

The Effect of Mental Pressure Due to Covid-19 on Students' Educational Performance: A Study from Karachi, Pakistan

Aisha Rahat ¹, Farida Lodhi ², Rizwan Muneer ³ & Huma Mahmood ⁴

^{1,3} University of Karachi, Karachi, Pakistan

^{2,4} Jinnah University for Women, Karachi, Pakistan

Aark755@gmail.com

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received : 2021-06-09

Revised : 2022-01-11

Accepted : 2022-02-12

KEYWORDS

Mental pressure

Mental health

Virtual learning

Depression

Educational performance



ABSTRACT

Coronavirus pandemic had not only affected the physical health of people but also the mental health of people globally. It has developed a fear in the minds of people regarding their selves as well as their loved ones. The essential change in the lifestyles of people and the need for social distancing has stopped the normal activities of people which caused mental disturbance among them. The present quantitative survey-based research has been led to know the impression of COVID 19 on the mental pressure of the students regarding their academic progress. The hypothesis were developed from which one was a null hypothesis; H1, was to find that whether there is a positive relationship between mental stress and COVID and third, H2, was to find whether there is any negative relationship between mental stress and academic progress. Both, H1 and H2, were accepted through conducting quantitative research by circulating an online survey that consists of 14 close-ended questions regarding the 2 research questions made. Respondents were taken from 5 universities of Karachi, Iqra university, Jinnah university for women, NED university of Engineering and Technology, University of Karach, and ZABIST university. The samples was consist of 90 students (54) were females and (36) were male selected by simple random sampling. The statistical method used to analyze the results was the simple percentage method as it clearly defines what percentages of the students were affected by COVID and how it impacted their mental pressure. It was found that there was a positive relationship of COVID on mental pressure that means the complex spread of COVID 19, higher the mental pressure and there was a negative relationship between COVID 19 and academic performance that means that high mental pressure was the cause of the lower performance.

1. Introduction

Corona virus pandemic has not just highlighted the physical health concerns among the affected people but, its prominent spread also affected the mental health of a lot of people around the world. It has developed a fear in the minds of people regarding their selves as well as their loved ones. The drastic change in the lifestyles of people and the need for sure of patients, young children, and the general population and hospital workers. Kaiser Family Foundation undertook a poll, recently, that showed that covid-19 resulted in social distancing that has halted the day-to-day activities of people which caused mental unrest among them.

A review done recently on the outbreak of coronavirus showed that it has affected health in the form of infections, fear, irritation, lifelessness, financial instability, etc. Most research on mental pressure has been done in China and many of them

only focus on the adverse negative health and developed metal Stress. Moreover, Nelson conducted research that highlights that there are severe symptoms of depression and anxiety in North America and Europe. Generally, apart from a few studies, China has clear evidence on how the mental health of students was affected due to the pandemic, this study also converges with the studies in other countries. Much work has been done on this topic, but, indeed, there is always room for improvement in every field. This study throws light on the effects of mental pressure on students' academic performance in this study the researcher tries to point out the different factors which influenced the student's mental health due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

Coronavirus is a new virus that has been discovered with its outbreak in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. Now, it has spread at a lightning speed to affect several countries. According to WHO

(2020b), on March 31, 2020, this virus has reached 202 countries, areas, or territories with 693,224 confirmed cases and 33,391 deaths (Hamouch, 2020)

The immeasurable amount of information of COVID-19 from the media whether it is ingenious or bogus, can worsen the situation and contribute to anxiety in society. The reality shows that this pandemic gets robust exposure from social media as well which spontaneously adds to the worry and restlessness and further provokes extreme stress within entities. COVID-19 elicits the impact of stress and mental health to those indirectly and directly having contact with the virus. Each individual needs to understand the consequence of mental stress. To obtain proper mental health, it has to begin with positive person-to-person relationships that will produce a more healthy and peaceful situation which may lead to concentrating effectively on all educational matters. The ability to believe, love, and support others (spouse, children, parents, and colleagues) is an important input for the consolidation of the individual's mental health that will minimize the stress faced during and post-COVID-19. This research would play a vital role to determine the affecting areas (stress, anxiety depression, and isolation), etc. It is a humble attempt to develop a workable strategy to focus on affected areas to establish an effective correlation between COVID-19 and academic performance.

