

COVID-19 A psychological Outbreak- a social review

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ABSTRACT: This paper consists of how the Covid-19 impacted people's lives psychologically, it also consists of 2 surveys done on 70 and 100 people respectively, the results are based on conclusions of these surveys, the paper has an analytical approach from the references.

KEYWORDS: Covid-19, stress, anxiety, lockdown

SURVEYS:

- Survey No.1

Report link:

<https://i49vn7vgy9s.typeform.com/report/cELEiaYh/LWMOAE2UeeYAonBX>

When a survey was conducted on 100 people, the following questions were asked

Q:1) how far has covid-19 affected your diet?

Ans: 57.7% said more towards healthy foods and 23.7% said that their intake had increased

Q:2) how afraid are you of acquiring covid-19 when going into the public areas

Ans: Almost 60 people said that they were afraid to go out in public areas as they fear to catch the coronavirus.

- SURVEY NO.2

Report link : [Untitled form \(Responses\)](#)

1] When a question was asked that after lockdown did people started interacting with their peers or family about life?

Ans: 32 answered: Occasionally, yes

And 24 said yes

The rest answered no

The questions the conclusion and the research will be done are provided in the links above and the important questions are written too

I. INTRODUCTION:

Covid-19 was declared a Pandemic by WHO on 30 January after the sudden rise of pneumonia having the same genetic sequence, in Wuhan (most of these patients had links to human seafood market where animals are cut live and eaten) SARS-COV2 is a respiratory syndrome that

supposedly seems to have originated from Bats. It's this infectious agent that is causing the coronavirus. After knowing the transmission (human to human) method of the disease and considering the seriousness of the outbreak, Countries started cutting off the activities that required human touch and imposed a lockdown on large scale, wherein the first lockdown was imposed in the Hubei district of China and the first largest lockdown happened in the neighbouring country i.e., India, where the whole country was shut down for 3 weeks after 20 cases (approx), was confirmed.

Of course, Change is a nice way of increasing a person's personality, many people got the opportunity to do things which some were taking for granted like the importance of family and hygiene. But staying in that state of change and not getting back to our previous selves can be dangerous for both our physical and mental health. Change can bring positive results in our life but get used to the change is not what somebody wants.

HOW DOES LOCKDOWN AFFECT OUR MENTAL HEALTH?

When the Lockdown was imposed, it cut out the contact within people and disturbs the routine, schedule, and future projects, creating a feeling of helplessness promoting anxiety and stress.,unemployment and lockdown.

Many non-essential workers have lost their jobs due to the pandemic. From the CIME (Centre monitoring marketing Indian Economy) in April where the second wave was hit hard, the employment rate fell from 37.56% (March) to 36.79%.

And according to UKHLS stated that 800,000 unemployed people will have poor mental health as of the first quarter of 2021, The Covid-19 pandemic caused 114 million people to lose their jobs in 2020 alone. 76% of Americans choose money & work as their cause of stress.

Living in a hypercompetitive society there is a stigma stuck with unemployment is what causes the phenomena of low self-esteem within the quarter of unemployed people, they start

questioning their potential and having no option of employment causes them to be stuck in this spiral. People socially isolate themselves in the fear of being judged, some studies have even shown that socially isolating yourself can even shorten our life to 29%. Many mental health experts predicted that if the unemployment numbers rise to the highest of all times (which is the time of the Great Global Depression) then the numbers of depression and anxiety levels could rise high and affect generation after generation to come, which is a ringing alarm.

Many people with Reduced working hours have also faced a money shortage. Many companies have also made their employees work for more than their pre-pandemic hours, making them overwork themselves. According to a study, Work from home is considered to be the most stressed way of working, for women mostly who have to take care of kids and family

Students and lockdown

While interviewing with PBS Newshour a student said that she had trouble sleeping at night because she had to sit in her room throughout the day and felt unfair. On a survey done by activeminds.org,

- 20% said the Covid-19 lockdown had significantly worsened their mental health
- 74% were challenged to maintain a routine

An Oxford study found out that 1 out of 5 children is now afraid to leave their homes since in many parts of the world coronavirus waves have taken a huge toll on people's lives. Also, many college students who were living in paid homes

away from their parents found themselves feeling lonely and frustrated towards studying. Staying lonely can let our flight or fight hormone and staying in that state for too long can increase the risk for our body like problems in digestion and type 2 diabetes. More than 30% of college students have seriously considered suicide. When a survey was conducted on 70 people, 50 of them were students, 49 said they had difficulty in focusing during their online school sessions. 13 rated their studying/working highly dissatisfying. Whilst 48 said that their schedule was highly disrupted and they found it hard to focus and adjust to the new normal. Many students were reported to have heavy fatigue after attending online classes and some even stated that online lectures tend to get monotonous. Even teachers said that many students have had problems sustaining interests during the lectures.

Students have had felt a feeling of helplessness since the lockdown had been imposed. Change when given suddenly is proved to be hazardous for people with fragile minds and body, as they don't know how to respond to this situation or make sense of it. Pre-pandemic times, students had a specific routine to spend their day. After the lockdown, they had to change their schedule to what everyone calls the "new normal". Not doing it gives us more anxiety as we can't stick to it. The brains have been adopted to have others as a baseline.



