

Effect of COVID-19 Pandemic on General Patients across India

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Abstract

Life as we know as human beings is based upon social structures; we are social beings requiring a company for survival. Our lands have thrived because of mutual co-operation, an increase in transportation, and well-built communication systems. Humans have grown closer in the past few years despite their geographical differences.

Everything was looking good for us as humanity, but this year, the dark canopies of an overhanging pandemic fell on our heads. COVID-19 has its strangling grip on the world as a whole. Fear and panic are running rampant everywhere. During such a time this study examines the minds and everyday issues faced by general patients who are suffering from the financial crisis, lack of public transport, psychological issues apart from the novel corona virus.

Keywords: COVID-19, General patient, Psychological pressure, Public Transport.

I. Introduction

Today we are facing a pandemic situation on the worldwide level due to COVID-19 which has destroyed the casual life of the masses and it is everyone's psychology under extreme stress. Now the very first question which comes in one's mind when one hears the term Corona virus (COVID-19) is its nature and origin; COVID-19 can be described as a highly infectious disease and this virus affect the respiratory tract of mammals as well as in birds. In humans being the virus infects the respiratory tract which can be moderate or severe; it includes many varying symptoms, including fever and sore throat. In birds, the virus family causes upper respiratory tract infection, and while in mammals like cows and pig it causes diarrhea [1]. The first identified case was reported as pneumonia outbreak in December 2019 and was spotted in Wuhan, China. On 31st December 2019, the outbreak of COVID-19 was tracked to a novel strain of the Corona virus.

COVID-19 has made a colossal impact on the regular lives of common people. The rapid transmission capacity of the virus has caused many countries, including ours to enforce a strict lockdown. Even the lockdown is done for the safety purpose for masses but it is also harming the normal course of life. There are two kinds of people that are facing a medical crisis from the patient side, Firstly the people who're infected and currently suffering from COVID-19 and, secondly the General patients, people who're having medical issues and need treatment for the same. The second section will be focused on this paper i.e. on general patients; we set to find out the actual opinions and problems being faced by this lower echelon of citizens.

Action and thought of Human being purely based on once psychology. Any human, upon hearing news of a disaster or drastic nature, might fall into the pits of despair and hypertension leading to copious amounts of anxiety. The ones who are already suffering from acute or chronic diseases get into more traumatic psychological pressure because they have to maintain their prevailing diseases as well as to take precaution from the forthcoming danger. The low mortality and high infection rates make COVID-19 not very lethal on its own but having an underlying condition increases this risk manifolds.

Nowadays, safety has become the top-most priority for everyone, going out without it being necessary is considered to be unsafe, even if one decides to go out, proper precautions must be followed to ensure safety.

Ascribed to lockdown, the world is suffering from a strangling, great financial calamity like no other, and this, in turn, has greatly affected the daily life of people [3]. Apparently, having catastrophic financial conditions, the general populations suffering from their previous ailments are unable to manage their health crucially.

Public transport is a very important part of many people's life, to us, it's a very well known fact that lockdown has resulted in all halt in public transport; consequentially it has lead to a lot of suffering amongst the population, especially the lower classes of the economic spectrum that lack in both money and private vehicles [4]. The general patients, who use public transport as a means of commuting between hospitals, clinics and labs are also facing a rather harsh time. The lock-down has also brought with itself, a ban on intrastate and interstate movements, Hence the people who get their treatment in different cities from their residency face even more serious repercussions, and it's the focal point of this paper i.e. to find the grievances and everyday hustle that the society as commoners have to go through.

II. Review of Literature

COVID-19 has turned out to be one of the worst amalgamations of this century, combining economical crisis and health crisis never seen before in such blown off proportions. Undeniably the resultant scenario of these mishaps is an ugly one and brings with it a colossal flood, one which engulfs all the basic necessities a human being is required to be provided with. We humans are fragile existences dependent on our systems and executions which turns the gears of our mortal needs and wants.

