



LESSONS FROM COVID PANDEMIC AND PARENTAL FEARS ABOUT GETTING BACK TO NORMAL

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ABSTRACT:

Pandemic is a word we hardly knew before 2020's. A health crisis that started in late in the year 2019 got over almost all the countries of the world, very rapidly. Been the first of it's kind global emergency, no one was in a position to handle this pandemic and it really went far ahead to made us think if we would have managed it well. COVID-19 Pandemic appears like greatest crisis of history of human evolution. There is a quote by Dalai Lama saying 'The time of greatest gain in wisdom and inner strength is often the time of greatest difficulty.' Hence, it is research worthy to study and note how this pandemic and experience of lock-down and home confinement has affected us. This is an effort to identify the lessons this pandemic has taught us and challenges it has enforced on us, as society.

Key words: -COVID-19 Pandemic, Lockdown and its impact, Lessons and challenges of pandemic

INTRODUCTION:

It was assumed in the year 2020 that COVID-19 Pandemic will subside in a year and we will be free from all the restrictions. But the fate was decided and it attacked us globally again in the year 2021 with second wave and interminably in the year 2022, too. The entire world has shaken with this pandemic. Lockdown due to global spread of COVID-19 led to school closure, work from home, home confinement due to restrictions on movements, shift to online teaching-learning, loosing job or working on half-pay, uprising health problems around in the community, exposure to various digital platforms, scarcity of resources, uncertainty and chaos and lot many changes in lifestyle. As this health crisis crushed the social-economical-education-familial systems across the world, it is essential to study physical, psychological, social, emotional, behavioural impact of this pandemic on different age groups.

History of human evolution has experienced multiple turmoil and each has made us stand

with more strength and moulded us in dynamic way. Every crisis has led us to unlearn-relearn few things of living. Every new challenge is an opportunity to alter our social-economical-family-educational systems for better and smooth going (Sapp, 2021, Collins, 2014). Thus, investigator did this study to note down parents perception on what this pandemic has taught us and made us realised few facts of life, if any.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

The study was a cross-sectional survey across various regions of India. As it was not possible to contact participants physically due to restrictions, non-probability snowball sampling method was used for their recruitment. Thus, it was wide-spread across the country. Thus, 230 Parents participated in this study.

A cross-sectional online survey was conducted through a well-structured closed ended questionnaire is designed by the investigator. It was shared and made available to parents from different communities in different part of India.

Objective of this questionnaire is to record, observations and perceptions of Parents with special reference to COVID-19 pandemic. This questionnaire is divided into 02 parts. First part is consisted of questions based on Demographic Details such as i) Area of residence, ii) Occupation, iii), Age of Parent, iv), Age of children, v) Type of Family, vi) Extend of infection of COVID-19. The second part of the questionnaire covered 02 dimensions related to effect of COVID-19 Pandemic and coping strategies, mainly realisation, teachings on the basis of COVID-19 pandemic and Lock Down and alteration it has enforced on the style of living.

RESULT & DISCUSSION

This survey received responses from 256 out of which 230 responses were clear and complete. After cleaning and compilation of data collected, demographic details of 230 Parents participated in this study were tabled as follows:

Coping Ways adopted to lessen the pandemic's effect on children

It is well noted that disruption due to COVID - 19 pandemic led all of us to break the set schedule and disciplined lifestyle and reframe it again as needed and required on personal and professional front. It has raised a question whether to enjoy the idle time or to invest and utilise for revisiting self-family-society, for building skills, reiterating priorities of one's life. Researches have suggested that young adults may consume all the out-of-school-time in idle activities, being lazy and disoriented and hence, it was suggested to adapt ways mitigate the consequences of lockdown and pandemic (Kasturkar & Gawai, 2020, Brooks, et al., 2020, Adverse consequences of school closures, 2020, Sun, Loh, & Nie, 2021).

Family is the biggest support system for any growing child. It is the first smaller version of society before the child is introduced to school and larger society. In the crisis time of pandemic

when everyone has to inverted to home confinement, one has to adapt to the only social entity available to him/her, i.e. self and family. This is the only place where one finds solution-solace-satisfaction when feels out of place. Hence, it is important how family dwelled with this situation and coping ways where family come together are seem to be most effective. As lockdown due to pandemic continued for longer time and problems had intensified on health front, too, it is worth to study how families and adults in the family tried to cope with the situation and made it comfortable for children. Participants were asked to report about the same.

