

A REVIEW ON PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF COVID -19

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ABSTRACT

Human being facing number of challenges in their life. One more addition in that the current situation of corona virus and spreads all over the world. In this article we explained how this virus spreads, its symptoms and about different countries affected with it like U.S., Japan, etc. We discussed targeted population of high risk to low risk with levels and how people goes through mental and psychic disturbances. We gave the information about possible vulnerable group, risk factors and psychological symptoms. We touched to stress and anxiety amongst male and female with the help of chart, also to grief and bereavement. This article mentions about population who need to be psychologically communicated and how impact can force people to be fearful. It includes how to come out of this situation particularly message for general people, isolated peoples, adults, children and mainly healthcare professionals/workers who are equal to God now. We briefly discussed an idea about different impacts with tips.

KEYWORDS: COVID-19, Psychological impact, Stress, Anxiety.

INTRODUCTION

The world facing one of the most feared situation because of one virus named: COVID-19 (coronavirus disease).^[1] Cause by the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 [SARS-CoV-2].^[2,3] The virus spreads through saliva droplets/ discharge from nose (sneezing/coughing).^[4-6] Symptoms is similar to that of Flu, includes fever, cough and shortness of breathing followed by pneumonia.^[7,8]

WHO on 11th March 2020 declared COVID-19 a pandemic? This disease started in late December-2019 in China which is quickly spread all over different countries like United states of America, Japan, Italy etc.^[1] It extended more than 200 countries that just because of the inappropriate, insufficient preventative measures and unrestricted travel as well. Till date more than one million cases were observed and still continues.^[2,3] Highest confirmed cases observed in United State of America, Spain, Italy, Germany along with highest deaths in United State, Italy, Spain, France.^[9] None the less India is the second most populated country in the world, if this virus spreads in India like other countries then situation became out of control. So the Indian government taken majors toward COVID-19 like extension of lockdown, make people social aware about this pandemic.^[10]

This pandemic remind us outbreak of SARS in late 2003. If we compare COVID-19 in current with the SARS at that time then this COVID-19 proved to be much more widespread. As WHO stated that from SARS there are total 8422 people worldwide were affected along with 916 deaths. Now the current pandemic already had over 33,000 deaths.

When WHO declared it as a pandemic there was sudden rise of fear and anxiety among the general population.^[11,16] There are total 2,475,723 confirmed cases and 169,151 death cases reported to WHO till date 23rd April 2020.^[9] The below table describes who will be at higher risk amongst general population (target population).^[17]

Table 1: Peoples with their risk level.^[17]

Sr. No.	Levels	Targeted Population
1.	First level	Patients with confirmed COVID-19 Front line medical staff, disease control staff, management staff
2.	Second level	Patients with mild symptoms (fatigue, cough, fever) Close contact of confirmed patients Patient in self isolation/quarantined individuals
3.	Third level	Peoples related to first and second level (family members, colleagues, friends, volunteers, healthcare workers)
4.	Fourth level	Residents of geographic area affected by the epidemic General public

Effects at Psychological Level

Proper vaccines on COVID-19 is in developing phase. So because of lack of preventive vaccines there has been a high panic situation amongst the general peoples.^[4-6] this pandemic also has an economical, psychological, mental and social impacts as well.^[2,3] Those people living away from their families because of the educational or work purpose are at higher risk of mental health problems like depression, anxiety etc. Now the lockdown is going on all over the county, most of the industries closed down and business incur severe losses, people might build up stress. Financial insecurity and stress felt by people just because of enormous hit on the economy, mainly daily wage workers.^[11-16] Isolation can helps to reduce spreading of virus infection but along with it there is reducing access with family, friends and love once which leads to increase in loneliness that arises mental health issues of anxiety, depression, etc.^[10,18] Many peoples staying in indoors so there is a chances of development of anxiety related to Claustrophobia.^[11-16] As this pandemic progresses, many of healthcare professionals / healthcare workers will be at the brink of psychological breakdown.^[11-16] COVID-19 affected

patients may developed death fear, loneliness feeling along with anger, also amongst the quarantined people. As lack of face to face connection and traditional social intervention in quarantined people can be the stressful phenomenon.^[19-21]

