

POSTPANDEMIC IMPACT OF QUARANTINE ON PEOPLE KEPT IN ISOLATION

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ABSTRACT

The coronavirus disease worldwide impacted the livelihood of people immensely. It affected people basically who lost any near or dear one, who lost their job and home. Mental health is a very integral part of every human being. Nearly every aspect of life is impacted by mental health, which also affects our ability to communicate with others. It also has a connection to our physical health, supporting our ability to continue with some routine operations like immune system maintenance. How well we can handle stress and deal with certain difficulties depends on our mental health.

Aim of this research is to find out how badly the COVID 19 caused and brought imbalance in social relationship and mental illness of people. We also took a survey which gave the live experiences of individuals' own perspectives regarding the isolation. It is a critical examination of facts and interpretation of people. The objective of this research is also to find out what are the significant substitutions happening in nature of human and humanity.

Keywords: Post Pandemic, Mental health, Criticism, Isolation, Depression, Anxiety, Loneliness, Society

INTRODUCTION

Humanities suffered tremendous losses during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Beginning in December of 2019, corona virus emerged and spread throughout the entire globe. Every continent, every country and every individual witnessed and suffered through it.

One of the most alien things about this virus was the fact that nobody knew anything about it. The top scientists of the world, even WHO, was very skeptical about the properties of this deadly virus. From the beginning it spread at a very rapid base. There was anxiety and confusion throughout the globe. Countries started to impose heavy lockdowns. People could not leave their homes, go to their jobs. This was more severe for the labor class because they usually don't have hefty savings. There was both criticism and support for the government decision to impose lockdown.

Some people were criticizing the government stating that the lockdown should not be so sudden and harsh. This was also partly harsh treatment of citizens by police forces. The other spectrum was supporting the government thinking that if the lockdown was imposed, we would be able to defeat and overcome this virus more effectively. So that we could go back to our normal life.

Adhering to government guidelines and also the guidelines suggested by the WHO like not leaving homes for unnecessary purposes and wearing masks. This however led to loneliness, obesity due to over eating and not doing any physical work. Some people contracted COVID-19 but due to unavailability of hospital beds had to be isolated in their homes. Isolation period varied from 14 days to 2 months.

Combined with the fact that people were anxious, lonely and gaining weight led to stress, anxiety and depression. It was unheard of that people had to stay away from their own house. This disturbed the mental health of both patients and their relatives. There were no vaccines available as the study of COVID-19 still incomplete and the antidote would still take time. The order of the society was completely shattered. We are now in the post pandemic time and humanity has mostly defeated the virus. People still have horrendous flashbacks and the most important lesson this wicked virus taught humanity is the significance of mental health and mental support.

Evolution Of Coronavirus

In 1965, researchers found the first human coronavirus. The result was a common cold. Humans can catch seven different corona viruses. The virus that causes SARS first appeared in southern China in 2002 and expanded fast to 28 other nations. By July 2003, 774 people had died and more than 8,000 had become sick. In 2004, there was a tiny epidemic with only four further cases. Fever, headaches and respiratory issues including coughing and shortness of breath are all brought on by this coronavirus. In 2012, MERS first appeared in Saudi Arabia. Nearly 2,500 cases have affected individuals who reside in or travel to the Middle East.

Less people can contract the corona virus.

Numerous investigations have been conducted to identify the origins of SARSCoV-2, but none of them have produced a definitive result. Middle East respiratory disease (MERS) and severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) are caused by coronaviruses that originated in bats. In Wuhan, China, the virus first surfaced on a limited scale in November 2019, followed by the first significant cluster in December 2019. SARS-CoV-2 was initially believed to have transitioned to humans at one of Wuhan, China's outdoor "wet markets." Later speculations raised doubts that it might have started out as a biological weapon in a Chinese laboratory. SARS-CoV-2 affected people who hadn't had any direct contact with animals as it spread both inside and outside of China. That indicated that a human being can spread the infection to another.

The World Health Organization, however, disproved the theory that COVID started in a Wuhan wet market or was the result of a lab leak in a report on February 8, 2021. Initially, it was thought that the virus came from a "wet market," which is a place where animals including bats, snakes, rabbits, and birds are sold illegally. In wet markets, both living and dead animals are crowded together in close proximity so it was suspected that market vendors who had contact with animals are thought to have been the first to contract the strain.