Results showed that parents (32.5%) observed children came to realised that It is important to meet basic needs of living and it is possible in any kind of situation, half of the parents (48.75%) parents noted that it is good that children got a chance to understand that one can be happy without being desirous of fashion, status, lifestyle goals etc., 60% and 63.75% parents reported that children understand that life should be simple, normal and cordial to be and remain happy and there is no substitute to good eating habits, hygiene, mental and physical health, respectively. Realisation of importance of family and society as an integral part of human life is one of the crucial lesson children understood during this pandemic as reported by 55% of parents whereas 28.75% parents reported that supreme power nature over technical and scientific advancements is also realised during course of pandemic.

This pandemic indeed made us to unfollow our regular practices which has created lot of stress and panic. But, ultimately we have to adapt to new things as pandemic situation continued for longer period. Similar observation is reported by 63.75% parents.

Parental fear about coming back to what was 'NORMAL' before pandemic-

Pandemic has created chaos in personal-professional-social life, it also made almost all the families spend long hours together during lockdowns. We all made saucerful adaptation with new normal. but eventually things will soon get back soon to what was normal before this pandemic. This idea somehow threatens parents assuming that how children will unlearn the 'pandemic lifestyle' and resume to the original one.

These numbers reported by parents regarding fear they perceive about will children be able to came back to original life style or not are quite noteworthy. 63% of parents has this fear. 12% parents reported that how children who are now experiencing online education, home confinement with no school and isolation will adapt to previous version of practices. Parents (11%) also fear that this situation will make children asocial and alter their personality to the core. Similar results have been mentioned in various studies done at various places that this long-going pandemic is affecting young minds in detrimental way and its ill effects needs to be addressed cautiously (Shaikh, Pevrah, Mohamed, Noor, & Andharia, 2021, Imran, Zeshan, & Pervaiz, 2020, Thavarajah & Mohandoss, 2020, Kumar, Bharti, Kumar, & Prakash, 2020).

CONCLUSION

It is said that when the going gets tough, the tough gets going. Similarly, COVID-19 pandemic has made us accept the reality, learn new ways of coping and living and re-discover what was missed amidst of race of modern life. This research study accessed the responses of parents about lessons from pandemic and fear about how children will adapt to life after pandemic gets over. This research can be concluded as pandemic has taught us to value

real things in life. It has underlined the importance of mental and physical health. It also taught us to get adapted to things that are beyond out of control. Secondly, there are parental fears about re-adaptation back to normal life.

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Table No. 01 – Demographic details of sample of Parents (N = 230)

Demographic Variables	Type	%
Area of residence	North-East India	15
	North West India	20
	Southern India	22
	Central India	60
	Union Territories	0
Occupation	Homemakers	16
	In-Service	72
	Entrepreneurs	12
Age of Parent	Below 30 years	3
	31 - 35 years	30
	36 - 40 years	36
	41 - 45 years	41
Type of Family	Nuclear Family	56
	Joint Family	22
	Triadic Family	13
	Single Parent Family	9
Age of children	3 - 5 years	36
	6 – 10 years	32
	11 – 15 years	32

Table No. 02– Showing responses by Parents regarding Lessons from COVID-19 Pandemic

Parental report about Lessons from COVID-19 Pandemic	%
It is important to meet basic needs of living and it is possible in any kind of situation	32.5
One can be happy without being desirous of fashion, status, lifestyle goals etc.	48.75
To be and remain happy, it is important that life should be simple, normal and cordial	60
There is no substitute to good eating habits, hygiene, mental and physical health	63.75
One needs family and society the most	55
Technical and scientific advancements are nothing when it comes to play of nature	28.75
It is better to adapt any new situation even if it is challenging and unpleasant	63.75

Table No. 03 – Showing responses by Parents regarding their assumptions and fears about how children will cope up to old normal -

Parental Fears	%
Whether children are ready to adapt to situation, if persists	63
Worried whether they will be able to adapt to prior style of living	12
I am afraid that this will change their personality	11
I am afraid that it will make them asocial	11