Many countries have decided direction by applying alternative actions to avoid the infection spreading. In this international concern (PHEIC), and on March 11, 2020, the WHO announced coronaviruses as a pandemic, Coronavirus is thought to be increasing in Pakistan. The first coronavirus was reported from Karachi on February 26, 2020, which an estimated populace of Pakistan as 204.65 million. Successively, the virus spread into various Regions nationwide and has currently become an epidemic with a high level of contamination (e.g. China, Italy, France, Spain, US, Canada). On January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared coronavirus outbreak as the six public health emergency of distancing imposed everywhere tourism constraints, close borders and canceled flights from and to country Such widespread outbreaks are associated with adverse mental health consequences. (Raj Kumar, 2020) People's life and occupation have widely been affected, due to the Coronavirus Diseases (COVID-19) outbreak around the world. As the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a global pandemic in the second week of March 2020. While the terms 'academic performance' and 'academic success' are widely used, there is no easy or universally acknowledged definition of either term. (Reuter & Forster, 2021) Hardship, stress, and adversity are inevitable parts of the human experience, (Fullerton et al., 2021)

Students always show concern about their academic progress and the outbreak of coronavirus has further heightened this concern, and in some cases, it has transformed into a mental pressure for the students especially for college and university students. One of the notable reasons is that college and university students are more concerned about their career prospects and graduation thus they tend to worry about their education and its completion. Because of the lockdown and the risk of spread of coronavirus, all the schools, colleges, and universities shut down, in some cases, this resulted in some universities delaying their semesters, and therefore, the uncertainty increased the stress among them. The college students were unsure whether they will be able to get admission to universities, nationally and internationally. Furthermore, it is creating pressure on students to adapt to modern mediums of communication to learn.

Di Pietro (2020) with other authors stated in his book that children tend to learn most in schools as it provides a formal learning environment but as the schools have been closed and most of the learning is becoming home-based thus children are spending very little time in studies. A School-barometer survey was conducted for almost 10 days starting from 25th March showed that students including primary till 19 years old have reduced their learning time in between 4 to 8 hours as compared to the times when schools were opened. The COVID-19 pandemic is a major health crisis affecting several nations, with over 720,000 cases and 33,000 confirmed deaths reported to date.

Academic stress among high school students in a rural area of Nepal: A descriptive cross-sectional study. (Gurung et al., 2020) Around 6.91 million people were down with Coronavirus Disease as of June 7th, 2020 from which 0.4 million was the confirmed casualty rate worldwide. Consequently, several nations implemented precautionary and safety anti-epidemic measures, that included traveling restrictions for local and foreign citizens, closure of public parks, libraries, and other places, halting the transit system throughout, just to control and contain the spread and transmission of the extremely contagious infection from one to another.

In continuous efforts and struggle to contain the widespread of Coronavirus Diseases (COVID-19), in most of the countries around the world, their educational ministry and educational institutions collectively decided the termination of in-person teaching and learning and adapt to remote teaching and learning model (online teaching and learning). As per UNESCO's report, towards the end of April 2020, a total of 186 countries put a closure on their educational institutions that had an impact on 74% of learners around the world, whose education was in progress and were enrolled in different programs.

Lockdown has forced people to quarantine themselves in their homes to fight against the unparalleled pandemic; this has made academic and professional careers uncertain and has resulted in adverse effects on the mental health of students. As per the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), over one billion students in 129 countries across the globe were affected due to

COVID-19, their learning was interrupted due to the Pandemic. The succeeding COVID-19 pandemic is making a psychological messy circumstance as nations have been revealing a harsh rise of mental health issues, including tension, depression, and stress, sleep disorder unhappiness, fear, etc.,(Makhbul & Rawshdeh, 2021) discusses the published literature addressing mental health distresses linked to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The outbreak of COVID-19 is influencing the entire world. Its impact on the education sector is also adverse as it is putting pressure on students to cope up with academic performance and challenges. The episode of Coronavirus had prompted extreme pressure on students' minds. Echoing the above explanation this present study would like to analyze the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental health of students, and to discover the association

2. Theoretical Framework

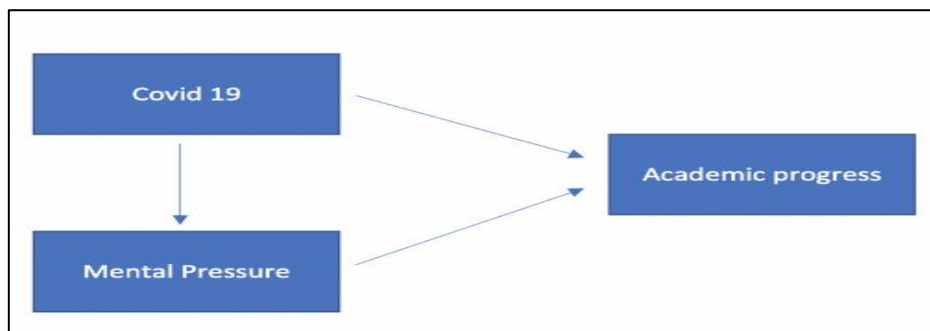


Figure 1. Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework shows the dependent and independent factors of the study. The impact of mental pressure due to COVID on a student's academic performance. The framework above shows that academic progress is an independent factor because it is being affected by two dependent variables that are COVID 19 and mental pressure. A study conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (2020) reported that 33% of South Africans were depressed, while 45% were fearful, and 29% were experiencing loneliness during the first lockdown period. (Nguse & Wassenaar, 2021)

Many countries have demonstrated leadership by implementing emergency measures to prevent the infection from spreading. In this context, schools and universities, kindergartens, cinemas, museums, restaurants have been closed, public gatherings and

between mental pressure and academic performance of students.

