

The Consequences of Covid-19 on Youth Mental Health

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Submitted to the

International e-Conference on Microeconomic Impacts of COVID-19 Pandemic

October 2-3, 2021

Organized by

Center for Academic & Professional Career Development and Research (CAPCDR)

CAPCDR

Abstract

During epidemics, the quantity of individuals whose emotional well-being is influenced will in general be more noteworthy than the quantity of individuals influenced by the disease. Previous disasters have demonstrated that the mental health consequences can last longer and have a higher incidence than the pandemic itself, and that the psychological and economic consequences can be incalculable when considered in diverse situations. The COVID-19 pandemic has ramifications in other areas as well, including family, organization, school, company, and public place closures, changes in work routines, and isolation, which can lead to emotions of helplessness and abandonment. Furthermore, the economic and societal ramifications of such a large-scale catastrophe may exacerbate insecurity. The COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown have brought about a sense of fear and anxiety around the globe. This phenomenon has led to short-term as well as long-term psychosocial and mental health implications, especially among the youths. Many vulnerability factors, such like developmental age, educational status, pre-existing mental health disorders, being impoverished, or being confined due to infection or fear of infection, determine the quality and extent of the impact upon youths. An attempt has been made in this paper to study the mental health aspects of the youths impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This study will try to find out the various impact on the mental health of the youths, its root causes along with some suggestive measures to get rid of such mental illness. It will be qualitative research in nature. Data will be collected from 25 youth who are students through telephonic interviews using an interview schedule.

Introduction

Covid 19 is a virus causing both mental and physical illness to human beings. As a contagious virus it can be easily spread from an infectious person by coughing or sneezing the virus into air to a healthy human being by breathing or touching the virus unknowingly. Precaution is considered as the best preventive way to fight this pandemic. As soon as WHO declared Novel Corona Virus as a on 11 March 2020, the immediate action to fight this virus is to impose strict Lockdown to treat detect and reduce the transmission. Developing Countries like India with its existing challenges such as large population size of 1.35 billion across various states, poverty, socioeconomic inequalities, and lock down became a big challenge not only for the government but also for each individual.

As there is no specific criteria to define youth but for our better understood as the period of transition from childhood to adult hood independence of surviving on its own. For our better understanding youth is referred as a person who is in the verse on standing on its own taking its own decision and finding its way of surviving and leaving in the society. No country can survive without sustained contribution from the youth. The youth need to be

nourished properly as they represent the nation. Fear of youth is always a hamper to the nation. Some of the worries are fear of Income, social interaction, illness has caused tremendous stress on the youth considering the age as factor in the verse of adulthood social acceptance and personal safety can disrupt the sole integrity of the youth the pillar on which almost each youth rely on. Education institutes, collages, Sports training centers, Companies all are affected during the lockdown financially mentally and physically. Fear of getting infected has hampered the moral of every human being. It is seen that the survival of youth is high from infection but post covid trauma and the fear of been isolated from society has affected the mental health of the youth.

This study will try to find various impacts on the mental health of the youth along with their reactions to those impacts. This study will help to explore various issues related to the mental health occurred due to the Covid 19 pandemic and lockdown. It will be a qualitative research in nature. Data will be collected through some open ended questions using telephonic interviews.

Statement of the Problem

Mental health and its wellbeing is the backbone and pillar to handle life and its various stress and challenges. As a human being our health has always been our conscious or sub-conscious priority. As a youth our priority may change but the outcomes always affect our mental health. Some of the factors considered during evaluating mental health are mood and outlook, social self, drive and motivation, core cognition, mind-body connection etc. These criteria may vary for person to person.

India is a young country where almost half of the population is below the age of 25 years so thinking about their mental health is a very important matter of concern. After the COVID pandemic arose a large population of India the youth became vulnerable to the virus as hoping to curve down the spread of virus all protective measures has shown both positive and negative impact on the youth. It can't be denied that the lockdown was effective but the cost to pay is also high both financially and mentally that the youth has lost. From the studies it is observed that as during lockdown due to total ban in selling alcohol caused alcohol withdrawal syndrome in many youth which many are unknown. Many youth started having fear of COVID-19 that cause psychological distress which many are unable to express. Many students fear of missing great opportunities for further studies and with the trauma going all around the depression and anxiety is normal which the society denies to accept causing many youth to attempt suicide.

