



Research Paper

## Psychological Impact of Covid-19; a Study Among Undergraduates In Mapauram District

Vincy Joseph

Research Scholar, Srinivas University, Mangalore, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

Dr. Suphala Kotian

Professor, Srinivas University, Mangalore, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

**ABSTRACT:** Amid the covid-19 pandemic, undergraduate students suffer from mental state problems like stress, anxiety, depression, etc. The intensity of those symptoms will be more once they are infected by Covid -19 instead of knowing a loved one or relative is infected. During the second wave of the pandemic, the students are left with feelings of helplessness, isolation, boredom, and uncertainty about what would happen to their future. This study aimed to research the perceptions of psychological impact of covid-19 on undergraduate students within the Malappuram district. A web survey was conducted on 40 undergraduate students during the second wave of Covid-19 using purposive sampling. The result in two scenarios indicates that feelings of negative thoughts, lack of sleep, feeling of sadness, feeling of irritation, feeling of depression, helplessness, anxiety about members of the family, distraction and lack of concentration, was higher in students during the primary phase of Covid-19, while within the second wave of Covid -19 students had experienced losing confidence, feeling of loneliness, feeling of insecurity, thoughts of suicide, fear of death, anxiety about future studies, feeling of meaninglessness and fear of contagion in a very higher level. The activities adopted by students during Covid -19 were watching movies, using social media, sleeping, and completing academic works. This study also proposes a personal psychological take care of students who are tormented by Covid -19.

**KEY WORDS:** Covid-19, pandemic, depression, psychological impact, undergraduates

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Student's life has had a major impact during the covid-19 pandemic. Anxiety and depression are the result of this unpredictable fast spreading, infectious disease. Therefore early assessment and timely treatment can prevent incidences. A study done in Nepal among the health workers showed that 38% suffered from anxiety and depression (Gupta et al, 2020) Research reveals that college students develop anxiety, depression and other symptoms during this period. It affected their daily routine, interpersonal life and their academic life. The aim of the present study is to assess the psychological impact of Covid-19 among undergraduate students. Changes in our daily routine, job loss, financial hardships, grief over the loved ones has the potential to affect the mental state and well-being of scholars. The second wave of covid-19 was severe than the first episode. Denmark study reported that psychological well-being as negatively affected the students. as per the survey conducted by the American Psychiatric Association in the United States nearly half were found to be anxious.(WHO,2021).In another study demonstrates reasonable prevalence rates of depression, stress and anxiety amongst non-frontline HCWs within the setting of the second Covid wave in India (Thakar,2021).

### II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Jan Chodkeiwicz et al,(2021) conducted a study on Mental health during the second wave of Covid 19 pandemic-Polish studies". The objective of the study was to investigate the impact of second wave of Covid 19 pandemic on the mental health of individuals and the variables that affect the anxiety and depression in participants. The sample size of the study was 618 people. The result of the study indicated that the second wave of the pandemic had a negative impact on respondents' mental health. It was also seen that many people experienced anxiety and anxiety- depressive disorders and many had suicidal thoughts.

Yuko Fukase Kanako Ichikura, Hanako Murase, and Hirokuni Tagaya(2021) studied on “Depression, risk factors and coping strategies in the context of social dislocations resulting from second wave of Covid 19 in Japan”. 2708 individuals participated in the study. The findings of the study indicated that the prevalence of depression was two to nine times more during the pandemic than before the pandemic of Covid 19.

Richard Isralowitz et al, (2021) studied on first and second wave Covid 19 impact on Russian Medical Student fear, mental health and substance abuse. The aim of the study was to investigate the impact of Covid 19 fear on medical student’s depression, exhaustion, loneliness, nervousness, anger and substance uses. The sample of the study was 164 medical students. The results showed a severe drop in Covid 19 fear impact on medical students from May 2020 to November 2020. This may be because of increased coping strategy. However the medical student who are directly involved in fighting the pandemic may require support and assistance to cope with the situation.

Wenjun et al,(2020) in their study on “The psychological impact of the COVID-19 epidemic on college students in China, found that 0.9% of the respondents were experiencing severe anxiety, 2.7% moderate anxiety, and 21.3% mild anxiety. It was also found that if the students’ relatives or acquaintances were infected by COVID-19 or if their academics were delayed then they were more at risk to develop anxiety. Kavita Batra, Manoj Sharma, Ravi Batra, Tejinder Pal Singh and Nena Schvaneveldt (2021) conducted a study on “Assessing the Psychological Impact of COVID-19 among College Students: An Evidence of 15 Countries”. The study aims at conducting a meta-analysis on the available evidences about the psychological impact of COVID-19 on college students. The results indicated 39.4% anxiety and 31.2% depression in college students with increased risk for women than men. The prevalence of stress, post-traumatic stress disorder and impaired sleep quality was also found among college students.