Coronavirus pandemic has not just highlighted the bodily health concerns among the affected people but, its prominent spread also affected the mental health of a lot of people around the world. It has developed a fear in the minds of people regarding their selves as well as their loved ones. The radical change in the lifestyles of people and the need for social distancing has halted the day-to-day activities of people which caused mental unrest among them.

1: Does Covid-19 have increased the mental pressure on students with regards to their academic performance?

2: Does the mental pressure adversely affect the academic performance of the students?

H0: There is no relationship between the impact of Covid-19 and mental pressure on students regarding their academic performance.

H1: There is a positive relationship between the impact of Covid-19 and mental pressure on students regarding their academic performance

H2: There is a negative relationship between mental pressure and academic performance.

events have been canceled, people quarantined, travel restrictions closed borders, and canceled flights from and to countries with a high level of contamination (e.g. China, Italy, France, Spain, US, Canada...)(Hamouche, 2020). Each national disaster can and should be viewed as being both all the while dangerous and useful: they break up yet additional reconstitute human networks. This is brilliantly delineated by German-American political scholar, Arendt (1954,p.4), who argued that "in every crisis, a piece of the world, something common to us all, is destroyed"; which rings true when we consider that common individual experiences can only appear where there is a shared objective world of stable structures, spaces and things "which as the table gathers together those who sit around it" .(Raaper & Brown, 2020)

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic first detected in China in December 2019 has had a substantial impact on people's physical and mental health. (McCartan et al., 2021) COVID-19 pandemic attacks the entire world including Indonesia, thus causing restrictions on community interaction. Physical distancing in all fields of life, both in education, economics, and other social fields. (Fajri et al., 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic has made the biggest interruption of instruction frameworks ever, influencing almost 1.6 billion students over 190 nations and all continents. Terminations of schools and other mastering spaces have affected 94% of the world's understudy populace, up to 99 percent in low and lower-center pay nations. (Brief, 2020).

During a pandemic, fear increases anxiety and stress levels. Health anxiety is the somatic and mental concerns about having a severe illness and is triggered by perceived bodily changes. (Kurcer, 2021) Human-to-human transmissions were identified, and the number of confirmed cases and suspected cases increased rapidly. People experienced stress in response to information on COVID-19, changes in daily routines, and the uncertainty regarding the future of the epidemic. (Xie et al., 2021)

Mindfulness-based programs improve psychological flexibility, mental health, well-being, and time management in academics. (Marais et al., 2020) With incendiary speed, COVID-19 has transformed economies, health services, and education structures, informing new methods for remote teaching. (Lungu & Lungu, 2021) Education is no exception. Students from privileged backgrounds, supported by their parents and eager and able to learn, could find their way past closed school doors to alternative learning opportunities. Those from disadvantaged backgrounds often remained shut out when their schools shut down. This crisis has exposed the many inadequacies and inequities in our education systems from access to the broadband and computers needed for online education, (Aji, 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic is having a wide-running effect. Attributable to the pandemic, all SAR governments have shut HEIs. By and large, the terminations have come around the finish of the scholarly year, the upsetting culmination of the schedule for the scholastic year, assessments needed for progress or graduation from HE, and additionally assessments or confirmations techniques for section into HE.

The COVID-19 pandemic has carried many challenges to higher education in terms of teaching, learning, research associations, and institutional authority. Moreover, this pandemic brings about an excellent opportunity for various stakeholders to re-think and even re-design higher education with an operative risk-management plan to increase the sustainability and flexibility of this sector in the future. This crisis forces higher education shareholders to reexamine the role of information and communication

technologies (ICT), specifically reviewing the effectiveness of online learning in higher education. Although online learning has been treated as a remedy for higher education problems (e.g. rising tuition costs), students and instructors have expressed many negative concerns regarding learning effectiveness and collaborations during the pandemic. (Kong et al., 2021) Students' mental health is greatly affected when faced with a public health emergency, and they need attention, assistance, and support from the community, family, and tertiary institutions. It is recommended that the government and schools should collaborate to solve this problem to provide crisis-oriented psychological services that are of high quality and timely bad character to students. (Pragholapati, 2020) The COVID-19 emergency has achieved fast changes in schooling around the world. The outcomes of the emergency may set aside an effort to turn out to be completely clear. (Lei & Medwell, 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic is a non-natural disaster that can have an impact on the mental health and psychosocial conditions of everyone. According to WHO (2020), the emergence of a pandemic caused stress to various levels of society. Although so far there has not been a systematic review of the effects of COVID-19 on mental health, several studies related to pandemics (including bird flu and SARS) have shown a negative impact on the mental health of sufferers. (Pragholapati, 2020) The COVID-19 pandemic exceptionally influenced undergrads because of the conclusion of campus discharge quarters and restricted grounds eating and food outlet accessibility for the last piece of the spring 2020 semester. (Tanang & Abu, 2014)

