



## A REVIEW ON PSYCHOLOGICAL STATUS IN PEDIATRIC AGE GROUP ALONG WITH ITS MANAGEMENT DURING LOCKDOWN

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### ABSTRACT

The health and pleasure of human life is mainly depend on the balance of the psychosomatic balance of the humors. There is mass promotion and advertisement about the measures to be taken for physical health, but very least concern and awareness campaigns regarding the psychological health. Interaction and communication is the core area of the social wellbeing, especially in children as there is due development of their social and adaptive skills. Hence, interaction with the peer groups is very essential part of daily routine of children. In certain situation where communication with peer groups was not found possible and emotional deprivation observed in children. Lockdown imposed globally during COVID 19 Pandemic is such situation. In present review it has been observed that there is dramatic changes in the situation of society and community. These changes lead to the disturbances in behavior pattern of the children, in the form of anxiety disorder, panic disorder, separation anxiety etc. The different patterns are observed in different children due to difference in their socioeconomic pattern, and cultures as well as geographical distribution. Hence, treatment or prevention with different measure is like make them engage and motivate them through different stories, games, devotional stories etc. is find to be highly beneficial in this situation. This article is an attempt to highlight the importance of the children's mental health and application of different measures to prevent mental illness in present and in future also.

**KEYWORDS:** Anxiety disorders, COVID 19, Lockdown, Psychological health.

### INTRODUCTION

All global population is currently facing a very dreadful situation of global health emergency in the form COVID-19 which is imparting a great burden overall health care systems & economy of all affected countries. WHO has declared it as a pandemic state. COVID-19 is a type of airborne disease which highly contagious & attacks over respiratory system. COVID 19 spreads through droplet infections via sneezing and coughing of infected person to another person. After that by contacting of infected persons there are chances of infections. Studies suggest the highest infectivity rate of the virus across the globe.<sup>[1]</sup> The first confirmed case of COVID 19 is identified in China and on 30th Jan 2020 first case was reported in India. After the first case of it, cases were widely increased in numbers throughout the India. As looked on increasing cases Government ordered to people for maintain social distancing.<sup>[2]</sup>

Government ordered Janta curfew for 14 hours on 22nd march for Indian population that they have to stay at

home in between these hours strictly. No one was allowed to go outside the home between 7:00AM – 21:00 PM. This order was mandatory for all villages, towns, cities, districts and states in our country. Not any public transports work on that day. After 22<sup>nd</sup> march government announced complete lockdown for next 21 days.<sup>[3,4]</sup> After the completion of total 21 days of lockdown government extended this term till 3 May on 14 April. Government re extended till 17 May for 2 weeks for the prevention of COVID 19 Pandemic.<sup>[5,6]</sup> After re extension of lockdown, The Ministry of Home, Govt. of India, announced new guidelines based on prevention and spread of novel coronavirus infection the demarcation of the different zones of country into red, green and orange zones. Red zone for higher risk of spread of infection, orange zone for minimum risk of

spread of infection and green zone for infection free areas or where no single positive case of corona found.<sup>[7]</sup> Lockdown was extended for more than two weeks till 31 May by the Government of India. Division of red and green zones of cities are mentioned by state and union territory government have the power to divide based on parameters given by union health ministry.<sup>[8]</sup>

World health organization and Ministry of health and family welfare of India suggested to maintain social distancing between each other for the prevention of infection and slow down the spread of infection. Ministry of health and family welfare explained the meaning of social distancing or physical distancing and also talk about interventions related to it. According to MOHFW, social distancing is non pharmacological intervention, prevention applied to decrease the distance between two persons or people around us for decrease the morbidity, mortality and spread of infection through infected person to other non-infected person, so that we can get success to slow down the rate of newly discovered COVID 19 infection throughout the world.<sup>[9]</sup> Centre of disease Control (CDC) also suggest to maintain social distancing and said it is the maintaining of space between each other and from each person to person either it is in your home or outside the home.<sup>[10]</sup>

