

A STUDY TO FIND OUT THE EFFECT OF CORONA VIRUS PANDEMIC ON THE MENTAL HEALTH OF B.ED STUDENTS

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Abstract:

It seems just like yesterday, we were all reading, browsing about the first outbreak of COVID-19 at the city Wuhan, China in the month of Dec, 2019. Within a span of three months the virus has engulfed major portions of the earth. India too is facing a lot of crisis due to the outbreak in the country specially Maharashtra and Kerala. Our honorable Prime Minister has declared a complete lockdown from 24th March, 2020 till 14th April, 2020. And we are not sure after this too whether the situation will be in control or will the lockdown will be continued. There is lot of anxiety, depression, uncertainty, sadness expressed by people in social media and other platforms. The researcher being a teacher educator felt the need to find out what is the mental health of B.Ed students during this process.

The data was collected in-between 29th -31st March, 2020 from 173 B.Ed students, wherein we all were in lockdown status at home.

The results were found out that many of them are suffering with ill mental health and a zoom session was taken to share the findings and counsel them accordingly.

Key Words: *Corona Virus, Lockdown, Mental health*

Introduction:

According to World Health Organization, Corona virus (COVID 19) is an infectious disease and till now there is no specific vaccines and treatment found out. However there are many ongoing trials for evaluating potential treatment.

On 2nd April, 206 countries are already affected with 856,386 confirmed cases and 41,956 confirmed death. India has 1636 confirmed cases and 38 deaths on to this date.

USA, Italy and Spain are worst affected with numbers in lakhs.

Amidst the outbreak of the disease, there are so many news and videos being circulated in social media regarding how the best off medical facilities in developed country also is unable to handle the pandemic. Just to mention a few,

- In Italy military personnel were called to carry the deceased due to corona virus.
- Germany Minister, Schaefer, 54, committed suicide, after virus crisis worries.

Review of Related Literature:

Main Alexandra & Others (2011) examined the main and interactive relations of stressors and coping related to severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) with Chinese college students' psychological adjustment (psychological symptoms, perceived general health, and life satisfaction) during the 2003 Beijing SARS epidemic. All the constructs were assessed by self-report in an anonymous survey during the final period of the outbreak. Results showed that the relations of stressors and coping to psychological adjustment varied by domain of adjustment. Regression analyses suggested that the number of stressors and use of avoidant coping strategies positively predicted psychological symptoms. Active coping positively predicted life satisfaction when controlling for stressors. Moreover, all types of coping served as a buffer against the negative impact of stressors on perceived general health. These findings hold implications for university counseling services during times of acute, large-scale stressors. In particular, effective screening procedures should be developed to identify students who experience a large number of stressors and thus are at high risk for developing mental health problems. Intervention efforts that target coping should be adapted to take account of the uncontrollability of stressors and clients' cultural preferences for certain coping strategies. A multidimensional battery of psychological adjustment should be used to monitor clients' psychological adjustment to stressors and evaluate the efficacy of intervention.

Sankalp Yadav & Gautam Rawal (2015) studied how the epidemic of Ebola virus disease has claimed many lives. The impact of this disease is evident in the mental health of the survivors. The mere drafting of policies will not help; rather execution at the ground level is essential. There is an urgent need, to focus on the ways by which the sufferings should be reduced. The present article throws light on this grave problem in Africa.

Keywords: Ebola virus, Psychological impact, Stigma

Need of the study:

The teacher educator received lot of messages from the student teachers regarding the boredom, stress, restlessness, anxiety, depression, and feeling of claustrophobic during lockdown. The present pandemic outbreak is indeed a worrying situation for all. But individuals should not lose hope and breakdown. This is not the time to have negative impact on the mental health. So the researcher first wants to find out the mental health of student teachers and accordingly their coping ability to face the pandemic.

Rationale of the study:

According to Mental health is the level of psychological well-being or an absence of mental illness. It is the state of someone who is "functioning at a satisfactory level of emotional and behavioral adjustment". Some individuals already suffer from adjusting their mental health with their day to day functioning.

And with the outbreak of this kind of crisis, loss of loved ones, health emergency, financial emergency etc they tend to suffer a lot.

So the researcher felt that it was the need of the hour to find out if any student is suffering from any kind of mental illness due to the corona Virus outbreak and counsel them if they are at risk.