Infection might be fatal to elderly people and those with persistent health conditions like diabetes, hypertension, etc.^[7, 8]

Natural disaster like situation shows disruptive events associated with effects on mental health post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) along with depression, anxiety and behavioral as well as psychological disorder. Now just think of this COVID-19 pandemic effects/risk for psychological and psychiatric morbidity.^[11-16]

Indian Government actions like quarantining people and ensuring Lockdown in the country to stop the spread of pandemic. This could lead to negative psychological effects like post-traumatic stress, symptoms, confusion and anger.^[7,8]

Table 2: Possible vulnerable groups with possible risk factor and possible psychological symptoms.^[1]

Sr. No.	Possible vulnerable group	Possible risk factors	Possible psychological symptoms
1.	Children and adolescents	Vulnerable to misinformation, disruption of daily routine	Tantrums, clingy behavior, increased bed wetting, repeated crying.
2.	Elderly adult	Age, medical comorbidities	Anxiety, insomnia, depression, worsening of medical condition
3.	Jobless and homeless persons	Lack of support, uncertainties	Anxiety, insomnia, depression, stress disorder, suicide
4.	Persons suspected of COVID-19	stigma., prolong isolation, social rejection, death of loved once	Anxiety, insomnia, depression, stress disorder, obsessive symptom, grief, fear of contracting illness
5.	Healthcare providers of COVID-19	Work stress, burn out, being direct contact with positive cases	Anxiety, insomnia, depression, fear of contracting illness, post-traumatic stress
6.	Person with mental illness	Discrimination, outstanding stress, economic burden	Exacerbation of symptoms / relapse

SOME OF THE COMMON SYMPTOMS:

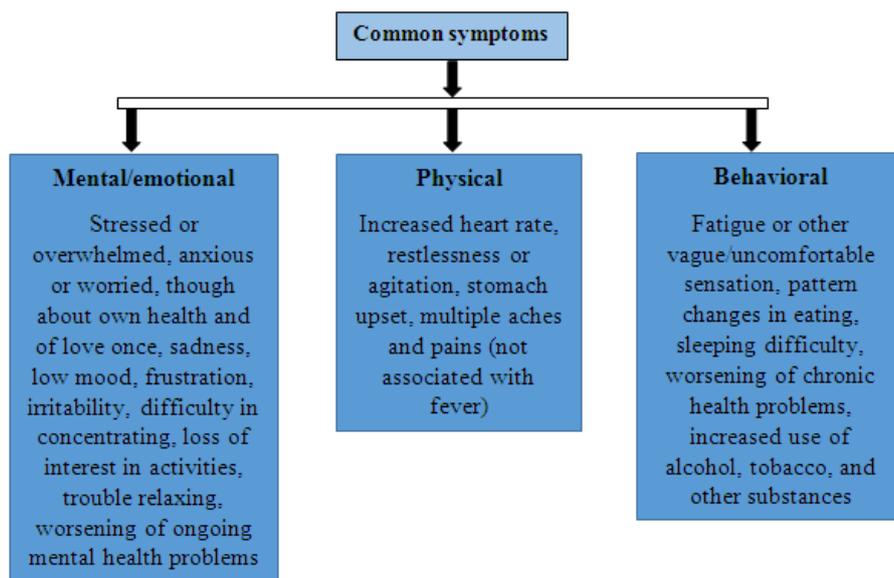


Figure 1: Common psychological symptoms of COVID-19.^[17]

Stress and Anxiety Study

The author conducted human psychology study in lockdown periods. For the study they used convenient sampling technique and study were performed on people from Pune city region which is currently hotspot of

COVID-19. There were total 95 respondents got from the region. Below chart shows the findings and results of research on increased in stress and anxiety.^[22]

