

PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS, FEAR AND COPING DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC (REVIEW BASED ARTICLE)

¹Raja Sekar.A, ²Dr. R. Neelakandan,

*Department of Psychology
Annamalai University*

ABSTRACT

The COVID 19 pandemic has enormously affected the Psychological Wellbeing, Social and working life of millions of people across the world. The world is currently facing a pandemic due to the spread of corona virus disease. As of February 2022, an estimated 42,34,37,674 corona cases were confirmed and around 5,87,83,028 deaths, according to WHO, Covid 19 impacted psychological wellbeing of global population. Emotional stress due to disasters, quarantine and lockdown, where people in uncertain situations lose the power to predict and control their lives under conditions of threat. Psychological distress had been shown to be more prevalent among middle-aged single women and mothers, and those in lower income groups. Covid-19 related to lockdown reported many negative psychological effects associated with quarantine including fear, stress, insomnia, depression, frustration, and anger in which some persisted over post quarantine period. This study aimed to investigate the psychological distress, fear and coping during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Based on the available literature review.

KEYWORDS: Psychological distress, Fear, Coping.

1. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic, with more than 42, 34, 37, 674 cases and 5, 87, 83, 028 deaths by mid-February-2022, has occurred in 3 waves. The first wave raised the alarm of what was imminent; the second wave identified the in country differences in incidence, prevalence and mortality rates as well as health system gaps, not with standing policy failures; while the third wave further exposed varying social, financial, policy and failures in the health system management on the global scale. COVID-19 impacted psychological wellbeing of global populations. Studies revealed that COVID-19 pandemic affected people in discrete ways across the world and exposed varying degrees of vulnerability among divergent community members. Evidence linked emotional stress to disasters, quarantine and lockdown, where people in uncertain situations lose the power to predict and control their lives under conditions of threat. Prevalence of psychological distress, anxiety and depression. Psychological distress had been shown to be more prevalent among middle-aged single women and mothers, and those in lower-income groups. A recent review of the psychological effects of COVID-19 related lockdown reported many negative psychological effects associated with quarantine including fear, stress, insomnia, depression, frustration, and anger and in which some persisted post quarantine period.

Factors associated with psychological wellbeing during the (current) COVID-19 pandemic are diverse. However, the primary reasons for COVID-related stress were associated with contracting the virus, related complications, restrictions and mandated lockdowns, social isolation, financial loss, lack of income and disruption of daily routines which have been observed globally. More over critical incidents such as death of family members, Preexisting stressors, being older and migrant were substantial grounds for poor mental health outcomes. An international study of 18 countries examining the mental health outcomes related to mandatory lockdown showed that half of the study population (n=9,565) expressed moderate mental well-being; financial impacts a long with lack of access to basic needs were identified as substantial grounds for such poor mental health outcomes.

A recent Australian study also found that people with higher psychological distress had increased smoking and alcohol consumption during the pandemic period; females and people with pre-existing mental health conditions were more likely to experience higher levels of psychological distress. Furthermore, being on the frontline, health care workers also confronted physical and mental health consequences of COVID-19 crisis.

COVID-19 was unpredictable. Varying degrees of lockdown or isolation measures were implemented nationally, depending on the stage of the pandemic. Most of the published studies examined psychological impacts of COVID-19 in a single country or small communities. A recent systematic review and meta-analysis showed that Black and Asian ethnic community people were at increased risk of COVID-19 infection, intensive care admission and deaths. Evidence from multicultural communities on a global scale was lacking. Unless the issue of COVID-19 related mental well-being were addressed in a timely manner, such impacts could potentially translate into a range of long-term illnesses with severe economic impacts. As COVID-19 continued to peak in many countries, it was imperative that ongoing planning with mental health support strategies and early identification of psychological distress were realised, because people had the ability to normalise stressful situations when they had access to support networks and resources. Therefore, our study aimed to examine the extent of and the factors associated with psychological distress, the level of fear of COVID-19 and coping strategies amongst a diverse range of community people in multi country settings.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A literature review consists of an overview, a summary, and an evaluation of the current state of knowledge about a specific area of research. It may also include a discussion of methodological issues and suggestions for future research. Conducting a literature review should enable researcher to find out what research has already been done and identify what is unknown within researcher topic. Sources covered in the review may include scholarly journal articles, books, government reports, Web sites, etc. So the study of related literature place a vital role in the field of research in Psychology.