First-class understudy competitors, who work on their game and scholastic professions simultaneously, have expected to adjust both their preparation and studies because of the lockdown brought about by COVID-19. Under ordinary conditions, understudy competitors put forth an attempt to perform the two exercises at the same time, coordinating and improving their experience with the assistance of their coach. (Abenza-cano et al., 2021) The risk of COVID-19 in higher education has affected all its degrees and forms of training. Unexpectedly, a whole generation of young people has had to continue their education differently in an unusual situation. (Ilieva et al., 2021)

Effect on Training Going to class every day is that the most straightforward open course of action device open to help aptitudes. While instructive occasions are routinely fun and should raise social aptitudes and social care, from a financial viewpoint the main motivation behind being in school is that it fabricates a child's ability (Bao, 2020). To be sure, even a practically short period in school does this; even a relatively short time frame of missed school will have repercussions for fitness improvement. Regardless, would we be prepared to evaluate what degree the

Coronavirus impedance will impact learning? Restrictively, as we are during a different universe; yet we'll use various assessments to support a greeting for scope. (Mohamed et al., 2020) The current pandemic is an extraordinary occasion with numerous variables identified with understudy accomplishment that are difficult to measure, including its immediate effect. In any case, given the size of our information and what we know from past research, we can make conceivable gauges about the expected effects of COVID-19 dependent on numerous situations and suppositions about how learning may have changed during the 2019–2020 school year and will change over the 2020–2021 school year. Regardless of whether conjectures can just give a scope of potential effects dependent on various presumptions made about the current circumstance, figures are in any case important in aiding teachers and policymakers get what's in store as understudies return in fall 2020, including how learning may advance distinctively throughout the 2020–2021 school year. (Kuhfeld et al., 2020)

College and university students are confused and unsure about their academic credibility and value, they are finding it difficult to cope up with the fact that the whole world has been facing the after-effects of COVID-19, they are stuck in an unfavorable situation where they have no secure path that will lead them to a confirmed placement in the industry. The COVID-19 chaos has brought darkness over students' academic performance, they are socioeconomically weak and mentally disturbed. One of the factors for anxiety and depression found in students was that most of them were stuck in a foreign land with no family and friends, it isolated them and affected their mental comfort. Given the length of time that may be required to continue practicing social distancing, it may be years before academic research institutions reach a new normal.

Although some beneficial practices may become more routinized (e.g., more alternative work arrangements and virtual meetings), there will undoubtedly be far more deleterious impacts across higher education. Anticipated budget shortfalls from multiple revenue streams suggest that the ongoing pandemic will hamstring institutions financially for years to come. (Wigginton et al., 2020) The COVID-19 pandemic has carried numerous difficulties to advanced education as far as instructing, learning, research coordinated efforts, and institutional administration. Additionally, this pandemic brings about a great open door for different partners to reconsider and surprisingly re-plan advanced education with a viable hazard the executives intend to expand the maintainability and versatility of this area later on (Ye, 2020). The Coronavirus pandemic again raises issues of things to come of worldwide higher education. Would the Coronavirus offensively influence worldwide teaching and understudy

portability? Various gatherings of worldwide higher education partners understand the significant impacts brought by the pandemic on global higher education. (Kong et al., 2021) The overall understanding of COVID-19 has expanded throughout the world, yet its immediate and long-term mental health impacts on children are challenging to estimate. Measures to prevent the virus from spreading and tackling the uncertain situations pose risks to the psychological well-being of the children. (Shah et al., 2020)

Furthermore, it is significant for us as teachers to perceive the foundational disparities that exist in advanced education and the way that understudies are inconsistent put to prevail in their college concentrates during the Covid-19 emergency. For instance, we need to recognize that a few understudies have less admittance to solid mechanical apparatuses which thusly may diminish their chances to utilize a support that exists on the web, for example, either through colleges' true administrations or casual friend networks that understudies may grow locally, broadly or even globally. A few understudies, for example, care leavers or irritated understudies may have restricted or no contact at all with their families to get fundamental help. It is in this way fundamental to stress the arrangement of mechanical gadgets and online help to understudies who are out of luck. (Raaper & Brown, 2020)

3. Method

In this research study quantitative descriptive research design is adopted to answer the research question and to test the hypothesis. This research design is measured suitable for the study since it allows the researchers to generate data through standardized data collection techniques based on a highly structured investigation tool(s), well-defined research perceptions, and correlated variables. In the study the population selected was the 90 students at 5 universities out of 54 universities of Karachi Pakistan. Which is almost more than 10% of the population. Random sampling has been used.

