

Effects Of Lockdown 2.0 On The Mental Health Of Performing Arts Students

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Abstract

Humans have evolved from apes to the present form of humans for over 6 million years (approximately). Many perceptive abilities, cognitive abilities, various types of intelligences have all evolved through certain process which involves many external factors like the climate, soil, water, types of animals in the surroundings, general weather conditions, the threats they faced (Natural and from other humans) and, yet the most important factors were humans.

1. Introduction

Humans have evolved from apes to the present form of humans for over 6 million years (approximately). Many perceptive abilities, cognitive abilities, various types of intelligences have all evolved through certain process which involves many external factors like the climate, soil, water, types of animals in the surroundings, general weather conditions, the threats they faced (Natural and from other humans) and, yet the most important factors were humans.

Humans interacting with humans, either to form alliances, or to fight, have been in some sort of contact. The non-verbal forms of communication like body-language, mental vibrations and energy expelled from others have always impacted in shaping an individual and on a larger scale the society.

Being the weaker section and occupying the lower levels in the food chain, humans began their journey being hunted down by the predators at the apex of the food chain, where we lacked in brute physical strength, we learnt to compensate with 2 fully functional opposable thumbs and a spine that enabled us to be erect and found our way to the apex of the food chain.

When fighting for survival was already our most immediate concern, we had yet another, equally dangerous element that posed as a threat to the survival of our species, the birthing process which happens as a premature birth, that is the full development of the body and brain does not happen in the mother's womb, which increased the need to form societies and depend upon each other for survival. As and when the humans evolved so did the concept of a society, so much so that humans have been calling themselves the "Social Animals".

A big part of being involved in a society is to interact and explore, everyone seeks to be entertained there are various platforms to pursue this activity, concerts, art exhibition, dance recitals, theatre, movies, and so on. Performing arts has been part of this since centuries, people gather in an art space and interact, communicate, share feelings, express and experience intense emotions that are close to their own personal experience. And performing artists are used to interacting with such crowds and providing the platform to laugh, cry, feel remorse, fear and so on. The journey of an art enthusiast (at the stage of learning, and an artist when performing) is quiet peculiar since this is the time when they come face to face with an audience to learn and grow. Although

it is true that every individual learns and grows throughout, it is very essential that young artist have a constant interaction with the audience, to know more about themselves and the audience.

At a deeper level, people tend to choose an artistic career because they have a need for a greater and more profound social experience. The need to strengthen the emotional roots are much more in an aspiring artist when compared with many other professions. The effects of this isolation through lockdown (which is necessary for our survival at this point) on students who were exposed to the vibrant, socially charged lifestyle is immense, which may not manifest itself as a short term effect, will definitely have an effect in the long term in their growth as a performing artist.

In the present situation of the SARS COVID-19 Pandemic situation, humans are battling millions of years-old habits of being in a societal condition to isolating themselves especially due to the lockdown imposed by the governments. Of course, such isolation is seen in spiritually advanced beings to learn more about the true nature of the self and so on, that is a conscious choice made by people who are ready for such isolation. For everyone who is not ready for such isolation it is almost torturous, which is why we have JAILS which restricts all social activities, as a form of punishment (majorly) and for the protection of the innocent.

The present isolation is forced onto us as a last resort of survival and to reduce the risk of mass extinction.

This research is carried on to find out the effects of the lockdown 2.0 on mental health of performing arts students who are restricted from mingling in social situations and are isolated as an effect of the SARS COVID-19 pandemic.

The survey takes the PERMAH profiler to measure the positive negative emotions, engagement, or the level of involvement in activities, interpersonal relationships of the subject, the subject's sense of meaning and purpose of life, the achievements and the sense of accomplishments, and the general outlook on health which is a very important factor of well-being.

PERMAH stands for

P :- Positive and negative emotions

E :- Engagement

R :- Relationships

M :- Meaning

A :- Accomplishments

H :- Health

2. Review Of Literature

The topic of study effects of lockdown 2.0 on the mental health of performing arts students' is a study that was much needed in the Lockdown Version 2.0 in Karnataka. Karnataka has recorded a total 3,75,350 (2,09,932 (F) and 165418 (M)) students graduating from the bachelor's program in 2019 in Karnataka alone.