1. **Manel Mohamed E kayal, Mohammed Abdul Harmed Shahin and Rashe Mohammed Heusien (2022)** Conducted study on psychological distress related to the emerging Covid 19 pandemic and Coping strategies Among general Population in Egypt. Data were collected from 312 samples through cross sectional survey method. The data accomplished administered with the Kesler psychological distress scale & ways of coping scale (WCS). Descriptive statistical tool were employed in this study. This study found that the methods of adaptation used by most of the population were based on emotional coping strategy. The study focus light on the importance to provide appropriate interventions against covid-19 related stress and equipped people with suitable strategies for coping with the covid-19 pandemic.
2. **Mabel Oti Boadi, Esther malrn, Nutifafa Eugene Yaw Dey, Stephen Oppong (2021)** Conducted study on Fear of COVID-19: Psychological distress and coping among university students in Ghana. Data were collected from 214 samples through online survey method. The data accomplished were administrated with The Fear of COVID-19 Scale (Ahorsu et al, 2020) Depression, Anxiety, and stress scale (DASS -21; Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995) & The Brief coping Inventory (Carver, 1997). Descriptive and correlation analyses, Multiple Regression analyses, Mediation analyses statistical tool were employed in this study for data interpretation. The result found that an emphasize on the need to design and optimize institutional interventions that will assess psychological distress and fear of Covid 19 levels desire this pandemic and provide psychotherapeutic support for students as they return school.
3. **Sek Ying Chair, Wai Tong Chien, Ting Liu, Louisa Lam, Wendy Cross, Biswajit Banik and Muhammad Aziz Rahman (2021)** Conducted study on Psychological Distress, Fear and Coping Strategies among Hong Kong people during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Data were collected from 555 samples through cross sectional survey method. The data accomplished by a admired psychological distress was assessed using the 10 item Kessler psychological distress scale (K10),

Fear of covid-19 scale (FCV -195), Brief resilient coping scale (BRCS). Univariate logistic regression were employed in this study for data interpretation. This study found that key factors associated with distress, fear and coping strategies during the pandemic in Hong Kong, Mental health support strategies showed be provided continuously to prevent the mental impact of pandemic from turning into long term illness.

