Analysis of Multiple Factors Influencing COVID-19 Induced Mental Health

Neha Chauhan[1,*]*, Niranjan Dubey*[1]*, Dr. R. Kamatchi Iyer*[1] *and Nilima Zade*[2]

[1]School of Management and Entrepreneurship, Atlas SkillTech University, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India
[2]School of Digital Technology, Atlas SkillTech University, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

Abstract. The pandemic has adversely affected human lives. People have lost their loved ones, their jobs and even their homes in some cases. People have suffered from anxiety, frequent frustration, distress and loneliness due to the pandemic. With many of us facing challenges and battles in our lives, it is natural to feel frustrated and distressed. The spread of rumours and misinformation has led to anger, disorder and stress among people. In a country like India, where the population has suffered immensely due to the lack of healthcare infrastructure, Mental Health conditions are also deteriorated considerably due to different factors, we can confirm this by looking at the rise in suicide cases not only in India but also all around the world. We surveyed a few people across India including the working class and students from various age groups as the Covid-19 pandemic situation has brought everyone into renewed focus. The result indicates the level of suffering and the factors that have influenced their recovery.

1 Introduction

Mental health has been a growing concern for a while now, the importance of mental health has increased in recent times especially due to Covid-19 where people went through frustrations, isolation, distress and a lot more. Even though there are multiple factors influencing mental health, the following factors are considered to have a major impact during the pandemic scenario where people are isolated from each other, lost their loved ones, and deteriorated in financial condition; cases of the same have boosted [1-3]. The objective of the study was to assess the reasons for an increase in mental illness due to the covid-19 outbreak in India and to investigate people's attitude towards the pandemic, how people have been affected mentally, what activities are they doing to feel relaxed as well as to come up with a recommendation that is effective for people to stay stress-free [4-5].

1.1 Background

The alarming rate at which the covid-19 cases have increased in India has led to an increase in mental illness among the people. According to the Indian Psychiatry Society, as shown in Fig.1, there has been an increase in mental disease cases, with at least one out of every five Indians affected. There has been a big rise in suicidal cases, with many of these being unreported [6]. India reported 381 suicides daily for the year 2019, a 3.4 percent increase in deaths due to suicide as compared to 2018. A study by the International Journal of Mental Health Systems found a 67.7 percent increase in the

online news report about Suicidal behaviours [7]. The purpose of the study was to understand various factors leading to diminishing mental health among people due to covid-19 and how they can cope with the same [8].
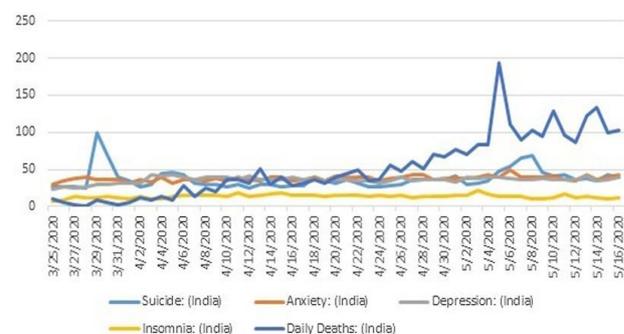

Fig. 1. Int Psychogeriatr. 2020 Jun 3: 1–2. Published online 2020 Jun 3. doi: 10.1017/S1041610220001052 (nih.gov). Source: PubMed Central

2 Methodology

A self-administered web-based questionnaire was created using Google Forms and circulated via social media among the people of Maharashtra, India. Participation in the survey was voluntary and participants were not offered any incentives, the participants were a self-selected sample. Our research was mainly divided into two parts, the first part was mainly designed to understand the demographics of our respondents followed by a study designed to understand various factors leading to diminishing mental health among people due to covid-19 and how they can cope

---

Corresponding author: nehachauhan3129@gmail.com

with the same. This research has been performed using a qualitative method wherein the target audience are students and working professionals from all age groups wherein major responses are from the age group of 18 to 45. The tools used to carry out the analysis were Microsoft Excel and Power BI. To know from which demographics our respondents belong to we asked them about their Demographic data like age, gender, city, state, profession and the sectors they work in, which helped us understand whose mental health is affected by the pandemic the most. The research was further narrowed down to the mental illness of the respondents it was necessary to know the root cause behind the same, for which the questions were asked whether or not the family members/loved ones were affected by the virus? There were also certain questions related to assessing their mental health. As the research is based on how the Covid-19 virus affected people's mental health, narrowing down to know the root cause of it, it is necessary to know if they or any of the direct family members have been affected by the Covid-19 virus and if they were affected by the virus did, they notice any change in their mental behaviour. Noticed any change in their mental behaviour. There are many other changes which Covid-19 pandemic brought in people's lives, which also introduced to new normal like working or studying from home but as everything comes with a drawback, working/studying from home comes with additional performance pressure. Due to the deterioration in the economy, the people also faced job loss, salary cuts, and it even led to the shutdown of many businesses. These are the main parameters for this research. To understand how people cope with the new normal the research aimed to understand various activities they practice to relax. Stress being a normal part of life can sometimes be difficult to manage on our own for which the research also tried to find out whether or not people consulted someone to battle their stress.