With such numbers rolling into the educational program with numbers only increasing each year, the global pandemic crisis has posed a herculean challenge in the field of education. The survey and research mapped the mental health of students of the age group 18-21 undergoing formal education in the online platforms using the PERMA test.

Will isolation and restricted social interaction affect the psychological processes of young minds? This research also tries to explore the needs and necessities of a physical place with sufficient touch with the outside world.

The research conducted by Usama Rehman et.al. on Depression, Anxiety and Stress Among Indians in Times of Covid-19 Lockdown attempted to understand the psychological distress of individuals during the lockdown which included a variety of participants from students, teachers, researchers to mental health professionals . it also included doctors, nurses and homemakers, business people and not employed individuals. This test concluded that students and health care professionals needed special attention due to stress.

Bijoy Chhetri et.al. conducted a research with an objective to determine the effects of the prolonged break from academic activities and staying at home which included 1536 students scaled on the PSS (Perceived Stress Survey) by the snowball sampling method which concluded that students were generally stressed during the lockdown and that the students' mental health must be continually monitored. This survey concluded that the

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students' mental health needs to be continuously monitored especially during the pandemic, since there is a fear factor leading to stress about their studies and future careers.

Mathew Browning et.al. worked on the psychological impacts from COVID-19 among university students, in this study, the cross-sectional data were collected through web-based questionnaires from seven U.S. universities, which included 2,534 applications, segregated as 61% women, 79% non-Hispanic Whites, and 20% from graduate students. Risk factors across seven states in the United States, concluded that the efforts have been inadequate to recognize and address college students' mental health challenges, especially during a pandemic and this could have long-term consequences on their health and education.

3. Methodology

Participants

This study indulged in an online survey during the 2nd lockdown in Karnataka i.e. from April- May, 2021. Data was collected from 69 performing arts and related students (23 males and 46 females) between the age groups of 18-23 studying in UG or PG courses.

Materials

The PERMAH questionnaire assesses the following areas:

Positive and Negative emotions- Emotions are an important part of our well-being. One can depict negative to positive. Positive emotions include, joy and contentment. Negative emotions include, sadness, anger and anxiousness.

Engagement-Engagement means one's ability to get absorbed or holding interest in any activity .Some individuals show high levels of engagement and are completed lost in one activity some others show low engagement levels

Relationships- When a relationship is fulfilling one can see that they feel loves, valued by other people or even supported . Holding positive relationships plays an important role in everyone's life

Meaning- Holding a sense of purpose in life , having an idea as to in which direction one's life is going, feeling valued or connecting to any faith with a meaning goal provides a sense of meaning to many.

Accomplishment- One can accomplish in life with honours or awards that they receive, they also feel that they are on top of their game and responsibilities. It includes a feeling that one can complete their daily tasks and responsibilities

Health – Physical and mental health is an important part of all our lives . This scale measures one's health and one's feeling of being healthy on a regular basis

The items are divided into six sub-scales which includes Positive emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Accomplishment, and Health.

Answers are provided on an 11-point scale ranging from 0 to 10. Some questions need to be answered on a scale of 0 being never and 10 being always; of 0 being terrible and 10 being excellent; of 0 being not at all and 10 being completely; of 0 being terrible and 10 being excellent. Responses varies as per questions.

Analysis method

Categorically variables were presented as numbers and percentages. For analysis, responses were divided into different sections. Percentages were identified between genders and were denoted with the help of a pie chart.

The main outcome of the study was to determine the gender differences on the various variables on the PERMA profiler. This helps us identify which gender was higher or lower on Positive and Negative emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Accomplishment and Health

4. Results And Discussions

In the current study, effects of lockdown 2.0 on the mental health of performing arts students the students from whom data was collected are performing arts students who are used to a lot of human interaction, the general exchange of energy of other humans, relatively extraverted, and a dominant kinesthetic lifestyle.

A performing artist's students' life is majorly dominated with group activities, team building exercises and are encouraged to lower their inhibitions to be able to perform in front of large crowds. This is a research to measure the psychological impacts on performing art students in the version 2.0 of lockdown

Initially, the participants had to fill in demographic information such as age, gender, and name. The self-rated test which conducted included the questions adopted from the PERMA Profiler which the participants did at the convenience of their own home and environment. The measure taken was a self-rated questionnaire of a 10-pointer scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Respondents were asked various questions that helped in assessing all aspects of the PERMAH Profiler, namely Positive emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Accomplishment and Health for the purposes of analysis. Although the numbers of male (23) and female (46) participants as shown in *Fig 1*. were different, the analysis was effectively undertaken with prominent results showcasing how various factors affected performing arts students who are used to a socially active lifestyle during the lockdown 2.0 through the 2021 Pandemic.

