A Study of Novel Coronavirus Disease and Mental Well-Being

Meenakshi Chouhan

Email: 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 (Kecojovic 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 (Kapczinski 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 (Kecojovic et al., 2020).

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

In order 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. In order 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 community resources, mental health/ issues among the students, elderly population. 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


