

# Psychosocial Impact of Lock Down among College Students in Nagpur

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## Abstract

**Background:** The deadly COVID 19 has brought the life to a standstill in many parts of the world. The uncertainties in lives of people are increasing along with the spread and increasing death tolls due to disease. College students, the predominant youth are maximally affected by this crucial stage. **Aim:** The current study aims at assessing the psychosocial impact of lock down among the college students.

**Study Design:** Online survey.

**Study Population:** College students in the age group of 17 to 25 years both male and females.

**Sample Size:** 337.

**Material:** Psychosocial Impact Scale for students developed by investigators ( $r=0.85$ ).

**Results:** The mean age of the students is  $19.93 \pm 1.14$ . 96.4% students were living with their parents during the period of lock down. 36% experienced borderline negative impact and 20.17% reported mild to moderate negative impact of lockdown in just 15 days of lock down period. Most surprisingly despite being with parents; 20.18% had been out on roads during lock down, 1.48 for their job, 36.80% for purchasing medicines, 39.17% for grocery and vegetables, 4.75% to meet their friends, 2.37% to attend a funeral, 2.97% attended family function, 9.50% to complete their academic assignments, 13.65% to refresh themselves, 12.76% to help neighbour/relatives.

**Conclusion:** Lockdown has adversely affected the psychosocial status of the college students. While equipping for any disaster, a nation will have to find out strategies for rebuilding mental strength of its people after the disaster is over so as to enhance the return to normal functioning.

**Keywords:** Psychosocial impact, Lock down, students.

## Introduction

The COVID 19 spread compelled many countries to impose complete lockdown. Naturally the schools and colleges stopped functioning. Youth are the topmost priority of any country. India was not exception either. Since 16<sup>th</sup> march 2020 all the colleges in Nagpur are closed down. It is in the months of January to April the colleges, schools and students also take their studies seriously. The portion completion targets, preliminary

examination and working on formative assessments, completion of assignment are geared up at both ends; the students and the teachers; during this period. The investigators, both being from the field of mental health and academicians were contacted by parent of many student and students themselves expressing worries and concerns about their studies and examinations. Some expressed concerns regarding teaching of portion to be covered while some others thought that they will not be able to cope up with studies of their own through self-

study. On the other hand, the institutes also anticipated the needs of students and were thinking and planning on terms of completing the portion for all the students through sharing the study material and online lectures wherever possible. It was challenging as many students did not have android phones or PCs to attend interactive lectures online. Some others who had necessary phones but the internet facility was not available in their areas. Apart from these technological hurdles, many were not techno-savvy enough to handle the interactive lectures virtually. Thus one can say it is chaos in education front in many cities marked with red zone for corona infection including Nagpur<sup>1</sup>.

## Material and Method

**Aim of the study:** The study aims at assessing the level of psychosocial impact of lock down on the college students.

**Objectives of the study:** The objectives of the study are

1. To identify the reasons for breaking the lock down by students.
2. To assess the nature and extent of psychosocial impact of lock down among the college students.

**Study setting:** The study was conducted in Nagpur city of Maharashtra state which was declared as red zone for Corona infection. The students were from all the disciplines of study.

**Study design:** Online survey with the Google form of questionnaire

**Study population:** College students from all disciplines of study in the age group of 17 to 25 years both male and females were included in the study.

**Study duration:** From 6<sup>th</sup> April to 9<sup>th</sup> April 2020 (Initial respondents are included)

**Sample size:** 337

**Tool for data Collection:** Investigator prepared psychosocial impact of lock down scale. The tool had three parts. The Part I caters to the demographic information of the students and includes, age, residence, course of study, year of study, types of family, number of

family members, during lock down living with, etc. Part II of the tool evaluated the reasons for breaking the lock down and number of times the lock down was broken by the student in past 15 days. The Part III of the tool was a self-rating scale with 30 statements for which response was elicited on 5 point scale. The response was to be graded based on how often the student felt that way in last 15 days. Higher the response higher was the impact. Each item had minimum score of 0 and maximum score of 4. The responses ranged from minimum 0 to maximum 120. The response scores were categorized into five categories of reactive depression. The score range of 0 – 20 was considered as normal response to the event of lock down. 21 – 40 score was considered as borderline negative impact. Scores between 41 – 70 was treated as mild negative impact, 71 – 100 was put into moderate negative impact category and scores between 101- 120 were put into severe negative impact category.