Objectives of the study:

- 1) To find out the effect of Corona Virus pandemic on the stress level of B.Ed students
- 2) To find out the effect of Corona Virus pandemic on the mental health of B.Ed students
- 3) To conduct a zoom counseling session with the student teachers

Sample:

The researcher used purposive sampling method wherein she administered the tool (questionnaire) to the B.Ed students via Google forms. The sample size was 173 student teachers.

Tool:

Questionnaire was prepared and was validated by experts online.

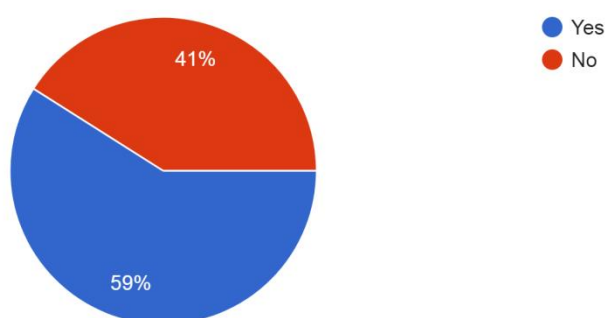
Findings:

Q no. 1 and 2 were about the knowledge and precautionary measure of COVID -19, and all the respondents have replied yes.

Q no. 3 Are you mentally stressed about the spread of the disease?

3. Are you mentally stressed about the spread of the disease?

173 responses



Inference: 59% of the respondents are mentally stressed about the spread of the disease and 41% of them are not mentally stressed.

Conclusion: It is seen as an alarming ratio that more than half of the respondents are already mentally stressed about the pandemic. Being aware is different than being stressed. It's important to be cautious and be informed about the current situation.

Being mentally stressed will not help any individual or their family. On the contrary, it may invite more

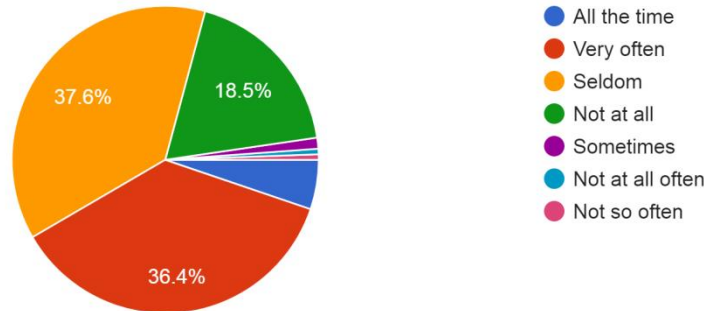
irritation, self- isolation etc and eventually lead to depression or other mental illnesses.

In a stage wherein we all are advised to remain at home in order to be safe, new mental illness should be prevented.

Q no.4. During the past two weeks, how often have you felt low?

4. During the past two weeks, how often have you felt low?

173 responses



Inference:

10.5% of respondents have felt very low, 36.4% have felt low very often, 37.6% have seldom felt low, 18.5% have not at all felt low and rest 11% have not at all often or not so often felt low.

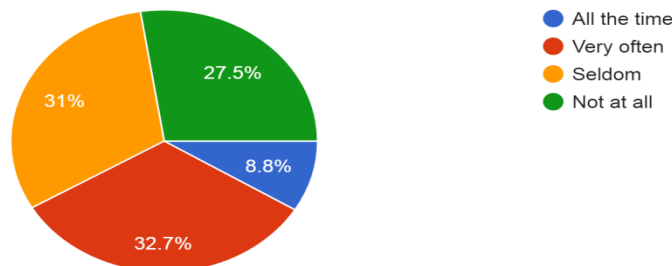
Conclusion:

Feeling low is the first sign of being mentally disturbed. Once you are low, you start withdrawing yourself first from your intra self and then with others. There is no positive energy to pull you up and you feel disturbed. This sign is again harmful sign because if it affects the productivity of a person. However 37.5 % seldom felt low, 18.5 % didn't feel at all. So, most of the student teachers were able to handle their psyche in the present condition. 10.5 % of the students who felt low were counseled and motivated to deal with this situation bravely.

Q no. 5. During the past two weeks, how often has your mental health interfered with your inner self?

5. During the past two weeks, how often has your mental health interfered with your inner self?

171 responses



Inference:

8.8% of the respondents have replied all the time, 32.7% very often, 31% seldom and 27.5% of the respondent's mental health has not at all interfered with their inner self.

