

Fear and Obsession among Covid-19 Survivors

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ABSTRACT

Background- Covid-19 has emerged from Wuhan city. Its fatality rate is very high among the population. the rate of fear and obsession with COVID-19 has been increasing among the population due to the fatality rate, anxiety, and death anxiety of COVID-19. **Aim-** The study aims to investigate the relationship between Fear and Obsession among COVID-19 survivors. **Measures-** The study's sample size is N=200 including 100 males and 100 females. Measures have been used such as Fear of COVID-19 by Ahorsu et al. (2020) and obsession with the COVID-19 scale by Lee et al. (2020). Statistical techniques such as descriptive statistics, independent t-tests, and Pearson product-moment correlation have been used. **Results –** Results found that the mean value of fear and obsession is high among females. Results indicate that the correlation coefficient is .556 between fear and obsession which is significant at the .01 level. **Discussion-** Results demonstrate that there is a positive correlation has been found between the variable fear and obsession.

Keywords: *Fear, Obsession, Covid-19, Covid-19 Survivors*

In December 2019, unknown fever symptoms appeared in China's Wuhan hospitals. The virus is transmitted very easily and frequently among the population. Scientists from China dubbed the disease 'sars-cov-2-Sars acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus-2' as the 'Coronavirus-19' (Yuen et al., 2020).

The abbreviation for the coronavirus is "CO stands for corona, VI for viruses, and D for disease." Coronavirus is derived from the 'Latin' word, 'Crown.' The name represents the virus's unusual appearance as spherical particles with a rim of projections that resemble the solar corona when viewed under an electron "microscope."

Covid-19 appeared in 2020 in Wuhan, China. The World Health Organization (2020) has announced the worldwide pandemic of the coronavirus. Characteristics of the COVID-19 outbreak including the symptoms of a relatively long incubation period, the transmission rate of COVID-19, and high fatality rates in the elderly and individuals with pre-existing

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conditions, have led governments worldwide to implement unprecedented strategies to counteract its further spread (WHO- China Joint Mission, 2020). Zoghi et al. (2020) show that respiratory system secretion, contact with contaminated surfaces, and interpersonal interaction are the three ways the virus spreads. Arpaci et al. (2020) show that the disease's effects are exacerbated by the coronavirus (COVID-19) infection's quick worldwide dissemination, pandemic-like outbreak, lack of treatment, and high fatality rate.

Fear

Fear indicates a reasonable response to possible danger or threatening situations and has little negative outcomes as long as physical and social mobility remains unaffected. Fears are characterized as typical responses to real threats; they are adaptive and frequently have survival value.

American Psychological Association (2020) has defined Fear as, “a basic, intense emotion aroused by the detection of imminent threat, involving an immediate alarm reaction that mobilizes the organism by triggering a set of physiological changes.”

In any adverse condition such as disease, earthquakes, and pandemics fear is the primary first emotion (Ekman, 2007). Fearful thoughts, thoughts of escape, and a powerful autonomic surge that causes bodily symptoms like perspiration, trembling heart palpitations, and nausea are the symptoms of fear.

D'souza et al. (2020) found that in any threatening situation, fear is a normal reaction that occurs in daily life. Fear of COVID-19 is reported as the major suicide mediating factor in the context of the coronavirus outbreak.

Obsession

The word 'Obsession' is derived from the Latin word “obsidere” being taken into possession, occupied, or preoccupied. Obsessions are frequent, enduring thoughts, desires, or impulses that are deemed bothersome and undesirable and that significantly increase anxiety or discomfort.

According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5, 2013), obsession is defined as “recurrent and persistent thoughts, urges, or images that are experienced as intrusive and unwanted,” in contrast, compulsions are defined as “repetitive behaviors or mental acts that an individual feels driven to perform in response to an obsession or according to rules that must be applied rigidly.”

worries about germs and contamination, doubts (“Is the water tap off?”) order and symmetry (“the need for all items to be arranged a certain way”), and urges that are aggressive are considered basic obsessions. The individual attempts to ignore or repress these ideas and urges because they know they are unreasonable, but they struggle to do so. Alateeq et al. (2021) show that germs and virus-related obsessions and perceived stress were found to significantly increase among those who spent time in quarantine, quarantine discipliners, and students.

Fear and obsession

Deng et al. (2020) show that the coronavirus outbreak affected individuals' physical health, and mental health at a personal level, interpersonal level, and social level. A cross-sectional study has been conducted on a sample of 1068 participants and found that the prevalence

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rate of obsession is '13.47%' and fear is '46.9%' among the population. This study also found that a positive correlation has been found between fear and obsession. The study concludes that due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the mental health of the population has been affected (Srivastava et al., 2020).

The likelihood of mental health problems such as increased obsessive-compulsive traits may also be associated with such fear (Ornell et al., 2020). AKBULUT et al. (2023) conducted a cross-sectional study on 449 participants and the study concludes that a significantly moderate correlation has been found between the variables fear and obsession.

Objective

To investigate the relationship between fear and obsession among COVID-19 survivors.

Hypothesis

There will be a positive relationship between fear and obsession among COVID-19 survivors.

Sample

The sample for the present study includes N=200 (100 males and 100 females) covid-19 survivors in the age range of 30-50. The participants for the study have been selected from the Jind and Hisar districts of Haryana, India who were willing to participate in the study. To select the sample the following inclusion and exclusion criteria were used.

