



Impact of COVID-19 on Students Mental Health

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ABSTRACT:

The aim of this study is to find out the mental condition of students due to COVID-19. For this study an online survey was conducted for the students of age group 17 to 25 years for the time period of one week for getting information about the impact of COVID-19 on students mental health and I got 74 responses from the students of RTMNU (Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University). The sample consist of responses from 54.8% male and 45.2% female students. Students responded that COVID-19 had bad impact on their mental health. COVID-19 also had bad impact on their academics, social relations. Out of the total respondents 95.9% students are worried about their family health. 52.1% students have bad academic impact, 46.6% started overthinking and 47.9% students were depressed. To overcome the bad impact of COVID-19 most of the students spend their time on watching movies and web series followed by mobile gaming. And few of them spend their time on activities like cooking, reading, and exercise.

Keywords: COVID-19, students, anxiety, stress, mental health.

Introduction:

The very first case of COVID-19 came out from "Wuhan" city of China in the month of December 2019. After that the cases of COVID-19 started to increase drastically, not only in China but all over the world. Infected person have symptoms like fever, cough, low oxygen levels and headache. From the very first case in China, the virus has took place over 180 countries and it has been officially declared as "Pandemic" by WHO (World Health Organization). Till 5 January 2022 the virus has affected 295,664,059 people all around the world. Among which 5,474,814 people are dead and 256,200,554 survived against the virus. It's been 2 years since COVID-19 has started spreading all over the world and till now no one has completely got rid of it.

As the virus spreads through air, government of all countries has made it mandatory for the people to wear a mask and maintain a 3ft distance at public places. Economies of the world had been affected very negatively by COVID-19 and it has put restrictions on the cycle of movement.

The very first case of COVID-19 in India was found at Kerala in the month of January 2020. And since then India has become one of the major countries which is adversely affected by the virus and it had faced three lockdowns in almost every state of it. All the markets, companies, schools, universities, public places got shutdown completely. Only essential things like Medical Shops, hospitals and grocery stores were opened, that too for a specific period of time. Not only in India but other countries were also imposing lockdowns and that caused a pause of all activities all over the world. Which had a great impact on the world's economy. Due to restrictions people have to stay within their homes and the affected persons have to go for a mandatory 14 days isolation period. Many people have faced problems like mental illness, frustration and financial problem and scarcity of resources. Especially the students who were sitting at their homes due to the pandemic have faced the problems like low self-esteem, anxiety and stress. COVID-19 has killed a multiple number of people, which had created a tensed like situations and fear among the other family members.

At the learning age and at the time of facing and getting exposure of the real world, students found themselves in an isolation at their homes. They started spending more time on social media platforms and found many false information regarding the virus which created more fear among themselves. Due to the restrictions and shut down of schools and universities the classes of students started to conduct in an online mode, which was a new thing for students and at the initial stage they found it difficult to cope-up with the online classes as it was a new thing for many of them.

As India is the second largest populated country in the world and its major population consist of youths, its future is in the hands of youths, so it is important to know the impact of COVID-19 on mental health of the students. I have selected a sample of students from one of the renowned university of India i.e RTMNU which consist students from various states of the country. For knowing the mental health of the students we have conducted this survey for their well-being.

Review of Literature:

Many other ways were followed by number of students to deal with uncertain conditions and situations which was affecting their mental health like preparing schedule for day to day activities, they were trying to connect with friends and family as they can play a vital role in helping them to deal with the uncertain situations (KshipraMoghe, ManjushaPatil, DishaKotecha, 2020).

Many medical students have faced mental disturbance and their physical fitness was also affecting. Their study has been greatly affected by the pandemic which automatically caused conditions like low self-esteem, self-doubts, overthinking, and depression like situations within the students (Khaled Seetan, Mohammad Al-Zubi, Yousef Rubbai, Mohammad Athamneh, Almu'atasimKhamees, TalaRadaideh, 2021).

