

ANALYSIS OF HEALTH STATUS OF PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS: PRE AND DURING COVID-19

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How to cite this article: Mohammad, A., Khan, M.F., Pahwa, T., Attri, P., Kumar, D., & Kazmi, Z. (September 2024). Analysis of health status of pre-service teachers: Pre and during Covid-19. Journal of Physical Education Research, Volume 11, Issue III, 27-35.

Received: July 17, 2024

Accepted: August 29, 2024

ABSTRACT

A healthy teacher creates a conducive learning environment for their students, and it is believed that physical, mental, and emotional well-being of teachers increases their self-esteem and reduces their stress level. This study focuses on analysing and comparing how pre-service teachers rate their overall health before and during CoVid-19. Data was collected from 60 pre-service teachers who were B.Ed. 1st year students and have opted for 'Health and Physical Education' as their elective paper in Department of Teacher Training and Non-formal Education, Jamia Millia Islamia, a top ranked central university in India. The responses provided by pre-service teachers on "Health Status Questionnaire" was treated as primary data for this study. This data was collected for the period of 5 academic sessions (3 before CoViD-19 and 2 during CoViD-19). A descriptive statistic was applied on the collected data. The findings revealed that the overall health status of the pre-service teachers was slightly affected during CoVid-19 pandemic. It was found that the overall physical health of the pre-service teachers was decreased during CoVid-19. This study also highlighted the importance of physical, mental, emotional, and psycho-social well-being of pre-service teachers as these variables influences teaching-learning process.

Keywords: Covid-19, pre-service teachers, health status.

1. INTRODUCTION

The word 'health' is a state of complete physical, mental, and social wellbeing that includes resources to ensure an individual performs all the functions throughout the day with the desired quality (Glazzard, & Rose 2019; World Health Organisation, 2020). Studies documented that those who are physically active tend to be healthier and lead a more active lifestyle as compared to the adults who are not physically active (Glazzard & Rose 2019; World Health Organisation, 2020). The traits of healthy lifestyle include an adequate amount of attention to oneself through behaviour, specific actions, and self-awareness (Sivkovych, Slyvka, & Hamerska, 2020).

The youths who opted for the teaching profession must know the fact that along with the teaching-learning process, they are also responsible for looking after the health of school children, directly or indirectly (Ranga, & Majra, 2020). Therefore, physical fitness is recognized as a crucial aspect of education as a process. In addition, the literature in the past few years confirms that regular exercise impacts a person's social wellbeing, including improved social relationships, increased self-esteem, and reduced stress (Castillo, & Molina-

Garcia, 2009). If teachers are healthy then they will be able to provide a conducive learning environment for their students. Studies also confirm that physical and mental health are linked with the teacher's performance in school. Teachers' mental and emotional health affects their ability to plan a lesson, manage the classroom, do their share responsibilities, evaluate work, and maintain healthy relationships with their colleagues (Glazzard, & Rose, 2020; Teacher Wellbeing Index 2018).

A teacher who is active and connects with their students with enthusiasm, is the idol teacher amongst the students (Glazzard, & Rose, 2020). These teachers are best performer in their educational institutes. Here, it is important to mention that teachers' health is a key component in achieving educational goals. If we maintain good health, there would be very rare chance of falling ill. The teachers who are healthy enough, have very few chances of getting ill and missing their classes. Miller, Murnane and Willett (2008) reported significant reductions in student achievement was found, if a teacher is out of the classroom for more than ten days a year. This indicates the importance of the health of a teacher. Health related issues such as stress and physical health are the significant causes of teachers' absenteeism which may affect students' performance too (Obeng-Denteh, Yeboah, Sam, & Monkah, 2011). Absenteeism also impacts the quality of teacher-student relationships (Jamal et. al., 2013).