Major issues faced by the general population (Suffering with illness other than COVID-19):

1) Psychological Impact: We all are known with the effects of internment on the mind, it tends to lead us into anxiety and over thinking. Those patients who all are already suffering from a severe disease like heart problem, mental disorder etc, may fall prey to heart attacks, delusions and hallucinations. There's a noticeable amount of stress induced by the lockdown upon every single one of us, this isn't very healthy at all for our mental health and rational thinking. But Alas! There's no effective counter to completely return to normalcy yet.

If a patient is in any shape or form, afraid of getting his/her tests done might end up having to face serious consequences. If hospitals and clinics aren't safe spots to them, they cannot comprehend of any actual safety anywhere, not even their homes, leading up to a panic-like situation in midst of a pandemic.

2) Transportation Trouble: In these vulnerable times it's been the lack of one human activity that has cost the most to almost all economic structures as well as all humanity-essential structures, which is Transport. Goods, humans, cattle, essentials, nothing at all are being transported at a rate that used to be rapid and reliable. Patients who're in agonizing situations due to their illness can't even visit their hospitals and clinics even if they're not psychologically scared of COVID-19, just because of a lack of public transport system. Many time cabs or any other private vehicle cannot be affordable by everyone; therefore we must try to see every situation from a broader lens of perspectives. Even critical medicines and supplies are unable to be made available at the required time due to the broken down supply chain as well as the excessively imbalanced demand to supply ratio. Patients relying on other cities or countries for their treatments would have to simply suffer under stifling silence and hope for interstate and international travels to be made possible as soon as possible.[5]

3) Financial Crisis: The massive blunt impact of COVID-19 on the financial infrastructure is inarguable. This is a time where corporate giants and commoners both have their legs in a pool pit deep with tar. Even if they are trying to lift themselves from this crisis still, they'll be stuck in for an indeterminate amount of time. Concerning our general patients, even if they are not afraid of the treatment facilities acting as vector spots and they even manage to get transportation medium, it'll still be all worthless if they cannot pay for their cure. This economic earthquake has caused many tectonic shifts taking place like, salary decrement, tax increments, poor stock market returns, devaluation of assets and failed sectors and schemes.[6]

III. Personal Perspective

In our honest and most sincere opinion, we would have to unquestionably agree with the fact that the lockdown despite serving its positives does have a strong negative effect on the general populations. Even if we put aside the psychological impacts, the physiological impacts can't simply be ignored and shunned off as a bare minimum sacrifice for the sake of the greater good. People are undergoing

a radical change; they are unable to trust anybody these days due to the panic and nescience which spreads much more quickly than the actual virus itself. To a certain group of people life is all about the GDP, economy and maintaining a spotless facade (This is in reference to the entire world and not any particular state or nation). The deepest clefts of our mind are left in shock whenever we find that a general patient couldn't make it alive out of a disease which could have been easily monitored and eradicated or even the kids of daily wage workers and salary-men who have a limited amount of saving. In case of a medical mishap, such people will have no chances at procuring a humungous amount of money.

These things draw us deep down into feelings of despair and helplessness. Not only the governments are to be blamed alone, it's all a mixed up factor of environmental issues, limitations of resources and land plus a lack of an able and effective medical infrastructure to beat pandemics as well as to look after everyone's health simultaneously. Reformation and amendments are very much needed in the fields of medicine, education, healthcare and self-reliance. These four can act as effective and powerful cornerstones to a firm foundation of a society. (Testimony: There was a report, on April 13, 2020, by 'Anil Sharma', "Hindustan Times Tarn Taran" that most of the dentals surgeons were not opening their clinic due to feeling vulnerable against COVID-19 which is rendering many patients to suffer badly, although they are getting treatment advice through calls and chats but this is not resolving their problem. This is because most of the cases are of RCT or tooth extraction and thus medicines alone are not enough in helping the patients. 38-years old 'Ravinder Singh' was suffering from pain due to cavity in his two molars and he was in much dire need of RCT endodontic therapy to get rid of his toothache but he did not get help from his dentist and he was forced to stay on medicine only. And it seems that he won't get any further assistance in the upcoming future).[2]

IV. Research Methodology

A research methodology is a unique procedure or technique used to identify select, process and analyze information about a specific topic, methodology section answer to main questions:

- How was the data collected
- How was it analyzed

In this Research, we have followed this research process as follows:

Step1- Firstly we included the identification of the problem and developed a research question.