The researcher designs a closed-ended questionnaire for the collection of data. The questionnaire is according to the objective of the study and consists of 14 questions. The questionnaire was distributed via an online survey on Google forms and collected the data within almost two months. The researcher collected the data and interpreted it with the help of a simple percentage for easy understanding at a glance.

4. Findings

The following questions were developed to understand the demographics of the respondents.

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents according to Age

| age | percentage |
|---------|------------|
| 15-18 | 3.7% |
| 19-22 | 15.6% |
| 23-25 | 54.6% |
| Onwards | 25.6% |
| Total | 100% |

The above table shows that most of the students belonged to the age of **23-25** which contributes to almost **55.6%**, following the **25.6%** of students who were of the age of **25** years and onwards. **15.6 %** were in **the 19 – 22** bracket. The lowest contribution is of the students between **15-18** years old that is **3.7%**.

Table 2. Distribution of Respondents according to Gender.

| gender | Percentage |
|--------|------------|
| Male | 40% |
| Female | 60% |
| Total | 100% |

The above table shows that **60%** of the respondents out of **90** responses for the survey were **females** and the **40%** remaining respondents were **males**. Out of 54 female Students 18 were engaged in science faculty, 18 were students of social sciences and 18 were of business administration. Out of 36 male students 12 were engaged with science faculty, and 12 social sciences and business administration.

Table 3. Distribution of Respondents according to Qualification

| Qualification | Percentage |
|---------------|------------|
| Matriculation | 1% |
| Intermediate | 2.8% |
| Bachelors | 22.6% |
| Masters | 73.6% |
| Total | 100% |

The above table shows that 73.6% of the students who participated in the survey were pursuing Master's degree following the ones who belongs to Bachelor's Degree Program. The results of the questions mentioned below were developed to find out how COVID-19 had an impact on the mental pressure on students.

1) *Statement 1: Has COVID-19 affected you mentally and physically?*

Table 4. the students' responses of statement 1

| Response | Percentage |
|----------|------------|
| Yes | 91.1% |
| No | 8.9% |
| Total | 100% |

The results showed that almost **91%** of the students were affected both mentally and physically by COVID-19. The percentage is significant enough to gauge the impact of the Novel Corona Virus the fatigue was mainly due to the lack of face-to-face interaction with the teachers as well as difficulties in online education like slow internet, power failures, etc.

2) *Statement 2: Did COVID-19 lead to the closure of you educational institution?*

Table 5. The students' responses of statement 2

| Response | Percentage |
|----------|------------|
| Yes | 97% |
| No | 3% |
| Total | 100% |

The result revealed that we all are aware of the fact that COVID-19 lead to educational institutions closure for a long period. Almost **97%** of the people responded with **YES**. And only **3%** said their educational institutions were **NOT** closed. The answer yes was obvious as all the educational institutes had been closed by the government.

3) *Statement 3: Did COVID-19 affect your academic performance as a student?*

Table 6. The students' responses of statement 3

| Response | Percentage |
|----------|------------|
| Yes | 91.1% |
| NO | 8.9% |
| Total | 100% |

The responses of samples almost **91.1%** of the respondents believe that COVID-19 has affected the academic progress of the students and only **8.9%** believe that their academic progress has not been affected. The respondents with the answer yes are way higher than those who believe their academic progress is not affected. Although there were online classes they largely failed because of lack of basic facilities and insufficient orientation and awareness among the respondents.

4) *Statement 4: Did your learning/educational expenses and cost increase due to COVID-19?*

Table 7. The students' responses of statement 4

| Response | Percentage |
|----------|------------|
| Yes | 55.6% |
| No | 44.4% |
| Total | 100% |

The question has somehow equal answers to the question being asked. Almost **55.6%** of the people said that their expenses and cost does increase due to COVID whereas, **44.4%** said that their cost did not increase due to COVID, the reason can be that people cannot comprehend the hidden cost they had to bear due to COVID as they cannot convert it in financial terms.

5) *Statement 5: Did your graduation get delayed due to COVID-19?*

Table 8. The students' responses of statement 5

| Response | Percentage |
|----------|------------|
| Yes | 75.6% |
| NO | 24.4% |
| Total | 100% |

The collected data showed that almost **75.6%** of the respondents marked **yes** for the question being asked. Most of the institutes got closed to control the spread of the coronavirus. Thus, the academic session got delayed which resulted in the graduation of students being delayed. This impacted the mental health of students because their future became uncertain, and they started worrying about their future careers and higher studies.

6) *Statement 6: Did you get anxiety due to COVID-19 that affected your health and academic performance?*

Table 9. The students' responses of statement 6

| Response | Percentage |
|----------|------------|
| Yes | 90% |
| No | 10% |
| Total | 100% |

The sudden outbreak of this deadly virus created anxiety among people because of their uncertain future and because of the social isolation policy. **90%** of the students marked **yes** whereas, **10%** selected **No** as an answer for their anxiety.

