

Covid-19 Pandemic

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I. Introduction

From the onset of civilization, there have been many health issues that have affected human health and wellbeing. These epidemics have caused panic among global populations who at times opt for prayers for protection leading to economic destruction and human mortality. This was the same case with the Covid-19 pandemic in December 2019. Its outbreak affected all nations and territories with governments cautioning their citizens to take precautionary measures. The first outbreak was in Wuhan China. Consequently, the World Health Organization in January 2020 declared it as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern followed by a declaration of a pandemic in March, the same year (Cucinotta and Vanelli, 2020).

The rapid spread of Covid-19 and its high contagiousness posed a major challenge to public health. For instance, the World Health Organization reports that there have been 656 million cases and another 6.67 million deaths resulting from the virus. Examples of countries that were most affected by it include: USA, Spain, Italy, China, etc. Covid-19 is transmitted through droplets from infected people i.e. by coughing, sneezing or touching contaminated surfaces. There is also a significant risk of asymptomatic carriers transmitting the diseases thereby contributing to its burden in the society. Despite the availability of vaccines such as Moderna and Pfizer, Pan et al. (2022) asserts that their long term efficacies are unknown.

The efficacy of the vaccines is doubtful since they may be ineffective against mutant strains in addition to experiencing significant hesitancy. However, applying different precautions has been proven to reduce Covid-19's spread and the resulting deaths. Examples are washing hands and social distancing. Everyone must take them seriously to reduce its spread. Therefore, this research will discuss the Covid-19 precautionary measures.

Research Rationale

Going by the experience of Covid-19 pandemic, it is clear that the risk of its transmission significantly reduces when the right precautionary measures are considered. Thus, it is imperative to be mindful of these measures e.g. hand hygiene and masking for everyone. Besides, the lessons that shall have been learned from the Covid-19 management protocols forms the basis of a continued quality improvement program for the prevention and control of other infections even in the future. Also, its outbreak culminated in a significant challenge not only to the health of everyone globally but also to their livelihoods and productivity. This makes the implementation of precautionary measures be crucial to the overall situation of the pandemic. When individuals know the right precautions to undertake during any epidemic, then the transmission rates will be greatly reduced. The research is necessary to provide the details regarding all the aspects that needed to be undertaken by both individuals and medical practitioners in the prevention of this disease.

Aims and Objectives

They include:

- To discuss the different precautionary measures some of which include social distancing, washing of hands, wearing face masks, restricting travel, etc.
- To find out whether the willingness of a person to take precautionary measures against Covid-19 is really effective.
- To determine whether there is relationship between the precautionary measures and the overall situation of Covid-19 prevention and control.
- To find out to what extent precautionary measures improve the health status of individuals while reducing disease infection.

II. Literature Review

Social Distancing

Sheikhi, Shirzadfar, and Sheikhi (2020) mention that Covid-19 has for the last two years been a part of our everyday lives. With about the multiple new cases daily, it is still imperative to stay alert and know the right precautions to take. According to CDC, a sure way of preventing illness is by avoiding exposure to the virus. Therefore, an imperative precautionary measure is practicing social distancing. Park et al. (2020) indicates that close contact is considered as the primary source of transmission. As a result, social distancing helps in mitigating its spread. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends a distance of six feet between people particularly in public spaces (Park et al. 2020).

The distance helps one avoid being in direct contact with respiratory droplets produced when one coughs or sneezes. More studies have shown that outdoor settings that allow for good social distance and ventilation experience significantly reduced exposure to the virus. In fact, Cucinotta and Vanelli (2020) quantify it that there is an eight percent less transmission of Corona virus outdoors compared to indoors. Social distancing enforces the idea that people need to stay away from each other as much possible. Its practice encourages other ways of communicating e.g. online video instead of in-person contact.

Hand Washing

The second precautionary measure is proper washing of hands. Generally, good hygiene assists in the prevention of Covid-19 spread. Using soap and water, hands should be washed for about twenty seconds especially after visiting a public area, blowing the nose, and sneezing. Other instances to wash hands include before eating/food preparation, touching the face, after diaper change, and touching a mask, animals, or other pets. Despite handwashing being a simple activity, it is credited with keeping even other diseases e.g. cholera at bay and ourselves healthy and safe (Yadav and Mohite, 2020).

Regularly washing hands at intervals is critical in stopping the spread of Covid-19. Soap molecules disrupt the virus by breaking down its viral coat. It is also recommended that one washes hand upon touching common surfaces e.g. door handles and when an individual comes back home from a public space. Pan et al. (2022) mentions that hand hygiene is crucial at every level of healthcare. As a result, it has been accepted as a primary mode of decreasing healthcare related infections. It is imperative to attain universal hand hygiene so as to beat Covid-19, which is far from over. In case of unavailability of soap and water, then one can use a hand sanitizer having about sixty percent alcohol concentration.