Stress, depressions and anxiety are the major mental health issues that have found in most of the students. Loss of their loved ones, concern about health issues of family members and their own health problems have created a disturbance in their physical as well as in mental health and they also found it affecting their academic performance as well (Sasangohar, Changwon Son, 2020).

As universities were shut down during pandemic students showed that stress and anxiety can also be the factors caused within them due to low social exposure and distancing from the universities as its life is based on exchange of relationships and opinions. Shut down of universities lead to online teaching which not showed down-slowning of studies, infact students found digital mode was offering more wide experience and opportunities for them and they have considered it as a positive impact of online teaching (Leonard Villani, Roberta Pastorino, Enrico Molinari, Franco Anelli, Walter Ricciardi, GuendalinaGraffigna, and StefaniaBoccia, 2021).

As compared to male students, female students are more stressed about things regarding their academic performance during pandemic. Students who live in other city or state faced many difficulties to reach their home due to restrictions at the time of pandemic and this have created higher stress in them. The students who live in the same city in which their university is located have faced higher stress level as comparrrd to the other students who lives in other cities (Agnes Yuen-kwan Lai, Lelitia Lee, Manping Wang, Yibin Feng, Theresa Tze-kwan Lai, Lai-mingHo, Vernocia Suk-fun Lam, Mary Sau-man I and Tai-hing Lam, 2020).

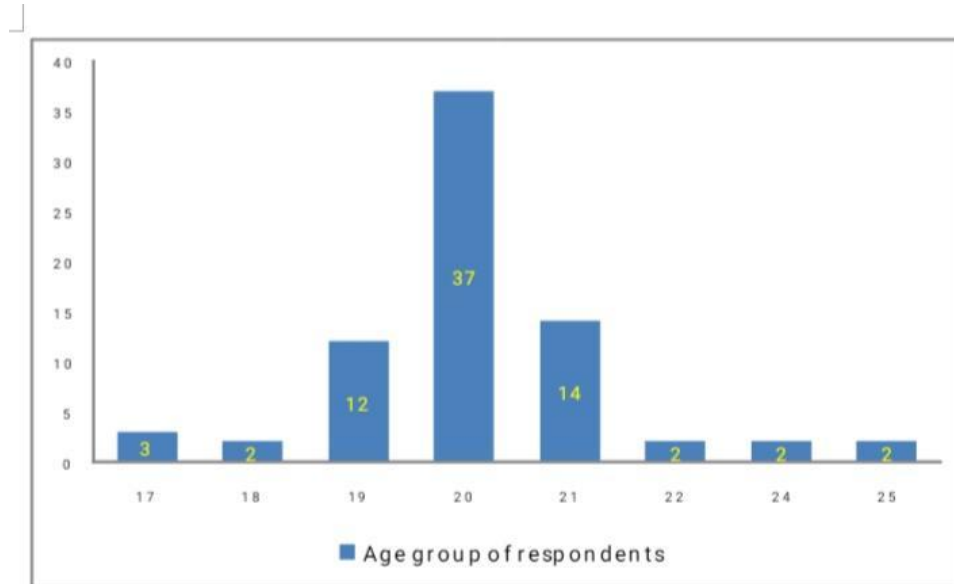
Students found that their own home provides a destructive environment for then as it gives them a place to relax and not a place to concentrate on studies, some were finding difficult to concentrate due to their family chaos at home as well. Sleeping Pattern of Students was changed as they use to sleep at any time or wake up late, which was not as per their scheduled time before COVID-19. Lack of social interaction and self-isolation has created problems like overthinking and depressive thoughts in students. There were only fee students who got suicidal thoughts caused by reasons like insecurity, academic performance, family problems during pandemic (SudeepHegde, Alec Smith, Xiaomei Wang, FarzanSasangohar, 2020).