WHO announced to protect yourself and other persons you should have to wear masks, use sanitizers and repeatedly wash your hands to slow down the rate of infection spread in community. WHO briefly explained that when and how to use masks and how to wash your hands through different types of advertisements in newspapers, television and other social media platforms so that everyone can aware of the prevention of this infection.<sup>[11]</sup>

Due to the Pandemic of COVID19 every person in the world facing lockdown, quarantine, isolation and different kind of symptoms. Each person is maintaining social distancing as per said by WHO to prevent yourself and your loved ones from this virus. As all the generations are maintaining social distancing and at every moment the news of new cases of it has been heard and new death ratio. By continuously seeing the bad news of new cases and deaths and separation of their close person, people have very bad impact on their mental health.

Apart from it children are facing this critical condition more than adult because children cannot understand that what is happening around, why all are maintaining distance, why they can't go outside the home for playing, travelling, why they can't meet their neighbourhood, friends and other relatives. It's very difficult to teach about everything to younger children.

A research study is also going on to investigate the mental health impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic on

young people by Psychologists of Sheffield and Ulster University of UK.<sup>[12]</sup> In this critical time of pandemic COVID19 everyone in this world have fear about that they and their loved ones will either live or die. Children are more anxious about it than adults. Children have to accept the lockdown forcefully and maintain social distancing as Govt. strictly ordered it. There are many reasons like children can't go anywhere out of the house for play and other activities and it is difficult for children to stay connected with friends. Children have behavioral characteristic i.e. Versatility as they can't sit or stand in one place. They wants to roam one place to another place. As they live in their house all day and night it appears the symptoms of stress or anxiety like irritability, mood swings, aggressiveness etc.

As we hearing the news of deaths around us due to COVID19 and as children are knowing about the separation and disruption of their family members and their relatives and friends, it gives bad impact on their mental health. So it is very important to assure the children safety, care and their emotional attachments and fillings whenever the social scenario is disturbing and unstable. Every child's reaction on this time of separation and whenever he heard the news of death of any known person is varying from their age to age and their cognitive development and previous experiences. Their emotional attachment with those persons and so many other psychological factors.

Children living in foster care also have significant developmental, behavior and emotions problem that is important to assess the quality of physical health and mental health care services in children.<sup>[13]</sup> Most of the adult psychiatric disorders have their onset in adolescence period. Every child's mental health is based on child development perspective whether it is normal abnormal, on the basis of the evolution of problems, causative and risk factors and its outcome.<sup>[14]</sup> Now the days of pandemic children facing fear problems and if he suddenly appear panic attack about intense fear even in the absence of real critical danger situation and have anxiety symptoms like shortness of breath, chest pain, palpitations, choking sensation, and fear of losing control and it happens again and again then your child is suffering from panic disorder which may be characterized by presence of recurrent, unexpected panic attacks. Children may develop these symptoms either for short period of time or for a long period. Most of the time this attack appear for less than 15 minutes. To diagnosis of panic disorder it will be of 1month panic attack with behavior changes and worrying about another panic attack.

During the period of lockdown, people and children have developed fear in themselves about using of public transportation like buses, autos etc., standing in crowd spaces or being outside the home even when they have to go outside for buy essential food things which are necessary for living. In this situation of pandemic where

escape is difficult from stress or fear about infection. This persistent type of fear and anxiety can make people homebound and this is called as agoraphobia that is fear to go outside specially in public places.<sup>[15]</sup>

A pediatrician can easily catch or diagnose the illness of any child even he could imagine the stress of child by watching the behavior of child in front of him. Early notifying the stress level of child is very helpful to improve the mental health, emotional health and so as it is directly improve the health of child with timely intervention and interferences. Environment plays an important role on children's health and behaviour. So environment around the child should be of positive affirmatives. So that children who are the wealth of nation and future of our country could grow with good physical, mental, emotional, cognitive, spiritual and social development.<sup>[16]</sup>

But at this time of pandemic, there is unsafe and unhealthy environment around children. Even they don't feel safe in their own house. Most of the kids going ahead anxiety problems like uneasiness etc. It has been so tough to survive for isolation and home quarantines family. Children also developing separation anxiety which means they have fear to separate from their parents and they always in stress while thinking about them. Behaviour of child is adjudged by heredity and environment. Behavioural theory state that behaviour is substantially a product of external environmental that child can be observed and measured from environment.<sup>[17]</sup> Therefore to alter the maladaptive behaviour and to increase good appealing deportment, we can manipulate the environmental precursors and consequences of behaviour.

