

Challenges Faced by Working Population During Lockdown in Response to Corona Virus Outbreak

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Abstract

COVID-19 pandemic has created an unprecedented social and health challenges on the working-class population in India and across the globe. To mitigate the spread of the virus all the state and central government in India imposed lockdown in the society over the weeks or, in some cases months. This lockdown has made a severe impact on the physical, psychological, financial, and social conditions of the people. The aim of this study is to understand the impact of lockdown amongst people on their personal life, work life and health conditions. Independent survey was conducted to collect the descriptive statistics from 120 participants. Majority of the participants expressed that their life become difficult in lockdown. There is big challenge observed for women to manage children under 10 years of age. Work from home pattern was found favourable for those who are using computer and internet. Many participants were stressful and fearful as their job is at stake due to heavy financial loss to their employing organization. We have applied chi square test to find out association and it was found that age and gender is not significantly associated with facing challenges while other demographic factors are significantly associated.

Key words – Corona, Covid-19, challenges, stress, lock down, social distancing

Introduction

CORONA – Epidemics History

Covid-19 is a communicable disease caused by coronavirus. First case of covid-19 was found in Wuhan, China during December 2019. Covid-19 has now become a pandemic and has cases all over the world. Coronavirus is known to cause respiratory infections ranging from common cold to severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS)¹. The most common symptoms are headache, cold, conjunctivitis, sore throat, diarrhoea etc. some people may have mild symptoms. Older people with co-morbid conditions like hypertension, diabetes, heart disease, lung disease are at higher risk of developing serious illnesses even death²

The pandemic of COVID-19 is causing a worldwide crisis in 2020. Many countries have closed schools and daycare centers, canceled events and closed borders. Under these circumstances, working population must work from home and complete their tasks. In this unique situation, research nest group is conducting an nationwide study to learn more about the challenges working population have to face and their way of coping with these³

Local weekly markets, ATMs peoples were advised to follow social distancing norms, however, it has been observed due diligence in most of the places. Migrant Labourers are suffering without earnings, facing serious problems due to hunger, health, and hygiene during this lockdown⁴

The current crisis is different because it is a pandemic. Nationwide lock down happened first time in Indian history. It has got impact on every citizen in the country. Poor peoples are suffering most as their livelihood is

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depends upon daily work. Bigger corporate companies are pressurizing people to complete their tasks by work from home. This working class are directly affected by it. Most of them may not suffer too much from the virus itself, but they must understand why they must give up their daily routines, why they should not meet friends or pursue their hobbies etc. Events and vacations, they have been looking forward to having to be canceled. Many things that offered them opportunities for growth and for dealing with all the personal issues, an altruistic reason not easy to understand. If they stay at home, their parents or other adults may be in the same house at the same time, but they are not able to professionally replace the educator, as they have their own work responsibilities as well as dealing with the general stressful situation⁵

Television, streaming, and computer games offer entertainment and help to cope with emotions like boredom, anxiety, and loneliness. On the other hand, it may also contribute to negative effects such as emotional stress when they are used too long, when being exposed to information that may foster emotional uncertainty, or to pictures (e.g., on Instagram), that foster lower self-esteem and body image. Additionally, it is often a reason for arguments in families, who are under stress anyway because of this special situation of being trapped together⁶.

Looking into intensity of the disease and fatality of the cases, Government of India announced total lockdown from March 23, 2020 onwards to reduce infection among population. Infections and death were increasing. The situation of India and other countries pushed economy into crisis and unemployment increased for daily wage labourers. The lockdown situation posed

many problems for working population as well as non-working groups. All working and productive population is away from work due to slow down. Entire lock down population facing challenges related to finance, social withdrawal, shut down of schools, colleges, industries, etc.

Hence researchers have decided to conduct the study titled - challenges faced by working population at home in response to corona outbreak.

Material and Methods

Study on the Covid-19 crisis 2020 is exploratory descriptive study aims at identifying the challenges of working population and its association with demographic variables. Online survey was conducted, and nationwide data was collected. The target group are working population from 25 to 60 years who are willing to participate and questionnaire were prepared, validated, and distributed to participants. Most of the questions were closed questions (28) but some will be open ended (2). Each state must organize minimum n=20 working peoples, maximum N=120.

The questionnaire was developed in cooperation with national experts; a snowball system was used, and the questionnaire was circulated one to one using online mode. The field time was March 31st to April 30th.

