

Fear of COVID19 among public

Mr.Muthumani.R¹,Mrs. Sheeba paul²

¹Staff nurse (Bsc) ,Emergency Nursing Department ,Christian Medical College ,Vellore ,Tamilnadu,India

²Lecturer, Medical surgical nursing,Christian Medical College ,Vellore ,Tamilnadu,India

ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND

SARS COV - 2 is a pandemic viral pathogen which emerged from Wuhan, China. It was first reported on 31st December 2019 to WHO by China. On March 11th 2020, WHO announced COVID - 19 as a pandemic viral disease. Public are overloaded with lot of facts and myths about COVID-19 through social media and television. Hence determining the fear of COVID-19 among public will be more appropriate so that appropriate interventions can be initiated.

AIM

To study the fear level among public regarding COVID - 19 viral pandemic.

METHOD

A descriptive design was undertaken to meet the study objectives. A total of 600 public were selected using systematic random sampling technic in Emergency / OPD department ,CMC,vellore. Data was collected using Fear of Covid 19 scale (FCV 19) .

RESULT

Study analysis reveals that irrespective of demographic variables assessed in the study ,fear of Covid 19 is common among public. Level of fear is more since the finding reveals higher prevalence of moderate (51.5%) and severe fear level (43.16%) among study population. Pearson chi square test results shown that there is no p value assaociation(<0.05) among selected variables. Hence it is proven that fear of covid19 among public is certain ,irrespective of demographic properties.

CONCLUSION

This study analysis reveals that considerable fear level is existing among public. It is important to focus on psychological cure to avoid fear to become anxiety. As a nurses it is our role to alleviate fear among public and create awareness in regard of Covid 19. Awareness can be created in several ways among public such as Community health education programme, use of mass media,digital awareness campaign. These are the measures where nurses can enroll themselves. Importantly creating awareness during the time of decline in severity of COVID 19 will aid public to approach upcoming wave of infection effectively.

KEYWORDS

Covid 19, Pandemic, Fear of Covid 19,Anxiety.

Date of Submission: 23-05-2022

Date of Acceptance: 05-06-2022

I. Introduction

SARS COV - 2 is a pandemic viral pathogen which emerged from Wuhan, China and it was considered as an epicentre of the infection. It was first reported on 31st December 2019 to WHO by China. On 30th January 2020, it was declared as an emergency of International concern. On 11th February 2020, WHO announced a name for the new corona virus disease called COVID-19. On March 11th 2020, WHO announced COVID - 19 as a pandemic disease.

Dr. Hans Henri P. Kludge, Regional Director WHO, Europe mentioned that COVID - 19 pandemic causes remarkable psychological impact on community. Mainly due to large number of people getting infected, increased mortality, non availability of specific drugs, restriction on social mobility, social distancing, and self-isolation. Death due to COVID - 19 is a major cause for increasing fear level. In India, it is reported that COVID - 19 lock down and other social restrictions has caused increased fear which resulted in 20% increase in mental illness (Indian psychiatry society survey, March 2020). In Tamilnadu number of suicides due to fear of Covid 19 are increased and also increase in number of suicidal events are reported all over the country. Increased fear level due to COVID - 19 results in psychological illnesses as depression, substance abuse disorders, eating disorders, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and post-traumatic stress disorder (smitha et al 2020). Public are overloaded with lot of facts and myths about COVID-19 through social media and television. Hence determining the fear of COVID-19 among public will be more appropriate so that appropriate interventions can

be initiated. This study was conducted among public who visited Christian medical college , vellore. This study was planned to assess the fear level of covid 19 among public.

II. Objectives of the study

- To assess the fear of COVID - 19 viral pandemic among public.
- To find an association between fear level and selected demographic variables.
-

III. Hypothesis

There is a significant association between fear level and selected demographic variables

IV. Methodology

Approach and design: A quantitative approach and descriptive design is adopted for this study.

Setting:

The study was conducted among public (non COVID 19 infected/symptomatic patient relatives) who are visiting Emergency Department/ OPD, Christian Medical College, Vellore.

Sample size

A total of 600 subjects who fulfilled the inclusion criteria were selected using systematic random sampling technique.

V. Data collection instrument

The instrument consists of the following sections:

Part-I

It comprises of socio demographic variables such as age, sex, educational level, occupation, living locality, use of social media, etc.

