

Determine the Mental Health and Quality of Life of Karachi Residents During the COVID-19 Pandemic.

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Abstract

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has affected the world's economy, way of life, and physical and mental health. This study aims to compare the mental health status of the general population of Karachi during the pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has raised the general population's concern and fear regarding its control and the spread of infection. We examined the perspectives and attitudes of the participants of Karachi towards their mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic, keeping in mind the relevance of the current context. We conducted a qualitative and quantitative questionnaire survey study using a purposive sampling approach, at participants of Karachi, Pakistan. Questionnaire survey was conducted with participants including, young adults, middle-aged adults and older adults of both genders. Study data were analysed using MS Excel 2010 in terms of percentages, and conclusions were derived from the results. A variety of graphs, such as bar charts, were also employed to clearly concentrate the situation. Participants generally experienced greater worry and panic due to the infectious nature of the infection. In addition to increasing participants' psychological discomfort, the pandemic's social and economic implications have also contributed to this effect. Nonetheless, participants were able to identify a number of coping techniques, such as connecting with family and friends, attending mental health sessions, and resetting lives through engaging in different activities such as relaxation and exercise.

Keywords: Mental Health, COVID-19, and Pandemic.

Introduction

The global spread of the COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) pandemic has compelled countries to respond to the crisis in various ways, including declaring a national state of emergency and mandating home lockdowns. The COVID-19 infection is a potent stressor capable of inducing high levels of perceived risk, fear, and rage, whereas forced quarantine at home may produce feelings of boredom and isolation, evoking negative mental and behavioural reactions in people [1]. It appears that the more time a person spends at home, the more severe their mental, emotional, and lifestyle difficulties become [2]. This circumstance has interrupted living and as a result affected numerous lifestyle choices. As a result, the collateral damages of the pandemic include inadequate nutrition with a risk of both overweight and underweight, screen addiction, social isolation, disrupted sleep, and reduced physical activity with increased sedentariness: all of these indirect effects of the COVID-19

outbreak have the potential to have a negative impact on mental health, especially for vulnerable groups, and require effective and targeted measures.

Lockdown has a worsening influence on altered consumption habits, increased symptoms of generalised anxiety disorder, and lower levels of physical activity [3]. As part of the sudden societal changes caused by COVID-19, there is a decline in physical activity and an increase in sedentary behaviour. Due to shuttered athletic centres and restricted social mobility, physical activity was restricted. Social distancing and teleworking may contribute to sedentary lifestyles and increased sitting time during the day, as well as reduced time spent engaging in leisure-time intense physical activity and total physical activity, adverse changes in motivation, and subjective feelings of exhaustion [4]. It is well established that regular physical activity helps prevent a variety of chronic diseases, including diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases, cancer, chronic kidney disorders, obesity, and osteoarthritis. Reduced physical activity is associated with increased body weight and risk of sickness, including inflammatory and cardio-metabolic disorders, as well as an increased chance of catching infectious infections. It has also been established that regular physical activity may protect mental health and improve quality of life [5].

During the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, sleep problems have afflicted a large number of people worldwide. The loss of daily routines owing to home confinement and the existence of changes in work, family habits, and financial concerns, as well as the limited exposure to natural light and diminished possibilities to exercise, may have a bad impact on sleep. Changes in daily schedules have had an effect on circadian rhythms and energy balance, with confinement having a considerable effect on various external synchronizers of the biological clock [6]. Insomnia/disrupted sleep, daytime symptoms such as inadvertent daytime drowsiness, difficulty falling/staying asleep, later bedtimes, atypical behaviours in sleep, sleep-disordered breathing, restless legs, sleep phase disruptions, and nightmares have been seen more frequently [7]. During the epidemic, not only the amount but also the quality of sleep was found to be impacted [8].

Material and Method

This study employed and qualitative and quantitative research design using questionnaire survey. The study was conducted in the population of Karachi city. The respondents completed the questionnaires through an online survey platform (Google form). After gathering data through the questionnaire, MS Excel 2010 was used to tabulate and analyse the data in terms of percentages, and conclusions were derived from the results. Diverse graphs, such as bar charts, were also used to illustrate the situation effectively.

Results

Young adults, middle-aged adults, and older individuals of both sexes participated in this study, which had 102 participants. Table: 1 depicts the demographic information of the participants.

Table: 1. Demographic and Social Profiles of Participants

Variables	Categories	Participants	Percentage
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Age	25-30 Years	35	34.3%
	31-35 Years	30	29.4%
	36-40 Years	19	18.6%
	41-45 Years	06	5.9%
	46-50 Years	06	5.9%
	51-55 Years	06	5.9%
Educational Details	Secondary school	3	2.9%
	Higher qualification	99	97.1%
Employment Status	Full time	69	67.6%
	Part time	21	20.6%
	Student	12	11.8%
Marital Status	Single	41	40.2%
	Married	61	59.8%

The study was indicated the increased level of stress related to work, home and financial status which was 52.9%, 54.9% and 53.9% respectively. Almost around half of the participants feel horrified and apprehensive due to COVID-19, which was 52% and 50% (Figure: 1).

