

## Chapter 18

# Mental Health and Well-Being of Students and Faculty: Enhancing Quality Mental Health and Well-Being of Female Students and Faculty in Colleges

**Memory Deredzai**

*University of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe*

**Pedzisai Goronga**

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9066-7498>

*University of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe*

**Beatrice Maupa**

*University of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe*

### **ABSTRACT**

*The aim of this chapter is to interrogate issues of mental health and well-being of female students and faculty after the devastating effects of COVID-19 pandemic. The chapter further explores strategies that can be used to enhance the mental health and well-being of female students and faculty in order to enhance their optimal functioning. There has been growing global interest in mental health, with increasing concern over mental health difficulties among female students and faculty in colleges and universities. Academic pressure, social isolation, disruption in education, demands posed by online learning and other uncertainties acted as challenges that impacted students' mental health. Female students and faculty may experience heightened psychological distress resulting in PTSD, anxiety, and depression due to poor mental health and wellbeing. To have quality mental health and well-being, female students and lecturers should take steps to protect and support their mental health throughout life.*

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3693-5483-4.ch018

## **INTRODUCTION**

In today's fast-paced and demanding academic landscape, the mental health and well-being of students and faculty have become increasingly crucial especially after the experience of COVID-19 pandemic (Gogoi et al., 2022). Among them, the unique challenges faced by female students and faculty cannot be overlooked. From the pressures of academic performance to societal expectations, they often navigate a complex web of responsibilities as they strive to excel both personally and professionally. According to Abrams (2022), college students are juggling a dizzying array of challenges from coursework, relationships, adjustment to campus life to economic strain, social injustice, mass violence and other forms of loss related to COVID-19. This chapter delves into the multifaceted aspects of mental health and well-being specific to female students and faculty. Exploring the intersection of gender, academia, and mental health, will shed light on the unique experiences, challenges, and potential solutions that can foster a supportive environment for female students and faculty in institutions of higher learning. The chapter examines the various factors that impact the mental health of female students and faculty in colleges and universities. The role of societal expectations, gender biases, and the pressures of balancing academic and personal lives are also interrogated. This helps to uncover the specific stressors that can contribute to increased vulnerability and decreased well-being in female students and faculty. Furthermore, the chapter highlights the importance of creating an inclusive and supportive environment that promotes mental health and well-being for female students and faculty. It is anticipated that, by interrogating evidence-based strategies, interventions, and support systems, we generate new insights that inform colleges and universities to implement effective initiatives that address the unique needs of women in general and female students in particular. Ultimately, this chapter aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by female students and faculty in colleges and universities with a view to offering practical solutions to enhance their mental health and well-being. It is anticipated that, by doing so, more inclusive, supportive, and empowering academic environments that allow all individuals to thrive and reach their full potential will be created in colleges and universities.

Globally, the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic brought about many challenges with devastating consequences to higher education. The impact of the pandemic resulted in educational institutions across the globe closing doors to students curtailing access to education by students and other stakeholders. This was meant to limit the spread of the deadly virus by human congregations. However, in order to continue accessing education, the closure of educational institutions saw students migrating from the traditional face to face mode of learning to online learning (Gogoi et al., 2022). This transitioning to an alternative mode of learning was not without challenges. The disruption, combined with the lack of physical interactions among students and faculty and the demands of the new learning systems, impacted the mental health of particularly female college and university students (Gogoi et al., 2022; Chen & Lucock, 2022). Research evidence suggests that, following the pandemic, high levels of stress, anxiety, and depression were found among female college and university students leading to mental health issues (Fruehwirth et al., 2021; Chen & Lucock, 2022). The mental health and well-being of students and faculty in colleges and universities are of particular concern due to the pandemic's impact on the overall scheme of teaching and learning (Gogoi et al., 2022). Notwithstanding the emergence of the pandemic, evidence suggests that, even before the pandemic, mental health issues among female students in tertiary institutions were already present and had increased by an average of 16 percent between 2005 and 2015 and spiked due to increased exposure to pandemic-related risk factors (Baranuskas et al., 2022; Sesma-Vazquez & Strong, 2015). Of particular note are female students who were found to be at greater risk of poor mental health

20 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:  
[www.igi-global.com/chapter/mental-health-and-well-being-of-students-and-faculty/345231](http://www.igi-global.com/chapter/mental-health-and-well-being-of-students-and-faculty/345231)

## Related Content

---

### **Safety Intelligence and Security Management in Public Secondary Schools in Epe Local Government Area, Lagos State**

Amidu Owolabi Ayeniand Irene Oluwaseyi Orhewere (2021). *International Journal of Disaster Response and Emergency Management* (pp. 63-77).

[www.irma-international.org/article/safety-intelligence-and-security-management-in-public-secondary-schools-in-epe-local-government-area-lagos-state/273004](http://www.irma-international.org/article/safety-intelligence-and-security-management-in-public-secondary-schools-in-epe-local-government-area-lagos-state/273004)

### **Chad's Global Disaster Risk Map**

Fatma encan (2026). *Interdisciplinary Studies on Global Disasters* (pp. 423-466).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/chads-global-disaster-risk-map/404314](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/chads-global-disaster-risk-map/404314)

### **Predicting Tweet Retweetability During Hurricane Disasters**

Venkata Kishore Neppalli, Cornelia Caragea, Doina Caragea, Murilo Cerqueira Medeiros, Andrea H. Tapiaaand Shane E. Halse (2019). *Emergency and Disaster Management: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 1277-1298).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/predicting-tweet-retweetability-during-hurricane-disasters/207626](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/predicting-tweet-retweetability-during-hurricane-disasters/207626)

### **Business Continuity Management in Micro Enterprises: Perception, Strategies, and Use of ICT**

Marc-André Kaufhold, Thea Riebe, Christian Reuter, Julian Hester, Danny Jeske, Lisa Knüverand Viktoria Richert (2018). *International Journal of Information Systems for Crisis Response and Management* (pp. 1-19).

[www.irma-international.org/article/business-continuity-management-in-micro-enterprises-perception-strategies-and-use-of-ict/212701](http://www.irma-international.org/article/business-continuity-management-in-micro-enterprises-perception-strategies-and-use-of-ict/212701)

### **Safety and Security in SCADA Systems Must be Improved through Resilience Based Risk Management**

Stig O. Johnsen (2014). *Crisis Management: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 1422-1436).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/safety-and-security-in-scada-systems-must-be-improved-through-resilience-based-risk-management/90785](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/safety-and-security-in-scada-systems-must-be-improved-through-resilience-based-risk-management/90785)