Step2- After the problem has been identified we reviewed the literature related to the research problem. This provides us with foundational knowledge about the specific problem area and it also educates what study has been collected in the past.

Step3- After all this, we clarify the problem and narrow the scope of the study.

Step4- In this step, the terms and concept of the topic has been defined to minimize the confusion related to the research.

Step5- This step we have defined the population and to narrow the scope of the study from a very large population to on that which is manageable for us. Based on the certain decided population, we analyze the conclusion.

Step6- Based on the selected population we developed an instrumental plan.

Step7- After the development of instrumental plan we have started a collection of data through a questionnaire which is a very pivotal part of the research.

Step8- At the end, we analyze the data on the basis of collected data.

On the prevailing situation of COVID-19 and lockdown, we observed panic and helplessness of the general patients who were suffering from other diseases it seemed to us that this lockdown is impacting the general patients due to unavailability of getting proper medication and other problem facing by them, for this reason, we selected this topic.

For this study, we selected empirical research method- '**non-doctrinal research**'.

- **Sampling:**

For this study, we have to use probability sampling (Random sampling). Under this survey, every individual gets an equal and fair chance of inclusion

- **Sample size:**

160 People were selected randomly as a sample, out of which 151 responses have come.

V. Outcomes of Empirical Research

There have been significant points to be interpreted from the obtained data, in a detailed format. Upon a serious analysis, these illumination

Table.1

Sr. no	Age	No. of Respondent	Percentage
1	Under-18	7	4.6%
2	18-30	109	72.2%
3	31-45	12	7.9%
4	46-60	17	11.3%
5	60+	6	4%
	Total	151	100%

Age wise classification of respondent

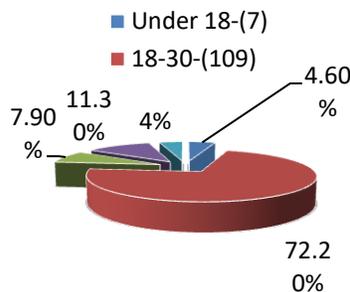


Fig.1

The majority (72%) of the mass were aged between 18-30 whereas next to them were people aged between 46-60 (11.3%). The minority were people aged over 60 (4%) and under 18 (4.6%). This indicates an abundance of the mature and aware test group.

Table.2

Sr. No	Gender	No of respondent	Percentage
1	Male	86	57%
2	Female	65	43%
	Total	151	100%

Gender wise classification

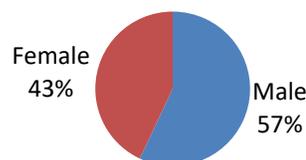


Fig.2

The maximum number of respondents turned out to be males (57%) while the rest of them were females (43%).

Table.3

Sr. No	Mode Transportation	No. of respondent	Percentage
1	Public Transport	54	35.8%
2	Own car without driver	32	21.2%
3	Own two wheeler	56	37.1%
4	Own car with driver	9	6%
	Total	151	100%

Classification based on mode of transportation before lockdown

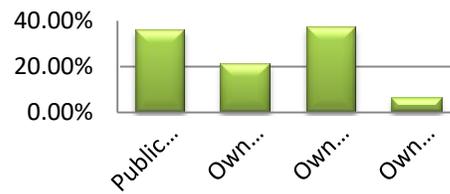


Fig.3

Upon making inquiries regarding the preferred mode of transportation, we came to know that most people commuted either via personal motorcycles (37.1%) or by means of public transport (35.8%). The rest of the respondents were using a car with a driver (6%) and without one (21.2%).

Table.4

Sr. No	Problem while travelling	No. of respondent	Percentage
1	Yes	76	50.3%
2	No	75	49.7%
	Total	151	100%

Classification based on unavailability of Public Transport during the lockdown.