Objectives

- 1) To determine the challenges faced by working population in response to Corona outbreak.
- 2) To find the association between the demographic variables and the challenges faced.

Results

Table No 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants (N=120)

Socio Demographic Variable	No.	Percentage
Gender		
Male	69	57.5
Female	51	42.5
Age group (years)		
21 - 30	48	40
31 - 40	40	33.3
41 - 50	13	10.8
more than 50	19	15.8

Cont... Table No 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants (N=120)

Religion		
Hindu	110	91.7
Muslim	1	0.8
Christian	8	6.7
Other	1	0.8
Educational Level		
Primary	0	0.0
Secondary	4	3.3
Higher Secondary	10	8.3
Bachelor or above	106	88.3
Occupation		
Business	22	18.3
Service	80	66.7
Agriculture	5	0.8
Housewife	13	2.5
Source of Information		
Mass Media (TV, Internet, Radio)	93	77.5
Family / Relatives	8	6.7
Health Professionals	16	13.3
Friends	3	2.5
Media Used to get Updates on Corona		
TV News	69	57.5
Internet	19	15.8
Radio	1	0.8
Facebook	2	1.7
Instagram	14	11.7
Mobile Phone	15	12.5
Others	0	0.0

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Participants (N=120). (a) Gender, (b) Age Group, (c) Religion, (d) Occupation, (e) Education Level, (f) Source of Information, (g) Media

Table 1, shows total 120 participants were participated in online survey. 69 (57 %) of the respondents were male and 51 (43 %) of respondents were female. Respondents were from 35 different cities in India. Maximum respondents (39%) were from Pune followed by (28%) respondents from Mumbai. Maximum number of respondents i.e. 40 % belongs to Age group 21 – 30 Years, followed by 33 % respondents belong to age group 31 – 40, followed by 16% of respondents belonging to age group 50 and above and least number 11% of respondent belonging to Age group 41 0 50 Years. Above table shows that 110 respondents belong to Hindu Religion, 8 belong to Christian, 1 belong to Muslim and 1 respondent belong to other religion. All respondents found Literate. It was found that 80 respondents belong to Service Sector, 22 belongs to Business sector, 3 respondents were housewife and

1 respondent was from Agriculture sector. Findings shows that 93 respondents received the information from source like Mass Media, 16 respondents received information from Health Personnel, 8 respondents received information from Family members and Relatives and 3 respondents received information from Friends. 69 respondents received information from TV New, 19 respondents received information from Internet, 15 respondents received information from Mobile, 14 respondents received information from Instagram, 2 respondents received information from Facebook and 1 respondent received information from Radio.

Section I

CHALLENGES FACED BY WORKING POPULATION AT HOME IN RESPONSE TO CORONA OUTBREAK

Table No. 2 Personal Life Challenges

Questions	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
This Lockdown has brought a big change in the daily routine	48%	42%	5%	5%
Managing work from home and household responsibility is making life miserable	12%	56%	24%	8%
Personal Life equilibrium is disturbed	28%	48%	20%	4%
Children health during this Pandemic is a big worry	36%	53%	8%	3%
Being at home for almost more than 20 days is making me feel sick	29%	35%	30%	6%
Not able to meet friends and relatives	39%	47%	10%	4%
Worried about the health of old aged parents	53%	41%	3%	3%
Lockdown had made it difficult to buy items of daily needs	29%	36%	30%	5%
Managing daily requirements of the family is becoming difficult	22%	57%	16%	5%
Managing small children along with work is difficult	23%	53%	16%	8%
Mean %	32	47	16	5

Table 2 shows depicts that maximum of 47% people Agree that their Personal life was very much affected due to lockdown, whereas 32 % people strongly have an opinion that Lockdown have affected their Personal life and routine at a great extent. Table No 2, shows that 56 % participants agreed that their life has become miserable whereas 53% are at opinion that they are worried about their children for obvious reason. 57% participants found difficult to fulfil the requirement of family members.