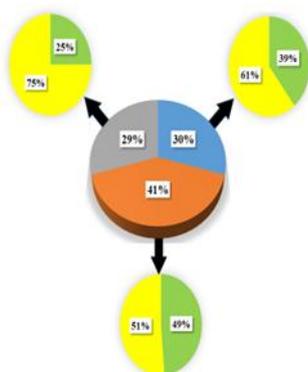


Figure: 2a

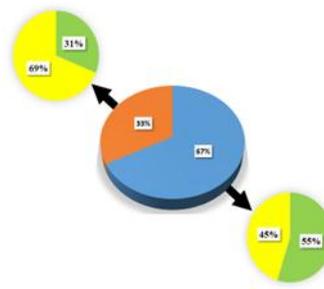


Figure: 2b

Figure 2: Increasing level of stress and anxiety.

Figure 2a: Considering 95 responds as 100%. We came to know about 30% feels stress and anxiety (male-39% and female- 61%) and 41% didn't feel it (male-49% and female-51%). Those people which were not confirmed whether they feel it or not such population with 29 % (male- 25% and female-75%).^[22]

Figure 2b: Does the continuous news of COVID-19 on News channel made you afraid and increased the stress level.

Same as above considering 95 as 100%. Total 67% (male-55% and female-45%) who were afraid along with increased stress level. Also there were 33 % (male-31% and female-69%) who didn't feel it. We calculated male

and female percentage for each section by considering that section as 100%.^[22]

Grief and Bereavement In Covid-19

Individual's response to the event of the loss is the Grief. It is generally of three ways:

1. Psychological: feelings, thoughts, attitude
2. Socially: behavior with others
3. Physically: health and bodily function

All patients who are dying and their love once, family members experienced the preparatory grief along with psychosocial support and counselling should be facilitated.

Bereavement is the object event loss associated with death, changes in relationship or economic status and geographic relocation.^[17]