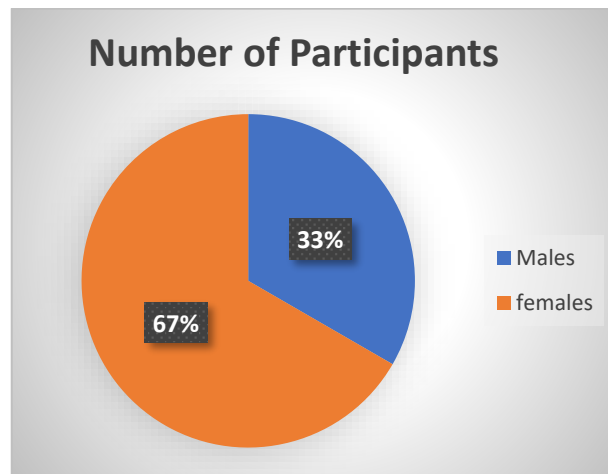


Fig 1. Number of male and female participants

The result of the research shows that 51% of the female population and 49% male population as shown in *Fig. 2* of the male population denoted negative emotions/feeling which causes an individual to be miserable and sad. Negative emotions can make a person dislike themselves, it can also reduce one's confidence as well as self-esteem levels, it can also hamper our general life satisfaction. Negative emotions include hate, anger, jealousy, and sadness.

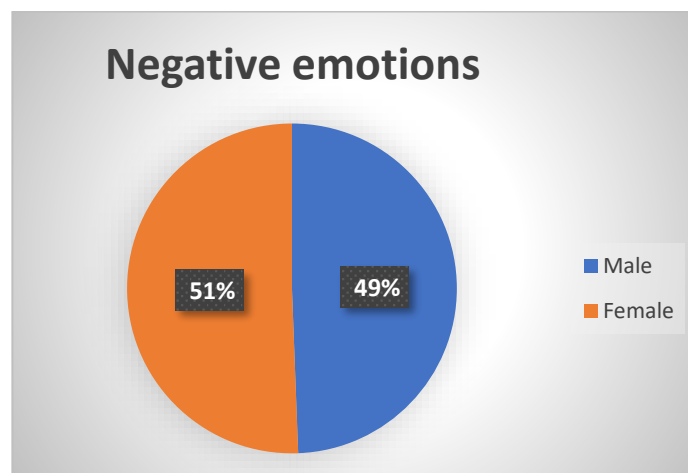


Fig 2. Negative emotions

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Fig 3 denotes engagement in 48% of females and 52% of males .The act of being engaged would therefore be one to which another act is joined, which it follows without obligation or coercion and males have a higher percentage of engagement compared to women.

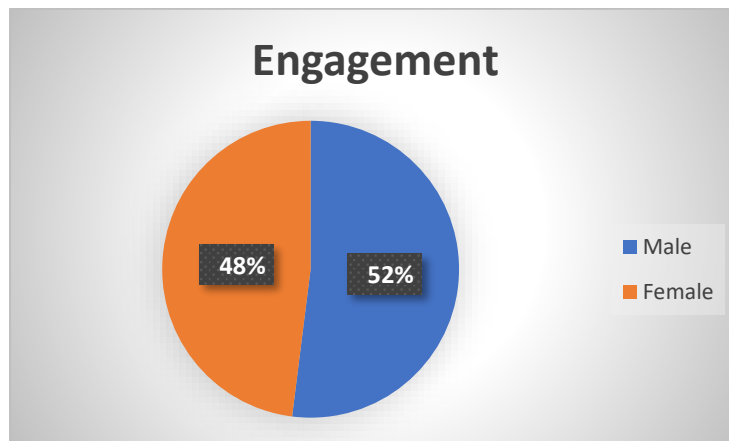


Fig 3. Engagement

Relationships help us stay connected to ourselves and others around us . Healthy relationships helps to increase happiness, improve general health conditions and reduce stress. Many studies have proved that people who enjoy healthy relationships are prone to more happiness and less stress levels . In this research 51% of female students displayed having good relationships and 49% of male students showed good relationships which can be seen in a pictorial form in **Fig 4**. A huge population of male and female students displayed having problems in their relationships.