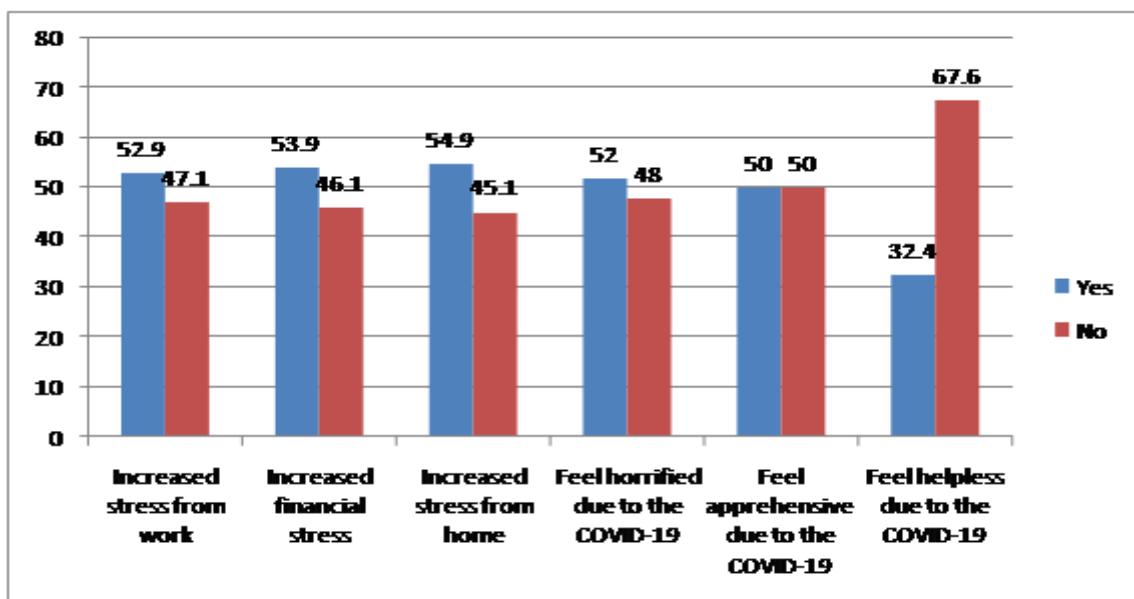


Figure: 1. Mental Status during COVID-19.

The results of the study revealed that the support system from family and friends during the COVID-19 was same as above via most of the participants, also shared feeling during mentally upset from family and friends was remain same by majority of the participants. Although the support system and shared feeling from family was increased by 43.1% and 38.2% of the participants (Figure: 2).

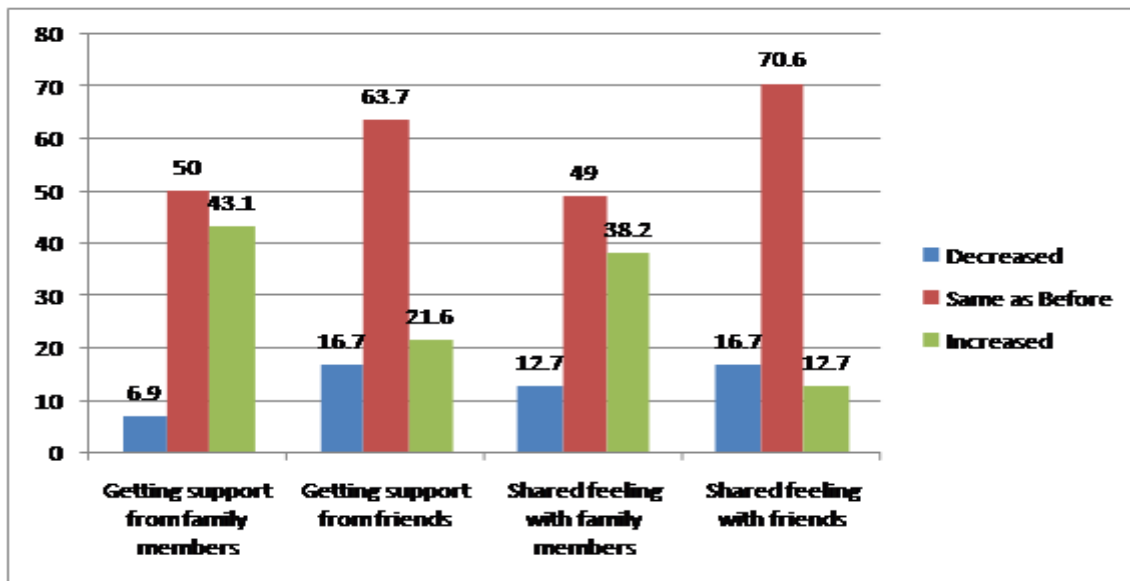


Figure: 2. Support System during COVID-19.

