

MENTAL ILLNESS MAY BE TURNING INTO A BIGGER CRISIS THAN COVID

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Introduction

- Mental health is rapidly emerging as one of the most distressing global health crises of our time.
- In today's fast-paced and constantly changing world, many individuals struggle to cope with stress, uncertainty, and pressure.
- The rise in social isolation, economic stress, and the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have only intensified the problem.
- As society becomes more complex and demanding, the inability to adjust or develop healthy emotional responses is becoming a major driver of the growing mental health crisis.

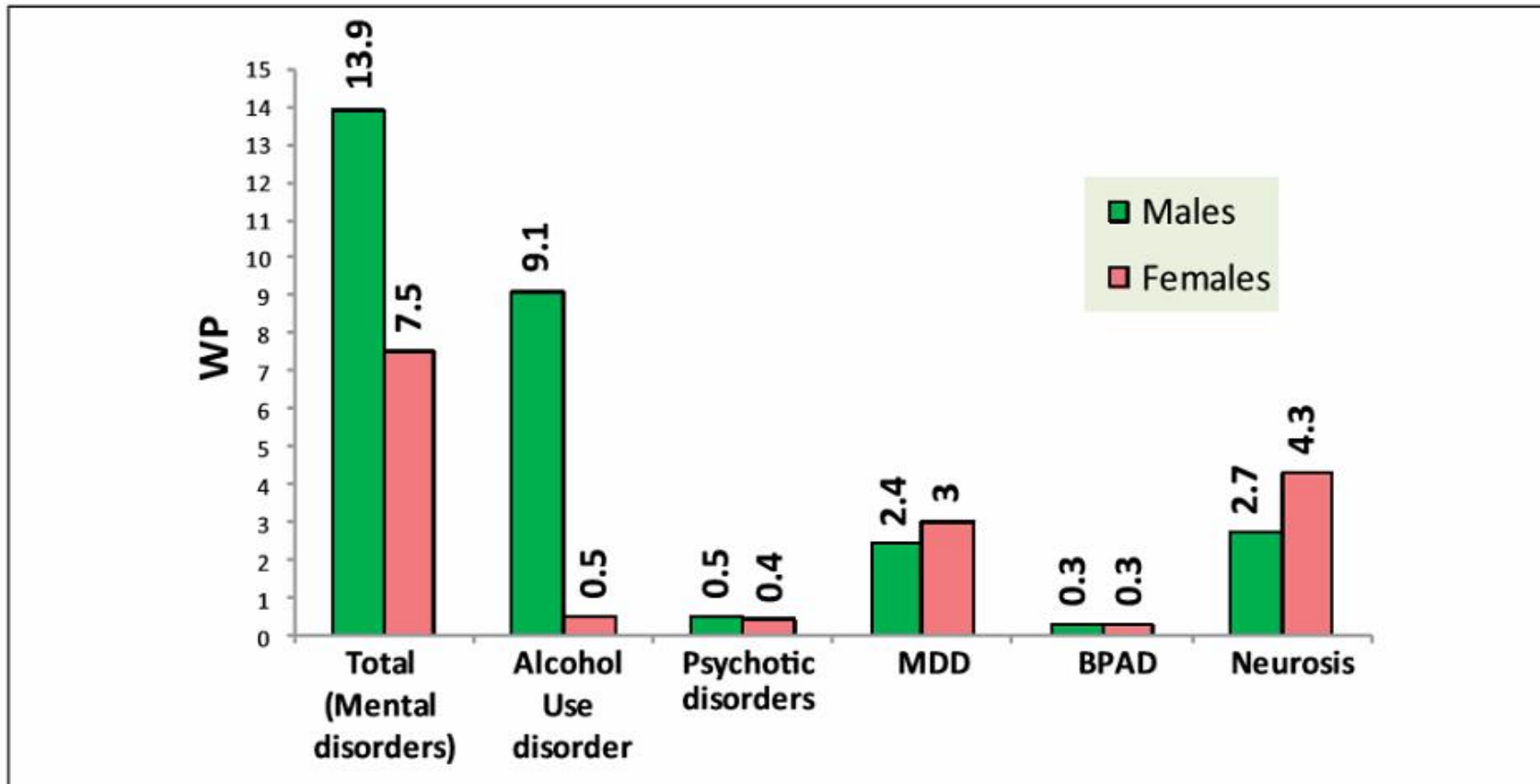
Global Overview

- WHO's latest World Mental Health Report says mental illness affects nearly a billion people globally and if left untreated it can lead to premature deaths and reduced economic productivity



