

Overview of the Study

Introduction

The World Health Organization (WHO) had declared COVID-19 as a global pandemic in March 2020, and it has adversely affected every aspect of human life. India as a developing nation with the world's second-largest population, had to face major challenges during the pandemic. With national lockdown, failing businesses and reduced opportunities, the challenges have been manifold on the financial, physical, social and mental health of the individuals.

This new situation called for novel solutions. Work from home, use of online services and the absolute shift of education from offline to online mode are few to be named. The changes in the education sector were achieved in haste, without leaving much time for training of the students and teachers. With the unavailability of infrastructure and space, the new classrooms needed a lot of adjustment from the learners and the facilitators. Also, the absence of school and workplaces, social meetings with family and friends have affected the relationships within the families. Stress from COVID-19 has added to these disruptions exponentially.

The pandemic has rapidly become a topic of research in the education community. It has become essential to assess the impact of the pandemic on the well-being of individuals and to learn from those who have demonstrated extraordinary resilience during these pressing times.

Research Design

The current study was conceptualized and conducted in the first wave of the pandemic in India. The study was implemented in three strands as follows:-

Strand-I

The first strand consisted of a survey conducted by students of Education of Lady Irwin College, University of Delhi, to understand the impact of COVID-19. During the process of the study, it was realized that this would not be sufficient to capture the dynamics of the way people reacted to COVID-19 and the peculiar impact that it had on the primary stakeholders related to education, viz. students, teachers, and parents. We have

termed this as the Macro part of the study, as it gives a broader picture.

Strand-II

To make the study comprehensive, students of education from Shyama Prasad Mukherji College for Women, University of Delhi, took the responsibility of interacting with the students at the secondary, senior secondary school level and higher education institutes. Some detailed interactions of school and college teachers were also conducted and documented in Volume II of the study.

Strand-III:

In the third strand, the students of the Department of Education, University of Delhi, commenced with family studies to gauge how family life had been impacted by the unprecedented situations. We mentioned this in the volume as the Micro part of the study, as it focused on nuanced and detailed elements of the study.

The common thread across the three strands was the focus on mental health concerns and coping strategies used by people across age groups.

Through the current volume of the Indian Journal of School Health and Well Being, we attempted to share surveys conducted in Strand-I of the study combined with intrigued narratives gathered by students to find out common coherence and learning from the study. However, the second volume tried to narrate the case stories based on interviews conducted in the Strand-II part of the study.

With the present study, we have made an effort to examine the impact of the pandemic on the lives of students, teachers, and parents at the macro and micro levels. We have attempted to identify their challenges and adopted coping strategies to deal with this sudden change. The insights received through this study may be used to develop a well-being and resilience framework that may benefit society at large.

Aim of the study

- To investigate the impact of COVID-19 on the lives of students, teachers, and parents.
- To identify the coping strategies adopted to overcome the pandemic.

- To study the changes in the education system and its delivery due to the pandemic.

Objectives of the study

- To identify the lifestyle changes the pandemic has brought into the lives of the students, teachers, and parents.
- To understand the challenges students,

School students: Twenty-five school-aged students between 12-17 years and twenty-five college students above 18 years.

Teachers: Twenty-four teachers teaching young children (Pre-primary/Primary grade) and twenty-five teachers teaching adolescents/Senior Students (Eighth grade onwards)

Parents: Parents of children belonging to

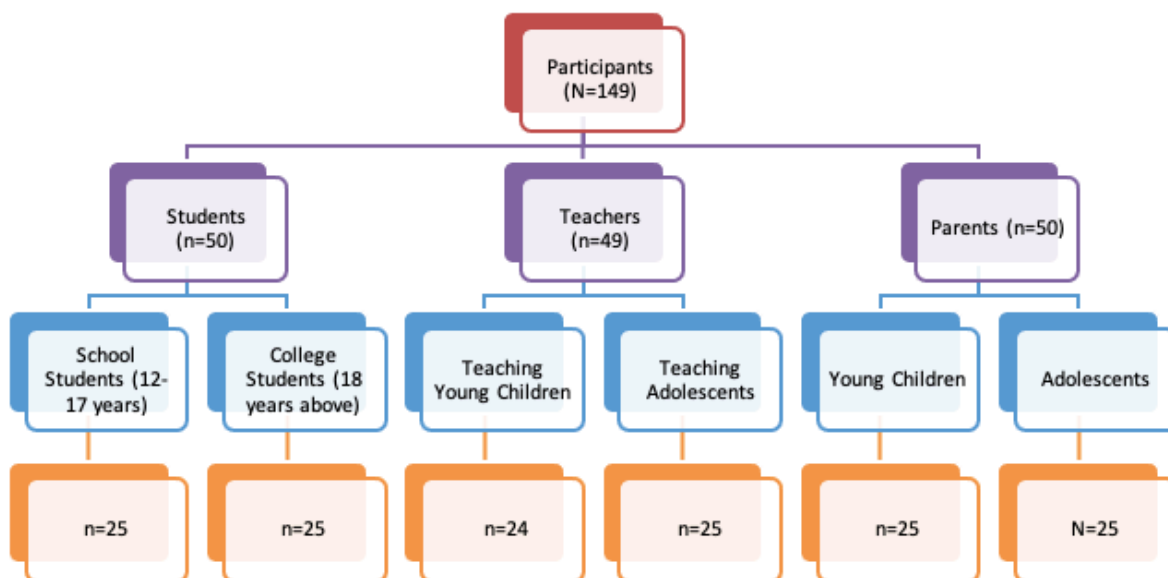


Fig 1.1 Sample and Sample size for Strand I of the Study

teachers, and parents have undergone concerning online education.