Inclusion criteria

- Those individuals who have recovered from COVID-19 and were also hospitalised during the covid 19.
- Age between 30-50 years, Either of the sex.
- Ability to read and write.

Exclusion criteria

- Patients with psychiatric illness.
- Patients who are not hospitalized.

Procedure

The present study includes a sample of 200 COVID-19 survivors. Only participants who were hospitalized after being infected and whose ages ranged from 30-50. Data was collected from the sample with the help of self-report measures including Fear of COVID-19 and Obsession with COVID-19. After the data collection, the data was analyzed and the results were prepared using 'Pearson product-moment correlation.'

Tools

- **Fear of covid 19 scale**-Ahorsu et al. (2020) developed a fear of covid-19 scale. This is a self-report measure. This scale consists of seven items on a five-point Likert scale. The score ranges from 7-35. A higher score on this scale represents a higher fear of covid-19. The scale contains good internal consistency. The test-retest reliability of the scale is .72. Cronbach alpha of this scale is 0.82.
- **Obsession with covid-19**-Lee et al. (2020) developed an obsession with covid-19 scale. This measure is a self-report inventory. This scale consists of four items on a 5-point Likert scale with a score ranging from 0-20. A higher score on the Obsession

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with COVID-19 scale indicates probable dysfunctional thinking about COVID-19. Obsession with the Covid-19 scale has good psychometric properties. The reliability of the test is .83. Omega coefficient of this scale is 0.89. The Cronbach α coefficient of this scale is 0.71 (Lee et al., 2020b).

RESULTS

The present study concerned the correlation between fear and obsession in a sample of 200 COVID-19 survivors. The mean age of the participants is 39.9. To measure the results some statistical tools like descriptive statistics, independent t-tests, and Pearson product-moment correlation have been used.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Fear	Female	100	19.98	8.67	.866
	Male	100	17.94	7.56	.755
Obsession	Female	100	5.99	3.73	.372
	Male	100	5.10	3.76	.375

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics which include the values of mean and standard deviation. Females' mean score on the variable fear is 19.98 (standard deviation 8.67) and males' mean score on the variable fear is 17.94 (Standard deviation 7.56). Results show that females' mean score on the fear variable is greater than males.

Results also show that the female mean score on the variable obsession is 5.99 (Standard deviation= 5.99) and the mean score of males on the variable obsession is 5.10 (Standard deviation 3.76). Thus, the females' mean score on the obsession variable is greater than that of males.

Table 2. Independent t-test

	Mean difference	Std. Error Difference	t-value	df	p-value
Fear	2.04	1.15	1.77	198	.078
Obsession	.89	.53	1.68	198	.094

Results have been shown in Table 2 that the mean difference score on the variable fear is 2.04 ($t= 1.77, p<.07$) which is not found significant. Females score high on the variable fear with the mean difference score 2.04. Results have shown that the mean difference score on the variable obsession is .89 ($t=1.68, p>.09$) which is also not significant. Females score high on the variable obsession with a mean difference score of .89.

Table 3. Correlation matrix for Fear and Obsession

	Fear	Obsession
Fear	1	.566**
obsession	.566**	1

**correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 3 shows the correlation coefficient. The correlation coefficient has been found .556 which is significant at the .01 level which indicates a positive relationship. The result shows

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a moderate positive correlation has been found between the variables fear and obsession which is found significant at a .01 level.

DISCUSSION

The present study aims to measure the relationship between fear and obsession among COVID-19 survivors. Hypothesis 1 stated that “There will be a positive relationship between fear and obsession among COVID-19 survivors.” Is accepted, which shows that there is a moderate positive relationship has been found between the variable obsession and Mental health. Some researches support our study that a cross-sectional study was conducted on 449 participants and the study concludes that a significantly moderate correlation has been found between fear and obsession (AKBULUT et al., 2023). Hypothesis 1 is accepted, which states that a positive relationship has been found between the variables. This shows that as the fear of covid-19 has increased the obsession with covid-19 also increases.

CONCLUSION

covid-19 pandemic increases the physical health issues as well as psychological issues. The COVID-19 outbreak increases psychological issues such as anxiety, depression, stress, fear, obsession, and PTSD symptoms. This outbreak is more vulnerable to all age groups such as children, adults, and old age. People with diseases and physical problems such as heart problems, lung problems, and diabetes are more vulnerable to suffering from this epidemic. The death fatality rate is very high due to the COVID-19 pandemic which increases the level of fear and obsession among individuals. our study aims to investigate the relationship between fear and obsession. Results show that a positive relationship has been found between the variables which show that as fear increases the level of obsession will also increase. Females have higher scores on the variable fear and obsession.

Implications of the study

The study aims to measure the relationship between fear and obsession among COVID-19 survivors. Our results show that a positive moderate relationship has been found between fear and obsession. Study shows that fear of any disease and pandemic leads to physical health and mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, PTSD, and obsession. If individuals do not have a fear of the pandemic, it can protect him/her. Many studies show that because of fear, individuals suffer in their physical health, mental health, and quality of life. The study has some limitations, too. A larger sample size can increase the effectiveness of the study. The efficacy of the study is also increased by comparing the normal population with a specific population and rural and urban backgrounds also can be compared in this study.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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