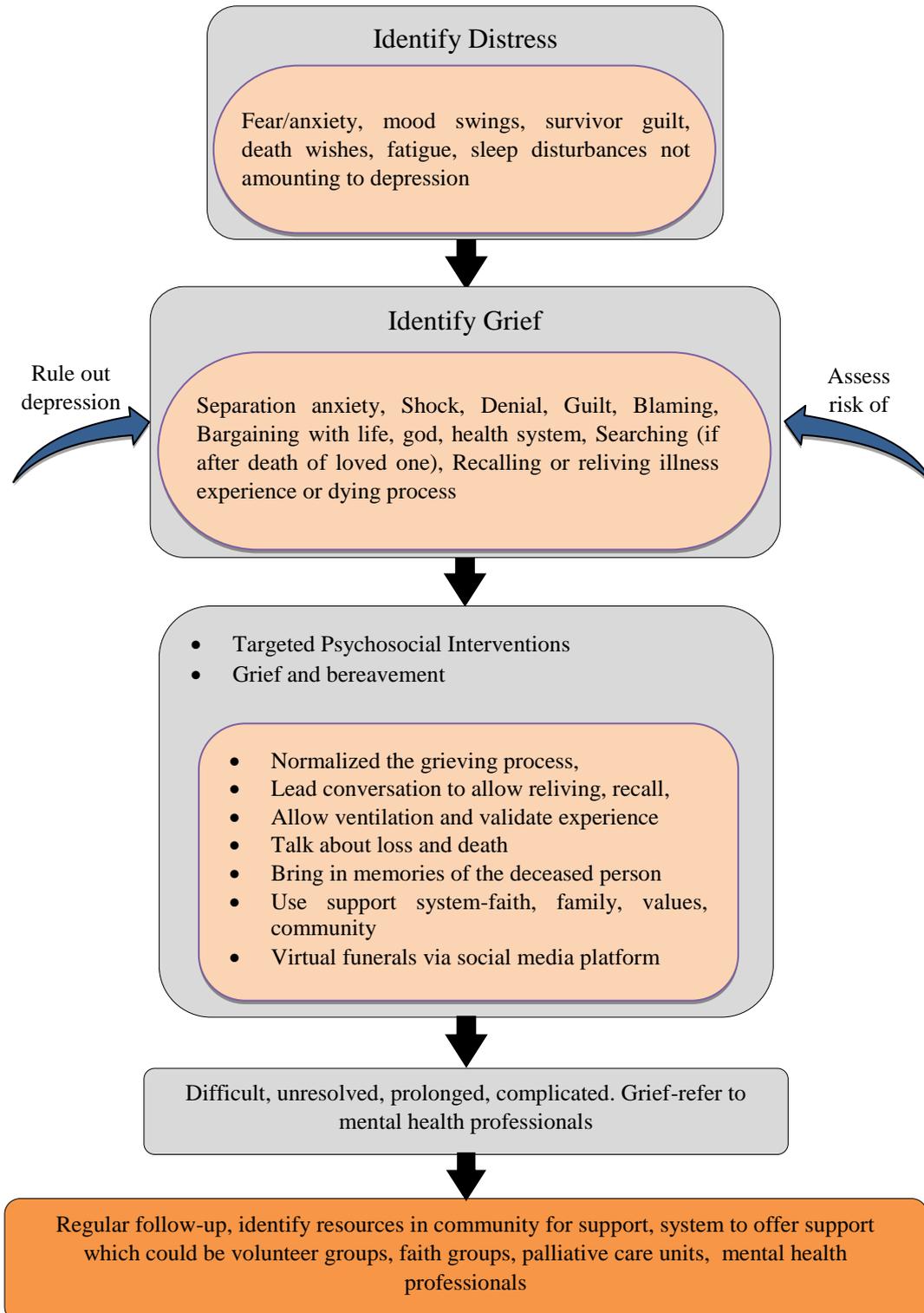


Figure 3: Individual's response to the Grief and Bereavement.^[17]

People who need to be psychologically communicated

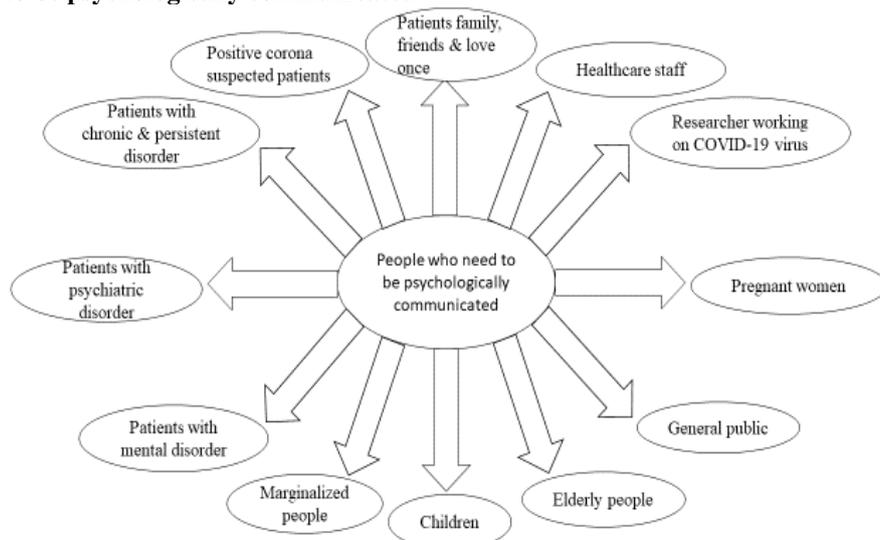


Figure 4: People who need to be psychologically communicated.^[23]

How Impact Can Force People To Be Fearful

There is a fear of reliving a pandemic if the person went through another pandemic in his or her lifetime like Ebola, SARS. That fear of losing someone from relatives due to isolation, marked limitation of travel and social behaviors, anxiety of social or physical distancing, Phobia related to stepping out of home, Stigma with peoples having normal fever, cough and cold, sneezing.