Literature Review

MEI (2020) in its research found that in youth the mental health is a serious problem during public health emergency. In the study it includes low education level, PTSD symptom, enterprise employee and negative coping styles were the factors that influence the youth mental health. The result emphasizes on the local government to take appropriate health care initiative. According to Ehlers and Clark (2002) report on posttraumatic stress disorder if someone experiences a traumatic event individuals may make a negative assessment of the trauma. It makes it easier to adopt to

maladaptive strategies to maintain PTSD symptoms such as invasion, arousal symptoms and strong negative emotions. So in this study it is assumed that youth groups have the tendency to develop psychological problems after experiencing traumatic. National Health Commission of China on Feb 18 2020 updated that outbreak of COVID-19 in China has caused the citizen to panic and led to mental health stress which is of same concern to the public as the pandemic itself. J Formos Med Assoc. (2010) in its research says that pandemic of SARS 2003 and the 2009 Novel Influenza A (H1N1) epidemic lead the public to undergo problem like PTSD depression and anxiety. Some has related PTSD with depression and anxiety. According to a theory of Clark and Ehlers traumatic events might take a negative assessment of the trauma both mentally and physically which make it easy to adapt to PTSD symptoms. So the study done suggested that youth group may have the tendency to develop psychological problem after experiencing traumatic stress disorder

Methodology

For the purpose of the research qualitative approach is used using both primary and secondary data. Respondents are selected through purposive sampling for the collection of data. 17 voluntary youth are selected from Guwahati and taken as respondents for the purpose of study. Different articles and journals are observed as a source of secondary data.

Objectives:

1. To explore the challenges came to the life of the youths due to the pandemic.
2. To find out the impacts of the pandemic on the mental health of the youths
3. To find out the possible measures to tackle these challenges.

Findings of the Study

From the above study it is found that most of the individuals that responded were highly vulnerable to the impact of the ongoing sensitive COVID-19 pandemic time. During evaluating the individual some of the factors considered during evaluating

mental health are mood and outlook, social self, drive and motivation, core cognition, mind body connection etc. These criteria may vary for person to person. Depression and anxiety that are mostly seen in the youth now a day has seen a dramatic increase with significant functional impairment and the associated risk that comes along with it. Fear of Income, social interaction, illness has caused tremendous stress on the youth considering the age as factor in the verse of adulthood social acceptance and personal safety can disrupt the sole integrity of the youth the pillar on which almost each youth rely on. With the understanding of the view point of the individuals it can be observed that lockdown has causes a dramatic change in the youth now a days. As the youth has instantly lost many activities that provide structure, daily rhythm and a meaning such as school, collages extra curriculum activities physical work and social interactions. It is also found that during lockdown due to closing of education institutions, home isolations that has bought an uncertainty in regard of the education system. Ultimately it leads to an anxiety and negative thoughts towards the career related aspects of the youth.

Many participants believed that these losses has increased the symptoms of depression exponentially during the initial few months which caused social withdrawal and emptiness within themselves which were seen to be almost equal for most participants staying near or away from homes. According to survey most of the symptoms were not permanent and the individuals were observed to be knowing of the problems they faces for which they were keen to take precautions.

During lockdown as most of the youth were returning home to stay long suspense of acceptance of the ongoing family environment as youth health both mentally and physically get influenced by their family system which gets impacted during the pandemic which is even worse when someone known to the family get affected. Expected to be a good factor Family might become a risk factor for the youth. Family resources like money food medicine are truly valued during the pandemic. With other family members experiencing their own

breakdown and losses the youth has to play an important role for the family which is a new experience for most of the youth. Domestic violence and conflict among siblings has also become a big concern for their own and others. According to the data Most of the youth has considered it to be a good experience as they are finding ways to be a better version of themselves for everybody. During unlock down maintaining social distance is also a big concern for the youth.

Conclusion

From the above objective it can be concluded that, the COVID-19 pandemic is a disaster that has affected the human beings at multiple level and its impact is yet to be thoroughly understood in the future. With the considerable evidence it can be observed that this pandemic has affected the wellbeing of the youth at psychological level. As WHO has warned the powerful nations and the governments how to prepare and to tackle the mental health complication that is most likely to arise due to COVID-19. As the evident indicate that there are many complications related to mental health in youth our knowledge of the impact cause during the pandemic on youth mental health is restricted to limited data and observations. Mostly the lack of awareness and the fear of social separation and neglecting the direct impact of COvid-19 is the root cause preventing the youth to present their views. Hence most of the research mostly focuses on understanding and exploring the mental health problem of elderly people rather than the youth generation. But with the concrete evidence it can't be neglected that Psychological distress associated with depression and anxiety is highly frequent and widely spreading in adolescents and youth which is now fueled by Covid-19. So it is high time that many steps that need to be taken by both Government, parents and the youth itself to maintain a good mental health and psychological well being of the youth who are in the most crucial phase of their lives.

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