

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON EVENT INDUSTRY AND PERCEIVED STRESS OF EVENT MANAGEMENT STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic imprisonment has wedged all sectors worldwide. The epidemic has not only solely brought risk of death from infection, but has additionally placed intolerable psychological pressure on students across totally different age teams and courses. This analysis paper notably studies the impact of covid-19 scenario on Media and Event management sector and students following Event Management Courses in Asian country. There has been each negative and positive impact of the Covid-19 on Media and Events business that is explained in thorough detail. This study additionally makes an attempt to know the perceived anxiety and stress of event Management students and investigates student attitudes toward online learning, particularly the necessity and importance of skills sweetening throughout this significant section. Students' angle towards online learning was explored through close-ended queries. Their perceived stress levels were administered through the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS). A random sample of (n=301) students participated within the current analysis. A majority were men (n=159, 52.8%); the common age was 16-18. Most students reported moderate levels of perceived stress and psychological and corporeal anxiety. The perceived stress was witnessed by the common correlation with student skills, specifically time management and procrastination, yet as student life. Psychological anxiety was acknowledged by perceived stress, which was assumed by student life. Students found that participating in on-line learning enabled them to shift attention faraway from the pandemic whereas the emotional support from lecturers expedited for them to address this era. However, lack of attention and focus, minimized motivation to attend lessons and study, restricted handiness of area reception, distraction from family, and having multiple assignments throughout the imprisonment were major challenges students were facing online learning.

Keywords : Stress, Event Management, Perceived Stress Scale (PSS)

INTRODUCTION

The worldwide severity of Covid-19 has resulted in lockdowns in most countries which has taken a toll on higher education. As most countries began following physical distancing, it has created a lot of negative impact on all the sectors, including events and media. Not only has it affect the Event Industry, but it has also forced most higher education

universities and colleges to shift to online learning within a very short span of time. They also had to change the way they functioned and communicated with their staff and students (Symonds Quacquarelli, 2020). These changes, along with other drastic measures taken to curb the pandemic, have affected the lifestyle and functioning of students who are engaged in higher education. Studies conducted

during this period have found that higher education students have been dramatically affected by the spread of COVID-19, especially after facing travel restrictions, isolation, and quarantining, physical distancing, as well as dormitory and border closure (SymondsQuacquarelli, 2020). Since most Event Management Institutes are in Mumbai, they have students from different parts of country who had to go back to their hometown in time of this pandemic. These changes affected both students' plans and priorities and their interest in attending online classes. Although, while some students reported that they were enjoying the online classes, others, due to the closure of the educational institutions' impact on their lifestyles, poor network range and connections, and other psychological reasons, reported lack of motivation and negative attitudes towards online learning (Quacquarelli Symonds, 2020). Being at home during the Covid-19 and the closure of educational institutions were considered as major reasons for students feeling disconnected from their social circles and society as a whole (Killan, 2020). In some cases, students reported negative experiences while returning home during the pandemic because of unpleasant and unfavorable family environment.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study can be divided in two aspects- the impact on the event Industry and perceived stress levels of Event Management Students. Based on the assumption that students' mental health may deteriorate over prolonged periods of physical distancing and online learning, this study aims to investigate the level of perceived anxiety and stress and explore student attitudes toward online learning, including the interactions among learning skills, student life, attitudes toward online learning, with anxiety levels and perceived stress. Studies in recent years have found that students who had better social support and higher learning skills had lower levels of anxiety (HyseniDuraku&Hoxha, 2018).

Other studies that focused on the same population group have confirmed the presence of significant interactions among the use of technology, concerns and fears before bedtime, and sleeplessness or insomnia, and higher levels of psychological distress among adolescents (Hyseni Duraku et al., 2018). The mental health of young people, including students, is considered a challenge to public health and society world over, including in India, especially because of the lack of professional services for this population group (Patel, Flisher, Hetrick, &McGorry, et al., 2018). Education institutions that cover both the emotional and the academic areas have proven to increase students' productivity, improve academic performance, and enhance learning. Universities that support students' wellbeing can also increase students' feeling of belonging within their education system. Thus, students feel safer and more fulfilled in relation to others and also acquire appropriate skills of adaptation and cope better in stressful situations (Sadock, Sadock, & Kaplan, 2009; Kieling et al., 2011, in HyseniDuraku et al., 2018). The needs of students for enhanced emotional support during the current pandemic have also been reported worldwide. Students have reported that Universities can play a vital role when students are practicing social isolation by communicating with them and providing emotional support throughout these difficult times (Quacquarelli Symonds, 2020).