The pre-service teachers are the key personnel who can inculcate and promote health and wellbeing in schools. The outbreak of CoViD-19 affected the life of millions, and the teachers were not exceptional as their life was also affected. This outbreak brought a new lifestyle and workstyle wherein people found themselves more occupied with work and struggled with day-to-day challenges (Codilla, Arreza, & Manatad., 2022). This sudden and prolonged change in lifestyle as well as workstyle causes several health issues. Numerous studies showed that the teaching profession became more challenging during CoViD-19 and it enhanced stress on teachers due to job insecurities, workload, and the pressure of dealing with new-normal and family health. Consequences of the CoViD-19 impacted teachers' health adversely, hence they start skipping or adjusting their online classes according to their will. In view of that, this study was conceptualized to analyze the health-related aptitude change of prospective teachers before and during CoViD-19 outbreak.

2. METHODS AND MATERIALS

2.1 Participants

The participants of the study were derived from the graduates of Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) programme of Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. A total of 60 B.Ed. students were participated in the study. These 60 participants were comprising those B.Ed. 1st Year students who studied 'Health and Physical Education' as their elective paper in the 1st year of study and were enrolled in 5 different academic sessions starting from 2017. Among, these 60 B.Ed. Students, 30 were those who completed their course before CoViD-19 and remaining were those completed their course during CoViD-19.

2.2 Tool for Data Collection

A questionnaire on 'Health Status' was developed and was used to collect data from B.Ed. students. The questionnaire contains five domains namely- Physical Life, Mental Health, Stress Evaluation, Life Enjoyment & Overall Quality of Life.

2.3 Procedure of Data Acquisition

The questionnaire on health status was used to collect data from the pre-service teachers. As data was obtained from 5 different academic sessions, at the end of each academic session the teacher who teaches these students who opted 'Health and Physical Education' as their elective paper asked the students to record their responses on the 'Health Status Questionnaire'. For the academic sessions 2017-2018, 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 questionnaires were filled through offline mode and obtained data was treated as pre-CoViD-19 data, further, for the session 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 the data was filled through online mode (*google form was used*) and obtained data of these two academic sessions were treated as during-CoViD-19 data.

2.4 Data Analysis

Obtained raw data was entered in M.S. Excel Sheet for descriptive analysis. After entering raw data into M.S. Excel sheet frequency and percentage was computed for data interpretation.

3. RESULTS

The results of the statistical analysis are presented in the following table and graphs.

Table 1: Responses of the Pre-service teachers who responded before and during CoViD-19 on the sub domain 'Physical Life' (n=30)

	A		B		C		D	
Responses	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid
None	2	4	3	2	1	6	6	5
Rarely	12	16	6	12	12	10	14	13
Occasionally	7	8	11	11	9	11	8	11
Regularly	7	2	10	4	8	3	1	1
Constantly	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
	E		F		G		H	
Responses	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid
None	11	9	13	17	7	9	0	2
Rarely	15	20	15	5	15	12	3	4
Occasionally	1	1	1	2	7	4	11	12
Regularly	2	0	1	5	1	3	13	10
Constantly	1	0	0	1	0	1	3	2

Legends- A: Presence of physical neck/backache pain, headaches, B: Feelings of tension, stiffness, lack of flexibility, C: Incidence of fatigue or low energy, D: Incidence of colds or flu, E: Incidence of nausea, diarrhoea or constipation, F: Incidence of allergies, eczema, or skin rash, G: Incidence of dizziness or light-headedness, H: Ability to work out or engage in activity

When pre-service teachers were asked about their physical life, approximately 40% pre-service teacher used to rarely feel back/neck pain and headache before CoViD. The percentage increased by 13.3% during CoViD i.e., 53.3% rarely feel body pain or/and headache. However, 6.7% used to feel constant pain before pain which reduced to 0% during CoViD.

Approximately 56% pre-service teachers rarely or occasionally experienced tension, stiffness, and lack of flexibility before CoVid. During CoVid 77% of the pre-service teachers

rarely or occasionally feel tension, stiffness, lack of flexibility however, none of them experienced constant tension, stiffness, and lack of flexibility before CoVid which increased by 3.3% amidst of CoVid.

Forty percent of pre-service teachers rarely experienced incidence of fatigue or low energy before CoVid, during CoVid it reduced by 6.7%. Whereas 30% pre-service teachers occasionally experienced fatigue or low energy which was increased by 6.7% during CoVid. None of the pre-service teachers had a constant incidence of fatigue or low energy. Around half of the pre-service teachers (46.7%) had a rare incidence of cold or flu that decreased by 3.4% during CoVid but, during CoVid 36.7% participants occasionally experienced cold or flu. There was no change in percentage of participants who had regular occurrences of cold or flu.