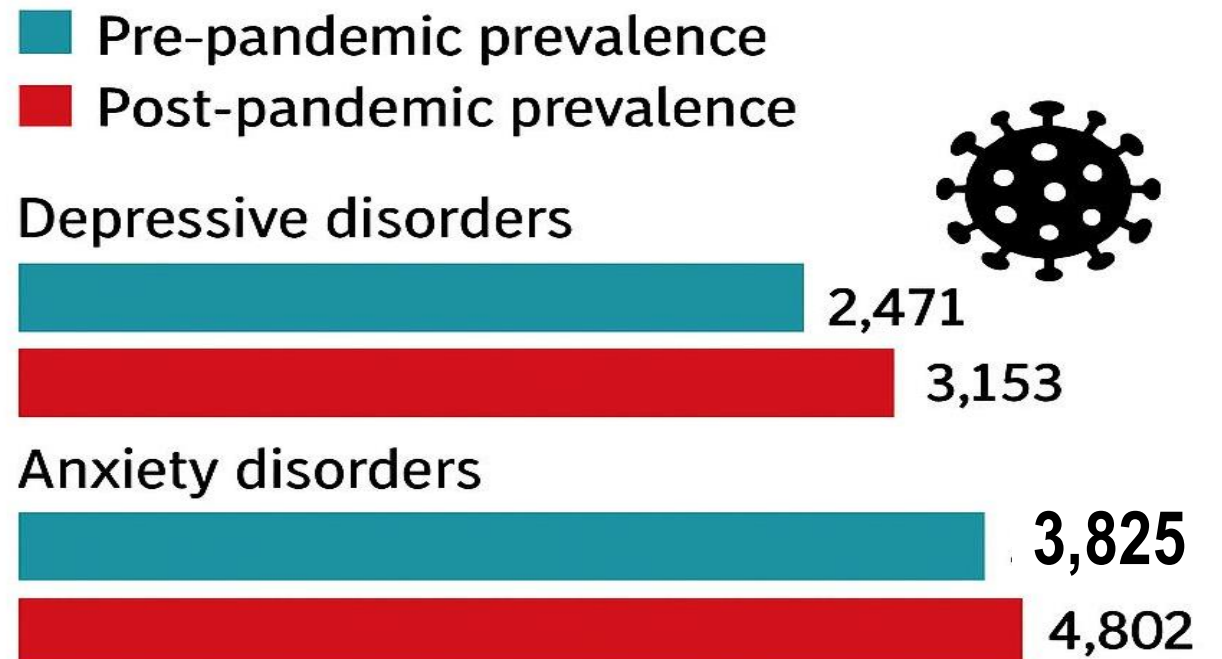
Who Is Most Affected?

- Women and working-age people are more susceptible.
- Depression and anxiety are about 50% more common in women.
- Substance use disorders are more common in men.



Impact of COVID-19

- Within a year after the pandemic, depressive and anxiety disorders increased by 28% and 26% respectively.
- Countries with the most COVID-19 deaths reported the largest mental health surges.