While the media and events sector is currently grappling with different challenging issues, however, as people strive to come back to normalcy, eventually the sector may be amongst the first few to recover, and continue to provide to everyone across all mediums and segments, the much needed entertainment (EEMA, 2020). Therefore the current study findings can serve as a baseline through which higher education institutions can identify the pandemic-related factors that are impacting students' learning and make any necessary adaptations to their education programs in order better to support students and facilitate their learning. This study is also significant in giving insights on the current

scenario of the event industry and the near future scope, given the lockdown conditions and rules for social distancing. These findings aim to understand the consequences of lockdown on the event industry and the relevant importance of addressing mental health issues and student well-being at the university level for event management students and encourage universities to respond by building up collaborations with students, and increasing and motivating learning within their current and future plans for the period after COVID-19.

OBJECTIVES

This study aims to highlight the following aspects with reference to the novel Covid-19 situation.

- Impact on the Event and Media Industry
- Event Management Students' Perceived Stress levels
- Short term Future scope for the Event Industry

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research is done on both primary and secondary level. It tries to understand the report submitted by EEMA (Events and Entertainment Management Associations), along with various articles published relevant to the industry. A primary research has been conducted on the students of Event Management courses to understand their perceived stress levels in this time and their perceptions towards this new method of online education. A total of 301 respondents participated of which 142 were female, and 187 were between 16-21 age bracket. All the respondents are from different parts of the country and are associated with one prominent Event Management Institute in Mumbai.

IMPACT ON MEDIA AND EVENT INDUSTRY

The whole media sector (including social media) has come to the forefront and into the limelight in the ongoing global pandemic caused by the corona virus.

Seldom has the role of the media come into such sharp relief at any time in the history. While it has come in for a lot of appreciation due to the brave and untiring efforts of its “front line workers” who are out there reporting among the hotspots, there are some sections of the media (and social media) have also come in for severe criticism for spreading misinformation and creating what has been termed as an “Infodemic” in the midst of this pandemic. It seems that along with fighting the virus, the country also has to fight the spread of disinformation and in this, the media has a major role to play. Nevertheless, the novel Corona has done some damage to the revenue to be generated by the Media and Events Industry. Below The Line Activities (BTL) like street plays, theatre and other skills in small and other outdoor places have seen a considerable decline leading to adverse impact on the less-recognized yet high contributing segment. BTL activities employ a significant number of talented youth and also add value addition to the industry. The impact on this segment will lead to large unemployment leaving a large number of youths in lurch and helpless. In addition to the extended lockdowns adversely impacting a large number of daily wage earners, and freelance creative talents, decreasing revenues and uncertainty around the ecosystem for recovery from the pandemic, unfortunately also triggered a number of layoffs and pay-cuts in the media industry. In these circumstances the social and charitable measures taken by several media bodies, including broadcasters, IPRS, Producers Guild of India and other industry bodies, are certainly a much-needed lifeboat to sustain livelihoods of composers, artists, singers, authors, and daily wage earners in the entertainment industry. Although the physical avenues of revenue generations have supposedly taken a big hit, the online mediums seem to have outdone during such times. As financial markets fluctuate with the spread of the pandemic, the reach of, and engagement with, digital content within the “Business News” category have surged. The number of unique visitors increased by 22% between the