The Psychological Impacts of a COVID-19 Outbreak on College Students in China was studied by Hong Yan Li et al, (2020). Mental health status of a college population before and after their COVID-19 confinement was investigated for the first two weeks, The sample of the study was 555 undergraduate students from Hebei Agricultural University in Baoding, China. The participants completed two online surveys- one before and one after the confinement of 15 to 17 days -on depression, anxiety and positive and negative affectivity. Inadequate supplies of hand sanitizers, a higher year of study, and higher scores on anxiety and depression were found. This result indicated that the healthcare policymakers should carefully consider the appropriate confinement duration, and ensure adequate supplies of basic infection-control materials.

Changwon Son et al, (2020) studied on Effects of COVID-19 on College Students’ Mental Health in the United States. The effect of COVID-19 on the mental of the college students was assessed in study. The data were collected from 195 students at a large public university in United States with an interview survey. The result indicated considerable amount of anxiety and stress among college students. Some of the potential stressors were, fear about their health and their loved one’s health, disruption in sleep pattern, decrease in social interaction because of social distancing, and increased concern on academic performance.

Psychological Impact of the COVID-19 Epidemic on Guangdong College Students was studied by Shun-Wei Liang et al,(2020) found significant high level of fear, depression, and trauma among counselling group than non-counselling group.

### **III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:**

**Aim:** The aim of the present study is to identify the perceptions of Undergraduates on psychological impact of Covid-19 in Malappuram District.

**Objectives:** (a) to find out the psychological impact of Covid-19 on undergraduates in Malappuram district.

(b) To compare the difference in psychological impact on undergraduates during the first and second wave of Covid-19 in Malappuram District.

**Sample:** The respondents for the present study are 40 undergraduates from Malappuram district who were affected by Covid-19.

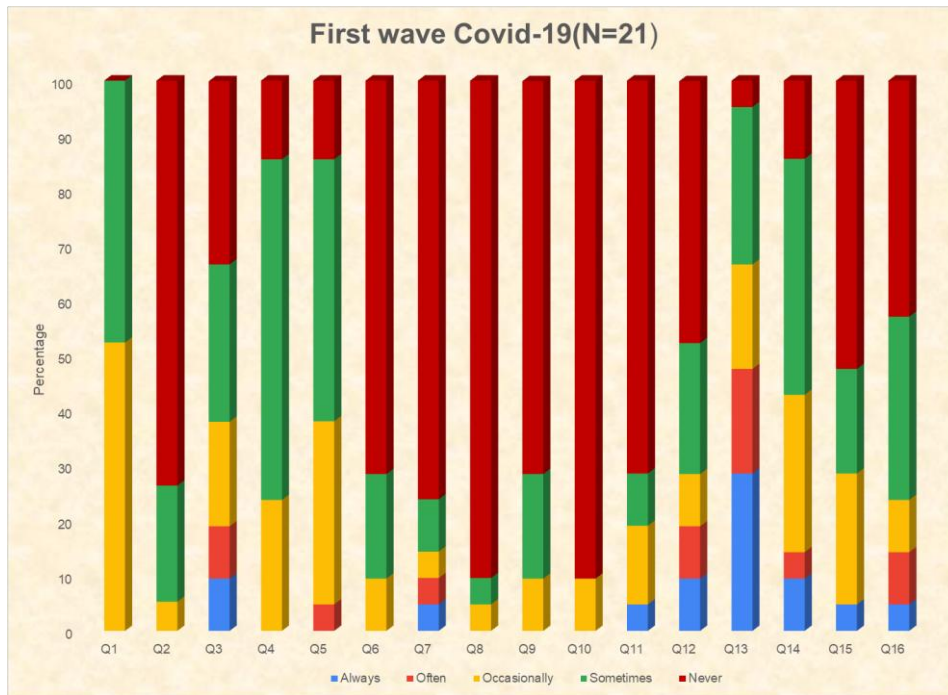
**Tool:** a self -developed questionnaire was administered to the participants via Google form. Survey included questions from the depression, anxiety, loneliness, insecurity, meaninglessness etc.

