



# STUDY ON HEALTH CONSCIOUSNESS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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## ABSTRACT

College students are among those impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. It caused the face-to-face learning method to transition to online learning. College students psychological health is impacted by this issue. Social support is one of the elements that affect psychological well-being. The motive of this research is to study the health consciousness of college students during the COVID-19 pandemic. Multiple COVID-19 prevention and control strategies aimed at college students may cause them to experience varying levels of stress and health issues. Our findings add to the body of knowledge on stress and health and have fresh, practical ramifications for all spheres of society to protect kids' health in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. Academic stresses are any academic expectations (such as external, internal, or social demands) that force a student to change how they act. Different levels of academic pressure would result from exams, performance competitiveness, and notably knowing a lot of knowledge quickly. Even if the COVID-19 pandemic has infected every planned course, online learning still places the same academic demands on college students. Additionally, prior research demonstrates that the separation anxiety disorder in adults is comparable to that of children and adolescents. When they leave school, college students who have formed bonds with their peers could struggle with separation anxiety. Home workouts can be influenced by health-related life objectives and perceived behavioural control as a result of health consciousness. This study expands on the theoretical research on home-based exercise using data from a survey on the practise. The results imply that individuals should focus on encouraging the transition of health consciousness into at-home activity. The type of research that has been used in this study is explanatory research. An aggregate of 120 students participated in this survey, which was conducted in Coimbatore city and it is conducted for 4 months. Given that health consciousness among college students increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is critical that the seriousness and importance of the same are followed post-pandemic as well in order to live a happy and healthy life.

Keywords: college students, COVID-19 pandemic, lifestyle behaviour, health consciousness.

## INTRODUCTION

The year 2020 has seen the outbreak of COVID-19, a major global health crisis. Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Many people infected by COVID will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and can recover without requiring special treatment. Yet, some people will become seriously ill and require immediate medical attention. Older people and those with underlying morbidities like heart diseases, breathing difficulties and other illness are more prone to COVID-19. Anyone can get sick with COVID-19 and become seriously ill or die despite their age. As of August 3, 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected 216 countries, with 17,660,523 confirmed cases and 680,894 deaths. The pandemic has had a severe impact on the global economy and threatened people's life critically. In this crisis, health has been the topmost priority for every individual. Various countries have actively adopted strict quarantine measures to control the spread of the virus. However, the compulsory prohibition of going out has significantly affected people's daily life. It led to decrease in physical activity, which means an increase in sedentary time leading to physical and mental health problems.

Health consciousness can be defined as the degree to which an individual cares about his/her health. In other words, health consciousness is a kind of behaviour and attitude in which people have an awareness of healthiness about their diet and lifestyle. Being health-conscious includes:

- Mindful eating.
- Good lifestyle.
- Maintenance of mental and physical health.
- Good sleep.

The more health-conscious a person is, the more likely he/she is to have healthy habits which is the basis for individuals to take health measures. Being health conscious adds many benefits to oneself.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1) The scholar Mohamed Abouzid, et al. (2021) did a study on COVID-19 on lifestyle of individuals in the Middle East and North Africa during lockdown. Various questions on lifestyle behaviours, including physical activity, eating habits, smoking, watching television, social media usage and sleep before and during the pandemic were collected with the help of questionnaire. A total of 5896 responses were collected for the final interpretation. The results showcased that the lockdown has led to an increase in food consumption and sedentary life. Public health mediation is needed to follow healthy lifestyle during and after the pandemic.

2) The scholar S T. Janetius & Krithika srisrimal (2020) This study focuses on health consciousness and health knowledge among yoga enthusiasts during the lockdown. This study's research design is exploratory and it used convenience sampling for collecting data from 60 participants. The results showed that yoga aspirants are highly conscious about their health.

3) The scholar A. Meji M, M. S. Dennison, et al. (2020) This survey is to study the general awareness about COVID-19, mental state, and academic anxiety among the various age group of students studying in different Schools, Colleges,

or Universities in the western districts of Uganda during this lockdown period. This study was conducted among a total of 405 students who were classified based on their localities such as rural, semi-urban, urban & age etc. This study primarily focuses on the general awareness about COVID-19 crisis, the mental state of the students and the academic problems faced by the students residing in the western regions of Uganda. The results show a remarkable level of rise in self-sustainability among the students residing in different localities such as rural, semi-urban and urban.