Conclusion:

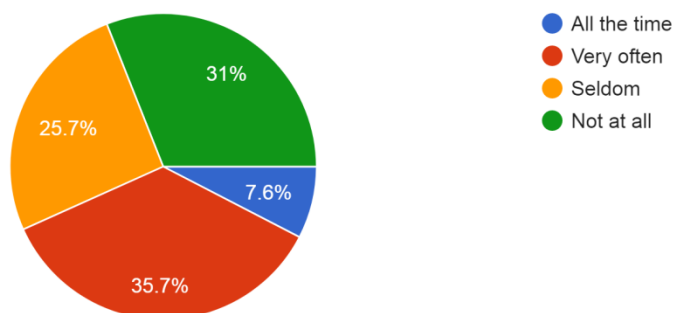
To know your inner self is to know your purpose, values, vision, goals, motivations, and beliefs. You are the owner of your life. If you are not connected with who you really are, you are probably just living your life for others. Mental health and inner self are highly correlated with each other, the better you have mental health, and you can deal with your inner self in a positive way. When the mental health gets disturbed, it starts contradicting with its own inner self.

The respondents who were at the borderline and were suffering were given tips to meditate, do yoga, exercise, and pursue their hobbies (which were possible only at their homes) and keep themselves engaged. These activities kept them to balance themselves both psychologically and emotionally.

Q No.6. During the past two weeks, how often has your mental health interfered with your ability to get your work done or accomplish task?

6. During the past two weeks ,how often has your mental health interfered with your ability to get your work done or accomplish task?

171 responses



Inference: 7.6 % of the respondents have answered all the time, 35.7% very often, 25.7 % seldom and 31% have responded that their mental health does not interfere with their ability to get their work done or accomplish task.

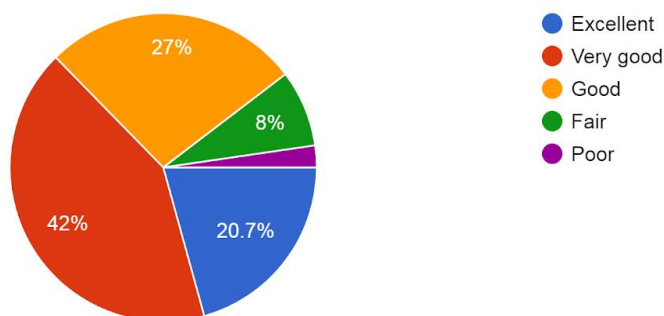
Conclusion: We all have social responsibilities. If our ability to do work gets disturbed, it is going to affect the normal smooth course of action. To work is to worship. So we need to carry out our daily routine productively as well as be useful to others too. This interference may cause problems in the long run.

The student teachers were appreciated for their concentration and devotion towards their work. The ones who were unable to manage were encouraged to build up their self esteem and be useful to them first and eventually to the family.

Q No. 7. Before the news of Corona Virus pandemic, how would you rate your mental health?

7. Before the news of Corona Virus pandemic , how would you rate your mental health?

174 responses



Inference: 20.7 % of the respondents have answered excellent, 42 % as very good, 27 % good, 8 % Fair and 2.3 % have rated themselves as having poor mental health.

Conclusion: Earlier to the outbreak, only 2.3 % had poor mental health .i.e. four student teachers do not feel that their mental health is satisfactory. They were directed to the counselors for

So comparing this with the above questions, the numbers facing mental health issues before and after the corona virus has increased.

There has been lot of instances in the past where human beings have faced such extreme conditions like wars, epidemic, pandemic etc. This is not a pleasant moment for any individual but we have to be mentally strong to face this.

Our government has taken a wise decision to put up such precautionary measure of lockdown and quarantine considering the nature of virus.

Conclusion and Suggestions:

The researcher concludes that almost half of the student teachers are standing on the brim of mental unrest. Along with the current situation which is worrying them, there are so many other underlying factors which are also intervening.

The researcher conducted an online zoom session on the above topic, shared with them the findings and gave them suggestions to better their mental health. The researcher made the session interactive and found out other underlying stressors.

To mention few:

Home front: Handling and managing daily chores, parents need to entertain their kids if they have, buying daily grocery etc

College front: Preparing for exams, learning new apps to write and submit papers etc

General: Uncertainty of the future, Safety from Corona Virus, increasing number of patients who were contracting the virus, health advisories getting affected too etc

They were unable to focus the prime issue of worry. Hence the teacher educator helped them with self help motivational strategies like pursuing hobbies, meditation, undertaking self motivational verses/ quotes which would help in the uplifting one's self esteem thus pulling oneself back from the dark side of life that we were foreseeing.

Strategies to cope up



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