**Procedure:** the respondents were selected through purposive sampling and were analysed by descriptive method. The data were collected during the early phase of the second pandemic wave. Information on demographics and other baseline characteristics were collected,

### **IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The following explains the analysis, major findings, recommendations and conclusions of the study conducted.

**Table 1:** the total number of responses who were affected by Covid-19 during the first wave



The above component bar chart shows responses of students who were affected during the first wave in each statement.

Feeling of negative thoughts sometimes experienced by 47.6% and occasionally experienced by 52.4% out of the 21 respondents. During the affected period losing confidence was occasionally experienced by 5.3%, sometimes experienced by 21.1%. the feeling of losing confidence was never experienced by 73.7%.The result also indicated that the students experienced always lack of sleep by 9.5%,often by 9.5,occasionally by 19% sometimes by 28.6% and never experienced by 33.3%

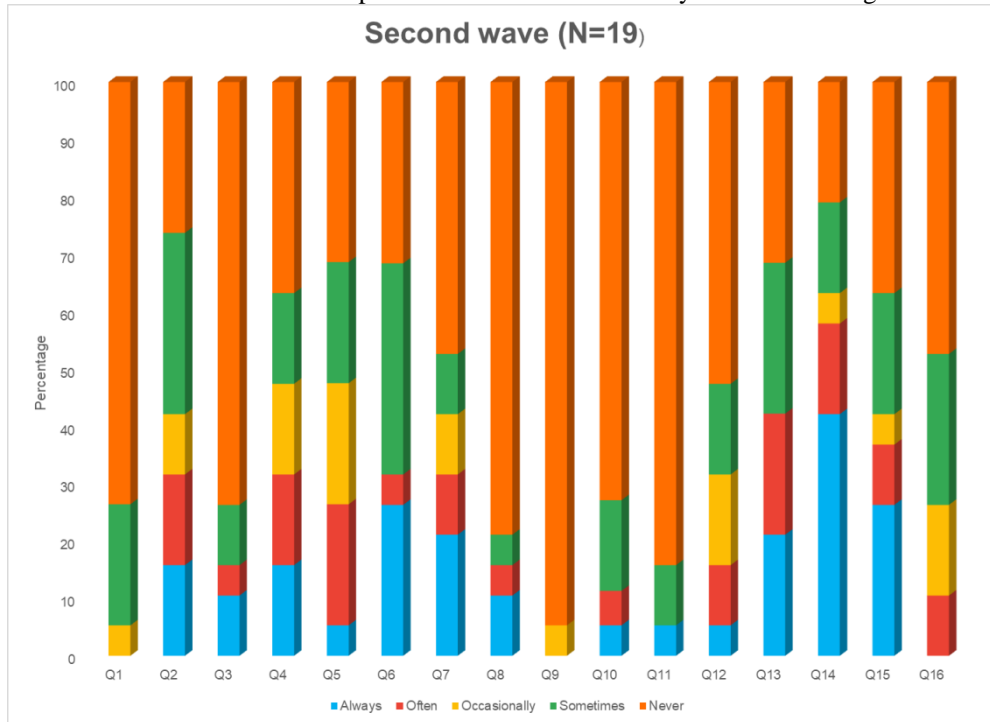
Feeling of sadness occasionally experienced by 23.8%, sometimes by 61.9% never experienced by 14.3%. the students also often experienced feeling of irritation by 4.8%, occasionally 33.3% sometimes by 47.6% and never experienced by 14.3%.

Feeling of loneliness was occasionally experienced during Covid-19 was 9.5% students, sometimes by 19% and never experienced by 71.5%.

Insecurity was always experienced by 4.8% often by % occasionally by 4.8% sometimes by 9.5% and never experienced by 76.2%. Thoughts of suicide were occasionally by 4.8%, sometimes experienced by 4.8% and never experienced by 90.5%. The study also analysed feeling of depression occasionally experienced by 9.5% sometimes by 19% and never experienced by 71.4%.

Fear of death was occasionally experienced by 9.5% and never experienced by 90.5%. Students also reported that helplessness was always 4.8%, occasionally 14.3%, sometimes by 9.5% and never experienced by 71.4%. 9.5% The students always experienced an anxiety about future studies, often experienced by 9.5%, occasionally experienced by 9.5%,sometimes experienced by 23.8% and never experienced by 47.6%. During the Covid scenario the 28.6% students always had an anxiety about family members, 19% students often experienced this and occasionally by 19% students and sometimes experienced by 28.6% and 4.8% never experienced it. 9.5% students always experienced distraction and difficulty in concentration, 4.8% students often experienced ,28.6% occasionally experienced, 42.9% sometimes experienced and never experienced by 14.3%.Feeling of meaninglessness was always experienced by 4.8% students and occasionally by 23.8% students and sometimes experienced by 19% and never experienced by 52.4%. Students of 4.8% always had a fear of contagion, often 9.5%, occasionally by 9.5% sometimes by 33.3 and never experienced by 42.9%.