About thirty eight percent of the pre-service teachers had no incidence of nausea, diarrhoea or constipation before CoViD; during CoViD it was decreased to 30% for participants. Half of the pre-service teachers rarely experienced nausea, diarrhoea or constipation that increased to 66.7%. Only 3.3% pre-service teachers were facing this problem before CoViD which reduced to zero.

Approximately 90% of the pre-service teachers had never or rare incidence of allergies, eczema, or skin rash before CoViD. During CoViD it reduced to approx. 70%. Hence, almost 20% experienced problems of allergies, eczema or skin rash during CoViD. Seventy three percent of the pre-service teachers never or rarely felt dizziness or light headed before CoViD which decreased by 10% during CoViD. Almost 26.6% pre-service teachers occasionally or regularly experienced dizziness or light head before CoViD that reduced to 23.3% during CoViD.

All pre-service teachers were able to work out before CoViD however, 6.7% were not managed to do physical activity during CoViD. Around half of the pre-service teachers (53.3%) were able to do work out regularly before CoViD whereas, this percentage reduced to 40% during CoViD.

Table 2: Responses of the Pre-service teachers who responded before and during CoViD-19 on the sub domain of mental health (n=30)

Responses	Sub-domains of Mental Health											
	A		B		C		D		E		F	
	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid
None	6	3	0	0	9	14	6	5	2	5	7	3
Rarely	12	18	17	14	10	9	9	8	14	12	11	17
Occasionally	10	6	6	13	7	6	7	7	9	7	7	7
Regularly	2	3	4	3	1	1	3	9	5	6	3	3
Constantly	0	0	3	0	3	0	5	1	0	0	2	0

Legend- A: Presence of negative feelings or energy, B: Moodiness, temper, or anger outbursts, C: Difficulty in falling or staying asleep, D: Being overly worried about small things, E: Difficulty in thinking or concentrating and F: Feelings of depression or anxiety

On asking about their mental health most of the pre-service teachers (73.3%) experienced negative feelings or energy rarely or occasionally before CoViD which increased by 10% during CoViD. None of the pre-service teachers had experienced the presence of the negative feelings or energy before and during CoViD.

None of the pre-service teachers had moodiness, temper, or anger outbursts before or during CoViD. Around 78% of them experienced rarely and occasionally moodiness, temper, or anger outburst before CoViD and 90% of them experienced rarely and occasionally during CoViD. During CoViD, it reduced to 13.3% who had faced regular and constant moodiness, temper, or anger outbursts.

About 78% of the pre-service teachers never or rarely faced difficulty in falling or staying asleep during CoViD which was 63.3% before CoViD. More pre-service teachers were facing difficulty in falling or staying asleep regularly and constantly before CoViD i.e., 13.3% before CoViD and 3.3% during CoViD.

Half of the pre-service teachers never or rarely worried overly about small things which reduced to 43.4%. There is no change in the percentage of pre-service teachers who occasionally feel overly worried. However, the number increased regularly and constantly from 26.7% to 33.3%.

None of the pre-service teachers were constantly facing difficulty in thinking and concentrating before and during CoViD. Whereas the percentage increased from 16.7% to 10% for pre-service teachers who regularly faced issues in thinking or concentrating. Around 48% of them were having rare difficulty in thinking or concentrating.

Around seven percent of the pre-service teachers were having depression or anxiety constantly before CoViD which reduced to zero percent during CoViD. More than half of them (60%) never or rarely had the feeling of depression or anxiety before CoViD which increased by 6.7% during CoViD. There is no change in the percentage of pre-service teachers who occasionally or regularly felt depression or anxiety before and during CoViD.

