

Impact of Pandemic on Mental Health Indian Perspective: A Systematic Review

Rayees Zahoor Shah^{1*}

ABSTRACT

Pandemic has led to unparalleled hazards to the mental health globally. In India pandemic resulted a huge impact on the mental health of people and include both positive and negative impacts. The National lockdowns have given an opportunity to study at home and work from home which intern lead to a family togetherness and build relationships. But this is the story of only one side of the coin. Mental health of millions of children has been put at risk with at least one in seven forced to remain at home under nationwide public health orders. People have been struck at home for more than nine months since the beginning of this pandemic. It has been very difficult for the parents to calm their children's anxieties because of the uncertainty and stress in them. The psychological difficulties like insomnia problems in having a good sleep and concentrating have been seen common during the pandemic. Some are at the greatest risk of developing intense reactions and suicidal tendencies. The COVID-19 is associated with significant levels of psychological distress that, in many cases, would meet the threshold for clinical relevance. Mitigating the hazardous effects of COVID-19 on mental health is an international public health priority. However, progressively significant work is being done to increase awareness about mental health and to strengthen mental health services in India. For example, the Government of India has initiated programs like the National Mental Health Program and District Mental Health Program During the initial lockdown period, under the mandate of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of India, the three central mental health institutions, National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro-Sciences and Central Institute of Psychiatry initiated a national helpline to provide support for mental health concerns arising out of COVID-19. This systematic review conducted on Scopus, Web of sciences, Google scholar etc. examined the psychological status of the general public in India during the COVID-19 pandemic and stressed the associated risk factors. A high prevalence of adverse psychiatric symptoms was reported in most studies which include high rates of anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, psychological distress and stress.

Keywords: *Mental health, Anxiety, Depression, Post-traumatic stress disorder, COVID-19*

¹Ph.D. Scholar, Holy Cross College (Autonomous) affiliated to Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli.

*Corresponding Author

Received: December 18, 2022; Revision Received: March 22, 2023; Accepted: March 27, 2023

© 2023, Shah, R. Z.; licensee IJIP. This is an Open Access Research distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (www.creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any Medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Mental health according to the world health organization include emotional, psychological and social well-being. How a person feel, think and act is affected by the mental health. How someone handles a situation, cope with stress and make the healthy choices depends on the mental health of a person. At every stage of life mental health is very important from the childhood to the adulthood. Mental and physical health are equally important factors for the overall health, for example condition like depression or the diabetes increase the chances of many types of health problems especially chronic conditions like heart diseases, diabetes, and the stroke Similarly the presence of chronic conditions increase the chances of poor mental health or mental illness. Persons mental health can change overtime depending on the demands placed on a person exceeded the coping capabilities results in mental health deterioration. Cause of the poor mental health can be the early life experiences like adverse life experiences such as trauma, history of abuses, assault, stress, assault, violence etc. presence of chronic medical conditions like cancer, use of psychotropic substances such as drugs, consumption of alcohol etc.

Covid-19 is mere a medical phenomenon but a pandemic, it leads to disruption of individuals and the functioning the society. People suffer from stress and stigma everywhere due to this pandemic. Dynamics of the pandemic which involve the security level, degree of flow and aftereffects. Rapid transmission of SARS-COV-2 results restrictions like lockdowns, isolation or the quarantine to prevent the spread of the virus. This leads to closure of schools, colleges and the universities as well as the workplaces, entertainment places etc. People are asked to stay indoors to break the chain of transmission of the virus. With these restrictions like in India there was the national lockdown which affected the social and mental health of people Quarantine leads to isolation cause negative impact on people's mental health due to separation from loved ones, boredom and there is dependence or the loss of freedom, with all these things one can experience the deterioration of mental health.

Mental health of people is affected by the COVID-19 weather children, adults or the elderly people, due to the pandemic restrictions were imposed due to which schools were closed hence children remain away from the activities school, away from the friends, away from colleagues staying at one place 'the home' questioning the parents about the outbreak. Most of the children experience the episodes of anxiety, were in distress conditions due to social isolation and an abusive environment which lead to the short and long term mental health conditions. Behaviour of the children shows changes during the pandemic like some children cry excessively, sadness and worry on their face. They also experience lack of concentration, no attention in a particular thing, unexpected headache and the feelings of pain, and also the change in the eating habits due to the pandemic.

Like the children, adults also face the challenges of mental conditions they also experience conditions of depression, stress, trauma, anxiety etc. Elders are the people who are more prone to be affected by the coronavirus the reason can be both the medical and the social reasons, such as having a weaker immune system due the process of ageing, also most of elderly are with various chronic medical conditions due to which the complexity of the condition increases when they are attacked by the virus. Some elderlies are also distanced from the families as well from their friends due to the busy schedule this forms the social cause. Due to the prevention measure like quarantine and isolation can have drastic negative affects on the mental health. It will lead to anxiety and traumatic conditions.