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People who were already diagnosed with depression and lockdown:

Neurotransmitters: the chemicals that affect your mood & emotions. The imbalance of these chemicals causes depression. The medicines aren't available easily. The people who need the medicines have to order them & need a prescription

every time. But because lockdown was imposed and every service was closed hence these medicines weren't available. While interviewing with TheQuint, a person affected with depression said, "With these restrictions, it would be difficult for me to cope with the illness so I would be at the mercy of my mental health" Disrupted

Neurotransmitters can affect the sleep cycle, digestion and the appetite of a person, without antidepressants a person's life can be at stake. Many psychologists started moving their practice online and even gave free sessions to people to not suffer much.

A study conducted by TOI stated that 7 per cent of the total population experiences depression on daily basis since lockdown, while 33% occasionally.

The role of social media and news during the lockdown:

The news played a huge role in spreading awareness to people about coronavirus and its effects, it was proved to harm people who were reading the same thing every day, Watching and instilling our minds with negative news is "hopeless" stating that there is no form of good things happening; thinking about how the virus can be dangerous to you, your family & friends caused signs fear & helplessness. Constantly staying in the state reported hurting many people physically. When on social media people could see a lot of people posting about how they are making use of time in a very efficient way but too much of this had a really bad impact on them as they had a feeling that just sleeping or binge-watching the shows the whole day is something that they should not do because everybody is efficient and productive but they are not, this made many people, especially teens develop eating disorders. Frontline workers and covid-19

Doctors & nurses in New York, India and the UK were reported to work for 13 hours for 6-7 in a row, with no lunch break and sometimes not even time to use restrooms. They said that it was both physically and mentally exhausting for them to work. While working with critical patients their relatives weren't allowed to meet the patients for obvious reasons, the relatives were forced to say

goodbye to the patients on video calls or ipads, nurses said that it was "hard" to watch the scene. After the first wave, 382 doctors died of the virus in India.

Many nurses were reported to be hostile, started to frustrate themselves out and even had rising anger levels towards their friends and family. They even said that they felt the whole burden of the world is on them and unless they don't overwork themselves they are doing a bad job. One healthcare professional working in Toronto even said that for nurses who have Personal protective equipment it is no denying that it is physically exhausting and frustrating to work now. While having a PPE kit on, the temperature it has is more than 30-degree Celsius and more which was the gears that nurses wore for over 13 hours each day. On 3rd March 2020 itself WHO announced the rising no of consumption of the PPE kits and thereafter resulting in a shortage of PPE kits. This resulted in many nurses wearing the same mask and PPE kit while treating multiple critical patients. By spring in America, 700 of the 1,25,000 lost lives constituted Of doctors & mostly nurses.

Witnessing deaths were said to be mentally exhausting, depressing and even made nurses pass some sleepless nights. The worse part is that many of these nurses hide their trauma from their family because they don't want their loved ones to feel that they are suffering. Many hospitals have faced a shortage of medical staff like in the Arizona state or Bangalore rural areas for example. Several nurses came out of retirement or some even flew to hospitals to lower the shortage of staff. The staff was less in only hospitals which were located in the undermined areas of the country because that's where people are paid less. Nurses have long hours of work, no breaks and are in underpaid conditions half the time.



The condition of a nurse after removing a PPE kit
Many mental health experts have stated that AN ENTIRE GENERATION of frontline workers are likely to suffer from prolonged

psychological effects. Some even predicted that Covid-19 can make many nurses suffer from PTSD or Insomnia on a mass scale since the time of world war 2, and it can continue to affect even after

everything is back to normal. Many nurses became the crucial support system to the ones who were dying and even to their family during their low points in life

“What angels are to the sad, the nurses are that to the sick people”

- Amit Kalankari.

2 New York medical health care professionals working in the emergency rooms with no history of reported mental illness killed themselves as they were seeing people dying in the emergency wards daily, which is again a rising alarm. Meadows mental health institute said that an additional 4,800 could die of additional drug doses. Frontline workers, health care workers, grocery store workers, delivery people are all vulnerable to be diagnosed with mental illness like insomnia, stress amongst others.

II. CONCLUSION:

The lockdown has shown numerous cases of mental illness rising but as many people find out the difficulty within themselves they try to reach out as much as possible, E-Sanjeevni a suicide help hotline has received a 65% rise in the calls since January 2021. This is alarming but at the same time it is a positive aspect of it as many people open up the levels of them being diagnosed with mental illness becomes less. The fear of catching the virus and isolating oneself in a room is a dangerous thought, even after the restrictions are lifted it would continue to haunt people for ages to come, a clear example of this fear is the MERS outbreak in South Korea, where 2/3 rd of people were still afraid to come out of their houses even after the

government announced that it is completely eradicated from the country.

Some people think a vaccine can eradicate the virus, which is a myth because a vaccine can only minimise the transmission, a country with fewer cases of the virus can't make the thing go back to normal until other countries recover from the second or third wave. We need to have a positive support system and facts to minimise our fears. Listening to pop music and exercising daily is a must, on survey no.1 many people said that after they started exercising more than 30 mins a day, which is a good sign. Many bands and celebrities have shown their support for the poor mental health faced by students during the pandemic like the song “we lost the summer” by a K-pop boy band TXT.

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