Objectives:

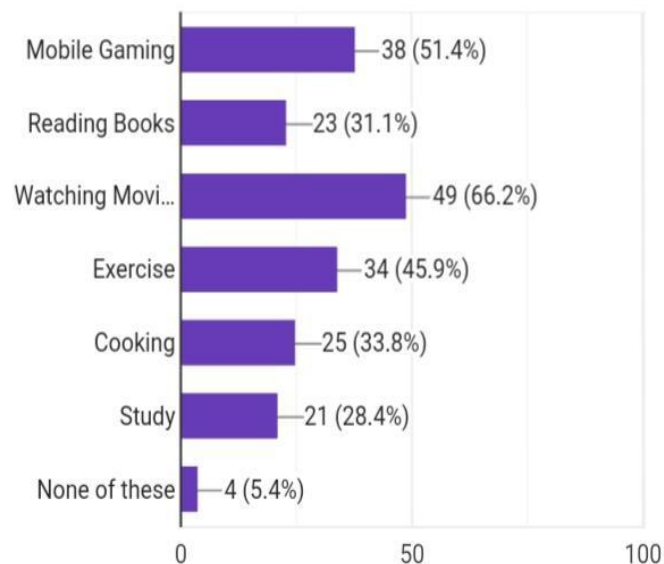
1. To know the mental state of students at the time of COVID-19.
2. To know the personal impact of COVID-19 on students.
3. To know the social impact of COVID-19 on students.
4. To know the stress levels among students
5. To know the anxiety and depression levels among students.

Research Methodology:

As my topic is related to student mental health, it was difficult to interact with students personally due to COVID-19 protocols and as many colleges are still not started with proper frequency as they used to have before COVID-19. Therefore I conducted an online survey by designing some questions on Google form. In this survey I have used Qualitative questionnaire method. The online survey was conducted for a period of one week. In this survey I tried to know the personal and social impact of COVID-19 on student mental health by designing a questionnaire followed by some questions regarding stress, depression and anxiety levels among students. I have used Likert scale format which includes multiple choice type options like very high, high, neutral, low, very low and increase, decrease, no change. In some questions I have used only "yes or no" type of options. I also included a question which shows how the students were spending their time at the time of COVID-19 by giving the options like "mobile gaming, reading books, watching movies and web series, exercise, cooking, study". I designed a questionnaire which includes 12 questions and got a total number of 74 responses. The sample is taken from the students of RTMNU. I got responses from students of the age group from 17 years to 25 years, which includes 45.2% females and 54.8% males.

Result:**Graph 1: Age group of Respondents**

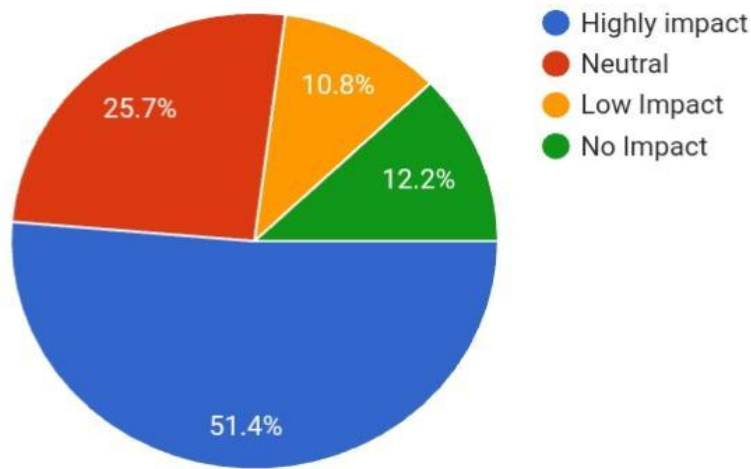
The above graph shows the age group and number of responses got from the students through online survey. Highest number of responses are 37 from the age group of 20 years. Followed by 3, 2, 12, 4, 2, 2, 2 responses from the age group of 17,18,19,21,22,24,25 years

Graph 2: Time spending on different activities by Students**Time Spending:**

It was necessary to know how the students were spending their time at the time of COVID-19, and I have provided seven options in questionnaire regarding this question. Majority of the students have spent their time on watching "Movies and Web series" (67.1%), followed by "Mobile Gaming" (52.1%). As maintaining a good health was became a crucial part at the time of COVID-19, some students have spent their time on doing regular

exercise to keep them fit and fine. Some of them have spent their time on their studies and by reading some books. 34.2% of the candidates enjoyed cooking.