METHODOLOGY

Methods and results were obtained on the basis of reporting items. A systematic search on different platforms like Scopus, Medline, web of sciences etc. were conducted as well as the topic related manual specific searches were done on google scholar to find the related studies. Search terms like COVID-19, Mental Health, psychological health, SARS-COV-2, post-traumatic stress disorder. etc. were searched by the researcher for the purpose of this research. Researcher searches titles, abstracts, methodology and the results, all the content were screened for or the purpose of this research. Entire articles were assessed their full data were checked for the eligibility in the initial screening by the researcher. Researcher followed cross sectional method for the purpose of this research. Relevant data is extracted by using the forms, the type of study design, sampling strength, characteristics ,assessment tools and techniques, and the prevalence of symptoms or the mental conditions due to COVID-19 like Depression, Post traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, psychological disorders, stress and the associated and relevant details.

Measurement tool

Many tools were used in these studies for the assessment of mental health like Beck depression inventory, Beck anxiety inventory, patient health questionnaire, WHO-5 well-being index, Self-rating depression scales, DAS 21 used to determine depression , anxiety, and the stress, HADS used to measure the hospital anxiety depression scale and PDI-Peritraumatic distress inventory were used to determine psychological distresses.

RESULTS

After selecting the almost hundred publications some were removed because of duplication, whole text of the articles were assessed for the eligibility, few were neglected due to non-standardization. After the screening only eight articles were selected which met the criteria of inclusion sample size of the studies were ranging between 3000-5000. Majority of the sample were the above eighteen years old. The percentage of female participant include about sixty percent. This study follows the cross-sectional research design.

It was found that there is high prevalence of adverse mental health deterioration among the sample. Mental conditions found in the sample include depression, Generalised anxiety disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, stress, mania and the phobias etc. Greater distress in the mental health in the working women because of higher presence in the workforce Panic conditions due to loss of job and unpredictability due to the pandemic were the stressful. People especially the elderly and people with chronic medical conditions showed symptoms of stress, anxiety and the depression. One of the reasons for the anxiety include is the exposure of screens, social media, fake news related to the COVID-19. Reports from the studies suggest that due to poverty, unemployment is the major risk caused for developing the mental illnesses which lead to poor mental health. Depression was prevalent in almost 68 percent sample of the studies, anxiety about 70 percent and the PTSD about 40 percent moderate to severe trauma.

CONCLUSION

This systematic review study was conducted to examine the mental health of the people during the pandemic through the research studies conducted in India as well as abroad. The results of this research found high prevalence of poor mental health of majority of people included in the sample. This pandemic came with unpredicted trauma and threat to the mental status of the people. Results show that in majority of the sample there was the

prevalence of Depression, anxiety, and PTSD found the leading cause of poor mental health in India during the pandemic.

REFERENCES

- J Affect Disord. 2020 Dec 1; 277: 55–64. Published online 2020 Aug 8. doi: 10.1016/j.jad.2020.08.001.
- Moukaddam, N., & Shah, A. (2020). Psychiatrists beware! The impact of COVID-19 and pandemic on mental health. *Psychiatric Times*, 37(3). <https://doi.org/https://www.psychiatrictimes.com/psychiatrists-beware-impact-coronavirus-pandemics-mental-health> [PubMed], [Google Scholar].
- Anant Kumar & K. Rajasekharan Nayar (2021) COVID 19 and its mental health consequences, *Journal of Mental Health*, 30:1, 1-2, DOI: 10.1080/09638237.2020.1757.
- Times of India. (2020, March 20). Do you have the obsessive-compulsive coronavirus disorder? *TimesofIndia.com*. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/life-style/health-fitness/health-news/do-you-have-the-obsessive-compulsive-coronavirus-disorder/articleshow/74655648.cms> [Google Scholar].
- Ahmed M.Z., Ahmed O., Zhou A., Sang H., Liu S., Ahmad A. Epidemic of COVID-19 in China and associated psychological problems. *Asian Psychiatry*. 2020;51 doi: 10.1016/j.aip.2020.102092.
- Anand K.B., Karade S., Sen S., Gupta R.M. SARS-CoV-2: camazotz's curse. *Med. J. Armed Forces India*. 2020; 76:136–141. doi: 10.1016/j.mjafi.2020.04.008.
- Moukaddam N, Shah A. Psychiatrists beware! The impact of COVID-19 and pandemics on mental health. *Psychiatric Times*. 2020. <https://www.psychiatrictimes.com/psychiatrists-beware-impact-coronavirus-pandemics-mental-health>.
- Int J Health Plann Manage. 2020 Sep; 35(5): 993–996. Published online 2020 Jun 22. doi: 10.1002/hpm.3008

Acknowledgement

I am thankful to my Research Convener Dr. P. Swarna Kumari Ma'am Associate professor and dean Research Holy Cross College, Tiruchirapalli and My loving Family Members.

Conflict of Interest

I declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to this research.

How to cite this article: Shah, R. Z. (2023). Impact of Pandemic on Mental Health Indian Perspective: A Systematic Review. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 11(1), 1532-1535. DIP:18.01.155.20231101, DOI:10.25215/1101.155