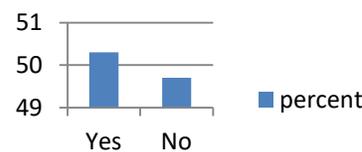


Fig.4

In regards of feeling difficulties in travelling during the lock-down due to a lack of drivers and public transport, the responses ended up in an almost fifty-fifty situation (Yes - 50.3% & No- 49.7%).

Table.5

Sr. No	Suffering with diseases	No. of respondent	Percentage
1	Yes	53	35.1%
2	No	98	64.9%
	Total	151	100%

Respondent are suffering from any kind of disease during this lockdown

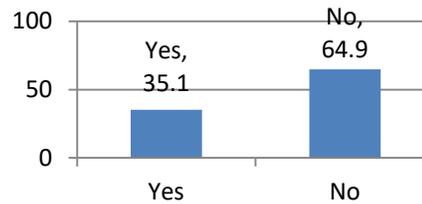


Fig.5

Majority of the respondents (64.9%) have no members currently suffering from major medical conditions, but this doesn't make the amount of the people facing serious ailments (35.1%) to be negligible.

Table.6

Sr. No	Feel safe in visiting the hospitals or clinics	No. of respondent	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	6	4%
2	Agree	21	13.9%
3	Neutral	39	25.8%
4	Disagree	47	31.1%
5	Strongly disagree	38	25.2%
	Total	151	100%

Classification based on Respondent feel safe in visiting the hospitals/clinic during the lockdown for general diseases.

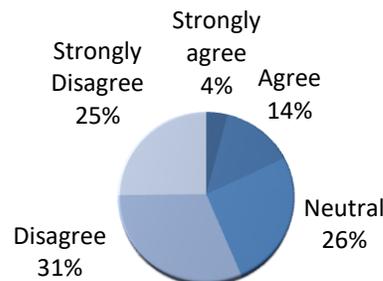


Fig.6

A huge number of the people think that it wouldn't be wise to agree with the safety measures present in the hospitals and clinics; with about 25.2% people having strong disagreements and about 31.1% of them having milder disagreements. The people who agreed to the safety measures were quite low,

about only 4% of them felt strongly safe whereas only 13.9% felt mildly safer. About 25.8% of people couldn't comprehend the exact situation and chose to act naturally.

Table.7

Sr. No	Treatment from another city	No. of respondent	Percentage
1	Yes	33	21.9%
2	No	118	78.1%
	Total	151	100%

Respondent or any one his/her family takes treatment from another city.

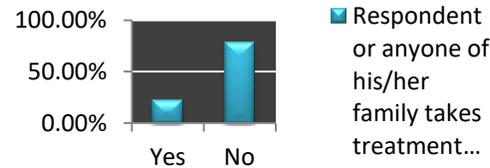


Fig.7

A noticeable minority (21.9%) are people having patients in their families or close circles who seek their treatments via intercity or interstate means. The rest of them (78.1%) don't rely on outside the locality of their cities or home for cures.

Table.8

Sr. No	Not getting proper treatment	No. of respondent	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	20	13.2%
2	Agree	16	10.6%
3	Neutral	34	22.5%
4	Disagree	53	35.1%
5	Strongly disagree	28	18.5%
	Total	151	100%

Suffering because of not getting proper treatment in this pandemic situation

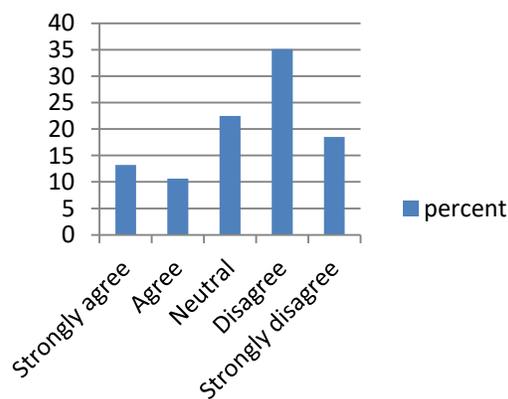


Fig.8

During the pandemic, an alarming number of people are unable to get proper treatments (23.8%) whereas the rest of the people are relatively safe (Neutral- 22.5%; Disagreements- 53.6%).