Face Mask

The third precautionary measure against Covid-19 is wearing a face mask. It is an important element in the protection of self against the virus. Various studies point out that a person having Covid-19 can either be asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic (Aschwanden et al. 2019) making it an important component particularly in public settings. Face masks act as barriers between one's airway and outside world. Therefore, an individual who wears a facemask that covers the mouth and nose reduces the risk of spreading Covid-19 by trapping droplets inside the mask. It also reduces the chances of contracting Corona virus by blocking outside droplets from accessing one's own airways.

There are also some significant basics of wearing masks. For instance, one should clean hands before putting it on, after taking it off and touching it. The mask should cover all parts of the nose, mouth, and chin. Upon taking off the mask, it should be washed in case it is fabric, or disposed safely in case of surgical masks (Bahl et al., 2022). The authors continue that a mask with valves should not be used since it allows in droplets. One needs to wear a face mask whether or not vaccination was done. Additionally, a facemask gives one with a weakened immunity protection in a public space. The infected droplets would not leave or enter an individual through the nose/mouth.

Travel Restriction

Another precaution to take is restricting traveling. Traveling increases Covid-19 spread and puts one at risk of contracting the virus. It is recommended that non-essential traveling needs to be avoided particularly to several international destinations. For domestic destinations, weighing the risks involved is vital. Yadav and Mohite (2020) write that individuals e.g. elders and those with existing medical conditions often at a high risk of contracting Covid-19 should avoid traveling. In case that it is a must, then it is prudent to take safety measures while considering the transportation mode and staying up-to-date with the current restrictions at the destination. Therefore, restrictions in traveling is instrumental in slowing down Covid-19 spread from one place to the other.

Covid-19 related Symptoms

Another precautionary measure is to watch for Covid-19 related symptoms. Its symptoms are usually same with those of other respiratory diseases. Some of them include fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore

throat, and diarrhea (Sheikhi, Shirzadfar, and Sheikhi, 2020). Since Covid-19 coincided with the flu season, it is imperative recognizing the variations in symptoms and even get the flu shot. Any person who thinks that they were exposed to an infected individual and is experiencing the symptoms should seek medical attention in addition to getting tested. Watching out for the symptoms is an essential precautionary measure since one is able to seek medical attention before the condition gets out of hand.

Self-Quarantine

Another precaution is self-quarantine. It should be practiced by people that have been exposed to the virus. The quarantine should be for about fourteen days (Aschwanden et al. 2019). In case one travels from a place that the virus was rapidly spreading, then self-quarantine is required. It involves staying at home without having visitors for the set duration. Special protective clothing, particularly in health settings, is to care for the affected. The fourteen days' period is enough period for medical practitioners to determine whether a victim of Covid-19 is still sick or whether he is still contagious to others.

Mitigating and controlling Covid-19 spread has a strong relationship to the practice of precautionary measures. This however depends on the knowledge, as well as, attitude of an individual. It is necessary to provide information about periods of incubation and the symptoms that are likely to be experienced when one contracts the disease. Training programs and workshops should particularly designed in the course of the pandemic to as to remind people of the important preventive measures e.g. disposal of face masks. Bahl et al., (2022) writes that educating people about these measures significantly reduces infections.

Integrating and disseminating the recommendations of World Health Organization together with related Covid-19 guidelines by governments encourages better compliance to the precautionary measures. It can even be done through social media. This means that governments have an instrumental role in educating their citizens to adhere to the precautionary measures. With the continued threat of infection, creation of awareness is integral to mitigate it. Knowledge culminates in the practice of protective behaviors among citizens.

III. Methodology

Information for this study will mainly be got from secondary research. Corti et al. (2019) defines secondary research as one that entails a summary and collation of the already existing research. There have been several scientific journals that have been written on Covid-19 precautionary measures. Other information are found in books, magazines and newspapers. These information will form the basis of this research. The scientific journals have been written on many topics related to Covid-19. However, only those that are specifically talking about the precautionary measures related to the disease will be used.

Despite the information that will be used being freely available online, ethically, it would be prudent acknowledging the owners of the original information. Therefore, the study will cite all the information that are gathered from these sources. Further analysis will be performed from the information got to ascertain their credibility. The sources that will be used will be related to Covid-19 precautionary measures. Since the research utilizes secondary sources, the only costs that are expected to be incurred are printing costs. Additionally, the study will not take a considerable time as information is readily available online.

IV. Conclusion

The paper has discussed Covid-19 precautionary measures. The disease significantly affected the wellbeing of many people globally. It led to economic destruction and several deaths. As a result, it was declared a public health emergency by the WHO. Despite the availability of vaccines, the paper has presented that their efficacies are unknown thus necessitating the practice of measures aimed at reducing Covid-19's spread. Some of them entail social distancing that discourages close contact, hand washing particularly by soap and water while upholding other practices of hygiene, and wearing of face masks that properly cover both the mouth and nose. Others are self-quarantine, travel restrictions, and being aware of the related symptoms. Using alcohol based sanitizer is also significant. Therefore, the paper has offered useful insights on Covid-19's precautionary measures.

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