2.1. Discussion points and results

The following observations are based on the survey:

Finding 1: To find which gender experienced an increase in performance pressure during the pandemic.
Outcome: Of all the respondents, 60percent of women and 40percent of men as shown in Fig.2, felt an increase in performance pressure due to working from home as compared to working from the office / visiting college campuses before the pandemic.
This has been due to the Women's facing difficulties in managing work-life balance while working from home. Along with their work, they also had to meet and manage the demands of their family who were at home due to the pandemic which led to overburdening them with work.
Finding 2: To find which gender experienced mental issues while they were affected by covid19 during the pandemic.
Outcome: Through our analysis, we observed that of all the respondents who were affected by the covid19 virus,

53.1 percent of women claimed to have suffered from mental health issues whereas only 18.4percent of men were affected as shown in Fig.3.

Gender	No	Yes
Female	44.00%	60.00%
Male	56.00%	40.00%
Total	**100.00%**	**100.00%**

Fig. 2. Increase in Performance Pressure

Gender	No	Yes	Total
Female	46.88%	53.13%	**100.00%**
Male	81.58%	18.42%	**100.00%**

Fig. 3. Mental Health

Finding 3: Reason for being frustrated too often.
Outcome: 30.2percent of respondents claimed to be frustrated too often mainly due to Loss of freedom/Boredom and 37.2percent of people were frustrated because of performance pressure as shown in Fig.4.
Humans are social animals and since most people are not used to being in isolation, they are facing frustration. Also, while working/studying from home they are expected to deliver more as compared to working from the office/studying on campus.
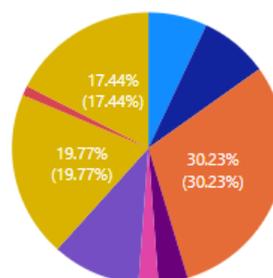
Frustrated too often
- Deterioration in Financial condition
- Family member is unwell
- Feeling boredom or Loss of freedom
- Loss of job / Loss in business
- Loss of loved ones
- Sitting idle for too long / Have nothing to do
- Study pressure
- Unhappy with world condition
- Work pressure

Fig. 4. Reasons for being frustrated

Finding 4: Professionals from which sector faced financial deterioration.
Outcome: The survey results also highlighted that the Education sector faced a major salary cut or loss in income i.e., almost 50percent of professionals working in that sector. Professionals working in Digital

Marketing, and IT had no salary cut as these industries were at a booming stage. Also, in the BFSI industry, only 6.2percent of people faced this issue as shown in Fig.5.

It was interesting imperative to discover that the healthcare sector which is one of the most demanded sectors whose employees worked almost 24*7 at risk of getting infected by covid-19 had to face a salary cut.

Sector	No	Yes	Total
BFSI (Banking, Financial Service and Insurance)	93.75%	6.25%	100.00%
Digital Marketing	100.00%		100.00%
Education	50.00%	50.00%	100.00%
Healthcare	66.67%	33.33%	100.00%
IT (Information Technology)	100.00%		100.00%
Not Applicable (I'm a Student)	82.35%	17.65%	100.00%

Fig. 5. Professionals from different sectors facing the financial crunch

Finding 5: Change in eating and sleeping pattern during the pandemic

Outcome: Change in eating and sleeping patterns can occur due to various reasons and it has been an area of concern for people suffering from mental illness. From the responses, 34percent of people claimed that they didn't notice any change in their eating or sleeping patterns whereas 27.4percent and 17.9percent as shown in Fig.6, claimed that there was a change in their eating and sleeping patterns during the pandemic since they failed to make a schedule of their day and due to the anxiety/stress respectively.
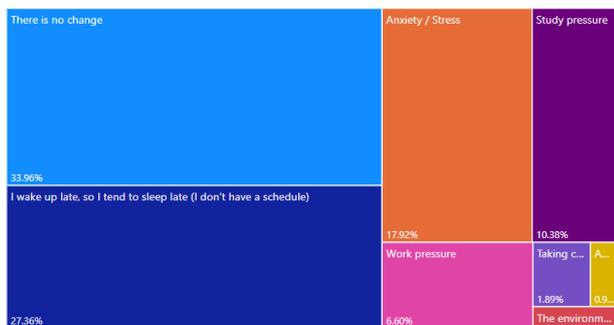

Fig. 6. Change in eating and sleeping pattern during the pandemic

Finding 6: What kind of relaxation practices do people follow?