4) The scholar Miguel López-Moreno, Maria Teresa Iglesias López, et al. (2020) The aim of this study is to evaluate the effects of COVID-19 home confinement on the food habits, lifestyle and emotional balance of the Spanish population. This cross-sectional study used questionnaire during the month before lockdown finished in Spain. Among participants, 38.8% of the respondents experienced weight gain and 31.1% lost weight during lockdown. It was also identified that 39.7% reported poorer quality sleep, 44.7% of the participants were not physically active during confinement. To conclude the importance of adopting a healthy lifestyle were insisted, as the COVID-19 pandemic is ongoing.

5) The scholar Vilma Kriaucioniene, Lina Bagdonaviciene, et al. (2020) This study aimed to raise the effect of the quarantine on dietary habits, physical activity and alcohol consumption habits of Lithuanians and the relationship between health behaviors and weight changes. An online cross-sectional survey was carried out among individuals older than 18 years in April 2020. A total of 2447 people participated in the survey. The study resulted in highlighting the requirement for dietary and physical activity. It also added guidelines to prevent weight gain during self-isolation, mainly focusing those with overweight and obesity.

## STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The goal of the current study was to determine the scope of several elements that were supposed to make it difficult for students to stay on track with their studies during COVID-19 lockdown. Then we discuss a variety of issues that could make learning difficult during the lockdown, including the frequency of online classes, accessibility to them, the ability to show up for them, comprehension of them, internet access, the environment at home, excitement, and motivation. The lack of physical activity, which can have a negative impact on mental development, was another issue covered in the paper.

## NEED OF THE STUDY

1. Health consciousness of college students during the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on their lifestyle.
3. Alternatives found for external activities during this lockdown.
4. Management and distraction of stress & difficulties faced.
5. Changes in their dietary habits such as binge eating and its effects.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study about the health consciousness of college students during COVID-19 pandemic.
2. To study about their lifestyle & dietary changes.
3. To study the alternatives found for external activities.
4. To study the effect of COVID-19 pandemic on their mental & physics

## CONCEPTUAL EXPLANATION

Schools have faced of unheard difficulties as a result of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, including the need to swiftly move to an online format, ensure that all students have fair access, support the educational needs of teachers' and students', and make plans in the face of significant uncertainty. The pandemic itself has generated a lot of anxiety, tension, and sorrow. Anybody can experience mental health issues due to these stressors, and those who may already be dealing with such issues may experience acute symptoms as a result of COVID.

Some of the common signs that teachers could look for in order to spot pupils who are having mental health issues might not be present. It's possible that some teachers aren't actually meeting with students. The same student drop-ins might not occur for all teachers. The disguised faces of kids may be invisible to some professors. Teachers may therefore be concerned about their pupils' progress or level of difficulty, particularly in the case of emotional issues.

Here, we discuss the methods teachers might employ to spot pupils who may want more help, particularly in the case of anxiety and depression, which can sometimes go unnoticed even in the best of situations.

In general, those who are more concerned about their health tend to have a lot of health-related goals in their lives, such as how much exercise they get each day and what time they go to bed. Setting a health life goal will enhance motivation to practise healthy behaviours. The self-determination hypothesis claims that life goal orientation has numerous health advantages and that it improves mental health issues, life satisfaction, and health-related activities. Through three months of exercise it has established a life goal setting technology that successfully enhanced the fragile elderly's physical fitness. This life goal is a health life goal. The key to how life goals affect health behavior is the health life goal. Because of this, persons who are concerned about their health have higher health-related goals during the COVID-19 epidemic, which motivates and plans their home-based exercise habit.

One of the key ways that people can pursue health is through exercise. Exercise can be performed inside or outside. The home was the hub of activities during the pandemic. We propose that people engage in home-based exercise. Regular physical activity is a key component of maintaining health during the quarantine, according to studies, Exercise at home is a practical and secure strategy to encourage people's health throughout the pandemic. One benefit is that it can maintain people's health levels. On the other hand, avoiding close contact between individuals can successfully prevent the spread of the coronavirus. It's important to consider how to encourage folks to exercise at home. There are, however, few investigations on the pandemic-related effects of at-home exercise.

The level of someone's health consciousness indicates how much they are concerned with it. People who are more

concerned with their health are more likely to adopt good habits, which serve as the foundation for taking health-related action. Scholars have recently concentrated on the impact of health consciousness on a variety of health behaviours, particularly a healthy diet and access to health information. Exercise at home is a healthy habit. This suggests that health consciousness will likely have a significant effect on activity at home. However, scholars today hardly ever link exercising at home with health consciousness. The COVID-19 epidemic simultaneously made people acutely aware of the fragility of life and the value of health. It is crucial to understand how to translate mental awareness into physical action. Therefore, a thorough examination of their relationship is required.