**Method of data collection:** The students were contacted through their functional emails and students Whatsapp groups. The link of the Google form was shared with the students. The participation in the survey was purely on voluntary basis. The investigators were accessible through phone for clearing the doubts of the students. Only the initial respondents are included who responded within 72 hours of sharing the forms. The self-report forms were shared with the students after 15 days complete lockdown on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2020.

**Plan for Data Analysis:** The collected data was coded and analysed based on the objectives of the study. Descriptive statistics of mean, standard deviation, frequency percentage was used to describe the students according to their responses to different items on the scale.

## Results

The observation and analysis section deals with the description of the study participants according to their demographic information, behaviour during lockdown in terms of number of times going out of the house and the reasons for it, and the depression level is assessed. Further analysis of association of depression levels with demographic characteristics is also done to identify the predictors of depression among the demographic characteristics.

**Table 1: General Information of study participants**

S.N.	Demographic Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age	17	2	0.6
		18	25	7.4
		19	98	29.1
		20	117	34.7
		21	70	20.8
		22	19	5.6
		23	4	1.2
		24 & more	2	0.6
2	Course of Study	Nursing	15	4.5
		BPTH	103	30.6
		BAMS	43	12.8
		BE	165	49.0
		Others	11	3.3
3	Year of study	1	96	28.5
		2	111	32.9
		3	100	29.7
		4	30	8.9
4	Residence	Rural	84	24.9
		Urban	204	60.5
		Semi-urban	49	14.5
5	Religion	Hindu	201	59.6
		Muslim	5	1.5
		Christian	1	0.3
		Jain	5	1.5
		Buddhist	15	4.5
		Other	110	32.6
6	Type of Family	Nuclear	249	73.9
		Joint	88	26.1
7	No. of family members	2	5	1.5
		3	62	18.4
		4	142	42.1
		5	57	16.9
		6	22	6.5
		7	13	3.9
		8 And more	36	10.7
8	During Lock down living with	Alone	5	1.5
		Parents	325	96.4
		Relatives	6	1.8
		Friends	1	0.3

The above table shows the distribution of students according to their demographic characteristics. The mean age of the students is 19.93±1.14. The students belong to Nursing (4.5%), Ayurvedic sciences (12.80%), Physiotherapy (30.6%), Engineering (49) and other streams of education (3.3%). The participants were studying in first year (28.5%), second year (32.9), Third year (29.7%) and final year (8.9%) of their respective course of study. They lived in rural areas (24.9%), urban areas (60.5%) and semi-urban areas (14.5%). Among

the participants 59.6% were Hindu, 1.5% each were Muslims and Jain, 4.5% were Buddhist 0.30% were Christians and 32.6% belonged to other religions. The students belonged to Joint families (26.1%) and nuclear families (73.9%). 19.9% students had 2 to 3 members in their family, 42.1% had 4 members in their families whereas 38% had more than 4 members in their families. 96.4% students were living with their parents during the period of lock down, 1.8% lived with their relatives, 0.30% lived with friends and 1.5% were living alone.

**Table 2: Movement during lock down**

S.N.	Statements	0	%	1	%	2	%	3	%	4	%
1	Been out on roads during lock down.	269	79.82	45	13.35	117	34.72	2	0.59	3	0.89
2	For job.	332	98.52	5	1.48	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
3	For medicines.	213	63.20	98	29.08	21	6.23	1	0.30	4	1.19
4	For grocery and vegetables.	205	60.83	97	28.78	22	6.53	5	1.48	8	2.37
5	To meet friends.	321	95.25	15	4.45	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	0.30
6	To attend a funeral.	329	97.63	7	2.08	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	0.30
7	To attend family function.	327	97.03	8	2.37	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	0.59
8	To complete academic assignments.	305	90.50	27	8.01	3	0.89	0	0.00	2	0.59
9	To refresh myself.	291	86.35	38	11.28	6	1.78	0	0.00	2	0.59
10	To help neighbour/relatives, etc.	294	87.24	31	9.20	5	1.48	3	0.89	4	1.19

The above table shows the number of times the students left their house and the reasons for which they went out of their house during the period of lockdown. Among the participants 20.18% had been out on roads during lock down. 1.48 had to go out for their job. 36.80% had to go out for purchasing medicines. 39.17%

had to go out for grocery and vegetables. 4.75% went out to meet their friends. 2.37% went out to attend a funeral. 2.97% attended family function during lock down. 9.50% had to go out to complete their academic assignments. 13.65% went out to refresh themselves. 12.76% went out to help neighbour/relatives, etc.

