

A Study of Novel Coronavirus Disease and Mental Well-Being

Meenakshi Chouhan

Email: [minuc8682\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:minuc8682[at]gmail.com)

Abstract: *The year 2020 has been a year of major health crisis i.e. Novel coronavirus disease, 2019 (COVID-19), faced by several nations at the same time, still it is an ongoing pandemic. Mostly it is seen that those people having any previous health issue are the worst sufferers from this disease, many people suffered the mental trauma of this pandemic, and many lost their lives. However there are several recovery cases as well. This study is an attempt in this direction to evaluate the available literature on Novel coronavirus disease 2019 and its consequences on mental well-being of general public. Economy, finances, relationships, employment, support networks and overall well-being in general are badly affected. The fear and uncertainty brought by COVID-19 leaves a person feeling stressed all the time. All these things adversely affected the mental health of an individual. In existing literature, many cases of anxiety, distress, suicidal thoughts and depression are reported by the researchers.*

Keywords: Novel coronavirus 2019, anxiety, stress, mental well-being

1. Introduction

A novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) was recognized as the source of infection for people reporting life threatening pneumonia which was first reported in Wuhan, China in December, 2019 (Shigimura et al., 2020). COVID-19 has been declared a public health emergency of international concern on 30th January, 2020 by WHO (Shigimura et al., 2020). Upto February, 2021 there are total 112,649,371 confirmed cases, 2,501,229 confirmed deaths (WHO, 2021) and according to worldometer website 89615341 people recovered so far from this disease. The whole world suffered and faced the consequences of Novel coronavirus disease 2019. Those having any previous health issue are at higher risks of catching infection. The fear and uncertainty brought by this pandemic lead to the feeling of stress and anxiety all the time. Sleep difficulties, paranoia of catching infection and distress associated with social media was also reported (Roy et al., 2020b). The occurrence of this disease has badly affected the education system, financial status of a person, social support networks, employment rate, economy of a country and overall well-being of people.

There are various studies from different countries which reported ill-effects of COVID-19 on mental health. Many reported increased cases of physical issues, hypertension, anxiety, depression and OCD during this period. The female students were more concerned about their future and were more vulnerable to psychological problems like anger outburst, helplessness, uncertainty (Moghe et al., 2020). The avoiding of infection transmission has lead to cut of family/social support networks, there is no one available to care or provide comfort to the affected families, so increased levels of grief, distress and guilt can be seen (Sun et al., 2020). 40.4% of the youth group showed more inclination to have psychological problems (Liang et al., 2020). The mental health of college students has been a growing concern; many students have experienced psychological distress (American College Association, 2020). The mental health issues have significantly affected academic success of students and their social interactions, thereby affecting their career opportunities in future (Kecojevic et al., 2020). There

are various studies conducted in order to evaluate the psychological impacts on health care workers (Kohrt et al., 2013), general public (Kapczynski et al., 2001; Wittouck et al., 2011; Patel et al., 2013), and older adults (IASC 2007). All these studies have reported increased level of stress, anxiety, depression and social isolation among these people during public health emergencies (Kecojevic et al., 2020). No access to computers/online programmes at home during the pandemic has further increase the difficulties of many students (Sahu, 2020; COVID-19). The other concerns include personal health issues, health of other family members and financial crisis especially for those who support themselves by working in factories/industries (Kecojevic et al., 2020). The people who were quarantined or kept in isolation also faced significant distress in the form of anger, confusion, anxiety and the symptoms of PTSD (Brooks et al., 2020).

The health care workers faced and are facing hardships during the whole pandemic and are at higher risk of adverse mental health consequences. The long working hours, physical fatigue, risk of infection, loneliness, lack of family/social support, shortage of protective equipments etc all leads to their impaired mental well-being (Kang et al., 2020; Rajkumar, 2020). Similarly, the student population, adults, poor people also suffered a lot throughout the crisis.

The World Health Organisation raised funds globally and established Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan (SPRP) with an aim of protecting those states having weaker health systems. Their main motive was to provide early care, limit transmission of the disease, communication of key information and to reduce economic and social impact (Roy et al., 2020b).

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of India has published IEC Materials on understanding of the lockdown situation, how to handle isolation and deal with mental health issues after the recovery from COVID-19 (MoHFW/Home, 2020). It is seen that during this period the government of various countries established online mental

health services, counseling, medical consultation, treatment etc for general public as well (Yao et al., 2020).

Inorder to handle the health crisis like situation in future, along with adopting strategies that manage and control the disease and the pandemic at large, the mental health of the people is also given due importance. There is a dire need of specialized psychological intervention and proper communication regarding crisis (Roy et al., 2020a).

2. Conclusion

It is evident from the available literature that this disease has caused adverse affect on the mental well-being of students, adults and elderly population. Inorder to positively boost the mental health/well-being of people the personal resources, community resources, coping skills need to be enhanced. Also something is done to enhance one's personal protective resources like resilience, optimism etc. The govt. should promote awareness programmes regarding various psychological problems/mental health issues among the general public and especially for improving the coping skills of bereaved families. The accessibility of mental health resources need to be increased (Tol, 2014; Sun et al., 2020). Hence, keeping a positive approach, effective communication strategies and understanding the problem statement, will help in dealing with the mental health issues faced by the world in this hour of crisis (Roy et al., 2020a).