weeks of March 9-15, 2020 and March 16-22, 2020, while the increase in total visits was 34%, and total minutes increased by 27% (Business News, EEMA, 2020). Government Consumers have also shown increased interest in content hosted on “Government” sites, whether that is the latest number of COVID- 19 positive cases or the most updated guidelines to be followed. Engagement, in terms of visits, increased by 39% and time spent on them increased by 27%. As people sought information about this relatively novel illness, traffic to health-related websites increased. Between the weeks of Feb. 10-16 and Mar 16-22, 2020, visits to health information websites and mobile apps increased by 25%.The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a toll on almost every industry in the world and the Indian Wedding Industry, estimated around \$50 billion, has now come to a halt. However, industry experts believe that Indian weddings will return with spike in growth in the coming years and it will continue to be bigger and better once the virus threat is down to become negligible.All the summer and spring wedding at 11 venues under FNP Gardens are either postponed or cancelled. Many couples have chosen to postpone their weddings to the winter season of 2020 or the beginning of 2021, whereas few who have cancelled the bigger celebration are now opting for an intimate wedding. Because of these cancellations, all the associated units such as caterers, designers, make-up artists, wedding vendors or planners have been affected to the core. The revenue continues to stay below expectations. But there is no question Indian weddings will return with spike in growth in the coming years (VikaasGutgutia, Founder of FNP).

EVENT MANAGEMENT STUDENTS PERCEIVED STRESS

The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) is that the most generally used psychological instrument for measure the perception of stress (Cohen, S., Kamarck, T., and Mermelstein, R. (1983). It's a live of the degree to that things in one's life are appraised as trying. Things

were designed to faucet however unpredictable, uncontrollable, and full respondents notice their lives. The dimensions conjointly include variety of direct queries regarding current levels of practiced stress. The PSS was designed to be used in community samples with a minimum of a college/ secondary school education. The things are simple to grasp, and therefore the response alternatives are straightforward to know. Moreover, the queries are of a general nature and therefore are comparatively freed from content specific to any population cluster. The queries within the PSS raise regarding feelings and thoughts throughout the last month. In every case, respondents are asked however typically they felt an explicit method. PSS scores are obtained by reversing responses (e.g., 0 = 4, 1 = 3, 2 = 2, 3 = 1 & 4 = 0) to the four positively stated items (items 4, 5, 7, & 8) and then summing across all scale items. A short 4 item scale can be made from questions 2, 4, 5 and 10 of the PSS 10 item scale.

Table: Norm Table for the PSS 10 item inventory

Category	Number	Mean	SD
Gender			
Male	159	30.51	6.56
Female	142	30.56	6.68
Age			
16-18	32	30.4	6.53
19-21	155	30.47	6.56
22-25	107	30.56	6.67
25+	7	30.88	6.87

The data collected through the online survey of 301 Event management students found that majority of them suffered from social stress and anxiety, a major reason of which being the lockdown due to Covid-19. There was slight differentiation between the results obtained by males and females, with females being more prone to stress generated in lockdown. A standard deviation ranging from 6.53 to 6.58 was

recorded. The most affected group was students aged 25+ as they are more susceptible to the employment conditions prevalent during these uncertain times. The least affected age group was 16-18, or otherwise the first year students who seem to be least affected by the unfavorable macro conditions.

FUTURE SCOPE OF EVENT INDUSTRY

Going forward, the industry will need to re-think various operational and legal aspects of the business, such as timelines, legal commitments, production costs and schedules, etc., in order to adjust to the 'new normal' being presented to the world. OTT platforms, where a large chunk of the content library is dependent on partnerships with third parties, may have to think of innovative ways of updating their existing content libraries, given that the production of new content may take a lot longer than earlier anticipated. Media companies including productionhouses will also need to find ways of increasing their use and reliance on technology. In addition, contractual arrangements and legal provisions will need to be re-evaluated wherever possible, so as to appropriately account for such risks occurring in future and mitigate losses. However, on the bright side, the demand for home consumption mediums including digital streaming services, which are hugely popular since even before the pandemic, is likely to increase even further. In the long run, this may in fact benefit subscription-based services which may be able to penetrate even further amongst viewers.

CONCLUSION

After reviewing various secondary data and conducting field research, it can be concluded that although the physical events have taken a hit, there is still a scope on the online platform. There has been a change in the mindset and outlook of the public, which in due course of time, can prove to be beneficial in recuperating for the events and media industry. The current situation has also taken a toll on the perceived stress levels of Event Management

students, and now more than ever, they need the support and guidance of the colleges and universities. There can still be further study done on the ways to improve the mental health of students during these tough times.

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