Outcome: Relaxation plays a crucial role in handling mental health especially when it comes to adapting to a new normal. It aids decision making, improves focus and overall mental stability. While adapting to the new normal, 22.9percent of the respondents watched movies/series, 18.1percent of people spent time with their family/loved ones and 33.3percent i.e.,1/3rd of people preferred doing physical activities which were essential during covid-19 to boost immunity as shown in Fig.7. Also, sleeping has been observed as a most helpful relaxation activity.
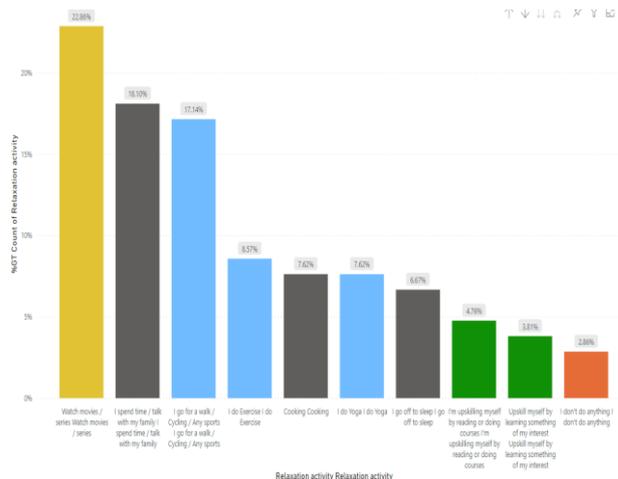

Fig. 7. Relaxation practices followed by people

Finding 8: Do people talk to or consult someone when they feel mentally unstable?

Outcome: Consultation/talking to someone has been known to increase mental stability and battle against stress, anxiety and other mental health conditions. From our analysis, we found that 37.7percent of people do not consult/talk to someone while facing mental health issues of which 0.9percent of them don't have anyone to talk with. The data also showed that of all those who preferred to talk to someone when they suffered from mental health issues, 20.75percent of people are between the age bracket of 19-25, followed by the 26-45 age bracket which is 17.92percent respondents as shown in Fig.8.
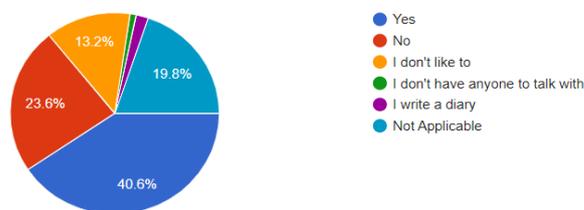

Fig. 8. Percentage of people who talk or consult someone when they feel mentally unstable

Finding 9: How would people rate their mental health on a scale of 0-5?

