COVID 19: An Analysis on Impact of National Lock-Down on Mental Health and Wellbeing

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Abstract: *India witnesses the largest containment experiment in history, when-on 25ᵗʰ March- its 1.3 billion citizens battened down their hatches in an attempt to flatten the Covid-19 curve. The national lockdown may now be ending but-as is happening across the globe-a new epidemic is emerged. A survey by the Indian Psychiatry Society, within a week of the start of the lockdown, the number of reported cases of mental illness in India had risen by 20 per cent cases of mental illness have risen by 20 per cent in India since the country went into lockdown. Only through local, community- based responses will India find the capacity to cope with this unfolding crisis.*
This paper is aimed at narratively reviewing various articles related to mental-health aspects of people impacted by COVID-19 pandemic and enforcement of nationwide lockdowns to prevent further spread of infection.
Key Words: *Covid-19, Mental Health, Crisis, Community, Children, Adolescents*

Introduction

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic governments across the world implemented an unprecedented and untested strategy to slow the spread of the disease. Colloquially known as lockdowns, these public health interventions effectively shut down most normal societal functions through the use of stay-at-home orders, school closures, business closures, bans on large gatherings, and travel restrictions. This policy apparatus effectively relegated the vast majority of people to a form of self-quarantine and completely upended the standard social functioning of society.

Objectives:

- To know the impact of the National lockdown on various groups

- To know how lockdown affects on people's mental health

In the weeks and months ahead, India will suffer from a massive mental health crisis due to unemployment, alcohol abuse, economic hardship, domestic violence and indebtedness. While this will affect most of the population it will disproportionately affect the poor, most vulnerable and marginalized groups. At-risk populations include the 150 million with pre-existing mental health issues, Covid-19 survivors, frontline medical workers, young people, differently abled people, women, workers in the unorganized sector, and the elderly (Nelson Vinod Moses). The people in distress during lockdown, as well as India is already overburdened mental health machinery will be unable to handle this unfolding situation, and it will need to leverage the power of communities with locally devised, evidence-based solutions. Here are three:

COVID-19 has created a great deal of stigma mainly through a lack of awareness about how the disease spreads and how it attacks the human body. In many cities, healthcare workers, who are treating COVID-19 patients during the day, have been forcefully evicted from their homes out of fear that they may be bringing the virus back at night. People who tested positive are being shunned in apartment complexes by their resident associations. The entire social distancing narrative has to be rebuilt. It's encouraging to see how some early COVID-19 survivors turned to social media to share their experiences in order to build confidence amongst others. Those having experienced the stress first-hand and having recovered are the right people to lead this change.

Child and adolescent mental health and well-being:

With schools closed for the past eight months, 253 million adolescents in India are in limbo, stuck with families unsure about their financial future, a lack of personal space, and most importantly separated from their friends. They are exposed to widespread fear fuelled by the rapid spread of the virus, compounded by constant news chatter about death and disease which creates uncertainty and apprehension about their loved ones. Many of the community support systems outside of the families have become unavailable, particularly for young girls, and domestic violence is on the rise. For an entire generation to grow up in these conditions, with no clear answers for the foreseeable future, is unprecedented and will have a significant impact on their worldview.

For adolescents, it is reset time. It is time to build mental wellbeing and resilience into schools, the community, and their families. Here needed a systemic approach to build the demand for mental wellbeing, just as we broadly introduced sports into schools in the late 1990s. In addition to various psychological problems like depression, anxiety, and panic disorder, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused severe threats to the lives and physical health of people around the globe (Qiu et al., 2020). In response to the problems posed by the pandemic, various public health strategies such as isolation of infected or at-risk persons, reduction of social contact, and simple hygiene like frequent hand wash, have been advised to reduce the risk of infection. Although in isolation people helps to achieving the goal of reducing infections, reduced access to family, friends, and other social support systems causes loneliness increasing mental issues like anxiety and depression (Zhou et al., 2020).

