Original Article
ISSN (Online): 2350-0530
ISSN (Print): 2394-3629

International Journal of Research - GRANTHAALAYAH
August 2024 12(8), 1–7

MENTAL HEALTH AND COVID-19 PANDEMIC: SURVEY ON URBAN ESTATE POPULATION OF PATIALA DISTRICT

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Received 07 June 2024
Accepted 08 July 2024
Published 31 August 2024

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DOI
10.29121/granthaalayah.v12.i8.2024.5721

Funding: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aimed to assess the mental health of students, private employees, and government employees in Punjab, India during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results of this study can aid healthcare professionals and policymakers in creating effective policies that promote mental well-being in the general population.

Abstract: This research aimed to assess the mental health status of students, government employees, and private employees during the COVID-19 pandemic. To achieve the purpose of the study calculated descriptive statistics, such as the mean and standard deviation. Following this, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to identify any disparities between the groups. Subsequently, a post-hoc test (Scheffe Test) was administered due to unequal group sizes. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Software Version-23 was utilized for all analyses, with a significance level set at 0.05. The study comprised 301 participants (N=301), consisting of 193 male and 108 female subjects. The participants were divided into three categories: government employees, private employees, and students. The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) 2008 was utilized for data collection through a questionnaire survey method. The researcher created a Google form and distributed it to the participants via email and other social media platforms. The collected data was meticulously recorded and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. The study found that the mental health status of government employees, private employees, and students did not show significant variations. However, it was discovered that the COVID-19 pandemic had a more substantial impact on the mental health status of students compared to the well-being status of individuals in different professions. In conclusion that students were mostly affected due to the covid 19 lock down, so special considerations should be given towards the mental well-being status of students.

Keywords: Covid-19, Students, Government Employees, Mental Health, Private Employees

1. INTRODUCTION

Our well-being and overall health depend on having good mental health, which is a fundamental human right. We are better able to connect, function, cope, and thrive when we have strong mental health. Both optimal mental health and severe mental health states characterized by intense suffering and emotional anguish are possible experiences along the complex mental health continuum. The primary objective of mental health promotion is to enhance well-being, competence, and resilience across the lifespan World Health Organization. (2004). Improving mental

health promotion involves increasing the prevalence of proven preventive factors for mental disorders World Health Organization. (2004). Certain individuals have a higher likelihood of developing specific mental disorders due to genetic, behavioral, or environmental factors that increase their risk World Health Organization. (2006). Although the absence of these risk factors is crucial for good mental health, it is not the only determinant. For instance, the absence of childhood abuse is essential since it may be a transdiagnostic risk factor for mental disorders Bonoldi et al. (2013), but this risk factor alone does not fully capture good mental health.

A state of mental well-being known as mental health enables individuals to effectively manage life's challenges, reach their full potential, learn and work efficiently, and contribute back to their communities. It is an essential component of health and well-being that upholds our individual and community ability to make decisions, build relationships, and affect the world. Mental health access is a fundamental human right. It is also necessary for socioeconomic, societal, and individual development World Health Organization. (2022).

Despite variations among the viruses, COVID-19 is a beta coronavirus Lu et al. (2020), and information from past outbreaks caused by coronaviruses, such as SARS-CoV-1 Cui et al. (2019), can now be helpful. Psychiatric symptoms in SARS-CoV-1 patients have been documented during the SARS epidemic Cheng et al. (2004), Chua et al. (2004), as well as after one month Cheng et al. (2004), Wu et al. (2005), one year Lee et al. (2007), and 30 months and longer. These symptoms include posttraumatic stress symptoms (PTSS), posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, and depression Mak et al. (2009), Lam et al. (2009). Additionally, PTSD, depression, and anxiety symptoms have been linked to the SARS pandemic in both the general public and among healthcare personnel during and after the outbreak Hawryluck et al. (2004), Lin et al. (2007), Verma et al. (2004), Lancee et al. (2008), Liu et al. (2012), Ko et al. (2006), Peng et al. (2010). The World Health Organization classified the CoViD-19 outbreak as a public health emergency of global concern on January 30, 2020, and it is thought to represent a serious threat to mental health on a global scale Talevi et al. (2020). The virus has already impacted the physical health of millions of people and is expected to have a significant impact on mental health as well.

Among its various effects, the COVID-19 pandemic has sparked a global mental health crisis that has harmed the mental health of millions of people by causing both short- and long-term stress. For instance, estimates place the increase in both anxiety and depressive disorders during the first year of the epidemic at more than 25%. At the same time, mental health services have been significantly interrupted and the treatment gap for mental health issues has grown.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1. SAMPLING

Total three hundred one (N=301) with male 193 and 108 female subjects from Urban Estate Patiala, Punjab were selected for the present study. The subjects were classified into three groups, named as government employees, private employees and students. The students were further categorized into three groups: under-graduate, post-graduate and higher education students.