There is exaggeration of physical, emotional, social, intellectual and spiritual growth in adolescence age, sometimes it forms with complexes having result in a need for counselling.<sup>[18]</sup> The eventual aim is the child's self-control that he behave well. Positive reinforcement of operant conditioning is more effective than punishment.<sup>[19]</sup>

Scolding, physical punishment and threats are some of the techniques used in children to control their undesirable behaviour. These techniques have potential negative impact on children's self-esteem. Sense of security.

Parental death or separation from loved ones can lead to cause serious illness in children and require sometime to hospitalization due to suicidal behaviours.<sup>[20]</sup>

Prolonged and persistent stress in children can lead to disrupt the development of vital brain framework and thus increase the risk for stress related diseases and cognitive impairment in adulthood. When an adolescent presents with stress related symptoms like exertion excessive sweating, difficulty to breathing etc. then it is

required to do counselling.<sup>[21]</sup> There are many screening and diagnosis measures to diagnose different types of stress disorders but the main test which is favourable in primary care centres are paediatric symptom checklist (PSC) for psychosocial problems.<sup>[22,23,24,25]</sup> Child and adolescent psychiatric screen (CAPS), 25,28<sup>[26]</sup> Child behaviour checklist (CBCL). 25,<sup>[27]</sup>

Confirmation of assessment is recommended on the basis of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, IVth edition, text revised (DSM-IV-TR)<sup>[28]</sup> A simple screening tool for screening of teen problems is CDC screening for adolescent's problems teen screen questionnaire- mental health abridged (TSQ-M). . In which you have to ask some questions to children like- 1. Have you ever felt anxious, sad, angry, irritable, stressed? 2. Have you lost interest in things that you always enjoyed? Etc<sup>[29]</sup> Teenagers are appearing stress related to adjustment, peer relationship as they have to live in a same place from last three months. Teenagers gets easily psychological, emotional, physical and environmental or social problems associated stress.<sup>[30]</sup>

#### **How to cope with isolation**

COVID-19 Pandemic is itself difficult to understand for parents and it is more difficult for children as they did not see any type of condition yet. It is first time when they are starving a lot for everything like for outside food, chips, kurkure, pizzas etc. that they can not dine in restaurants and also difficult to go outside for playing and travelling at this time.

**Keep calm** – as we all know its time of pandemic but it's not a solution to take every time stress, just keep calm and thought and also say in front of children and play like a game that if we will stuck in this then how we tackle it, how we can face it in a good manner like not listen news about it, just play games, sharing your feelings in front of all family members. Try to be happy every time so that your children also be happy while see you in good and happy mood as all children have feature that they behaves like they see facing their parents.

**Proper diet**- After the childbirth the first thing which is need for living is diet or feed. A good health only develop by proper diet and exercise. Avoid taking fast food and soft drinks or carbonated drinks which are harmful to body. Adolescence is a period which is more prone to obesity due to hormonal changes, bad dietary habits, lack of exercise and sedentary lifestyle. Before lockdown children go outside to play and roaming but it is impossible in lockdown and they have to stay at one place for long time so it give bad impact on adolescence health as they have eaten more than earlier in lockdown with complete sedentary life. To prevent from obesity children have to decrease calorie intake and should consume healthy food or increase physical activity like playing indoor games, dancing and singing songs etc.