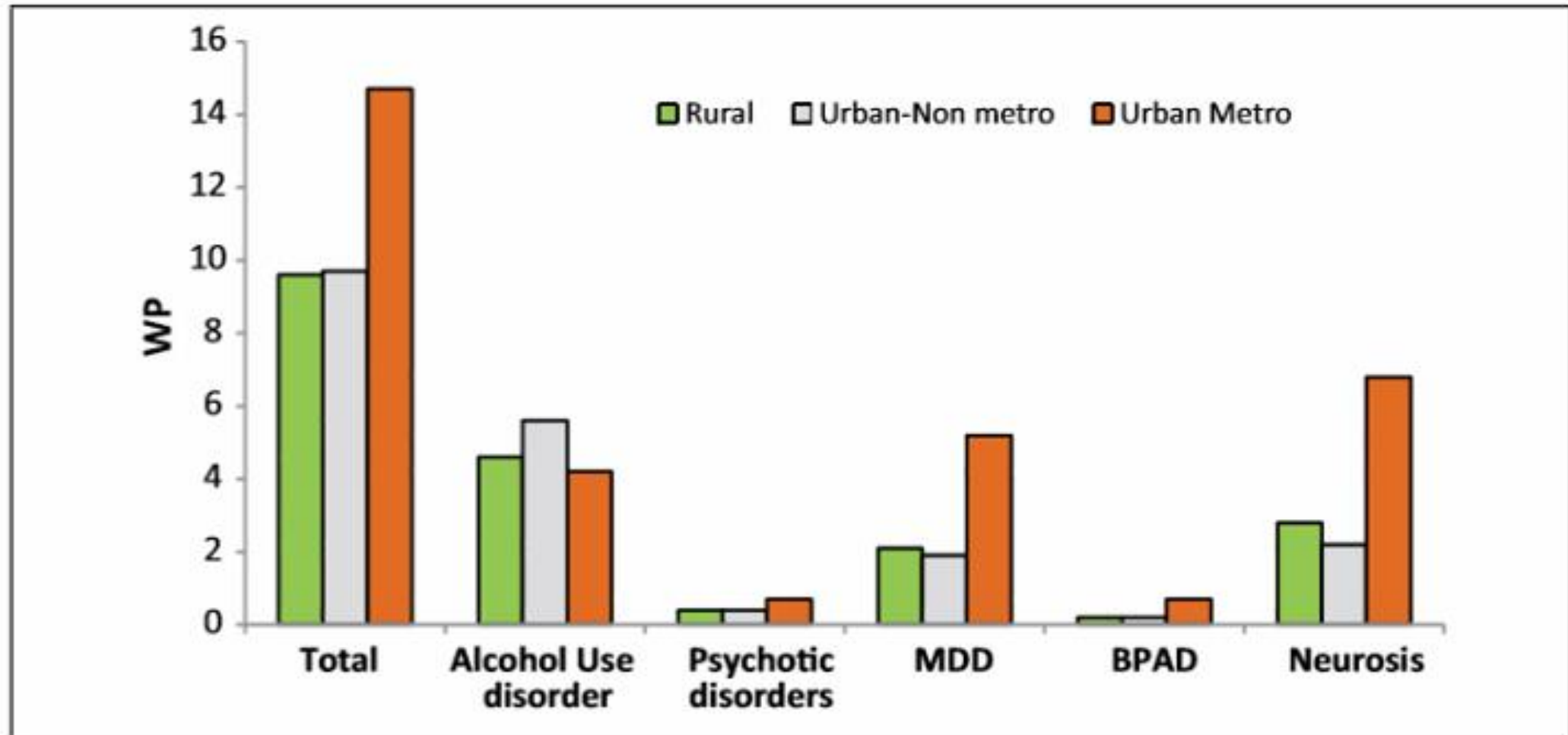
Lifespan Impact

- Severe mental illnesses can shorten life by 10–20 years.
- People with poor mental health have increased risk of cardiovascular and respiratory diseases.
- Mental illness accounts for 15.6% of years lived with disability (YLDs) globally.

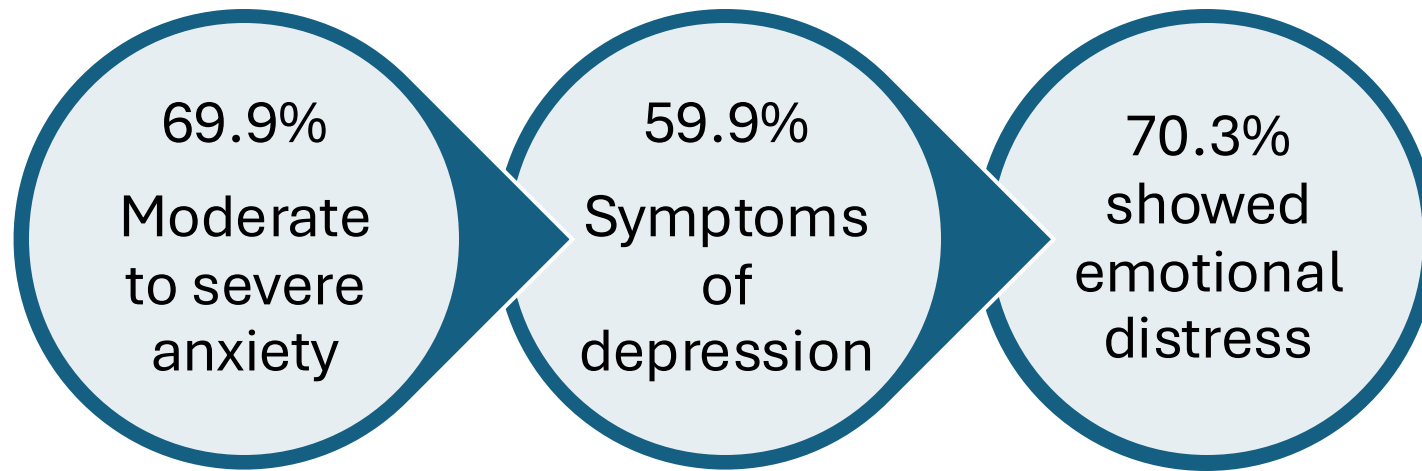
Economic Cost

- \$1 trillion/year lost to depression and anxiety alone.
- \$2.5 trillion (2010) was the cost for mental illness to the world economy→ expected to rise to \$6 trillion by 2030.
- High prevalence of mental illness can
 - Lower economic productivity
 - Increased unemployment rates
- By 2030 mental illness could cost the global economy more than cancer, diabetes, and respiratory disease combined.