Table.9

Sr. No	General medicine	No. of respondent	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	16	10.6%
2	Agree	32	21.2%
3	Neutral	24	15.9%
4	Disagree	51	33.8%
5	Strongly disagree	28	18.5%
	Total	151	100%

Struggling with getting the general medicine during the lockdown

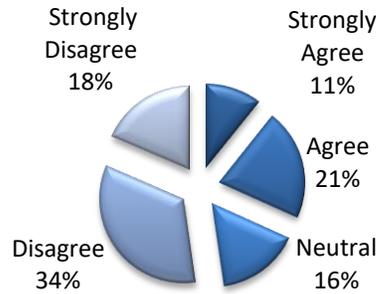


Fig.9

Investigating the availability of generic medicines, a lot of people (52.3%) have no troubles likely due to no one needing medicines in their households. Some people couldn't make a decisive response (15.9%). Discernible masses troubled by the lock-down in obtaining their medicines are all in all 31.8%.

Table.10

Sr. No	Rules & Regulation	No. of respondent	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	41	27.2%
2	Agree	59	39.1%
3	Neutral	32	21.2%
4	Disagree	16	10.6%
5	Strongly disagree	3	2.1%
	Total	151	100%

Rules & regulation causing more problems for the general patients in getting proper treatment at the right time

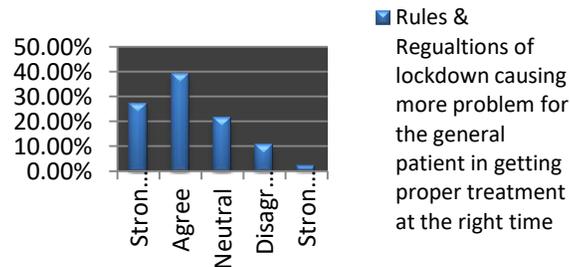


Fig.10

Humongous quantities (66.3%) of voters have responded that the lock-down is indeed a distressing problem for the general patients. A feeble amount (12.6%) of people believed that everything was going smoothly whereas 21.2% couldn't decide in favor or against the lock-down acting as a barrier in providing health care efficiently.

Table.11

Sr. No	Financial crisis	No. of respondent	Percentage
1	Yes	45	29.8%
2	No	106	72.2%
	Total	151	100%

Facing any financial crisis which is creating hindrance in getting proper treatment due to lockdown

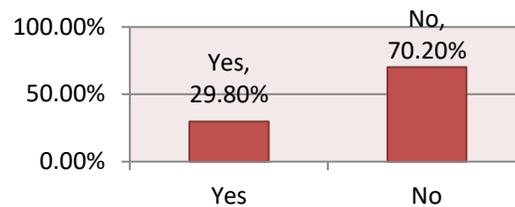


Fig.11

About one-third of the respondents (29.8%) felt that they were facing a financial crisis which was acting as a hindrance to the medical treatments. The rest (70.2%) likely didn't face any health crisis thus no financial troubles regarding medical expenses were involved in their day to day interactions.

Table.12

Sr. No	Service problem from hospitals or clinics	No. of respondent	Percentage
1	Yes	57	37.7%
2	No	94	62.3%
	Total	151	100%

Facing any kind of service problem from hospitals or clinics in this pandemic situation

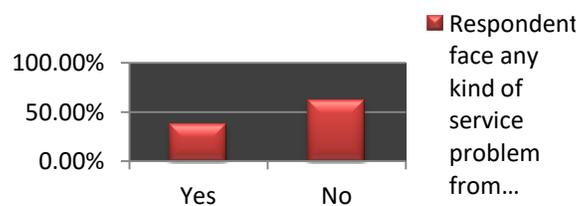


Fig.12

The people who went to the hospitals (37.7%) felt quite unsettled by the services provided there. The rest of them (62.3%) likely didn't visit a hospital or a clinic, or even if they did, couldn't realize any systemic errors.