**Media literacy-** Television is for entertainment purpose or watching good knowledgeable things on it but sometimes like the situation of pandemic by daily watching of bad news on it like deaths of people by COVID 19 or new cases arrivals which cannot be overlooked. Many studies shown that constant watching violence scenes make children more aggressive in their behaviour.<sup>[31]</sup> So don't watch such type of news on news channels in front of children and avoid meeting and phone calls and messages of persons who always gives horrible news. These factors affects your child's mental health.

**Concentrate on your child's feeling-** Mostly Children and adolescents expressed vague somatic symptoms like change in appetite, abdominal pain, and lack of energy whenever they don't want to go anywhere or not want to leave the home. Children also appears these kind of symptoms when their closed ones go away from them or by seeing the or hearing the news of death of near or close one or we can say that when there is separation from a major attached person thus it is called as separation anxiety disorder I.e., SAD. So observe your child's behaviour and manners so that you can find the causes early and intervention can be done on proper time.

**Busy their mind-** keep busy them at all time means never let them free. Ask them for household work like preparation of snacks, roti, Maggie etc., how to fold the clothes, how to wash hands properly, how to wash clothes etc. as well as various art and crafts.

**Praise-** Praise your child after every good work he did. Don't beat them for wrong work. Positive reinforcement of operant conditioning is more effective than punishment. Keep them away from bad things and motivate them to do good things. Firstly teach them good things and even after listening he did bad things then say them for good one and for being a good person.

**How to learn them to stop using bad words-** Teach them to learn good habits like to say Namaste, instead of shaking hands, because it is important for prevention of COVID 19. This may happen due to irritable mental status of child. Whenever your child use bad words in conversation first start to say that it is not a good word.

**How to motivate your child –** You can motivate your child to do good things by giving them examples of their good classmate, any devotional stories, inspirational stories of freedom fighters, various moral stories.

**Social media-** It's time to maintain physical distancing rather than social distancing. You can use social media to communicate with your relatives, friends etc via calling them by mobile phone. You can talk on video call via whatsapp, Google duo, facebook messenger, in your smartphone. As most of the families have at least one smartphone in their home. You can share your feeling

via calling and share your views on facebook, twitter, telegram, instagram and many other social apps which are connecting people with each other. Ask your child to give call their friends so they don't get bored in home.

#### **Play Online Games**

Use games apps for play online like ludo, business, carrom, chess, video games etc. Your child would feel comfortable and forget the physical distance between friends due to online facilities of playing. There are more certain games that can be played by multiple people even if they are not in the same room. With COVID-19, some of these games have become free or even more accessible. Download apps like Pogo to let your child play monopoly online with his friends. This will help them get rid of stress.

**Yoga-** Do 30-45 minutes of yoga every day. Yoga is known to help people get rid of stress.

**Practice of Writing-** You can ask your child to practice neat and clean writing to improve it.

**Go outside if possible-** While maintaining social distancing means staying indoor all the day, you can take a walk in society premises or terrace to get fresh air and relieve stress. Tell the stories of your life and your family background to your kids. You can tell or listen the panchantra stories. For the comfort of people our honorable Prime Minister Narendra Modi had started our historical and religious serials like Ramayana and Mahabharata.

The centre on 17<sup>th</sup> may again extended the lockdown for 2 weeks but this time he gave relaxation on economic activities and significant public movements. Now it is possible to go out from home for a few time. Go with your family and children to society park for refresh their mood and avoid crowdy areas like markets, shopping malls etc. you may also go to friend's houses so your children can share their feelings with their close friends.<sup>[32]</sup>

#### **CONCLUSION**

Lockdown situations due to pandemic is unavoidable but it is very important to maintain physical as well as mental health status of adults and childhood in family. In this article, a discussion has been done on various symptoms of ill health, anxiety disorders, its impact and its management. Motivation of children with moral stories, devotional stories, videos of inspiring people, stories of freedom fighters etc. Also make them busy in activities like art and crafts, drawing, painting, singing, dancing will help them to relieve stress and feel happy. If we face such type of lockdown situation in future then all these remedies will be beneficial definitely.

#### **DECLARATIONS**

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