

# Psychological Flexibility and Coping Strategies Influence Well-Being: The Mediating Role of COVID-19 Related Stressors During the Second Wave Among Indian Students

**Adithya Jain**

International Institute of Information Technology Hyderabad, Hyderabad, Telangana, India

**Priyanka Srivastava**

International Institute of Information Technology, Hyd, Hyderabad, Telangana, India

## Abstract

The detrimental impact of the long-overdue pandemic has been widely acknowledged. However, the varied responses to its unprecedented challenges, particularly among young adults in college, are not well known. This study explores the role of psychological immunity in COVID-related trauma among Indian students. A significant proportion of students reported psychological distress, depression, and stress during the second wave between May and June 2021, with COVID-19 infection and related worries correlating with poorer mental health. Mediation analysis indicated that psychological flexibility negatively predicted distress, depression, and stress, while avoidance coping strategies showed a positive association with these outcomes. These findings suggest that psychological flexibility serves as a protective buffer against the impact of the pandemic, fostering resilience, while avoidant coping exacerbates its adverse effects. Interventions like Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) may enhance psychological flexibility and mitigate maladaptive coping, improving student mental well-being.