7) *Statement 7: Did you delay enrolment in an educational program/due to COVID-19? ?*

Table 10. The students' responses of statement 7

| Response | Percentage |
|----------|------------|
| Yes | 50% |
| No | 50% |
| Total | 100% |

The responses were equal for the answer that is **50%** of people's enrollment got delayed in other educational programs or degrees due to COVID-19. On the other hand, **50%** said that their educational degree enrollment does not get affected due to COVID-19.

8) *Statement 8: Did you miss any opportunity of applying to abroad collage/universities due to COVID-19?*

Table 11. The students' responses of statement 8

| Response | Percentage |
|----------|------------|
| Yes | 51.5% |
| No | 48.5% |
| Total | 100% |

This question also has almost similar weightage allocated to both the options that are **51.5%** and **48.5%** found it not applicable, as they were not looking for any opportunity abroad and want to stay at their homeland.

9) *Statement 9: Did you find it difficult to concentrate on your studies at home due to COVID-19?*

Table 12. The students' responses of statement 9

| Response | Percentage |
|----------|------------|
| Yes | 91.1% |
| NO | 8.9% |
| Total | 100% |

The result shows that **91.1%** of the students said that it became difficult for them to concentrate on their studies, and this created mental pressure as they became worried, whether they will catch up with their academic progress or not. Only **8.9%** disagreed.

10) *Statement 10: Did you have reliable access to internet during online classes after COVID-19 outbreak?*

Table 13. The students' responses of statement 10

| Response | Percentage |
|----------|------------|
| Yes | 70% |
| No | 30% |
| Total | 100% |

The collected data regarding the question revealed that **30%** of the people said that they did not have proper internet connection in the times when **COVID-19** forced students to take online classes from home. Almost **70%** of the students did not face any internet issues. It must be kept in mind the respondents belong to different classes and areas. Some were from fewer privileged areas where a constant supply of electricity was a huge challenge.

11) Statement 11: Did you find it difficult to cope up with changing dynamics of educational activities due to COVID-19?

Table 14. The students' responses of statement 11

| Response | Percentage |
|----------|------------|
| Yes | 82% |
| No | 18% |
| Total | 100% |

The result showed that COVID-19 made a radical change in the entire educational system and it became difficult for students to adopt the new changes in the system. Almost **82%** faced problems in adapting to the dynamic of educational activities and only **18%** easily adapted to the changes. . It was obvious for a reason that the students were not oriented and trained in attending online classes, there were power failures, lack of awareness in interacting and lack of gadgets is well.

12) Statement 12: Did lack of gadgets (smart phones, laptops, tablets) effect your academic performance and caused stress?

Table 15. The students' responses of statement 12

| Response | Percentage |
|----------|------------|
| Yes | 56.8% |
| No | 43.2% |
| Total | 100% |

The responses showed that not everyone was ready to accept these new changes in the educational systems. Many students were not well-equipped to take online classes. The result shows that almost **56.8%** of the students have a lack of gadgets available at their homes and it caused stress amongst them. Whereas, **43.2%** mentioned that they did not face any stress due to the lack of gadgets.

13) Statement 13: Do you feel that academic stress has weakened your immunity?

Table 16. The students' responses of statement 13

| Response | Percentage |
|----------|------------|
| Yes | 81.1% |
| No | 18.9% |
| Total | 100% |

The result revealed that Stress plays a critical role in the health of people. Many illnesses happened due to stress. Thus, it weakened the immunity. **81.1%** of the students marked that stress led their immunity to get weakened. On the other hand, **18.9%** marked NO as an answer. One of the factors that add up to the stress is lack of basic health facilities and poor approach from the authorities on one side there was financial deprivation and on the other the ever increasing inflation.

14) Statement 14: Has COVID-19 caused to depress you, due to closure of educational institutions and lack of learning?

Table 17. The students' responses of statement 14

| Response | Percentage |
|----------|------------|
| Yes | 88.9% |
| No | 11.1% |
| Total | 100% |

The outcome of the question described that majority of the students went through depression due to the closure of educational institutions as they were not able to learn their respective subjects. Only **11.1%** said that they did not face any depression due to the closure and lack of learning. Whereas **88.9%** were affected. With closure of institutions.

5. Discussion

The study is conducted on the Impact of COVID 19 on the mental pressure of students regarding their academic performance. The findings of the study put clear evidence of the fact that COVID 19 has increased the mental pressure on students which in turn has adversely affected the academic performance of students in Pakistan The findings showed that stress, anxiety, and depression are the determinants of destructive mental health has been developed due to COVID 19. This supported the hypothesis that was being developed for this study. The study also answers the RQs.