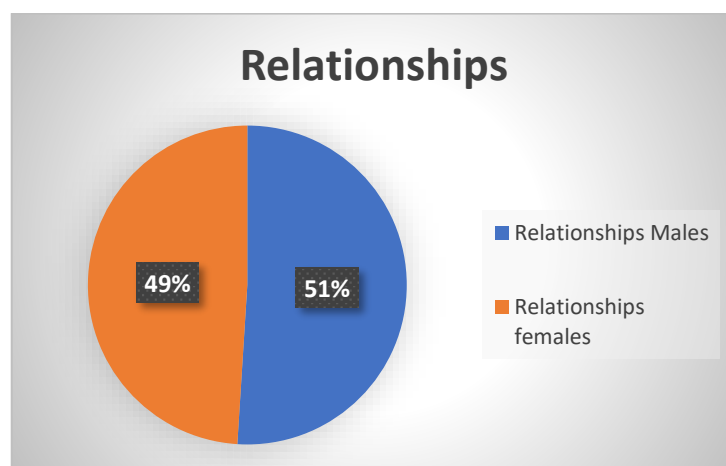


Fig. 4 Relationships

Under the area meaning in life, **Fig 5** shows that, 51% of females and 49% male students showed that they have found meaning to their life. The meaning one holds to life, or answers to some question like "What is meaning in life ?", means living or existence . Many of us question as to "Why we are born?", "What life holds for us?", or "What purpose does our existence hold ?" all of these questions have been answered for the students, but we should also note that a large number of students have not found their meaning in their life.

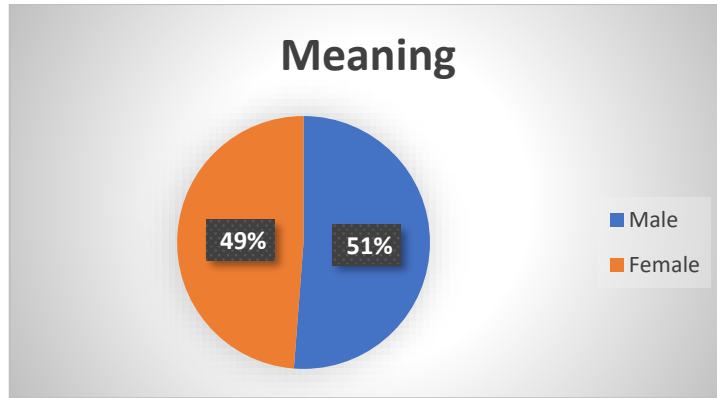


Fig. 5 Meaning

Both males and females have equal sense of accomplishment which is an average shown in **Fig. 6** of 50% as indicated in the survey. The successful achievement of a task is only seen by 50 percent of both males and females which is again a matter of concern among the population.

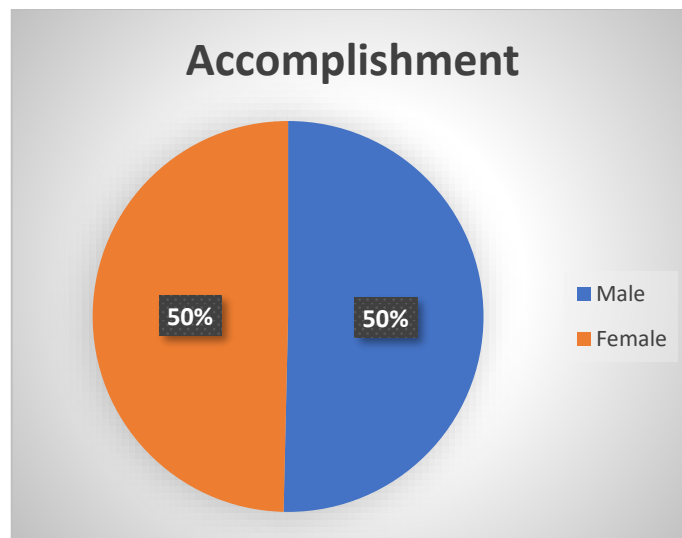


Fig. 6 Accomplishment

In the area of health 48% females and 52% males showed good health, **Fig 7** depicts the same. Health includes physical, mental and social being of an individual and absence of diseases. One can stay healthy in numerous ways from eating a balanced diet to consuming fresh fruits and vegetables and staying fit through exercising regularly.