Outcome: While rating themselves on a scale of 5 on how mentally healthy they feel, 43.4percent of respondents rated themselves at 3 or below as shown in Fig.9. From this, it can be inferred that the majority of people feel mentally healthy.
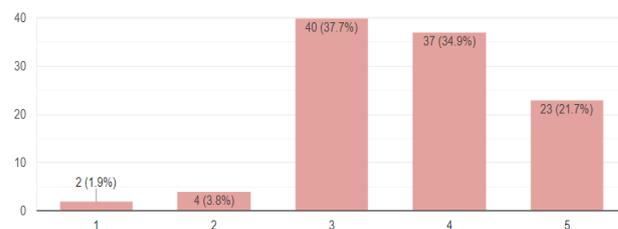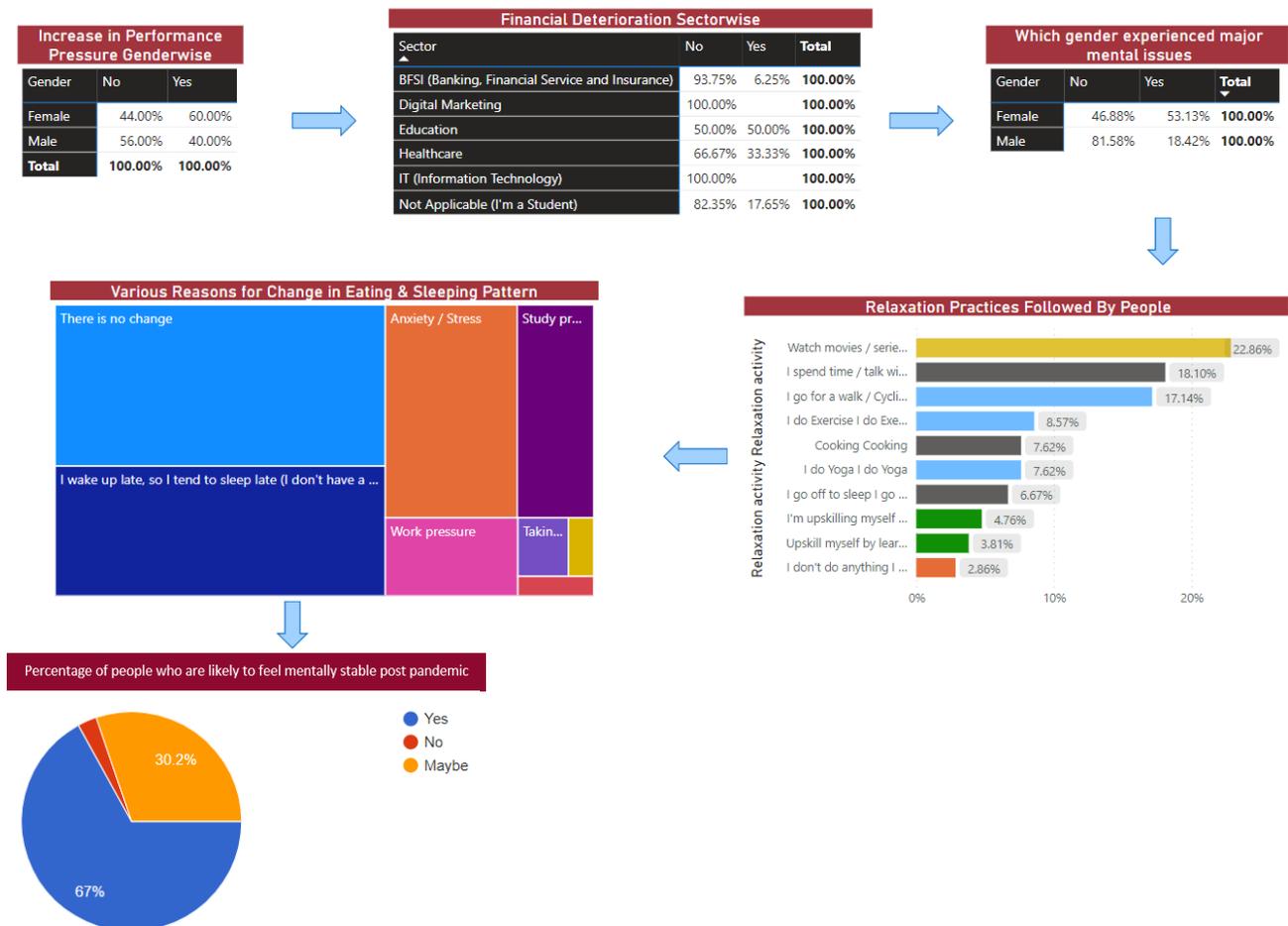

Fig. 9. People rating their mental health

Fig. 10. Summarization of whole analysis

2.2 Recommendations

As shown in Fig.10, to cope with mental health issues, it is recommended to do some relaxation activities to not fall victim to mental fatigue. The majority of people during the pandemic liked watching movies/series, spending time with family/loved ones and going for a walk/any other sport to overcome their stress. Consulting someone while suffering from a mental health issue can help to upscale one's morale and psychological condition. Maintaining a proper routine during lockdown/pandemics has been difficult for people, but those who have been able to follow a routine have experienced mental stability.

3 Conclusions

The purpose of this research was to understand various factors affecting mental health issues during Covid19 and how people can cope with the same. We observed that the major factors affecting mental health during the pandemic were Performance pressure, loss of freedom/boredom, failing to consult someone, not doing any relaxation activity and following Covid-19 news too often. Based on our analysis we can conclude that the

majority of people i.e., 67 percent of people feel that they are likely to feel healthier once the pandemic is over whereas 30.2percent of people are still unsure and the remaining 2.8percent are deeply affected by mental illness and need a proper consultation from experts.

Keywords

References

1. Gupta S., "How social distancing may affect mental health," ScienceNews, 2020. [Online]. Available: https://www.sciencenews.org/article/coronavirus-covid-19-socialdistancing-psychological-fallout. [Accessed: 06-June-2021].

2. "Anxiety and physical illness," Harvard Health, 2018. [Online]. Available: https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/anxiety_and_physical_illness. [Accessed: 07-June-2021]

3. Rubin G. J. and Wessely S., BMJ, **368**, no. January, pp. 1–2, (2020).

4. Brooks S. K. et al., Lancet, **395**, no. 10227, pp. 912–920, (2020).

5. BBC, "Coronavirus : India defiant as millions struggle under lockdown." [Online]. Avalable : https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-52077395. [Accessed: 30- Mar-2020].

6. Schmall E. and Saaliq S., The Washington Post, (May2020).[Online].Avalable: https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2020.05.03.20081380v1.full.pdf

7. Lancet Psychiatry, **vol. 7**, pp. 148–161, (2020). [Online].Avalable:https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31879245/

8. Mina S., Jabeen M., Singh S., and Verma R., **60**, no. 2, p. 211, (Mar. 2015).