Table.13

Sr. No	Positive or negative difference in the treatment.	No. of respondent	Percentage
1	Positive difference	47	31.1%
2	Negative difference	52	34.4%
3	No difference at all	52	34.4%
	Total	151	100%

Positive or negative difference in the treatment before the lockdown and during the lockdown

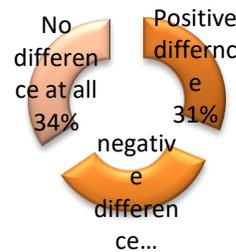


Fig.13

In regards to making up a positive or unrecognizable change due to the lock-down, the majority (65.5%) agree. The rest (34.1%) for some reason feel that the lock-down is impacting things negatively; this might be due to the poor economy and healthcare.

Table.14

Sr. No	Psychological pressure.	No. of respondent	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	50	33.1%
2	Agree	59	39.1%
3	Neutral	27	17.9%
4	Disagree	12	7.9%
5	Strongly disagree	3	2%
	Total	151	100%

General patient is suffering with the psychological pressure of not getting proper treatment due to lockdown

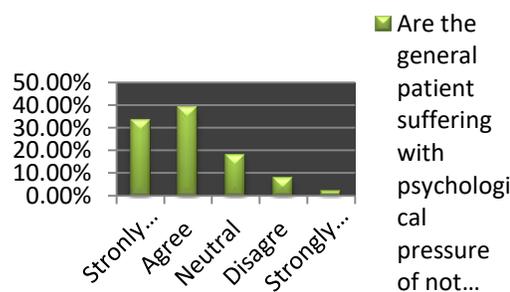


Fig.14

A whopping majority (72.2%) believe that people face incredible psychological pressure during this pandemic. A few people (17.9%) couldn't make up their minds while fewer (9.9%) of them believed that there was no stress at all.

Table.15

Sr. No	Lives of general patients in danger	No. of respondent	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	54	35.8%
2	Agree	56	37.1%
3	Neutral	31	20.5%
4	Disagree	8	5.3%
5	Strongly disagree	2	1.3%
	Total	151	100%

Pandemic situation putting the lives of general patients in danger

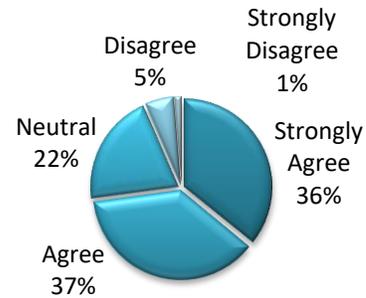


Fig.15

A statistical higher echelon is seen by the majority (72.9%) who believe that this lock-down is putting the lives of general patients at a risk. A scarce amount of people were at an inability to be decisive (20.5%) and hardly anyone (6.6%) thought this to be a safe time period for patients facing other ailments apart from COVID-19.

VI. Summation

After going through the data analysis it's quite ample in lucidity that the majority of the population doesn't face trouble with medical issues during the lock-down, personally. This does not imply that there is no troubling situation for the sufferers (as clearly stated in the last two responses).

People have provided most of the answers after looking into their own lives, but whenever there's a regard for the patients facing issues, they strongly believe that there's a negative impact that acts an obstacle in the path to achieving healthcare for everyone.

The financial issues being faced can't simply be disregarded nor can the psychological issues being brought upon in the general population, no matter what be the status of their physical vitality.

Different lessons can be learned from adopting a different standpoint to understand the situation in a broader sense. A few people who acted neutral throughout can't be determined as reliable voters but still, their opinion cannot be brushed off. In various scenarios, we could grasp that no matter what the personal take of a person might be regarding the COVID-19 situation but it's evident that people have stood by the minority, even though they lack in number but their grievances play a major role in humanity and the moralistic duty of a public service and healthcare system as a whole.

This study isn't intended to find out a scapegoat or a culprit responsible for the situation because we as humans are quite impotent against natural phenomena, especially one of such grave importance and wide geographical coverage.

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