



# IMPACT OF COVID-19 LOCKDOWN ON MENTAL HEALTH WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO BANGALORE CITY

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## ABSTRACT:

COVID-19 pandemic is a unanticipated challenge worldwide. India is confronting sudden challenge situation because the number of infected/positive cases is increasing day by day. With strict preventive measures and restrictions by the Indian Government with imposition of nationwide lockdown, the citizens are experiencing a variety of psychological and emotional reactions, fear and uncertainty being one of them. The daily routine of citizen has been changed to a different scenario of staying within the home. This sudden changing scenario impacted on wellbeing of people. This study aimed at finding the emotional & psychological challenges facing by people under the situation of lockdown. The study was motivated by the need to understand how the COVID19 pandemic has affected mental health, emotional changes and wellbeing. The researchers used a convenience sample, recruited via emails with a questionnaire to collect data. The study is limited to Bangalore, capital city of Karnataka.

**Keywords:** Covid-19, pandemic, mental health, psychological distress, wellbeing

## Introduction:

The word "pandemic" is derived from the Greek word "pandemos" wherein "pan" means "all" and "demos" means "people or population" i.e. "all the people". A pandemic is an epidemic which crosses international boundaries and affects all (nearly all) of the people. Other term used simultaneously is 'epidemic'. An epidemic ("epi" means "upon") as explained by the WHO, is the regional outbreak of an illness that spreads unexpectedly. It refers to an increase, often sudden, in the number of cases of a disease beyond what is normally expected in the population of an area. Examples of epidemics in India in the past include the outbreaks of zika virus, chikungunya and dengue fever.

The World Health Organisation (2001) defined Pandemic as “an epidemic occurring worldwide, or over a very wide area, crossing international boundaries and usually affecting a large number of people”. This definition does not include anything about population immunity, virology or disease severity. Pandemics can be said to occur annually in each of the temperate southern and northern hemispheres, given that seasonal epidemics cross international boundaries and affect a large number of people. However, seasonal epidemics are not considered pandemics. (WHO, 2001)

### **Corona virus (COVID-19)**

Corona virus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered corona virus. Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness. The COVID-19 virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes, so it's important that you also practice respiratory etiquette.

At this time, there are no specific vaccines or treatments for COVID-19. However, there are many ongoing clinical trials evaluating potential treatments. WHO will continue to provide updated information as soon as clinical findings become available.

Corona viruses are a large group of viruses that are known to infect both humans and animals, and in humans cause respiratory illness that range from common colds to much more serious infections. The previous well-known case of a coronavirus epidemic was Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), which was first detected in southern China in 2002, and then spread to 26 countries resulting in more than 8,000 cases and 774 deaths.

The Covid-19 disease was initially thought of as viral infection and first time on 31 December, 2019 World Health Organisation's China office heard the reports of an unknown virus (hence the name novel coronavirus) behind large number of Pneumonia cases, in Wuhan city of Eastern China. Apparently, the disease originated from a sea food market of Wuhan where wild animals, birds, marmots, rabbits, bats, snakes etc are illegally traded. It is known that corona viruses can jump from animals to humans, hence the first people to become infected with this disease are primarily from the sea food market who got infected from being in touch with animals. (WHO, 2020)

This disease which started as an epidemic mainly limited to China was declared as a pandemic on 11th March 2020 by the WHO. There have now been over 5,105,881 confirmed cases worldwide (WHO, 2020) and more 333,446 deaths, according to WHO Covid-19 dashboard. India has recorded 73560 active cases, 54440 cured & 3867 deaths so far from outbreak of corona pandemic in the nation.

## **The Lockdown:**

The prime minister of India has declared a three-week nationwide lock-down starting from midnight the 25th of March, 2020 to the 14th of April, 2020, explaining that it was an essential and effective measure for breaking the COVID-19 infection cycle. Social distancing is a critical means to break the cycle of infection. There is a significant decrease in growth rate and increased doubling time of cases because of the lock-down

There have been several discussions around the COVID-19 infection and its potential to cause fatality, during the sudden change of daily activities, people has to stay back at home. This homely lockdown impacts the mental health and emotions of people in various ways. So that mental health is a crucial aspect that needs to be addressed during this lock-down as all modes of communication revolve around the virus.

Cases of mental illness have risen by 20% in India since the country went into lockdown. Only through local, community-based responses will India find the capacity to cope with this unfolding crisis.

## **Effects of lockdown on mental health:**

It is already evident that the direct and indirect psychological and social effects of the corona virus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic are pervasive and could affect mental health now and in the future. The pandemic is occurring against the backdrop of increased prevalence of mental health issues in the India in recent years in some groups. Furthermore, severe acute respiratory syndrome corona virus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), the virus that causes COVID-19, might infect the brain or trigger immune responses that have additional adverse effects on brain function and mental health in patients with COVID-19.

Due to its tremendous infectious ability the disease has instilled a considerable degree of fear, worry and concern in the population at large and among certain groups in particular, such as older adults, care providers and people with underlying health conditions. In public mental health terms, the main psychological impact to date is elevated rates of stress or anxiety. But as new measures and impacts are introduced – especially quarantine and its effects on many people's usual activities, routines or livelihoods – levels of loneliness, depression, harmful alcohol and drug use, and self-harm or suicidal behaviour are also expected to rise.