Prevalence of mental disorders in rural and urban areas (%)

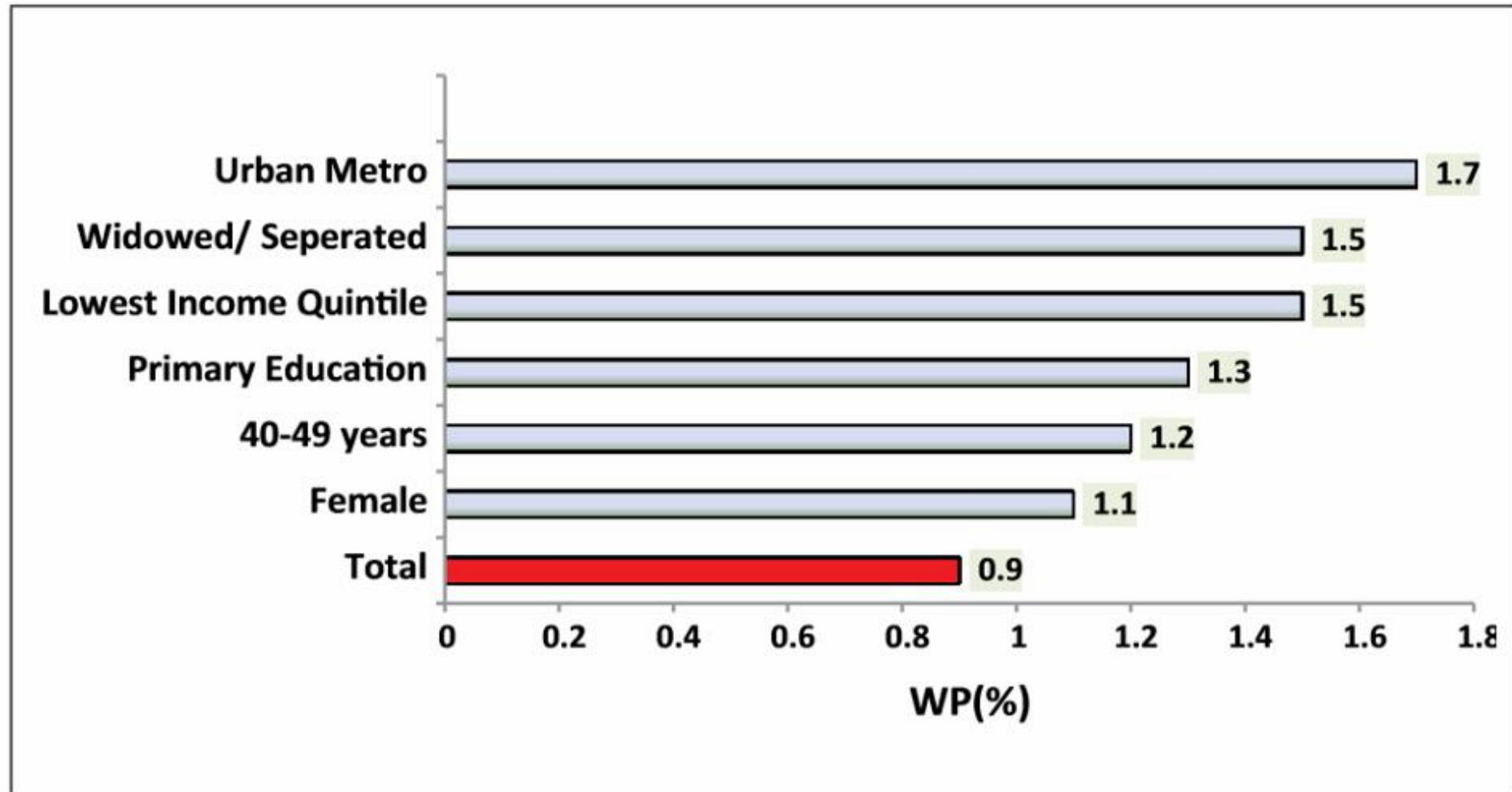


- A multi-city study conducted in AP, recently reveals alarming mental health statistics among college students aged 18–29 across India.



- These were mostly seen amongst tier 3 cities.
- The study recommends early **mental health screening**, support systems, and the use of **platforms like Tele-MANAS (14416)** for free diagnosis and counseling.

PREVALENCE OF HIGH SUICIDAL RISK



- This is a wake-up call for educational institutions to address mental health as seriously as physical health, as students face:
- Academic pressure
- Loneliness
- Post-pandemic challenges
- Lack of campus support

All of which contribute to worsening mental health outcomes

Concluding message

- Mental health is a global concern, potentially larger and longer-lasting than COVID-19.
- Investing in mental health care, early intervention, and reducing stigma could save lives and trillions in economic losses.