During such stressful situations, the concerned government, hospitals, educational institutions, organizations, and even individuals need to look into psychological intervention and adopt necessary measures. In addition to educating individuals to stay isolated, it is vital to educate and prepare them to face the mental health issues they may endure during the period. As UNICEF has put it If not adequately or appropriately addressed, the mental health consequences for a generation of children and young people could far surpass the immediate health and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, leaving long-term social and economic consequences in its wake.

This could be due to insufficient availability of mental health services, as well as the stigma associated with mental

health disorders. There is also the fact that mental health problems often do not manifest physically. However, by not making arrangements for patients during the lockdown, the government may be violating its own law. Hospitals are open. But without access to public transport, travelling to hospitals is nearly impossible, especially for those who do not live in cities. Many patients are registered with government hospitals and get their monthly dose of medicines there. People were worried about the emotional that the loss of loved ones would have on themselves and on their friends and neighbours. Many found it hard to cope with the grief and isolation, and others found it hard to deal with job loss and financial insecurity.

Here is a psychological view of man regarding the spreading corona virus all over the world. There is a philosophy called the "Kubler Ross Model". That is, when a human goes through any tragedy, natural disaster, accident, they pass through five stages. They are:

Denial: Refusal to believe such a thing never happened. For example, we all denied that Corona will not come to us. Even it comes, repeated denial that it will not spread to our place that it will not spread to our place due to hot climatic conditions.

Anger: Getting angry, for example, anger over the loss of income and the loss of normal life due to lockdown.

Bargain: Inwardly lamenting that the Corona may not have come and there should have been a lockdown at all.

Depression: It happened like this and goes in to mental pressure and depression.

Acceptance: the last stage, the other way around is to accept it. Example: used to live with Corona.

These five levels are not limited to Corona it will apply to all the problems in human life. The early stages of the pandemic and the ensuring lockdowns were hard on all of us, in different ways. Isolation, joblessness, childcare, and many other challenges severely affected the mental well-being of many people around the world.

Need to do: The coronavirus pandemic is having an impact on everyone's lives. During the lockdown, people may be bored, frustrated or feel lonely, feel low, worried, anxious, or be concerned about people health or that of those close to them. They may concern about the economic impact of the pandemic and how this could affect on job or finances. Everyone reacts differently to events and changes in the way that we think, feel and behave vary between different people and over time.

Covid-19 pandemic is turning out to be a major stressor for most of the people. Mental health is a crucial aspect that needs to be addressed during this pandemic. Millions of people in India has pushed into forced isolation and unemployment during this coronavirus crisis. In India, mental health issues following the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown are varied, from simple fear to depression and even suicide. The lockdown and social distancing have also led to several changes in activities of daily living, which ultimately responsible for many mental health issues like fear, distress feeling of emptiness, panic, sleeplessness, nightmares, irritation, various anxieties, depression and suicide. It is necessary to educate all health care

providers including community leaders and common people for early assessment of mental health issues and train them with basic psychological and mental health first Aid, which may be helpful to decrease the rate of mental health crisis during this pandemic.

Conclusion:

This perhaps the most obvious and immediate effect quarantine life has had on the mental healthcare support system the congruence of fear between a client and their counsellor. Everyone's routine has been thrown out of whack, making them lose the semblance of control over their lives. And everyone is afraid of death now, their own or that of the people they love. Whenever a society is hit by a crisis of the magnitude of the novel coronavirus, it legitimises anxiety of the people. Mental health is a crucial aspect that needs to be addressed during this lock-down as all modes of communication revolve around the virus.

Although every single citizen needs to contribute to this war against the virus by performing all the necessary measures, especially social distancing, the government of India has clearly understood that it cannot be fought alone. The government of India is performing on several fronts to preserve the mental health and morale of all the citizens. The central government has taken measures in this regard and has ensured the seepage of rules and measures to both state and local administration. The following are some of the measures, which directly or indirectly contribute to the mental health of the citizens of the country:

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