4. **Muhammad Aziz Rahman, Shaila Rahman, Amit Wazib, S.M. Yasir Arafat, Zulfia Zinat Chowdhury, Bhuiyan Mohammad Mathtab Uddin, Mufti Munsur Rahman, Ahmed Suparno Bahar Moni, Sheikh M. Alif, Farhana Sultana, Masudus Salehin, Sheikh Mohammed Shariful Islam, Wendy Cross and Tamanna Bahar(2021)** Conducted study on COVID-19 Related Psychological Distress, Fear and Coping: Identification of High-Risk Groups in Bangladesh. Data were collected from 962 samples through cross sectional survey method. The data accomplished by admired Kessler psychological distress scale (K10), fear of covid-19 scale & Brief resilient coping scale. Descriptive analysis was employed in this study. This study found that a high level of fear was associated with moderate to high levels of psychological distress. People with Pre-existing mental health problems were less likely to be resilient. Where those with having on income were more likely to be resilient.
5. **Ahmed Suparno Bahar Moni, Shalimar Abdullah, Mohammad Farris Iman Leong Bin Abdullah, Mohammed Shajahan Kabir, Sheikh M. Alif, Farhana Sultana, Masuda's Salekin, Sheikh Mohammed Shaiful Islam, Wendy Cross, Muhammad Aziz Rahman(2021)** Conducted Study on Psychological distress, fear and coping among Malaysians during the COVID-19 pandemic. Data were collected from 720 samples through snowball sampling. Data collection accomplished by Administering Psychological distress using the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale, level of fear using the factor of covid 19 scale and coping strategies using the brief resilience coping scale. Univariate and Multivariate logistic regression tool were used in this study for data interpretation. The study found that people whose financial situation was impact due to covid 19, people who drank alcohol in the last four weeks, people who were a patient, and had higher level of fear of Covid 19 were more likely to have higher level of psychological distress. Participants who self isolated due to exposure to Covid-19 and who had moderate to very high level of psychological distress had higher level of fear.
6. **Abdulkarim M Meraya, Mamoon H Syed, Ayesha Yasmeen, Amal A Mubarak, HadiDhafer Kairy, Wafaa Maabouj, Dhaifallah Moraya, Hafiz A Makeen (2021)** Conducted study on covid 19 related psychological distress and fear among mothers and pregnant women in Saudi Arabia. Data were collected from 628 samples through snowball sampling technique. The data accomplished administered psychological distress scale, Mother Fear of the children constructing covid scale. Descriptive statistical tool was employed in this study. The study found most mothers and expected mothers in our studies had moderate to high level of psychological distress during the covid 19 pandemic. Outbreak in Saudi Arabia Education, family income and chronic mental and physical conditions were associated with high psychological distress in during Covid 19.
7. **Mohammed Aziz, Namul Hoque, Sheik M Alif , Masudus Salehin , Sheik Mohammed Shariful Islam, Biswajit Banik , Ahmed Sharif , Nashrin Binte Nazim, Farhana Sultana and Wendy Cross(2020)** Conducted study on factors associated with psychological distress fear and coping strategies during the covid 19 pandemic in Australia. Data were collected from 587 samples through cross sectional survey method. The data were accomplished by administering Kessler psychological distress scale, fear of covid 19 scale & Brief resilient scale. Descriptive statistical methods were employed in this study. The study found that high level of fear and being formal was associated with high level of psychological distress. Perceived distress due to change of employment status, alcohol drinking, providing care to known or suspected cases, being female, being 30-50 year old and high level of psychological distress was associated with a high level of fear. While healthcare service use into last low weeks was associated with medical to lush relation.

8. **Muhammad Aziz Rahman, Sheikh Mohammed Shairfulislam, Thungpunkom, Farhana Sultana, Sheikh M. Aloif, Biswajit Banik, Masudus Salehin, et al (2020)** conducted study on COVID-19: Factors associated with psychological distress, fear, and coping strategies among community members across 17 countries. Data were collected from 8957 samples through cross sectional survey method. The data accomplished by admired Kessler psychological distress scale (K10), Fear of covid 19 scale (FCV-195) & Brief resilient coping scale. Univariate and multivariate logistic regression was employed in this study. This study found that extended psychological distress, fear of covid19, and coping varied among countries, however, the study identified few higher risk groups who were more vulnerable than others. There is an urgent need to monitor health and wellbeing of those people through well designed intervention that may need to be tailored to meet country specific requirements.
9. **Hua Yu, Mingli Li, Zhixiong Li, Weiyi Xiang, Yiwen Yuan, Yaya Liu, Zhe Li and Zhenzhen Xiong (2020)** Conducted study on Coping style, social support and psychological distress in the general Chinese population in the early stages of the COVID-19 epidemic. Data were collected from 1607 samples through snowball sampling technique. The data accomplished by admired Six item Kessler psychological distress scale (k6), the simplified coping style Questionnaire (SCSQ), and the social support rating scale (SSRS). Chi-squared test was employed in this study for data interpretation. The study found that individuals with high psychological distress were more likely to be unmarried, spend more than 6 hours per day searching information about Covid-19, more frequently adopted a person coping style, and reported less social support than those with lower psychological distress.
10. **Leodoro J. Labrague, Janet De los Santos(2020)** Conducted study on Fear of covid 19 psychological distress, work satisfaction and turnover intention among front line nurse. Data were collected from 261 samples through cross sectional survey method. The data accomplished by Admired the fear of covid 19 scale was used to examine nurses apprehensive about covid19. The job stress scale was used to assess nurse experience of psychological distress while caring out their work (House and Rizzo 1972), The job satisfaction index was used to assess Nurse satisfaction with their current work (Schriesheim and Tsul, 1980). ANOVA was employed in this Study for Data interpretation. The study found that an increased level of Fear of Covid 19 was associated with decreased job satisfaction, Increased organizational and professional Turnover Intentions.

