-24 years age group, suggesting that younger individuals were more likely to participate in this study.

Mental Health Impact

The results highlight a notable prevalence of mental health issues among the respondents. **Moderate to severe depression** was reported by 25% (35 individuals) of the participants. This finding aligns with global trends, where the pandemic has exacerbated mental health issues, especially depression, due to prolonged uncertainty, social isolation, and the stress of managing health risks^[1] (Xiong et al., 2020). Similarly, **moderate to severe anxiety** was reported by 34.2% (48 individuals), which is consistent with the general increase in anxiety observed during periods of crisis, as individuals were often concerned about their own health and the health of loved ones^[2] (Galea et al., 2020).

Another significant finding was that **36.4% (51 individuals)** reported moderate to severe levels of **stress**, highlighting the broad psychological toll the pandemic took on participants. Stress, fueled by fear of illness, job insecurity, and isolation, is known to affect mental well-being and was likely a major contributor to other reported symptoms such as anxiety and depression.

Loneliness was another key issue, with 32.1% (45 individuals) experiencing moderate to severe feelings of loneliness. Social distancing measures and lockdowns, particularly among individuals who already had limited social support networks, likely intensified feelings of isolation and disconnectedness^[3] (Loades et al., 2020). In parallel, **sleep disturbances** affected 33.8% (47 individuals), a common symptom linked to both anxiety and depression, and often worsened by pandemic-related stressors and disruptions to daily routines^[4] (Germain et al., 2020).

Additionally, **anger issues** were reported by 30% (42 individuals) of the respondents, which may have stemmed from frustration due to the restrictions imposed during the pandemic, a lack of control over life circumstances, or the economic and social instability caused by the crisis.

Coping Mechanisms

Despite the mental health challenges, a positive finding emerged: **62.9% (88 individuals)** of the respondents reported being able to cope with these symptoms after the COVID-19 pandemic. This suggests that a majority of individuals found ways to adapt or manage their mental health during this time, possibly through social support, coping strategies, or accessing mental health services, such as virtual counselling or telehealth^[5] (Moore et al., 2021). The pandemic may have also prompted individuals to develop new coping mechanisms, such as focusing on hobbies, physical activities, or mindfulness techniques, to manage stress and anxiety.

CONCLUSION

The results of this survey demonstrate the profound and widespread impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health of the respondents. Depression, anxiety, loneliness, and sleep disturbances were notably prevalent, reflecting the global challenges of coping with a public health crisis. However, the fact that a majority of individuals were able to

cope with the symptoms suggests that with the right support and resources, individuals can manage their mental health even during challenging times. Moving forward, it is crucial to provide accessible mental health services and continued support to individuals, particularly those who have experienced moderate to severe symptoms during the pandemic.

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