Table 3: Responses of the Pre-service teachers who responded before and during CoViD-19 on the sub-domain of Stress Evaluation (n=30)

Responses	Sub-domains of Stress evaluation factors							
	A		B		C		D	
	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid
None	10	4	8	10	6	3	8	4
Rarely	5	12	12	11	13	10	10	5
Occasionally	8	7	9	3	6	11	7	12
Regularly	4	6	1	6	3	6	4	7
Constantly	3	1	0	0	2	0	1	2
Responses	E		F		G		H	
	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid
None	3	5	8	5	6	3	4	13
Rarely	10	9	10	18	12	11	13	5
Occasionally	7	8	10	7	4	13	6	9
Regularly	7	4	1	0	5	2	4	3
Constantly	3	4	1	0	3	1	3	0

Legend- A: Family, B: Significant Relationship, C: Health, D: Finances, E: Work/School, F: General Well-being, G: Emotional Well-being and H: Coping with daily problems

On the domain of stress related factors about 24% of the pre-service teachers occasionally felt stress in the family during CoViD which was 26.7% before CoViD and around 23% of them regularly or constantly felt stressed before and after CoViD. However, half of the pre-service teachers had never or rarely experienced stress before CoViD and 53.3% during CoViD. Therefore, overall stress of the family of pre-service teachers increased after CoViD. Thirty percent of the pre-service teachers were able to occasionally maintain relationships before CoViD which reduced to 10% during CoViD. More than half of the pre-service teachers (66.7%) were never or rarely able to maintain significant relationships before CoViD that increased to 70% during CoViD.

More pre-service teachers had health stress during CoViD. Approximately 63% pre-service teachers never or rarely had stress about health before CoViD which decreased to 43.3% during CoViD. More than half of the pre-service teachers (56.7%) had occasionally or

rarely stress about health during CoViD which was 30% before CoViD. Around 7% of them had constant health stress before CoViD.

Findings revealed that constant financial stress was increased by 3.3% among pre-service teachers during CoViD. There was an increase of around 10% in the number of pre-service teachers who had stress of managing finances regularly before and during CoViD. Also, there was a 17% increase with respect to pre-service teachers who occasionally had stress of managing finances before and during CoViD. It was found that overall, the pre-service teachers' stress of managing finances increased during the CoViD-19 pandemic.

The constant work or school pressure increased during CoViD from 10% to 13.3%. Around 33% pre-service teachers had rare work or school pressure before CoViD and 30% during CoViD. Some pre-service teachers (23.3%) occasionally had work or school stress before CoViD-19 and increased to 26.7% during CoViD.

Percentage of pre-service teachers who had stress of general well-being rarely increased from 33.3% to 60% during CoViD. However, 33.3% pre-service teachers had stress of general well-being occasionally before CoViD, but it decreased to 23.3% during CoViD.

As per the data, there was a drastic increase in change in percentage of pre-service teachers who occasionally felt emotional stress i.e., from 13.3% to 43.3%. There was a difference of 10% in the percentage of pre-service teachers who never had emotional stress before and during CoViD. Whereas, 40% pre-service teachers had rare stress before CoViD which reduced to 36.7% during CoViD.

None of the pre-service teachers had constant stress of coping up with their daily problems during CoViD but it was 10% before CoViD. Around 13% of them had regular stress before CoViD which reduced by 3.3%. Around 43% pre-service teachers had no stress of coping up with their daily problems during CoViD. However, 20% of the pre-service teachers occasionally felt stress before CoViD and 30% during CoViD.

Table 4: Responses of the Pre-service teachers who responded before and during CoViD-19 on the sub-domain of Life Enjoyment (n=30)

Responses	Sub-domains of Life Enjoyment											
	A		B		C		D		E		F	
	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid
Extensively	7	9	4	7	7	10	10	2	6	3	8	5
Considerably	14	5	12	9	11	12	11	13	6	10	4	11
Moderately	7	13	10	10	7	6	7	11	13	12	11	11
Slightly	2	3	4	1	3	2	2	1	3	4	6	2
None	0	0	0	3	2	0	0	3	2	1	1	1

Legend- A: Experiences of relaxation, ease, or well-being, B: Confidence in your ability to deal with adversity, C: Experiences of relaxation, ease, or well-being, D: Compassion and acceptance of others, E: The Level of Recreation in your life and F: The Level of Recreation in your life

When pre-service teachers were asked about life enjoyment factor, around 23% pre-service teachers were extensively experienced relaxation, ease, or well-being before CoViD which increased to 30% during CoViD. Around 47% pre-service teachers considerably experienced relaxation, ease, or well-being before CoViD and 16.7% during CoViD. None of the pre-service teachers were not able to deal with adversity during CoViD. There was a 10% increase in pre-service teachers who slightly experienced relaxation, ease, or well-being.