**Table II:** The total number of respondents who were affected by Covid-19 during the second wave



Feeling of negative thoughts sometimes experienced by 21.1% and occasionally experienced by 5.3% out of the 19 respondents. And Feeling of negative thoughts never experienced by 73.7% students. During the affected period losing confidence was always experienced by 15.8%. Losing confidence occasionally experienced 10.5%, sometimes experienced by 31.6%. the feeling of losing confidence was never experienced by 26.3%.The result also indicated that the students experienced always lack of sleep by 10.5%,often by 5.3%, sometimes by 10.5% and never experienced by 73.7%

Feeling of sadness occasionally experienced by 15.8% students, sometimes by 15.8% never experienced by 36.8%. The students also often experienced feeling of irritation by 21.1%, occasionally 21.1% sometimes by 21.1% and never experienced by 31.6%.

Feeling of loneliness was always experienced during Covid-19 was 26.3% students, often 5.3% sometimes by 36.8% and never experienced by 31.6%. Insecurity was always experienced by 21.1% often by 10.5% occasionally by 10.5% sometimes by 10.5% and never experienced by 47.4%. Thoughts of suicide were always experienced by 10.5% often by 5.3%, sometimes experienced by 5.3% and never experienced by 78.9%. The study also analysed feeling of depression occasionally experienced by 5.3% and never experienced by 94.7%.

Fear of death was always experienced by 5.3% of students, often experienced by 6% sometimes experienced by 15.8% and never experienced by 73.7%. Students also reported that feeling of helplessness was always 5.3%, sometimes by 10.5%,and never experienced by 84.2%. among the total number of participants 5.3% of students always experienced an anxiety about future studies, often experienced by 10.5%, occasionally experienced by 15.8%,sometimes experienced by 15.8% and never experienced by 52.6%. During the Covid scenario the 21.1% students always had an anxiety about family members, 21.1% students often experienced this and sometimes experienced by 26.3% and 31.5% never experienced it. 42.1% students always experienced distraction and difficulty in concentration, 15.8% students often experienced ,5.3% occasionally experienced, 15.8% sometimes experienced and never experienced by 21.1%.Feeling of meaninglessness was always experienced by 26.3% students, often experienced by 10.5% and occasionally by 5.3% students and sometimes experienced by 21.1% and never experienced by 36.8%. Students had a fear of contagion, often 10.5%, occasionally by 15.8% sometimes by 26.3 and never experienced by 47.4%.

In previous studies on mental health survey ([shorturl.at/ftNW4](http://shorturl.at/ftNW4)) was conducted by the think tank, Health Parliament on the mental wellbeing of our students with 461 students and 15 psychologists/ counsellors across 27 states during the month of October-November 2020 during this pandemic. This study revealed that 99% of the participants had one or more issues related to mental health. And 76% of participants who sought

medical help for the same were women. And in further An almost equal number complained of unceasing stress during the second wave of COVID-19 in India,

## V. CONCLUSION

Comparing the result in two scenarios we can realise that feelings of negative thoughts, lack of sleep, feeling of sadness, feeling of irritation, feeling of depression, helplessness, anxiety about family members, distraction and lack of concentration, was higher in students during the first phase of Covid-19, while in the second wave of Covid -19 students had experienced losing confidence, feeling of loneliness, feeling of insecurity, thoughts of suicide, fear of death, anxiety about future studies, feeling of meaninglessness and fear of contagion in a higher level.

## VI. IMPLICATIONS

The first and second wave of Covid-19 affected all throughout the country and it changed the life of people. Most students, despite having access to resources, are finding themselves helpless and vulnerable due to the fast-spreading coronavirus. It has devastated their peace of mind and life. They need urgent help in the form of counselling, useful tips and information, health care as well as emotional support. The government and other agencies need to open their eyes to arrange a special house to house vaccination drive be carried out for this vulnerable group of citizens. Also awareness should be created about managing the psychological problems and strategies could be developed for preventing further psychological problems.

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