5.1 Does Covid-19 have increased the mental pressure on students with regards to their academic performance?

The general stance on this study is that there is a positive correlation between the coronavirus and the mental pressure of students regarding their academic performance thus it can be said that corona adversely affected the mental pressure of the students that have put a negative impact on the academic performance of the students. H2 was also accepted that says that there is a negative relationship between mental pressure and academic performance as the higher the mental pressure lower will be the academic performance. Anxiety is an intangible thing that can cause severe health problems among people. It measured anxiety as it causes mental pressure by asking the sample whether they got anxiety due to COVID that affected their academic performance. 90% of the respondents answered with yes, whereas only 10% said no. This shows that anxiety was a prominent factor that developed due to COVID and that also affected the health and academic progress of the students. The results showed that 88.1% of the respondents went through depression due to COVID 19. Whereas only 11.1% were the ones who didn't face any depression. The results support our hypothesis and research questions as depression is a significant factor to create mental pressure. The reason can be the fact, that the sudden outbreak of COVID made the future of almost all the people including students, uncertain. Moreover, students were not able to go to their educational institutions thus their social networking came to a halt, and isolation made people depressed. This increased their mental pressure.

5.2 Does the mental pressure adversely affect the academic performance of the students?

Academic stress happens when the students are given an extra workload or when there are not enough resources to keep up with the academic flow. The study measured stress through the question of the lack of gadgets that hindered academic progress and caused academic stress. As everything moved towards virtual learning thus lack of gadgets made it more difficult to cope up with the studies and created mental pressure. Almost 57% marked yes and 42.2% marked no. Also, it was found that academic stress has weekend immunity of people of which 81.1% said yes and the remaining 18.9% said no. This shows that academic stress also had effects on the immunity of the people. As a whole, stress, depression, and anxiety were all developed due to COVID and it affected the academic performance of the students. If all the variables are accumulated it can be seen that 78.36 percent of the students face mental pressure in the form of stress, anxiety, and depression among the 90 participants.

It measured whether there was any effect of COVID on academic performance or not? 91.1% of

the students responded with the yes and the remaining 8.9% said no. This clarifies that COVID Has affected a large population regarding their academia. Delay in graduation can affect academic performance for students who have plans for their careers and studies. 75.6% of the respondents faced a delay in their graduation and the remaining 24.4% did not face any graduation delay. The delay in graduation affects academic progress and performance as people are not sure about their future and this led them to worry about their studies.

It is important to have a full concentration of the students on their studies to understand the lecture being thought to them to perform well in academic endeavors. 91.1% marked that they face difficulty concentrating on studies at home due to COVID and the remaining 8.9% said that they did not face any difficulties. As everyone was at home, thus, it was difficult to find a proper space and environment to carry out learning, this leads to mental pressure for most of the students as despite wanting to perform well in their academics, and they are not able to do so. Overall, the accumulated results show that almost 86% of the respondents said that mental pressure negatively affected academic progress.

6. Conclusion

The study highlighted that the problem of students learning process and mental health that is related to the experience of isolation due to precautionary measures that are necessary to take around the world in the form of lockdown, social distancing, remote learning, etc. The research added significance to an understanding of the effects of COVID and its impact on mental pressure on students regarding their academic performance. It was found through the quantitative research that there was a negative impact on the performance of students and they also developed mental pressure regarding it. COVID-19 not just led to millions of deaths around the world, but it also caused depression, anxiety, stress, and several mental illnesses that affected the well-being, academic progress, academic pressure, and day-to-day activities of individuals.

7. Acknowledgment

I would like to thank the anonymous reviewers for their constructive feedback to improve this article. I have no conflict of interest.

References

Abenza-cano, L., Leiva-arcas, A., Vaquero-cristóbal, R., García-roca, J. A., Meroño, L., & Sánchez-pato, A. (2021). Effect of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) on Elite Spanish Student-Athletes' Perception of the Dual Career. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 3509 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.620042>