Total three hundred one (N=301) male and female subjects from following categories voluntarily participated in this survey:

1) Government Employees (male N=21) and (female N=3)
2) Private Employees (male N=34) and (female N=30)

3) Students (male N=138) and (female N=75)

The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) was implemented in the present research to gather relevant data. The investigator utilized a questionnaire survey method to collect the necessary information. A Google Form was designed and dispatched to the participants through email and other social media platforms. The participants completed the form, and their responses were documented. Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were applied to attain the study's objectives. The scale comprises of 14 items, each scored on a scale of 1 (none of the time) to 5 (all of the time), with the total score being the sum of the individual item scores (ranging from 14 to 70). The scale was originally developed by Stewart-Brown and Janmohamed (2008), and it has since been utilized by Lloyd & Devine (2012) and Waza & Singh (2023).

3. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Descriptive statistics, such as mean and standard deviation, were computed based on the study's objectives. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine the difference between the groups. For additional research The Scheffe Test (Post-hoc Analysis) was utilised due to the unequal size of the groups. The "Statistical Package for Social Sciences Software Version-23" was used for all of the tests. A significance level of 0.05 was chosen.

4. RESULTS

Table 1

Table 1 Shows the Mean of Mental Well-Being for Profession Wise Groups

S.N.	Group	Mean	SD
1	STUDENTS	50.77	9.67
2	GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES	53.58	4.99
3	PRIVATE EMPLOYEES	51.20	8.76

Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation value of mental wellbeing variable in students, government employees and private employee's groups, were 50.77 ± 9.67, 53.58 ± 4.99, and 51.20± 8.76 respectively. The mean value of government employees is much higher than that of other two groups, that are students' group and private employees. The mean value of students group is lowest than that of government employees and private employees.

Figure 1

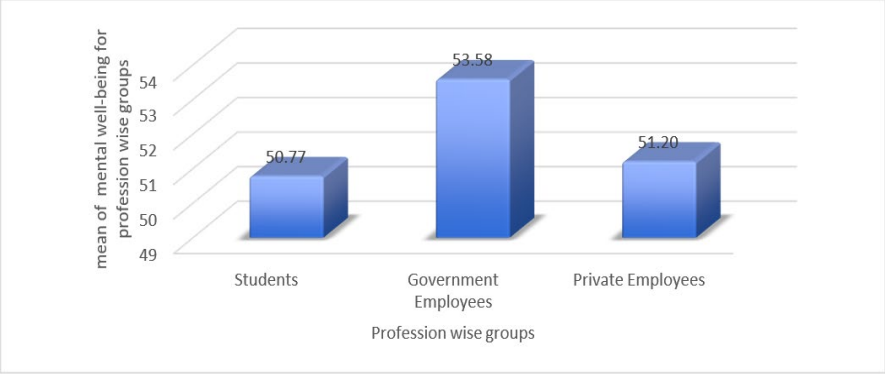

Figure 1 Shows the Mean of Mental Well-Being for Profession Wise Groups

Table 2

Table 2 Shows F-Value for all the Three Groups of Students, Govt. Employees and Private Employees for their Mental Well-Being Status

S.N.	Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Between Groups	170.57	2	85.28		
2	Within Groups	25216.82	298	84.62	**1.008**	**0.36**
3	Total	25387.39	300			

The level of significance 0.05 (2.99)

Table 2 shows comparison of the three groups of students, government employees and private employees for their mental well-being. After applying ANOVA, it was seen that the calculated F-value 1.008 is less than the tabulated F-value 2.99 p sig. 0.36 > (0.05). Therefore, there exists non-significant differences between the three groups for their Mental Well-Being status.

5. DISCUSSION

The objective of this research was to compare the mental health status of government employees, private employees, and students. The findings revealed no significant difference in mental health status among the three groups. This finding aligns with an international study conducted by Gloster et al. (2020), which found that about 10% of the population experienced the most severe mental health issues. The research also indicated that students were more affected by the COVID-19 pandemic than government employees and private employees. This conclusion is supported by studies conducted by Wang et al. (2020) and Chang et al. (2020), which found that the mental health of students was impacted during the pandemic.

One possible explanation for the heightened impact on students is the sudden shift to remote learning, which disrupted their academic routines and social interactions. Previous studies have noted that such disruptions can lead to increased anxiety and depression among students Wang et al. (2020), Cao et al. (2020). Additionally, students often face uncertainty regarding their future career prospects, which can exacerbate stress levels Aristovnik et al. (2020).

The mental well-being of students during the pandemic has been a growing concern, with several studies reporting similar findings. For instance, a study by Huckins et al. (2020) found that students reported higher levels of anxiety and depression compared to the general population during the early stages of the pandemic. This suggests that targeted interventions are necessary to address the specific mental health needs of students.

6. CONCLUSION

In summary, this study found that the mental health status of government employees, private employees, and students did not differ significantly. The study also revealed that students were more affected by the COVID-19 pandemic than individuals from other professions. Therefore, special attention should be given to the mental well-being of students during these challenging times.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

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