Part-II

The Fear of COVID - 19 Scale (FCV – 19S) is used. It is a standardised 5 point Likert scale consists of seven items(Cronbach’s alpha of 0.78),and obtained from public domain.

VI. Results

(Table 1) : Distribution of subjects based on demographic variables

S.NO	DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES	DISTRIBUTION	PERCENTAGE %
1	Age <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 to 25 • 26 to 39 • 40 to 60 • More than 60 	113 273 202 12	18.83 45.50 33.66 02.00
2	Sex <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male • Female 	377 223	62.83 37.16
3	Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary(till 5th) • Till high school • Higher secondary • Degree or diploma 	05 162 127 306	0.83 27.00 21.16 51.00
4	Occupation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health professional • Other professional • Non professional • Unemployed 	56 201 243 100	9.3 33.5 40.5 16.66
5	Locality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • within the Vellore district • Other districts • Other states 	223 362 15	37.16 60.33 02.5
6	Containment zone <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From containment zone • Non containment zone 	63 537	10.5 89.5
7	Smart phone usage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smart phone users • Analog phone users 	398 202	66.33 33.66
8	Duration of watching Covid 19 news		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than 2 hours • 2 hours and more • None 	25 495 80	04.16 82.50 13.33
9	Covid 19 news medium <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News paper • Television • Mobile 	31 451 118	5.16 75.16 19.6

Table 1 reveals that 45.5% among study population were aged between 26 – 39 years,62.83% were male participants,51% of study population have completed either degree/diploma,40.5% were non professional workers,60.33% were from other parts of tamilnadu and 82.5% of public were used to watch Covid 19 news for 2 hours and more.

Figure 1:Distribution of subjects based on fear level



Inference :figure 1 shows that distribution of subjects based on fear level as the categories of mild , moderate and severe. Here the moderate fear level is dominant(51.5%) whereas public who had mild level of fear (5.33%) among 600 samples. Severe fear level is 43.16% which demands greater concern since it has consequences like depression and other mental health disorders.

Table 2: Distribution of subjects Response based on questions n = 600

S.no	Questions	Strongly disagree %	Disagree %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Agree %	Strongly agree %
1	I am most afraid of corona virus	13.66	10.16	14	27.66	34.5
2	It makes me uncomfortable to think about corona virus 19	12.83	15.5	14.5	34	23.16
3	My hands become clammy when I think about corona virus 19	30.66	22.66	22.16	10.66	17.16
4	I am afraid of losing my life because of corona virus 19	23.5	21.5	19.66	16.33	19
5	When watching news and stories about corona virus 19 on media , I become nervous.	18.66	16.33	15.5	26.16	23.33
6	I cannot sleep because I am worrying about getting coronavirus 19.	27.66	27.33	18.16	12.33	14.5
7	My heart races or palpitates when I think about getting corona virus 19.	29.16	24.66	19	9.66	17.5

TABLE 3

S.NO	DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	P VALUE
1	AGE	2.1883	0.75530	5.022
2	SEX	1.3717	0.48365	1.331
3	OCCUPATION	3.2233	0.87449	4.424
4	EDUCATION	2.6483	0.86752	6.925
5	LOCALITY	1.6533	0.52626	7.837
6	QUARANTINE	1.8950	0.30681	3.273

7	SMART PHONE USAGE	1.3400	0.47761	2.092
8	DURATION OF WATCHING COVID 19 NEWS	2.0917	0.40850	2.920
9	COVID 19 NEWS MEDIUM	2.1500	0.49116	5.319

Pearson chi square test results (Table 3) shown that there is no p value association(<0.05) among selected demographic variables.