Impact Of Isolation on Old Aged

Early in 2020, as the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) spread across the world, older adults were disproportionately more affected by the pandemic's negative effects. These included more serious complications, higher mortality, worries about disruptions to their daily lives and access to care, difficulty adjusting to new technologies like telemedicine, and worries that isolation would exacerbate pre-existing mental health conditions. However, given the scope and severity of the epidemic, there was concern about a mental health crisis among older persons. For older people the complication was more severe. Firstly due to having a weak immune system they ran into a higher risk of contracting COVID-19. Patients suffering from asthma and diabetes had more extreme difficulty during pandemic. Older adults often have lower stress reactivity, generally speaking, greater emotional regulation and well-being than younger adults. In residential care facilities as well as at home, when interaction with friends, family, and caretakers grew more restricted, older individuals became the subject of the worry. Family members did not behave well with them. Their regular interaction with their near and dear was severely affected.

Impact Of Isolation on Children

Children are more active and communicative in nature. For a child every time is precious for them to explore, to speak, to sparkle, to touch, to feel, to see and hear the world. Unfortunately these opportunities were snatched from them during the pandemic. Infants were mostly safe because of their strong immune system however sometimes breast feeding mothers would be infected COVID-19 leading to them being separated from their mothers. This meant they would have to be looked after by someone else.

Similar is the case with prepubescent and pubescent children. In their case it was more traumatizing

because they argued about having their mothers isolated at home. We cannot even imagine how hard it must have been to know that their mother can't meet them even though she is in the next door. Looking at their father and every other family member in a constant state of stress and anxiety must have taken a huge toll on their mental health.

Adding to this inhuman conditions was the fact that they could not go outside to play with their friends. For a child that is the most relevant part of their life. There were cases where children lost their parents and siblings.

Problems In Healthcare Centers During The Pandemic

- Due to a hectic schedule and massive number of patients, doctors and nurses did not behave well with the infected people. Whereas that time they are necessarily entitled to mental support.
- They were not allowed to interact with their family members, whereas that time consolation from family members was a necessary medicine as compared to practical medical drugs. Because interacting with family ultimately leads to a positive atmosphere and attribute. It was the major reason for loneliness. They were not provided with even balanced and nutritious food. All these things critically affected the mental health of people.
- Despite having mild symptoms or less symptoms as they were absolutely detached from their own affection premises so an unforeseen and weird fear caused their thought process. So they started to think like they could face the painful death at any time.
- As "Novel" coronavirus was absolutely new to the world so everybody was unfamiliar with its consequences. Those people who got positive results with their PCR test and got isolated in any health care center or treated at hospital they felt serious hopelessness, sadness and loneliness that led to depression.
- Those people who were extremely afraid of that led to anxiety and nervousness.

OBJECTIVE

We took a survey among various people who were isolated during COVID. The questionnaire addressed all age groups on a wide range of topics relating to mental health and issues they felt during the isolation period. We discovered a huge number of variables and problems people had to go through. The questionnaire was designed to address all the major and some of the minor aspects of having been isolated from the world and mostly focussing on the mental health of people. To get more detailed information and personal thoughts, opinions and life or any relative of them who was isolated.

METHODOLOGY

In this research paper the qualitative research method was used. The data and information were collected from both primary and secondary sources.

Questionnaire, data analysis and observational research method also conducted in this research. The mode of the survey was online. This online survey study investigated mental health, subjective experience and behavioral changes among the people from different states across India. Assessment method comprised psychological scales, psychological questions. Data analysis comprised illustrative analysis of mental health, descriptive analysis of personality changes, self-concept and feelings.

We obtained many responses. We can now analyze and study how individuals' mental health was affected by the pandemic. We cannot say for sure how true the responses were because one of the ways the pandemic affected people is they don't want to share their personal problems; however,

we cannot also neglect the fact that they are people who need help and want to help others. The questionnaire targeted 40% male audience, 37.50% female audience and 22.50% people from the queer community. The age group from 17 to 25 is the larger respondents.