Approximately 23% pre-service teachers were extensively confident about the ability to deal with adversity before CoViD and 33.3% during CoViD. Around 37% had considerable confidence about their ability in dealing with adversity before CoViD which increased to 40% during CoViD. None of the pre-service teachers was not able to deal with adversity during CoViD.

Around 13% of the pre-service teachers were extensively interested in maintaining a healthy lifestyle before CoViD which increased to 23.3% during CoViD. Forty percent pre-service teachers were interested in maintaining a healthy lifestyle before CoViD and 30% during CoViD. There was no change in percentage of pre-service teachers interested moderately before and after CoViD. Whereas there was a 10% increase in pre-service teachers who were not interested in maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Compassion and acceptance of others was reduced during CoViD. Most of the pre-service teachers were extensively or considerably compassionate towards others before CoViD which was reduced by 20% during CoViD. More pre-service teachers were moderately confident about the compassion and acceptance of others during CoViD.

Only 40% pre-service teachers extensively or considerably indulged in recreational activities before CoViD and 43.3% during CoViD. Whereas 43.3% of them moderately involved in recreational activities before CoViD which was reduced by 10% during CoViD.

Approximately 27% pre-service teachers were extensively devoted to the things that they enjoy in their life before CoViD, during CoViD the percentage reached to 16.7%. Around 13% pre-service teachers were considerably devoted to the things they enjoyed before CoViD which increased to 36.7% during CoViD. Whereas 3.3% pre-service teachers were not devoted to time before and during CoViD.

Table 5: Responses of the Pre-service teachers who responded before and during CoViD-19 on the sub-domain of Overall Quality of Life (n=30)

Responses	Sub-domains of Overall Quality of Life											
	A		B		C		D		E		F	
	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid	Pre-Covid	During Covid
Delighted	5	6	4	3	3	3	3	3	8	1	6	6
Mostly Satisfied	12	8	17	12	8	15	12	13	14	15	6	9
Mixed	12	13	8	14	16	10	12	11	6	10	11	14
Dissatisfied	0	1	1	0	2	1	2	2	2	4	6	1
Unhappy	1	2	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0

Legend- A: Personal Life, B: Spouse/significant other, C: Job and work you do, D: The handling of the problems in your life, E: Physical appearance and F: The way you adjust to change in your life

On asking of how participants rate their overall health, 56.7% pre-service teachers were happy or mostly satisfied in their personal life before CoViD, the percentage decreased to 46.7% during CoViD. Around 3.3% pre-service teachers were not happy in their personal life before CoViD, the percentage of unhappiness increased to 6.7% during CoViD.

During CoViD there was reduction in happiness in relationships with their partners. Thirteen percent pre-service teachers were happy with their relationship with spouse and others before CoViD which decreased by 3.3% during CoViD. Approximately 57% pre-service teachers were mostly satisfied in their relationship before CoViD which decreased to 40% during CoViD. None of the pre-service teachers were unhappy in their relationship before CoViD that increased to 3.3% during CoViD.

Around 27% pre-service teachers were mostly satisfied with their job before CoViD and this percentage increased to 50% during CoViD. Around 53% pre-service teachers had mixed feelings about job satisfaction before CoViD which reduced to 33.3% during CoViD. Only a few were unhappy (approx. 3%) with their job before and during CoViD.

Many pre-service teachers were mostly satisfied with the handling of the problems in life during CoViD as 10% were delighted and 43.3% were mostly satisfied with the way they were handling the problems during CoViD whereas it was 10% and 40% respectively before

CoViD. There was no change observed in percentage of dissatisfied or unhappy pre-service teachers before and during CoViD.