People suddenly start hoarding the foods, essentials, medical necessities etc.^[24]

How to cope up with this psychological situations

Avoid rumors and misinformation which can leads to anxiety amongst you by minimizing watching, listening/reading news related to pandemic. You can get clear comparative ways between facts and rumors by utilizing WHO website and local health authority platform at regular intervals.

Healthcare workers feels not only pressure but the stress and feelings associated with it as well. That may reflects in their work. They are also maintaining distance from their family and love once or may get avoided due to stigma so, might be they may suffer from mental conditions, in such situation keep them connected through the digital methods like mobile. This way they can be more focus with their work. Also ensure about safety guidelines, quality communication, accurate information updates, rotates the workers from higher stress to lower stress, provide social support to each other.

Children feels fear about this pandemic. Keep them engaging with their interested activities. Maintain normal family routine. Just be them safe with their parents. Discuss about COVID-19 seriousness with them in an honest and age appropriate way.

Adults in isolation or with dementia may feel anxious, anger, stressed, agitated and withdrawn during this phase. Be they connected with families through informal networks and health professionals. If person is an underlying health condition take care of their medications. Do regularly simple physical exercise which helps you to be strong and positivity build up. Share clear information to reducing risk of it. Communicate instructions in a clear, concise, respectful and patient way. This can give you positive attitude to fight against pandemic.^[25]

WHO gave an advice and guidance for COVID-19 on the topic of individuals and communities, travel and tourism sector, health sector, employers and workers, faith based organization and faith leaders, large event organizers, countries, food and agriculture sector, cities and local governments.^[26]

Different Impacts Along With Tips

Anxiety

- Recognized the fear. Remembered that you are not isolated in feeling insecure.
- Planning the daily routine helps in adapting quickly and managing anxiety.
- Divide your time clearly as work and non-work times. Make the same division in your headspace too.
- Identify an activity/hobby that bring you joy and performed it.
- Working in short bursts with clear breaks will help to maintain your clarity of thoughts.

Loneliness

- Several community teams have developed interactive platform. Be active in groups you like.
- Spend time with love once.

- Be in touch with friends, family, and colleagues over social media or the phone.
- Pick a new hobby. Learn something new every day. Keep your mind engaged.
- Pen down your thoughts and emotions regularly.

Difficulty in concentrating, low motivation and a state of distraction

- It takes time to adapt with the situations.
- Pick a physical activity of your choice like Yoga or simple stretches. Spend at least one hour per day on your physical health.
- Meditation improves concentration.
- Do not have high expectations of others because they are suffering from same problem, so rational regarding expectations of ours and others also important.

Stress threshold

- Priorities your mental and physical health.
- Exercise regularly, eat healthy food and sleep thoroughly.
- Meditate regularly. This can reduce mental stress.

Negative emotional spirals

- Do not google symptoms of any disease, just trust on doctors.
- Avoid frequent checking the latest COVID statistics.
- Do not hesitate to seek help.
- Do breathing exercise and meditation every day.

Desperation

- Peoples addicted to alcohol, smoking, are desperate about to have it. But take it as a challenge to change your habit by engaging you in yoga, meditation regularly.
- When you feel the urge to smoke or drink, distract yourself with new hobbies or family discussions.

Pain and fear

- Keep in mind you are not alone.
- Be frank about your panic and fear.
- Consult the doctor or person you trust to share feelings and something uplifting.

Financial strain

- Consult to a financial advisor on phone and common platforms to discuss about governmental policies.
- Read about various investments and earning options.

Apprehension about future

- It is common but worrying does not help.
- Avoid speculation and focus of facts. Do not believe everything you read. Confirm your suspicions.
- Remember, humanity has seen worse, and every time we have bounced back. We will again. Being hopeful is the key.^[18]

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