



Psychological and Social Determinants of Health during COVID 19

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In recent years, it was noticed that social determinants of health influence mental wellbeing of a person. People who are unemployed or in risky employment encounter mental health issues⁽¹⁾. When people are affected psychologically, it leads to domestic violence, child abuse and rise in psychological illnesses. It is even harder when they already have preexisting psychiatric illness.

The World Health Organization considered that the COVID-19 to be a pandemic on March 11th, 2020⁽²⁾. It has been more than a year now and it is affecting globally. Everyone is affected by this unforeseen pandemic and now we are in the vaccination stage and still very few people have access to it. Even after receiving it we still need to follow the hygienic measures which is disappointing to many.

Many countries in the world were not prepared to handle the pandemic and they had to impose a lock down to keep this highly infectious disease under control. People became very sensible about their health and family and they were in a panic state of mind. Their involvement in recreation decreased and most people were anxious and cared less about others⁽³⁾. Many people lost their jobs and received minimum or no support. Family members had to stay at home with the low

economic state. They didn't have access to meet their basic needs as human beings. Improper nutrition affects immunity and the people may be at higher risk if they contract disease.

Another important factor to be considered is schools are closed for children and parents are facing challenges to keep them occupied at home. During this time when parents also with the disturbed mental state, child abuse increases. While some parents are without jobs and for some going to work is like health care workers. Both are facing difficulties in child care; all are having mental stress, when the parents don't have jobs it's hard to feed the kids and when they have to go to work they don't have place to leave their kids or they don't feel comfortable leaving the kids and going to work due to kid's safety during this pandemic.

There is another factor to make note of when they say social distancing, it is affecting many people instead we could call it physical distancing. Now people have adapted to communicate via social media with hardships; they face challenges like loved ones from abroad cannot visit their home countries, families cannot have social interaction, and reformed functioning of work places. The main factor which to be concerned is when some people neglect the hygienic measures and when

others have to live or work with them. This is becoming a daily distress socially and psychologically.

In some countries when a patient is detected positive for COVID they need to go to a treatment center which is very much distressing to the public. Most of them are not scared to contract the disease but they are scared of going to the places where they are not accustomed to live. They worry about their health more when they have to go there since they need to be in a common room, washroom and other facilities. They cannot have a relaxed time like at home and worry about the quality of the food.

To conclude we see that almost all countries implemented protective measures to control the spread of the coronavirus, nevertheless at some point they need to consider to ease the lockdown to retain the social determinants of health. Low income families cannot withstand long term lock down. It is expected that the infection will persist for a few years or longer⁽⁴⁾. The time has come to think for the 3rd dose of the vaccine as well. Are the vaccines being effective compare to the side effects that they create. Some vaccines are not effective with some variants. There is another concern that whether the vaccines have given a chance for more mutations in a short period? Therefore, it will be healthier when people learn to live with the virus while following hygienic practices!

Keywords: COVID, lockdown, mental health, physical distancing

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