ANALYSIS

- Of all the participants, 37.50% were females, 40% were males & 22.50% were queer.
- 78% of the people said they were quarantined and only 22% said they were not. 84% participants responded saying that they were quarantined at home. 56% of the people said that covid and isolation changed the way they think and act after the quarantine
- 68% of the people responded saying that they don't have flashbacks or some sort of dreams about being in isolation and only 31.6% responded saying they have flashbacks about the quarantine period. Out of those 31.6% people who said they have flashbacks 12% people say that they have depressing thoughts
- 81% of the people said that they noticed a change in sleep patterns and 75% of them said that they have a difficulty of fixing their sleep schedule
- On the question of gaining or losing weight, 57.9% people said they had gained weight and might need to change their living habits while 42% people said that they did not lose or gain any weight. 89% of the people who said that they had gained weight said that it has become a thing of concern for them and they don't feel comfortable in their body.
- 57% people said that they felt tensed and anxious during the isolation period and 68.4% said that they felt constant weakness and felt tired and 52% of the people felt lethargic and have a difficulty starting their day and staying active
- On the question of self-harm, the majority of people (78.9%) said no they did not hurt themselves but 21.1% said that either they harmed themselves or thought about it and out of them 50% said that it helps them with their anxiety and now do it regularly. 71% of the people said that they wanted to talk to someone about their current state of mind but are afraid of being judged. 26% of people said that they were on some form of anti-anxiety medication and 84% said that they felt depressed at some point of time.
- On the question of having problems in concentration and learning 52.6% said that they faced issues in those aspects. 78.6% of the people said that the fear of being alone forever and the chaos changed major aspects of their life and personality. Stating that they don't want to be alone ever in life and most of them said that being alone leads to a sort of sadness

OBSERVATIONS

Considering there are numerous variables and every individual is different. Every individual has suffered in his or her own way and everyone's problems are specific to them. However when we look through a broader perspective we observe certain similarities and patterns. There are certain challenges and difficulties that are frequent to everyone.

HUNTING FLASH BACK:

We saw that a number of participants also had concerns related to having flashbacks of the time when they were quarantined. This can trigger severe mental illness including schizophrenia and ODC.

DEPRIVED SLEEP PATTERN:

A whopping majority of the participants said that quarantine has in some way or another or other affected their sleep pattern. This is a pressing issue considering that sleeping on time and having a healthy sleeping routine is vital to good mental health. Furthermore, sleeping for an immensely long period of time may be a symptom of depression.

LACK OF CONFIDENCE:

20 Many of the participants said that quarantine has affected their confidence level. This can also

affect other aspects of life specially if their job comprises a lot of client interactions.

OBESITY:

Upon observation a major portion of the participants said that the weight they had gained during quarantine was a matter of concern. We know that trying and failing to lose weight may result in a person feeling under confident, avoiding social interaction due to being judged. This may sometimes lead to excessive eating and intake of large portions of greasy and junk food coping mechanisms.

ANXIETY:

In the survey we saw a huge no. of participants saying that quarantine has given them anxiety. Some of them even responded stating meditation. This can cause severe mental problems and personality issues in the long run. Not to mention the side effects of the medicines and the potential risk of overdose. Almost all participants said that they felt constant weakness and some sort of laziness.

SELF HARM:

While this issue is prevalent in a small number of participants, it's a very major one. Almost all of them said that now they regularly do it and it helps them in managing their anxiety. This is a severe problem considering that they have adopted this as an escape mechanism.

FEAR OF LONELINESS:

We concluded from the study that many people face this difficulty after having been isolated and that they don't want to be alone anymore. This is dangerous especially knowing the fact that they cannot have someone always there for them. There may be times that they will have to be alone which may result in poor mental health, since they will have to deal with loneliness on their own.

MENTAL HEALTH- ITS IMPORTANCE & SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE ON

The emotional, psychological, and social well-being of an individual is referred to as their "mental health" by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. "A person can do everyday chores, maintain relationships, and engage in meaningful recreation when they are in good mental health," stated Dr. Darleen Dumpster, a clinical faculty member at Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) in the clinical mental health counseling department. This includes having a feeling of balance and being empowered to establish boundaries and work toward long-term goals.