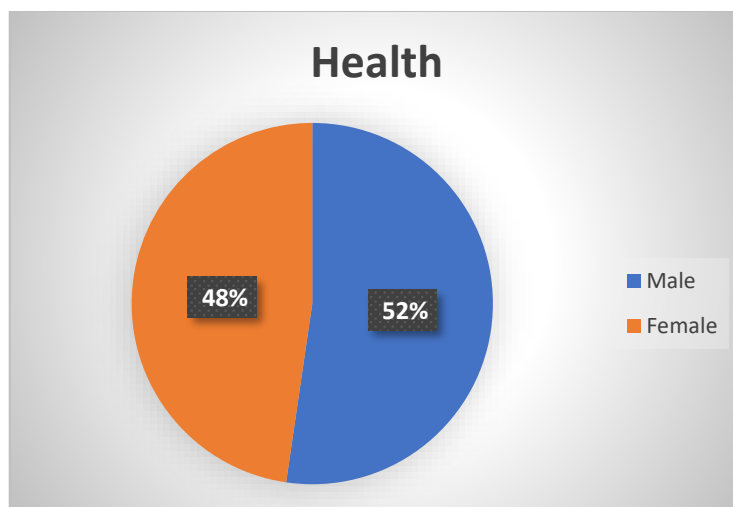


Fig. 7 Health

Happiness is a state which includes feelings of satisfaction, joy, contentment and fulfillment. It includes high life satisfaction levels. In this study Boys displayed 47% of happiness and girls displayed more happiness with 53% compared to boys *Fig 8* shows the above data in pictorial form . Individuals can increase happiness through a variety of techniques like practicing mindfulness, good quality of sleep, travel, smile and have healthy friends are some of the ways to enhance happiness.

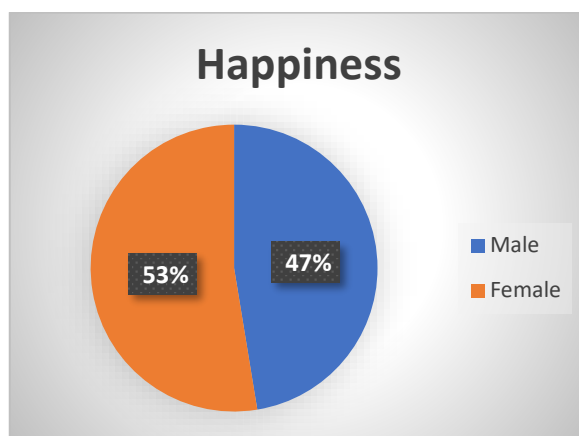


Fig. 8 Happiness

5. Conclusion

The impacts of the social isolation due to the lockdown can be seen in all the areas of PERMAH with scores being in and around 47 – 51 % in all categories. 51% of the female population and 49% of the male shown in *fig. 2* are experiencing hardships in experiencing emotions that is essential for their growth. *Fig 3.* Shows engagement between 48% of females and 52% of males which is a low score for students who are pursuing a course that is high in engaging activities. 51% of female students displayed having good relationships and 49% of male's students showed good relationships shown in *fig 4*, public and social relations are an integral part of performing arts and this too has seen a drop. The sense of meaning and purpose stands at 49% for females and 51% for males, which needs to be nurtured more in the future. *Fig. 6* shows the sense of accomplishment among the male and female participants to be 50% which is a low score for any field not only performing arts. *Fig. 7*, shows the health which also has a low score due to lack of social activity, *Fig 8*, depicts happiness, which stands at 53% for females and 47% for males which is also a low score.

The research concludes that all the aspects of PERMAH should be looked into and students need to be carefully guided and nurtured so that their lives, careers and social relationships are not permanently affected by the effects of the lockdown during the COVID-Pandemic.

6. Limitations

- Subjects were restricted to small numbers
- Only student subjects were considered
- Only performing arts subjects were taken for this study

Though COVID-19 has led to immense psychological problems among people under the prevailing health crisis all the other factors have not been considered

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