Table No. 3 Work Life Challenges

Questions	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Working from home is difficult during this phase of lockdown	24%	41%	30%	5%
Lot of communication and collaboration gaps during work is being faced	28%	52%	18%	3%
Quality and Quantity of work is affected	30%	52%	13%	5%
Face lot of distraction during work at home	19%	51%	26%	4%
Getting internet access is also a big challenged during this lockdown phase	31%	38%	25%	7%
Working efficiently at home along with household work is difficult	23%	50%	23%	3%
Team working is impossible due to lack of control on the team	42%	33%	23%	3%
Creating work environment at home is impossible	15%	52%	28%	5%
Lack of motivation and energy to work	20%	48%	26%	6%
Task completion and deadlines of work are affected	33%	43%	19%	5%
Mean %	27	46	23	5

Table 3 depicts that maximum of 46% people agree that working from home during lockdown was a stressful situation, whereas 27 % people strongly agree with the fact the Work from home affected their work culture a lot. Surprisingly an approximately same number of people i.e. 23 % of people have an opinion that lockdown

have not at all affected their work life and culture. Table No 3 indicates that 52% responded that their quality and quantity of work is affected due to lockdown. More than half participants agreed that creating work environment is impossible.

Table No 4 Physical Fitness Challenges

Questions	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My daily physical fitness routine is disturbed	27%	47%	19%	8%
Going out for sports and Gym is impossible	41%	51%	3%	5%
Sitting home 24/7 makes me feel lethargic	21%	48%	25%	6%
Physical activity has become minimal	31%	57%	10%	3%
I am facing physical problems due to weight Gain	21%	33%	31%	16%
I enjoy household work	13%	53%	26%	9%
I tried to be friendly with my family members	20%	66%	9%	5%
I watch my favourite TV programmes	26%	41%	18%	15%
Mean %	25	49	14	6

Table 4 depicts that maximum of 49% people Agree that their physical health was affected during the lockdown, their physical activity has become minimal. Whereas 25% people strongly agree that their physical fitness routines are disturbed to a great extent. As per the open ended views of participants about how does they utilize the time at home during lockdown, views expressed were that 40 % sample manage the situation

by using the internet, 31% are playing with kids and family member, 25 % are doing the house work and 4% are not doing as such activities.

When asked about ways to manage their stress during lockdown, responses were 33 % sample manage the situation by doing housework, 29% are playing indoor games, 25 % are doing the exercise and 13% mentioned they do activities as per situation.

Section II

Association of findings with demographic variables

SN	Variable	Chi ²	P Value	Result
1	Gender	43.55	0.2125	Reject H0
2	Literacy	80.00	0.0001	Accept H0
3	Age	140.00	0.0298	Accept H0
4	Religion	192.00	0.0001	Accept H0
5	Education	57.00	0.9225	Reject H0

p < 0.05 significant *

There is association between the demographic variable and challenges faced by working people. The data presented in the table shows that there is significant association with Literacy of the participants, age, and religion. Whereas gender and educational level there is no association.

Discussion

Covid-19 corona virus disease outbreak has been spreading all over the world. In view to prevent further spread and to protect Indian population from getting affected Government of India announced total lockdown from March 23, 2020. Due to prolong confinement of people in home during this outbreak work life, personal life and physical health of the working population is affected⁷. conducted to study to find out during lockdown physical as well as mental health of the people is at stake. A study was conducted to assess challenges faced by working population across the country during March 31 to April 30, 2020; online cross-sectional observational study conducted among 120 participants recruited by snowball technique. Demographic characteristics shows that 57.5 % male and 47.5 % female participants. Majority (40%) participants were from age group of 21-30 years whereas 33.3 % from age group of 31-40 years of age. All participants were literate and 66 % participants were working in office, industries and other places whereas 22 % participants were from business sector. All participants included in the study was working from home and adopted total lock down. Observations were made for work life, personal life and health challenges. It was observed that working population found personal life challenges found more intensive and people faced less health challenges. This observation was supported by study conducted by Mahendra kumar -2020 he found that social life challenges were 52 % while 79% people were worried about family and friends. He also found that 67 % people had altered sleep pattern during lock down⁸. It is also observed that working people with advanced age are more concerned about their health and they take rich food, do regular exercise and yoga practices while younger population found less attentive to health matter.

Conclusion

Corona virus pandemic affected working population worldwide, working population facing major issues

related to the work life, personal life and health challenges. One needs to prepare themselves to tackle all these challenges. Personal life challenges are more intense than any other challenges. Not only working population but also non-working population, old age peoples, housewives, children needs to adopt themselves for this changing pattern of life. Use of mask, social distancing, personal hygiene and use of sanitizer should become part of life of everyone.

Ethical Clearance- Institutional Ethics Committee approved the research study

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Conflict of Interest – Nil

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