- To find out how pandemic has affected relationships within the family and with friends for the students, teachers, and parents.
- To list out the coping strategies adopted by students, teachers, and parents to overcome the stress-induced due to the pandemic.

Methodology

For this section of the study, the researchers have utilized one of the most popular methods in educational research: the survey method. The focus was to understand and record the perception of the students; teachers and parents towards the changes that they have witnessed in their lives due to the pandemic, and this method suffices the purpose of the study.

Sample

A sample is a proportion of the population that is selected and used to represent, as far as possible, the whole population in a study. For the present study’s Strand-I, the data from 149 participants were collected. The sample of the study as shown in figure (1.1) included the following groups-:

primary or pre-primary grade/ young children and parents of adolescents were pursued.

In the third strand of the study, two kinds of families were taken. The first one was stories of families that had undergone COVID-19, and the second kind was families that had suffered from COVID-19 fear/anxiety. Each student of Education in Mental Health course from the Department of Education, University of Delhi picked two stories, falling into the two categories.

The students tried to engage in a dialogue with adults, children, and other members of the family. This was done to draw perspective from multiple persons of the family rather than from a single person. Thus, in Strand-III of the study, family as a unit was taken for the study

The entire sample was drawn using the convenience sampling technique from upper and middle-class populations studying, teaching, and living in Delhi.

Tools of the study

Perceiving the dangers and restrictions imposed due to the pandemic, the preferred choice of instrument for this section of the study was an

online questionnaire. Questionnaires were drafted separately for school students, teachers, and parents based on the objectives of Section I of the study. The questions in all three questionnaires were designed and constructed after a thorough discussion with the experts. Each questionnaire had around 25-30 closed-ended questions under four subheads. The subheads for the questionnaires were:

1. Change in Lifestyle
2. Psychological well-being
3. Impact on Education
4. Relationship with family and Friends

A pilot study for Strand-I of the study was conducted to test the tool before the actual sample was collected. The questionnaire was tested with three stakeholders, i.e., the students, teachers, and parents. Based on the results, modifications were made concerning the language of certain items in the tool. In the process, some questions were deleted, and a few new questions were added. The language of the instructions for the questionnaire was English.

In the third strand, the areas covered for narratives where family stories begin with a description of the family, age, introduction to family members, education, profession/work, where the family resides, lifestyle, some description about their home, their beliefs, their family values, the share of responsibilities at household chores, and decision-making at home.

Data Collection

Every student belonging to the Education in Mental Health programme at Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) II year of Lady Irwin College, University of Delhi (DU) was requested to collect data from two-three participants each. 60 students participated in the data collection of the study. The students were able to collect data from 50 students, 50 parents and 49 teachers.

Since the study of Strand-I had a questionnaire, so educated/literate participants were included in the study. The language of instruction in the questionnaire was English. Thus, the sample was drawn from participants who could read English. The location of the study was Delhi. Thus, the sample included in the study were from Delhi, Upper class, Middle-class and English reading participants. This was also the delimitation of the study.

Understanding the situation and allied dangers, an online survey was conducted. The students approached the participants through their emails and a Google link was generated and shared for filling up the forms online. Data were collected separately for each group, i.e., students (young and adolescents), teachers teaching (young students and adolescents) and parents (young children and adolescents). Along with the instructions, purpose of the research, anonymity clause, the contact information of a few selected students was shared with the participants, in case they need any technical support or help in understanding the items in the questionnaire.

As reported by the students, the process of collecting the data was smooth and trouble-free. Most of the participants could understand the questions. Few parents needed technical support and were provided so. The whole process of collecting the data through an online survey was completed in ten days.

In Strand-III of the study, once the data was received, it was put together to narrate the family story holistically. The narratives were documented in first-person mode and were narrated in a dialogical way at different places in the story that may reflect the authenticity of the story. Thus, the student narrated a story to the readers.

The analysis of Strand-III of the study was done based on the following themes:

- Perceptions, Fears and Beliefs
- Life before COVID-19

Precautions are taken by families to protect themselves

- How and in what ways has the family's lives changed?
- Views and experiences related to working from home
- Family time and duties
- Online Education
- Signs of Anxiety, Depression, and unhappiness
- Relations with neighbours and community
- Learned to live with COVID-19

Thus, each story was described and analysed based on the above-outlined themes. Thereafter, stories were shortlisted and put together with Strand-I to find out common coherence and

arrive at conclusions. The current articles in this volume have been divided into two sections, i.e., section A dedicated section A was allotted to findings obtained from Strand-I and section B described family stories. The stories in section B shared in the language that the participants were comfortable speaking in, viz. English/ Hindi. Some case stories have been presented as first-person narratives, where participants were comfortable with the same. In other cases, the student-researcher had paraphrased the stories and presented them in the third person. For this edition, a few shortlisted stories are being shared that may highlight the major changes students, teachers, parents, and corona warriors had to undergo. Significant insights have been drawn from the case stories, complemented with Strand-I findings, to present as a concluding note at the end of the volume.