**Table 3: Level of Negative impact of Lockdown**

Level of depression	Score Range	% range	Frequency	%
Normal Response	0-20	0-17	144	42.73
Borderline impact	21-40	18-33	124	36.80
Mild impact	41-70	34-58	54	16.02
Moderate impact	71-100	59-83	14	4.15
Severe impact	101-120	84-100	1	0.30

The above table shows the intensity of negative impact on students due to lock down. 42.73% students had normal response to the lock down conditions. 36.80% showed borderline negative impact of lock

down. 16.02% showed mild negative impact, 4.15% showed moderated negative impact and 0.30% showed severe negative impact due to nationwide lock down.

The lock down impact scores were found significantly associated with age ( $p=0.028$ ) at 5% level of significance and with course of study ( $p=0.062$ ) at 10% level of significance. This association can be attributed to most participants, having their age 20 years and most participants belonging to engineering course of study respectively.

### Discussion

The study aimed at assessing the psychosocial impact of lock down among college students in Nagpur. The findings reveal that the mean age of the students was  $19.93 \pm 1.14$ . 96.4% students were living with their parents during the period of lock down. 36.80% experienced borderline negative impact and 20.17% reported mild to moderate negative impact of lockdown in just 15 days of lock down period. One out of 337 students reported severe negative impact of lock down. Despite being with parents; 20.18% had been out on roads during lock down, 1.48 for their job, 36.80% for purchasing medicines, 39.17% for grocery and vegetables, 4.75% to meet their friends, 2.37% to attend a funeral, 2.97% attended family function, 9.50% to complete their academic assignments, 13.65% to refresh themselves, 12.76% to help neighbour/relatives. The lock down impact scores were found significantly associated with age ( $p=0.028$ ) at 5% level of significance and with course of study ( $p=0.062$ ) at 10% level of significance. This association can be attributed to most participants, having their age 20 years and most participants belonging to engineering course of study respectively. This also indicates that engineering students fear that the existing poor employability in engineering may be aggravated by the lockdown conditions<sup>2</sup>.

COVID 19 Psychological Research Consortium was founded in UK to study the psychological impact of COVID 19 in March 2020. A group of psychologists lead by Prof. Richard Bentall of Sheffield University and in collaboration with psychologists from Ulster University published their initial research findings on COVID 19 and Mental Health in UK. This study is the first of its kind reporting on COVID 19 and mental health of people. The authors report that 20.58% males and 23.40 females experienced depression due to COVID 19 spread in UK. 17.90% male and 25.12% females experienced anxiety and 18.93% males and 14.90% females felt stressed due to COVID 19 in UK. The study was conducted on general population. The authors also report that a spike in depression and anxiety was observed after the Prime

Minister's declaration of nation-wide lock down to control COVID 19 spread. The investigators found that higher rates of anxiety and depression were associated with young age, urban living and living alone during the pandemic<sup>3-14</sup>

### Conclusion

The present study findings reveal that COVID 19 and resulting lockdown has adversely affected the psychosocial status of college students. The uncertainties due to lock down have been overwhelming to the extent that despite being with their parents, a significant number of students are negatively affected. The higher rated responses like privacy being challenged, do not want to see the same faces day and night, expected to study all the time, being instructed all the time; are of concern for the parents. There is need to study the interaction between disease and its psychological impact on people of different age groups. Such studies are rarely done in the past. While equipping for any disaster, a nation will have to find out strategies for rebuilding mental strength of its people after the disaster is over so as to enhance the return to normal functioning.

**Ethical Clearance:** Taken from institutional ethics committee.

**Source of Funding:** Self.

**Conflict of Interest:** Nil.

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