References

- [1] American College Health Association. (2020). American College Health Association-National College Health Assessment III: Reference Group Executive Summary Fall 2019. Silver Spring, MD; 2020
- [2] Brooks, S.K., Webster, R.K., Smith, L.E., Woodland, L., Wessely, S., Greenberg, N., & Rubin, G.J. (2020). The psychological impact of quarantine and how to reduce it: Rapid review of the evidence. *Lancet*, 395(10227), 912-920. Published online 2020 Feb 26. doi: 10.1016/S0140-6736(20)30460-8
- [3] COVID-19: towards controlling of a pandemic. Bedford J, Enria D, Giesecke J, et al. *Lancet*. 2020;[Epub ahead of print] [PMC free article] [PubMed] [Google Scholar]
- [4] Inter-Agency Standing Committee [IASC] (2007) IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings. Geneva: IASC.
- [5] Kang, L., Li, Y., Hu, S., Chen, M., Yang, C., Yang, B.X., Wang, Y., Hu, J., Lai, J., Ma, X., Chen, J., Guan, L., Wang, G., Ma, H., & Liu, Z. (2020). The mental health of medical workers in Wuhan, China dealing with the 2019 novel coronavirus. *Lancet Psychiatry*;7(3):e14. [PMC free article] [PubMed]
- [6] Kapczinski F, Amaral OB, Madruga M, Quevedo J, Busnello JV, et al. (2001) Use and misuse of benzodiazepines in Brazil: a review. *Subst Use Misuse* 36: 1053–1069. – PubMed
- [7] Keckojevic, A., Basch, C.H., Sullivan, M., & Davi, N.K. (2020). The impact of the COVID-19 epidemic on mental health of undergraduate students in New Jersey, cross-sectional study. *PLoS One*, 15(9), e0239696. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0239696
- [8] Kohrt, B.A., Rasmussen, A., Kaiser, B.N., Haroz, E.E., Maharjan, S.M., et al. (2013). Cultural concepts of distress and psychiatric disorders: literature review and research recommendations for global mental health epidemiology. *Int J Epidemiol* 43: 365–406.
- [9] Liang, L., Ren, H., Cao, R., Hu, Y., Qin, Z., Li, C., & Mei, S. (2020). The effect of COVID-19 on youth mental health. *Psychiatric Quarterly*, 91: 841-852.
- [10] Moghe, K., Kotecha, D., & Patil, M. (2020). COVID-19 and Mental Health: A Study of its Impact on Students. DOI: 10.1101/2020.08.05.20160499
- [11] MoHFW | Home . (2020). Retrieved April 6, 2020, from <https://www.mohfw.gov.in/>
- [12] Patel, M.J., Ahmer. S., Khan, F., Qureshi, A.W., Shehzad, M.F., et al. (2013) Benzodiazepine use in medical out-patient clinics: a study from a developing country. *Journal of Pakistan Medical Association*, 63: 717–720. – PubMed
- [13] Rajkumar, R. P. (2020). COVID-19 and mental health: A review of the existing literature. *Asian Journal of Psychiatry*, 52: 102066. doi: 10.1016/j.ajp.2020.102066
- [14] Roy, A., Singh, A.K., Mishra, S., et al. (2020a). Mental health implications of COVID-19 pandemic and its response in India. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020764020950769>
- [15] Roy, D., Tripathy, S., Kar, S.K., Sharma, N., Verma, S.K., & Kaushal, V. (2020b). Study of knowledge, attitude, anxiety & perceived mental healthcare need in Indian population during COVID-19 pandemic. *Asian Journal of Psychiatry*, 51: 102083. Published online 2020 Apr 8. doi: 10.1016/j.ajp.2020.102083
- [16] Sahu, P. (2020). Closure of universities due to coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19): impact on education and mental health of students and academic staff. *Cureus*, 12(4). doi: 10.7759/cureus.7541
- [17] Shigemura, J., Ursano, R.J., Morganstein, J.C., Kurosawa, M., & Benedek, D.M. (2020). Public responses to the novel 2019 coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in Japan: Mental health consequences and target populations. *Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences*, 74(4), 281-282. doi: 10.1111/pcn.12988.
- [18] Sun, Y., Bao, Y., & Lu, L. (2020). Addressing mental health care for the bereaved during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Psychiatry and Clinical Neuroscience*, 74(7), 406-407. doi: 10.1111/pcn.13008.
- [19] Tol, W.A., Barbui, C., Bisson, J., et al. (2014). World Health Organization guidelines for management of acute stress, PTSD, and bereavement: Key challenges on the road ahead. *PLoS Med*, 11(12):e1001769. doi: 10.1371/journal.pmed.1001769
- [20] WHO Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Dashboard (2021) Retrieved from: <https://covid19.who.int/>
- [21] Wittouck C, Van Autreve S, De Jaegere E, Portzky G, van Heeringen K (2011) The prevention and treatment of complicated grief: a meta-analysis. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 31: 69–78.
- [22] Yao et al., (2020). Mitigating mental health consequences during the COVID-19 outbreak: Lessons from China. *Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences*, 74(7)1 .DOI: 10.1111/pcn.13018