During the time period of COVID-19 majority participants give attention to health same as above was 42.2%, while 38.2% shared they increased the attention towards mental health. In most of the participants time spent to rest or sleep was increases 40.2%. Although time spent during physical activity and exercise was same in 37.3% and 41.2% participant revealed the increased time spent in exercise or physical activity during COVID-19 (Figure: 3).

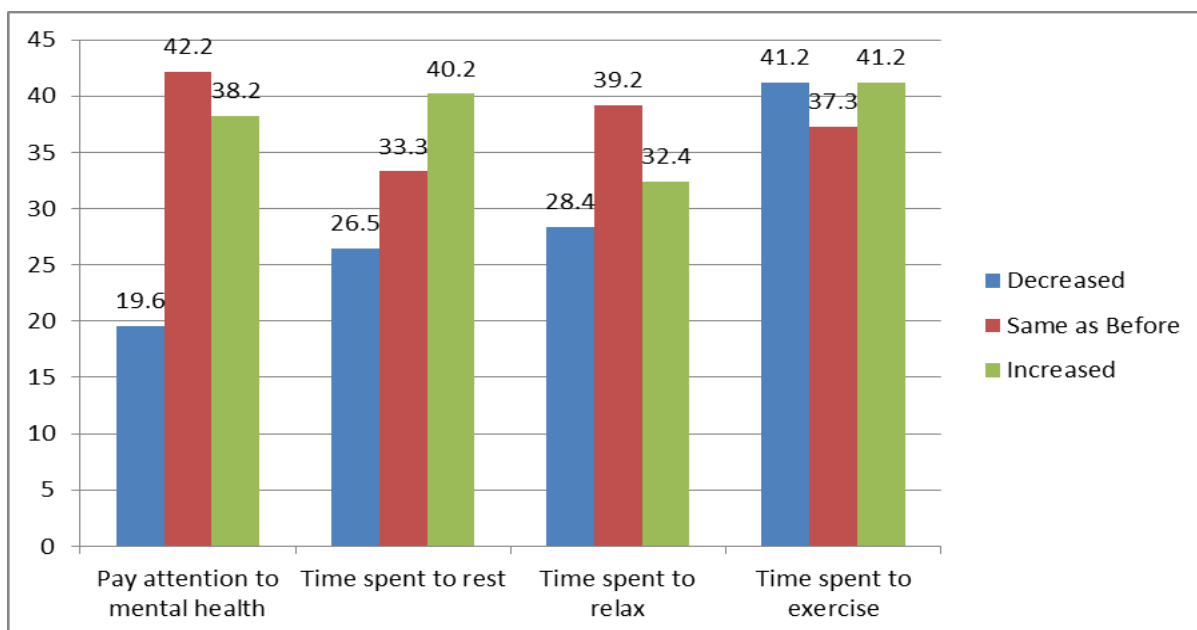


Figure: 3. Strategies for Mental Health during COVID-19.

Discussion

Numerous studies concur that the COVID-19 epidemic has had a negative impact on healthy and active lifestyles, resulting in a concurrent and consequential decline in mental health and quality of life. It appears that persons who have engaged in more physical activity and implemented healthy lifestyle eating and sleep guidelines have achieved better mental and physical health [9].

Although the COVID-19 illness initially appears to be a physical health emergency, it has devastating effects on mental health. In this unpredictable environment, however, several individuals have chosen various lifestyle-related methods to adapt to the situation and alleviate their pain. In addition, numerous solitary folks participated in a variety of tasks or pursuits to live the greatest life possible. To spend their free time effectively, many community members engaged in hobbies such as drawing, reading, writing, listening to music or motivational films, singing, playing an instrument, cooking, exercising, and taking online courses to gain new skills. This type of behavioural activity helped to divert the person's attention and generate positive emotions, allowing individuals to recover from negative emotions and reduce their psychological distress [10]. Furthermore, in the current situation, many families had the opportunity to spend quality time together, which fostered harmony and positivity [11]. Over study also reveal that increase spending time with family and friends and their supports along with some interventions in lifestyle can improve the mental health.

Conclusion

This study provides a comprehensive overview of community experiences and different mental health difficulties associated to the pandemic among young, middle-aged, and older persons in Karachi, Pakistan. In addition, the finding implies that during the outbreak, continual psychosocial assistance for all age groups should be of the utmost importance. This study's findings guide the development of context-specific mental health programmes to combat the pandemic's effects and may offer a long-term benefit of strengthening the system.

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