There was a drastic reduction in percentage of pre-service teachers satisfied with their physical appearance before and during CoViD. Most of the pre-service teachers (73.4%) were delighted or satisfied with their physical appearance before CoViD, but this percentage reduced to 53.3% during CoViD. Around 7% pre-service teachers were dissatisfied with their physical appearance before CoViD which increased by 6.6% during CoViD. However, 20% pre-service teachers had mixed feelings about their physical appearance before CoViD and none of them were unhappy with their physical appearance.

Before CoViD, around 37% pre-service teachers had mixed feelings about the way they adjust to change in their life however, during CoViD it reached to 46.7%. Around one-fifth of pre-service teachers were delighted before and during CoViD. Twenty percent of them were mostly satisfied with the way they adjusted to change in their life before CoViD, and during Covid 30% of them were mostly satisfied.

4. DISCUSSION

The focus of the study was to analyse the health status of pre-service teachers before and during CoViD-19. It was found that the overall physical health of the selected pre-service teachers was observed to be decreased during CoViD-19. As neck/back pain, headache increased by 13%, feeling of tension, stiffness, incidence of fatigue or low of flexibility was increased by 6.7%, Incidence of cold or flu was increased by 6.6% on rarely or occasionally, incidence of nausea, diarrhoea or constipation was increased by 10% on rare scale.

However, incidence of allergies, eczema, or skin rash 20% decreased on rare, lack of flexibility was decreased, incidence of dizziness or light-headedness 10% decreased on rare and ability to work out or engage in physical activities 6.7% decreased on regularly. This may be due to the fact that during CoViD-19 period none of the pre-service teachers were allowed to go outside due to imposed lockdown in the country. Our findings are in line with the findings of Giuntella et. al (2021).

Cao et. al (2020) documented that, during CoViD-19 mental and emotional health of individuals impacted badly, this is also reflected in the findings of this study i.e., mental/emotional health was moderately affected during pandemic. As presence of negative energy increased by 6.7% on rare or occasionally scale, moodiness, temper, or angry outbursts of the respondents increased by 13.3% on rare or occasionally scale, difficulty in falling or staying asleep also slightly increased. Being overly worried about small things and feeling of depression or anxiety increased by 20% on a regular basis. Hence, facing more difficulty in thinking and concentrating. Impact of CoViD-19 also vivid on the finding of this study.

The results of stress evaluation of pre-service teachers showed that stress in the family had increased by 26.6%. Stress level of pre-service teachers also impacted significantly. The findings of Kwaah et. al. (2022) also supports the findings of this study. Stress of Health and Emotional wellbeing increased by approx 26.7%. Work stress was slightly increased causing an increase in stress about general well-being by 26.4%. During CoViD-19 as compared to before CoViD-19. This might be due to the lockdown. When lockdown was imposed, individuals started giving more time to the family and their financial needs reduced due to none travelling to their workplace or other. On the contrary, stress of maintaining a significant relationship and financial condition was decreased.

Experiences of relaxation, ease or well-being slightly decreased. Time devoted to recreational activities, built confidence, and enhanced ability to deal with adversity. The respondents had mixed feelings about their quality of life. Personal life decreased by 10%. Even so the pre-service teachers were able to maintain a significant relationship with partners by 6.7% and pre-service teachers were more satisfied with their job. It was observed that

many of them gave more time to physical appearance. The way participants adjust to changes in their life increased by 10%. The finding showed that these unexpected results might be because the data was collected during the first and second wave of CoViD -19 as well as before CoViD-19.

Stress is basically one's body's reaction to demand or challenges. During CoViD-19 individuals were establishing themselves to the challenges secured by the adverse condition of CoViD-19. The pre-service teachers were also trying to adjust with the situation as they were engaged in their school internship programme. They had to manage challenges of online teaching. As they were new in teaching profession, they were more prone to CoViD-19 related stress. This is very much evident in the findings.

5. CONCLUSION

This study provides evidence of how pre-service teachers who opted health physical education as an elective paper rated their overall health before and during CoViD-19. The outcome of the study revealed that the overall health status of the pre-service teachers was slightly affected during CoViD. Above all this study highlights the importance of physical, mental, emotional, and psycho – social health status of pre-service teachers.

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