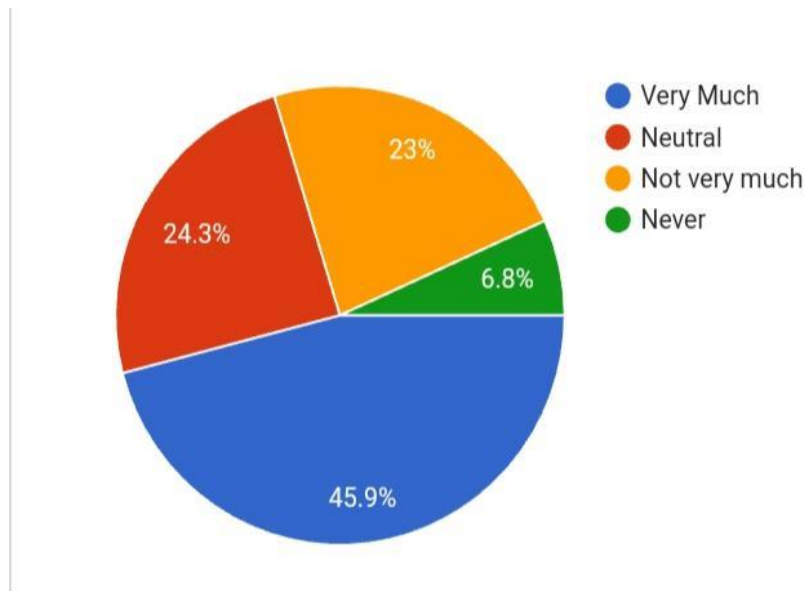
Graph 3: Impact on Academics of Students due to COVID-19



Impact on Academics:

Due to change in mode of teaching at the time of COVID-19 and the delaying of exams had bad impact on academics of students. 51.4% students respond that COVID-19 had highly impact on their academics, 25.7% had neutral impact, 10.8% found low impact and 12.2% told COVID-19 had no impact on their on their academics.

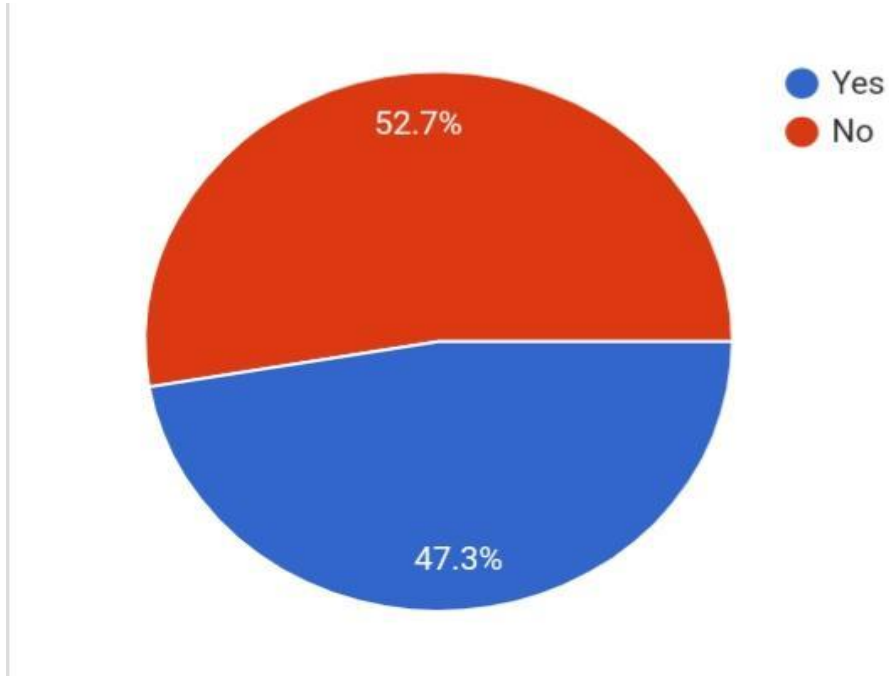
Graph 4: Overthinking due to impact of COVID-19 on academics and carrier