3. CONCLUSION

The findings clearly emphasized the key factors associated with Psychological distress, fear and coping during Covid-19 pandemic period. Participants who self-isolated due to exposure to Covid-19 and who have moderate to very high level of psychological distress and also have high level of fear. Increased level of fear of Covid-19 was associated with decreased job satisfaction and increased organizational and professional turn over interventions. Adoption is used by most of the population were based on emotional coping strategy. The recent urgent need to prioritise health and wellbeing of those people through well designed intervention that may need to be tailored to meet country specific requirements.

REFERENCE

1. Leodora J. Labrague, Janet De los Santos (2020). Fear of COVID-19, psychological distress, work satisfaction and turnover intention among front line nurses. Research square <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32985046/>
2. Mabel Oti-Boadi, Esther Malm, Nutifafa Eugene Yaw Dey, Stephan Oppong (2021). Fear of COVID-19: Psychological distress and coping among university students Ghana. Current Psychology <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34511860/#:~:text=Students%20scored%20between%20normal%20to,with%20fear%20of%20COVID%2D19>

3. Hacer Belen (2021). Fear of COVID-19 and Mental Health: The Role of Mindfulness in During Times of Crisis. International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33935608/#:~:text=In%20terms%20of%20the%20results,found%20with%20anxiety%20and%20depression>
4. Hua Yu, Mingli Li, Zhixiong Li et al(2020) Coping style, social support and psychological distress in the general Chinese population in the early stages of the COVID-19 epidemic. BMC Psychiatry(2020) <https://bmcp psychiatry.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12888-020-02826-3>
5. Bahar Moni As, Abdullah S, Bin Abdullah MFIL, Kabir MS, Sultana F, et al.(2021) Psychological distress, fear and coping among Malaysians during COVID-19 Pandemic. PLoS ONE 16(9): e0257304 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8432783/>
6. Rahman MA, Rahman S, Wazib A, Arafat SMY, Choidhury ZZ, Uddin BMM, Rahman MM Bahar Moni AS, Alif SM, Sultana F, Salehin M, Islam SMS, Cross W and Bahar T(2021) COVID-19 Related Psychological Distress, Fear and Coping : Identification of High Risk Group in bangladesh. front psychiatry 12; 718654 [https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyt.2021.718654/full#:~:text=level%20of%200.05\).-,Conclusion,leading%20to%20increased%20psychological%20distress.](https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyt.2021.718654/full#:~:text=level%20of%200.05).-,Conclusion,leading%20to%20increased%20psychological%20distress.)
7. Rahman et al (2021) COVID-19: Factors associated with psychological distress, fear, and coping strategies among community members across 17 countries. Globalization and Health (2021) 17: 117 <https://globalizationandhealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12992-021-00768-3>
8. Elkayal et al (2022) Psychological distress related to the emerging COVID-19 pandemic and coping strategies among general population in Egypt. Journal of the Egyptian Public Health Association (2022) 97:3 [https://jepha.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s42506-021-00100-2#:~:text=Results,adopted%20\(p%20%3C%200.001\).](https://jepha.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s42506-021-00100-2#:~:text=Results,adopted%20(p%20%3C%200.001).)
9. Rahman et al (2020) Factors associated with psychological distress, fear and coping strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic in Australia. Globalization and Health(2020) 16:95 <https://globalizationandhealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12992-020-00624-w>
10. Sek Ying Chair et al (2021) Psychological Distress, Fear and Coping Strategies among Hong Kong People During the COVID-19 Pandemic. Current Psychology <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34690470/>
11. Meraya AM, Syed MH, Yasmeeen A, Mubaraki AA, Kariry HD, Maabouj W, et al (2021) COVID-19 related psychological distress and fears among mothers and pregnant women in Saudi Arabia. PLoS ONE 16(8): e0256597. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0256597>