This research primarily examines a theoretical model, namely, how people's health awareness affects their at-home exercise habits during the COVID-19 epidemic. In this regard, the following aspects are examined in this work. This essay explains the beneficial effects of health consciousness on at-home exercise, analyses the mediating roles of health life goals and perceived behavioural control between health consciousness and at-home exercise, and discusses the positive effects of health consciousness on at-home exercise.

A life aim is a desired state that individuals may seek to achieve, keep, or avoid. Internal life objectives, such as development, relatedness, helpfulness, and health, are separated from exterior life goals, such as wealth, celebrity, and image. A person's expected life aim is to pursue physical health and prevent diseases. It accurately captures peoples' great desire to maintain their health.

The primary focus of this study was on the mechanisms through which health consciousness affected at-home exercise during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through health life goals and perceived behavioural control, health consciousness can have an indirect impact on home-based exercise in addition to a direct one. Between health awareness and at-home exercise, perceived behavioural control acts as a mediator. The research in this paper demonstrates the value of setting daily health goals, which steer us in the right way for adopting healthy behaviours. To ensure that the behaviours are followed, people must also strengthen their individual control. Healthy exercise is the key to life. People should build supportive environments so they can continue exercising no matter what the circumstances.

A person's conduct and attitude toward their health, nutrition, and lifestyle are referred to as "health consciousness." It is the condition of knowing how healthy you are and actively choosing to engage in behaviours, lifestyle choices, and activities that support good health. Everyone should be aware of their level of health.

Being healthy has an impact on every aspect of our lives. One must be both physically and intellectually fit to be healthy. The saying "health is wealth" encourages health awareness. Another adage promoting a healthy lifestyle is "You are what you eat."

The nutrients and minerals in the meals we eat are necessary for our everyday physical and mental functions. One method to guarantee that you are aware of how the foods you eat can affect your mental and physical wellbeing is to know how each of these can harm or benefit our health. Additionally, maintaining your existing health state from poor to good or from poor to best depends on it.

## SUGGESTIONS

1) Having found that the health consciousness among the college students has increased during COVID-19 pandemic, it must be made sure that the seriousness and importance of the same must be followed post pandemic as well in order to lead



a happy and healthy life.

- 2) The immunity level is highly influenced by the way of lifestyle of an individual. Though the immune boosting supplements provide temporary benefits, in order to improve one's immunity level for lifetime, balanced diet, good sleep and regularly exercising must be followed.
- 3) Equal importance should be given to mental health. Awareness should be given to as many people as possible in order to understand, support and help the victim realise the issues they are going through. In case of educational institutions, programmes should be conducted for students, professors as well as parents. Appointing a counsellor for helping the students out at the campus is advisable.
- 4) Sleep cycle is something that is been easily neglected by youngsters these days. Statistics have proven that less and disturbed sleep cause health issues if made a habit. Therefore, it is significant for any individual to follow a proper sleep schedule to lead a sick-free life.
- 5) Awareness on the importance of healthy lifestyle is mandatory. Poor dietary habits, disrupted sleep cycle, lesser physical activities will lead an individual to a position where he is easily affected by seasonal flus or life-threatening diseases like COVID-19 etc. In order to fight any such new diseases in the upcoming years and to lead a healthy life, it is mandatory to modify one's bad lifestyle into a healthy one. Therefore, various programmes and campaigns focusing on the importance of nutrition, good lifestyle, mental health etc must be conducted regularly.

## CONCLUSION

This study shows that the health consciousness of the college students has increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. They have become more cautious about their dietary habits, their general cleanliness and their physical and mental health. Being a victim of many physical health issues like weight gain, general weakness, and deficiencies, students have realised the ill effects of binge eating and the importance of balance diet and regular exercising. They have managed to find alternatives for external activities like home workout and online programmes for fitness and yoga. It was also seen that most of the students had faced mental health issues like anxiety, insecurity, concentration difficulties or felt lost but coped up effectively. Adding to it, students have also put in efforts to correct their disturbed sleep cycle. On the whole, it was found that this pandemic has positively altered the student's lifestyle. Though in the beginning, they were a sufferer of bad lifestyle, COVID-19 did bring in fear and a strong emphasis on good lifestyle. Therefore, it can be concluded by saying that this pandemic was an eye opener for the college students to follow a healthy lifestyle.

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