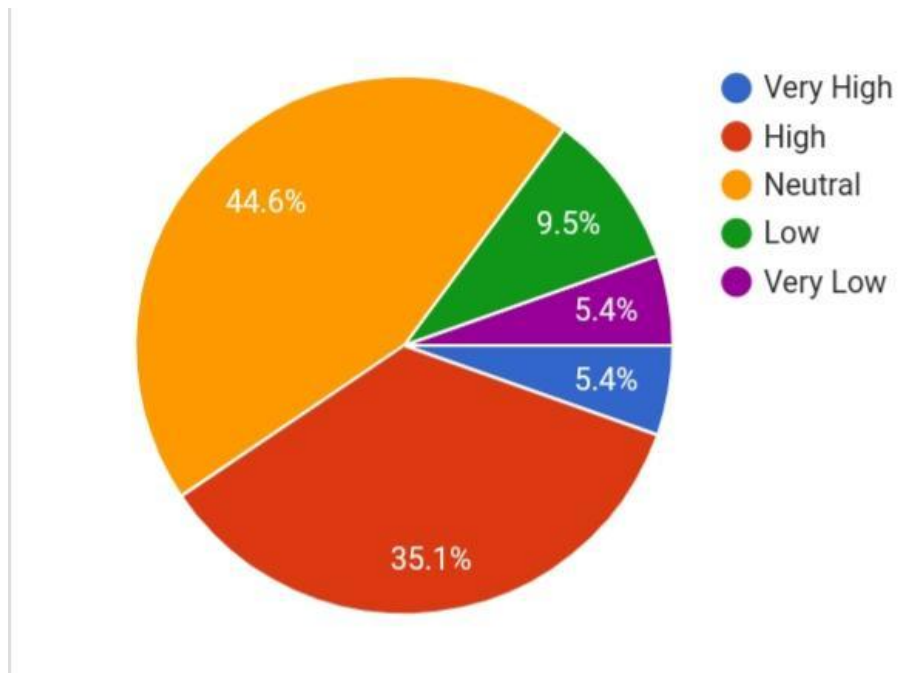
Students started overthinking about their academic performance and carrier, 45.9% of students started overthinking very much, 24.3% neutral, 23% not very much and 6.8% never