VII. Discussion

The relationship between infectious diseases and fear is directly related to its form of transmission and mortality rate.(ahorsu et al.2020). Covid 19 characteristics, such as being airborne (i.e., perceived as imminent and invisible), uncertainty over patient outcomes, and mandatory change of habits imposed by the governments to protect the population's health have led many individuals across the globe to experience a generalized sense of fear (Guan et al. 2020; Huang et al. 2020). Likewise in this study due to uncertainty of disease, fear about Covid 19 is more among public (94.66%) (fig 1). Psychological disorders such as anxiety and depression have been found associated with fear in previous epidemics and affecting people's quality of life negatively (Ford et al. 2018; Huang et al. 2020). Likewise in this study public appears to have moderate(51.5%) and severe (43.16%) fear about the disease which predisposes psychiatric disorders(fig 1).Fear has been shown to be strongly intertwined with anxiety and depression symptoms in both younger and older populations (Mathews et al. 2019).In this study also irrespective of age ,fear appears to be common among public(both younger and older population)(Table 1).Fear can evolve into a range of mental health problems, including distress reactions , health risk behaviors and mental disorders (shigemura et al.2020). Perceiving Covid 19 virus to be severe has been linked with worse mental health outcomes (Li et al.2020). In this study anxiety is expressed by the public in the form of fear of losing life due to Covid 19 (35.3%)(fig 1). . The fear of Covid 19 is strongly associated with psychological distress and sleep disturbance (cong et al.2021). Similarly in this study 26.83% public agreed that they have sleep disturbance due to fear of covid 19(fig 1). The Media exposure time increases the fear level about covid pandemic (li et al.2021). In this study 49.5% among study population have responded that they become nervous when they watch Covid 19 news in media(fig 1). Death anxiety plays crucial role in increase of fear level (menzieus et al,2019) ,likewise in this study fear of dying is expressed (35.3%) among study population(fig 1). Healthcare policies has to be defined exclusively to alleviate psychological implications of Covid 19 infection (banerjee et al , 2020), the same context is suggested in this study since 94.66% of the public is under the risk of developing psychological disorders. Centers of disease control and prevention 2020, states that prolonged pandemic situation increases the risk of psychological illness, hence this study suggests that fear of Covid 19 is predominant and it predisposes many psychological illness among public.

VIII. Nursing implications

1. Study findings helps nursing personnel to understand public psychological response to a pandemic disease.
2. Study findings helps nursing personnel to plan awareness activities among public .

IX. Recommendations

1. A comparative study can be conducted to assess the fear level among vaccinated public.

X. Conclusion

Fear of covid 19 has common impact among public, when compared to other health implications of covid 19 viral pandemic. Hence study analysis reveals that considerable fear level is existing among public, it is important to focus on psychological cure. Therefore it is the felt need of the public to have framework for adopting this pandemic psychologically in future. Common impacts like post-traumatic stress disorder , exacerbation of existing mental illness can be avoided by understanding the fear level and planning actions to alleviate the same.health professionals must provide timely and sufficient attention to feelings of fear in general population (jeff et al.2020). As a nurses it is our role to reduce fear among public by creating awareness of Covid 19. Creating awareness during the time of decline in severity of COVID 19 illness is vital since it aids public to approach upcoming wave of infection effectively.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There are no conflicts of interest

References

- [1]. Willem A. Arrindell*, Michael W "Fear Of Aids: Are There Replicable, Invariant Questionnaire Dimensions", V II.,P: 69-115. 1989. Printed in Great Britain. @ 1989 Pergamon
- [2]. Saadatian-Elahi, M., Facy,F.,Del Signor, C. *et al*. Perception of epidemic's related anxiety in the General French Population: a cross-sectional study in the Rhône-Alpes region. BMC Public Health 10, 191 (2010). <https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2458-10-191>
- [3]. International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction

- [4]. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11469-020-00270-8>.
- [5]. Najmumsakib ,tahminaakther : fear of Covid 19 and depression,International journal of mental health and addiction 2021.
- [6]. Philip hyland,Mark shevlin: anxiety and depression in Ireland during covid 19 pandemic. <https://doi.org/10.1111/acps.13219>.
- [7]. Shigemura,J.,ursano,R.J.,Morganstein,J.C kurosawa,M.,& Benedek,D.M.(2020). Public responses to novel 2019 coronavirus (2019 – nCov) in japan:mental health consequences and clinical neurosciences,74,281 – 282. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pcn.12988>.
- [8]. Ahorsu,D.K.,Lin,C.Y.,Imani,V.,Saffari,M.,Griffiths,M.D.,& Pakpour,A.H.(2020).The fear of Covid 19 scale : development and initial validation.International Journal of Mental health and addiction,1 – 9. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11469-020-00271-8>.
- [9]. Duan,l.,&Zhu,G.(2020).Psychological interventions for people affected by the Covid 19 epidemic.Lancet psychiatry,7(4),300 – 302. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s2215-0366\(20\)30073-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/s2215-0366(20)30073-0).

Mr.Muthumani.R. "Fear of COVID19 among public." *IOSR Journal of Nursing and Health Science (IOSR-JNHS)*, 11(03), 2022, pp. 14-17.