Therefore, this study aims at assessing the mental health of individuals during lockdown amid Covid-19 pandemic in India. This study aims at finding the prevalence of psychiatric symptoms viz. Depression and Stress across gender, age etc.

## **Methodology:**

In order to assess Depression, Anxiety and Stress among the residents of Bangalore city, Depression Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS- 21) was administered. DASS is a reliable tool to assess the psychological distress in clinical and non-clinical. A section of demographic profile (Age, Gender and Employment) was added. A online form was created and it was circulated among 300 resident of Bangalore city in Karnataka state of India in the month of May 2020.

## Result and Discussions:

Out of 300 people to whom online questionnaire was distributed, only 75.33% (226) filled the questionnaire. Out of these 226 samples 62% (140) were male and 38% (86) were female. Out of the total respondents 18% (42) were in the age group of 15-20 years, 42% (94) were in age group of 21 years to 25 years, 18% (40) were in the age group of 26 to 39 years, 15.5% (36) were in the age group of 31-35 years, 2% (4) belonged to the age group of 36 to 40, 2.5% (6) were in the age group of 41 to 45 years and 2% (4) were in the age group of 46 to 50 years old. Finally, with respect to employability 50% were employed and 50% were unemployed.

### 1. Level of Stress since Lockdown (Age group wise):

STRESS ( Age Group wise)					
Age	Normal	Mild Stress	Moderate stress	Severe stress	Extremely severe stress
15-20	16	20	2	2	0
21-25	31	22	34	4	3
26-30	12	12	14	1	1
31-35	12	11	10	3	2
36-40	1	2	1	1	0
41-45	3	0	2	1	0
46-50	1	2	1	0	0

TABLE:1

As shown in the Table no.1, between the age groups of 21-25 are facing moderate level of stress due to the sudden lockdown situation. Whereas age group of 31-35 are coping with the situation. In the age group of 41-45 majority are in normal state of stress.

### 2. Level of Depression since Lockdown (Age group wise):

DEPRESSION (Age group wise)					
Age	Normal	Mild Depression	Moderate Depression	Severe Depression	Extremely severe Depression
15-20	22	10	4	3	1
21-25	39	41	10	4	0
26-30	16	16	4	2	2
31-35	14	10	10	2	0
36-40	2	0	2	0	0
41-45	2	3	1	1	0
46-50	3	1	0	0	0

TABLE:2

As shown in the Table no.2, between the age groups of 21-25 are facing moderate level of depression due to the sudden lockdown situation. Whereas age group of 46-50 are coping with the situation. In the age group of 15-20 majority are in normal state of depression.

### 3. Level of stress (Gender wise):

Stress level (Gender wise)					
Gender	Normal	Mild Stress	Moderate stress	Severe stress	Extremely severe stress
Male	44	58	22	8	8
Female	31	18	20	9	8

Table no.3

As shown in the Table no.3, when compared to female, male are facing mild level of depression due to the sudden situation raised from lockdown. But stress level is found normal in overall population.

### 4. Level of Depression (Gender wise):

Depression level (Gender wise)					
Gender	Normal	Mild Depression	Moderate Depression	Severe Depression	Extremely severe Depression
Male	62	58	10	8	2
Female	30	36	12	5	3

Table no.4

Table no.4 denotes level of depression, when compared to female, 25% of the male population are facing mild level of stress. Whereas 27% are facing mild level of depression due to the sudden situation raised from lockdown. But depression level is found normal in overall population.

### 5. Level of Stress (Employment-wise)

	Normal	Mild Stress	Moderate stress	Severe stress	Extremely severe stress
Employed	42	68	10	8	5
Unemployed	31	42	8	8	4

Table no.5

Overall, the unemployed show less features of stress as compared to their employed counterparts, This study found that Depression was high among unemployed individual. This again can be attributed to the lack of daily routine and scheduling which affects the psycho-social functioning of individuals.

## 6. Level of Depression (Employment-wise)

	Normal	Mild Depression	Moderate Depression	Severe Depression	Extremely severe Depression
Employed	21	10	29	15	18
Unemployed	31	8	35	28	31

**Table no.6**

This study found that Depression was high among unemployed individual. This again can be attributed to the lack of daily routine and scheduling which affects the psycho-social functioning of individuals

## Conclusion:

The study revealed that Covid-19 is creating psychological distress among the individuals, as there are restrictions due to lockdown people are forced to stay home. Individuals are going through a crisis situation and feeling lack of control on their lives due to lockdown and restrictions imposed upon them. Young adolescents and adult age group is facing uncertainty with respect to career and professional life, jobs are at stake. Fear of infection is creating a panic situation among them.

The study is in tune with the findings of National Mental Health Survey of India 2016 which suggested that Anxiety is higher in females whereas males are depressed and stressed as compared to females. There is a significant difference between those who are employed and those unemployed in respect to stress and depression whereas in case of anxiety there is no significant difference between the both.

## Recommendations:

Findings of this study provide direct information about the mental health conditions, their prevalence and contributing factors, hence can be used to develop psychological interventions that can positively deal with the underlying psychological conditions amid Covid-19 outbreak. It can also act as a baseline for evaluation, preventing and controlling and help in psychosocial rehabilitation of the affected individuals.

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