Serious mental health conditions can have an influence on your relationships, profession, education, and long-term objectives in addition to your day-to-day life. Considering your mental health issues as global rates of mental disease rise

According to the NIMH, some mental diseases, such as sadness and anxiety, can result in physical symptoms that go undiagnosed. Additionally, the CDC notes that mental illness can raise the risk of diabetes, stroke, and heart disease. It has also been noted that people with severe mental illness are more likely to develop major illnesses after receiving COVID-19. Nevertheless, persistent problems with one's physical health can also exacerbate mental health problems

"Factors including a healthy diet, enough sleep, and exercise can improve our mental health. On the other hand, bad eating habits, inactivity, and lack of sleep might hinder our capacity to handle stress and life's obligations, according to Dempster. Sometimes, tension, unsettling thoughts, or other emotions might cause mental health issues to progress to somatic symptoms. Consequently, the relationship between mental and physical symptoms is cyclical

The NIMH estimates that about 1 in 3 persons may have an anxiety disorder in their lifetime, making anxiety disorders a major global mental health problem. Tension or nervousness, panic attacks, and physical disease are all examples of anxiety symptoms. Anxiety can refer to a variety of anxiety-based conditions, including social anxiety disorder, separation anxiety, specific phobias, and generalized anxiety disorder.

According to NIMH, depression is a different common condition that can have a significant negative impact on a person's life. Common symptoms include ongoing melancholy, emptiness, and irritation, lack of motivation, guilt, or feelings of poor self-worth. Focusing difficulty, aches,

headaches, digestive problems, or changes in eating and sleeping patterns can also occur in those who are depressed.

Suicidal thoughts and behaviours are some of the most severe signs of depression. According to the NIMH, suicide is the 12th most common cause of death in the country overall, but it is the second most common among people between the ages of 10 and 24 and the third most common among people aged 15 to 24. According to the CDC, there was a 30% increase in suicide rates from 2000 to 2020.

Post-traumatic stress disorder can develop as a result of the psychological effects of a traumatic event or experience (PTSD). Flashbacks, unpleasant memories, nightmares, and panic attacks are PTSD symptoms. Even while PTSD is frequently linked to combat veterans, a wide range of traumatic events, including abuse, assault, fatal accidents, and loss, can trigger the disease.

Addiction is another mental health issue that has been more prevalent recently, with the CDC reporting a sharp spike in drug overdose mortality since the 1990s. According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, alcohol is the most often abused drug, and it is responsible for 5.3% of deaths globally. Many people can only recover from addiction, a complex disease, with the assistance of medical professionals.

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, psychotic diseases are among the most stigmatized in our society, which only serves to further isolate those who have them and are seeking treatment (NAMI). A psychotic break from reality is characterized by auditory/visual hallucinations, disordered thinking, or delusions. Schizophrenia and schizoaffective disorder are two examples of psychotic disorders. Contrary to popular belief, psychosis sufferers are much more likely to be the victims of violence than the perpetrators, according to the World Psychiatry Journal.

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD), eating disorders like anorexia and bulimia, borderline personality disorder, and mood disorders like bipolar disorder are a few other common psychiatric disorders. Each mental health disorder comes with its own set of difficulties and treatments.

CONCLUSION

Based on our questionnaire and the responses which we received from the participants, we can clearly see that people have been greatly affected by the pandemic. While there is a minority of people who have survived out of isolation and lockdown with good mental health, people have faced a huge number of mental health issues that need to be addressed.

Majority of those problems like anxiety, obesity and self-harm need immediate medical help and issues like depression and fear of being lonely need psychological support and care. People are really afraid to talk to other people and they are afraid of being criticized. Great deal of responsibility lies on relatives and close friendships of those people to help them counter these issues.

Mental health being a taboo topic in our society is very dangerous especially to these people who need help. Almost everyone has lost someone they knew or loved or who was the backbone of the house. To recover from these devastated circumstances they need a cordial atmosphere and more loving people around them. Society, especially the government, needs to take crucial steps to raise awareness and more help as these issues are very delicate so everyone should be more careful.

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