Graph 5: Mental Issues

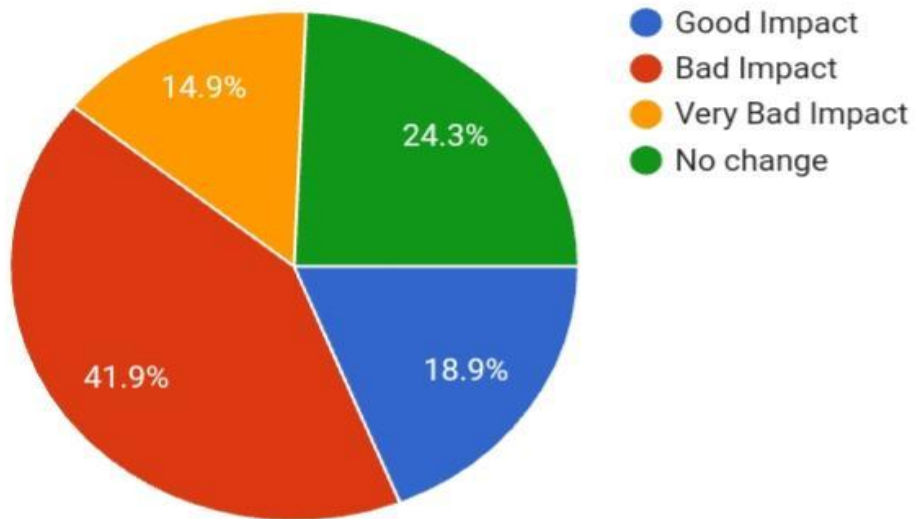
(1) Depression



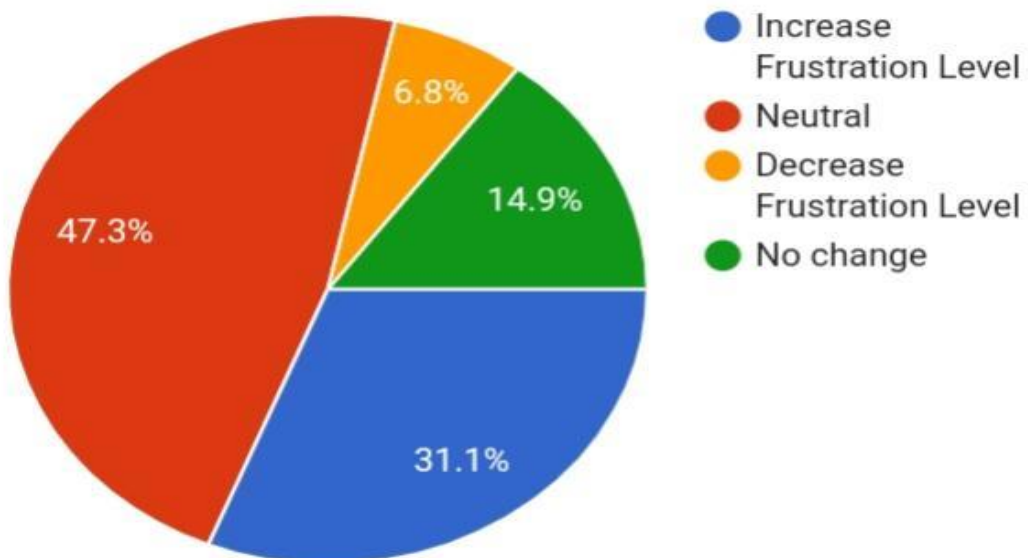
(2) Stress



3)Self-esteem



4) Frustration



Mental Impact :

This section covered mental issues like depression, stress, frustration levels, overthinking and impact on student self-esteem. 47.9% of students were depressed at the time of COVID-19 while majority of the students 52.1% were not depressed. 43.8% of student's stress level was neutral and 35.6% of student's stress level was high, 42.5% students felt COVID-19 had bad impact and 19.2% felt good impact on their self-esteem, while 15.1% of students felt very bad impact and 23.3% had no impact of COVID-19 on their self-esteem. Isolation at the time of COVID-19 had not that great impact on frustration levels of students as only 31.5% students feel that their frustration level has increased while 46.6% and 15.1% found neutral and no change in their frustration levels.

Social Impact due to less social exposure and Isolation:

As due to restrictions and isolation at the time of COVID-19, social interaction had been very difficult for not only students but for everyone as well. Less exposure of social interaction had caused a feeling of loneliness among students. 21.9% students have experienced the feeling of loneliness. Sometimes Isolation may lead to get suicidal thoughts and 17.8% of students got suicidal thoughts while 82.2% of students never got suicidal thoughts.

Conclusion:

My study concludes that COVID-19 really had a bad impact on student mental health. Students are concerned about their family health. They are tensed about their academics and low social interaction has caused an isolation and low self-esteem among them which automatically leads to depression and stress. Many of the students are trying to overcome stress by spending time on other activities like cooking, exercise, reading, watching movies and web series, etc.

Acknowledgement:

I am thankful to Dr. Saket Bansod Sir, HOD of BBA department from Dr. Ambedkar Institute of Management Studies and Research for his constant support and guidance throughout the working process of Research Paper.

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