- Aji, M. A. (2021). Effects of Covid-19 on Students' Academic Performance in Senior Secondary Schools Chemistry in Gashua Town, Bade Local Government Area Yobe State, Nigeria. *Electronic Research Journal of Behavioural Sciences*, 4, 102-126.
- Aucejo, E. M., French, J., Ugalde Araya, M. P., & Zafar, B. (2020). The impact of COVID-19 on student experiences and expectations: Evidence from a survey. *Journal of Public Economics*, 191, 104271. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpubeco.2020.104271>
- Fajri, Z., Baharun, H., Muali, C., Farida, L., & Wahyuningtiyas, Y. (2021, May). Student's Learning Motivation and Interest; The Effectiveness of Online Learning during COVID-19 Pandemic. In *Journal of Physics: Conference Series*, 1899, (1), p. 012178). IOP Publishing
- Fullerton, D. J., Zhang, L. M., & Kleitman, S. (2021). An integrative process model of resilience in an academic context: Resilience resources, coping strategies, and positive adaptation. *PLoS ONE*, 16(2 February), 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0246000>
- Gurung, M., Chansatitporn, N., Chamroonsawasdi, K., & Lapvongwatana, P. (2020). Academic stress among high school students in a rural area of Nepal: A descriptive cross-sectional study. *Journal of the Nepal Medical Association*, 58(225), 306–309. <https://doi.org/10.31729/jnma.4978>
- Hamouche, S. (2020). COVID-19 and employees' mental health: stressors, moderators and agenda for organizational actions. *Emerald Open Research*, 2, (15). 1-15 <https://doi.org/10.35241/emeraldopenres.13550.1>
- Ilieva, G., Yankova, T., Klisarova-Belcheva, S., & Ivanova, S. (2021). Effects of COVID-19 pandemic on university students' learning. *Information*, 12(4), 163..
- Mok, K. H., Xiong, W., Ke, G., & Cheung, J. O. W. (2021). Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on international higher education and student mobility: Student perspectives from mainland China and Hong Kong. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 105, 101718. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2020.101718>
- Kurcer, M. A., Erdogan, Z., & Cakir Kardes, V. (2022). The effect of the COVID - 19 pandemic on health anxiety and cyberchondria levels of university students. *Perspectives in Psychiatric Care*, 58(1), 132-140. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ppc.12850>
- Lei, M., & Medwell, J. (2021). Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student teachers: how the shift to online collaborative learning affects student teachers' learning and future teaching in a Chinese context. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 22(2), 169-179. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12564-021-09686-w>
- Lungu, B., & Lungu, M. (2021). Exploring the effects on student learning and engagement of COVID-19: an innovative and interdisciplinary approach. *Journal of Microbiology & Biology Education*, 22(1), ev22i1-2429. <https://doi.org/10.1128/jmbe.v22i1.2429>
- Makhbul, Z. K. M., & Rawshdeh, Z. A. (2021). Mental stress post-COVID-19. *International Journal of Public Health Science*, 10(1), 194–201. <https://doi.org/10.11591/ijphs.v10i1.20497>
- Marais, G. A., Lantheaume, S., Fiault, R., & Shankland, R. (2020). Mindfulness-based programs improve psychological flexibility, mental health, well-being, and time Management in Academics. *European Journal of Investigation in Health, Psychology and Education*, 10(4), 1035-1050. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ejihpe10040073>
- McCartan, C., Adell, T., Cameron, J., Davidson, G., Knifton, L., McDaid, S., & Mulholland, C. (2021). A scoping review of international policy responses to mental health recovery during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Health Research Policy and Systems*, 19(1), 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12961-020-00652-3>
- Mohamed, M. H., Ahmed, S. A., Hussein, A. M., Ahmed, A. S. A., Mohamed, I. I., & Sheikh, A. M. (2020). The Impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) on Higher Education Case Study Private Universities in Mogadishu, Somalia. *Creative Education*, 11(11), 2249–2261. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2020.1111165>
- Nguse, S., & Wassenaar, D. (2021). Mental health and COVID-19 in South Africa. *South African Journal of Psychology*, 51(2), 304–313. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00812463211001543>
- Pragholapati, A. (2020). Covid-19 Impact on Students. *edarxiv.org*. 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.35542/osf.io/895ed>
- Raaper, R., & Brown, C. (2020). The Covid-19 pandemic and the dissolution of the university campus: implications for student support practice. *Journal of Professional Capital and Community*, 5(3–4), 343–349. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPC-06-2020-0032>
- Rajkumar, R. P. (2020). COVID-19 and mental health: A review of the existing literature. *Asian journal of psychiatry*, 52, 102066.

- Reuter, P. R., & Forster, B. L. (2021). Student health behavior and academic performance. *PeerJ*, 9. <https://doi.org/10.7717/peerj.11107>
- Shah, K., Mann, S., Singh, R., Bangar, R., & Kulkarni, R. (2020). Impact of COVID-19 on the Mental Health of Children and Adolescents. *Cureus*, 12(8), 1-6. <https://doi.org/10.7759/cureus.10051>
- Tanang, H., & Abu, B. (2014). Teacher Professionalism and Professional Development Practices in South Sulawesi, Indonesia. *Journal of Curriculum and Teaching*, 3(2), 25-42. <https://doi.org/10.5430/jct.v3n2p25>
- Wigginton, N. S., Cunningham, R. M., Katz, R. H., Lidstrom, M. E., Moler, K. A., Wirtz, D., & Zuber, M. T. (2020). Moving academic research forward during COVID-19. *Science*, 368 (6496), 1190-1192. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.abc5599>
- Xie, L., Luo, H., Li, M., Ge, W., Xing, B., & Miao, Q. (2020). The immediate psychological effects of Coronavirus Disease 2019 on medical and non-medical students in China. *International Journal of Public Health*, 65(8), 1445-1453. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00038-020-01475-3>
- Ye, J. (2020). Pediatric mental and behavioral health in the period of quarantine and social distancing with COVID-19. *JMIR pediatrics and parenting*, 3(2), 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.2196/19867>