



Overview of Life of Women During Lockdown Caused by Covid-19

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ABSTRACT

The present survey was conducted to know the life of women during lockdown with the help of structured tool circulated through social media. The results showed that lock down has definitely created a pressure on their leisure time as more than 70 per cent respondents reported reduction in leisure time whereas 65 per cent respondents believe that family members extended full helps in day to day work. Salaries were not received on time and decreased income was reported by 67 percent of respondents. More than 65 per cent were satisfied with the relationship with their spouse and family members during lock down as they did not have complaint with them and only 2per centreported domestic violence at this time.

Key Words: Covid-19, Health, Violence, Women, Work load.

INTRODUCTION

Covid-19 has created a global crisis and the whole world is facing a huge catastrophe due to it. Women are the center point of every house. From cleaning to cooking and from listening to doing everyone is dependent on her. Self-quarantine and Lockdowns are the two important measures against Covid-19 across the world and also the two crucial movements those have increased women's workload because now more people are bounded at home for a continued days and caregiving tasks of women have increased. Women in India do nearly six hours to work at home compared to Indian men who is spend on an average less than an hour on doing the same. Women execute 76.2% of total hours on care work, globally.

Most of the women prefer to do so and feel cherished especially for their children and the close one who are dependent on her. However, factually when women ask for help in domestic chores or rest for her usually faced disapproval or emotional/physical abuse. It causes distressing in some vulnerable phases (like pregnancy, after childbirth,

rough menstruation, menopauseetc). The lack of comfort during physical disturbances can leads to long term significances on her mental health. The occurrence of pandemic was causing expansion in existing discriminations, revealing vulnerabilities in all spheres specially political, social and economic which ultimately amplifying the worst effects of the pandemic. Across every domain; society to social protection and health to economy, its effects were aggravated for women and girls because of being women by virtue of their sex. Hence, this study was conducted to assess the impact of lock down caused by COVID-19 on the life of Indian women.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Looking to the Lockdown and no physical contact the best approach to collect data was online survey (as MHRD also suggest to shifting of working habits from offline to online). The participation in the survey was volunteers and open for women population residing in India. Mode of data collection was google form and period of online survey was one month after (the link was

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Table 1. Distribution of respondents about impact of lockdown on personal life.

N=270

Particular	Time increased during lockdown(%)	Time decreased during lockdown(%)
Rest time	36	64
Favorite activities/ entertainment	69	31
Religious Activities	67	23
Creativity	72	27
Talk to family members / friends	84	16
Office work	51	49

open for seven days) the complete lockdown in India *i.e.*, April 24 to April 30, 2020. A google form was designed with the help of available literature on internet, newspaper and social media regarding the women and Covid -19 .The tool was developed in both hindi and english languages, which was further converted in electronic mode (Google form) for convenient reach to respondents during lockdown period. It had two sections; one was background information and information on various aspects (family, personal, social, economic, health and domestic violence) of women's life. This tool was circulated among women through email and whatsapp groups to get the information from women residing in India. Total 372 respondents participated in the survey out of which 270 forms were included for the analysis (considering the age of respondents more than 20 yr).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It was really of women life before the introduction of COVID-19 but now the scenario has changed and this is the right time to challenge it. Lock down has given an opportunity for both the partners (husband and wife) to communicate regarding who-does-what, as it will foster trust and sharing of responsibilities to have the ownership.

Background information of Respondents

The data revealed that more than 42 per cent respondents were between 26-30 yr and above 45 yr of age. Regarding marital status, nearly 70 per cent were married and 27 percent were single and

remaining respondents were widowed and divorced. On the basis of their response regarding their place of residence it was found that majority was residing in urban area (86%), lives in nuclear family (66%) and doing job as well managing home all together (41%).

Impact on personal life during lockdown due to COVID-19

It was felt that lock down during corona was a win-win situation in some cases as it give some relief to the health workers in terms of having a check on increased number of corona patients on the other hand in some cases, people have got some time to sit with their family and spent some time with their near dear ones. The results suggested that most respondents were spending more valuable time with themselves and their families during lock-down.

The results depicted that majority of respondents believes that during lockdown they got more time for communication with near and dear ones (84%), focused on their creativities (72%), doing entertainment(69%) and religious activities (67%) for recreation. But at the same time they believe that their rest time was decreased (64%). Regarding office work 51 percent of them believes that they got more time for office work, may be they were able to save travel time and gossip time.

Impact on family life

The respondents felt that their family members support her in daily chores (82%) and lock down

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Table 2. Distribution of respondents about impact of lock down on their family life.N=270

Sr. No.	Statement	Yes (%)	No (%)
1.	Privacy was at stake	27	73
2.	Staying at home whole day has increased the workload	36	64
3.	Other family members supported in domestic chores	82	18
4.	Work from home made you feel stressed	29	71
5.	You gave more time to family members than before	90	10
6.	Work from home allowed family members to give you less time than before.	47	53
7.	Helped more in children's education	64	36

Table 3. Distribution of respondents about impact of lock down on economic condition of family.

N=270

Sr. No.	Particular	Yes (%)	No (%)
	Income is decreasing from earlier	63	37
	Less expenses due to no outings	81	19
	Ruining of budget due to more storage	69	31
	Prices of essential commodities have increased	70	30
	Salary is not available on time	53	47

helped in term of getting more time for family (90%) and education of their kids (69%) as a result now their workload has increased (64%). While work from home was not less painful for women because staying at home has increased their workload (64%) and stress level (71%) and as a result it snatched the quality time opportunity from the family members (53%).

Impact on economic condition

Sixty one per cent Indians were experiencing mental health related issues because of the uncertainty and looming financial crisis during the lockdown (BBC, 2020). It showed that respondents feel that their income was reduced during lock down period (63%) and timely salaries were also not available to them (53%) but at the same time lockdown has restricted their outings (81%) hence less expenses which ultimately adds to their earnings. People don't have any experience of being in the situation ever before so to provide good facilities to

their family they stored stuffs more than their usual demand to fight with lockdown due to which they were running short of budget (69%). Shortage of essential and high demand caused the rise in price of goods (70%) which was a reason for increase economic challenges.

Impact on socio-cultural life

Due to lock down many festivals, family events, fairs and social / cultural events have been cancelled or postponed; every person in the country was suffering from an indefinite lock-down.

The data (Table 4) depict that almost all respondent (99%) agreed that they were not having any kind of event in their nearby surroundings due to which people getting away from the another people (98%) even they don't wanted to be. This cancellation of events and celebrations was not only creating economic losses (92%) but also had a profound impact on social and family relation (86%) of individuals. Government through social

Table 4. Distribution of respondents on the basis of their responses on impact of lockdown on socio-cultural life of women. N=270

Sr. No.	Statement	Yes(%)	No(%)
1.	No social / cultural events	99	01
2.	Postponement of Important events leads to economic loss	92	08
3.	Non celebration have profound impact on family and social relations	86	14
4.	Getting away from the people of society even you don't want too	98	02
5.	Corona virus has caused fear from people	76	24

media campaigns regularly emphasizing that “hameybimari se ladnahaibimar se nahi” but as per respondents due to COVID-19 they have started being afraid of other people (76%).

Impact on physical and mental health

The data depict that only 22 percent respondents were able to visit their doctor on regular basis, though in the situation of pandemic it was not considered to be safe to hospital but also many of the women were dependent on male member so they did not go. Keeping surface, body and stuff virus free was the only way to be safe from COVID-19 so women were more concerned for same (90%) but due to this concern their economic burden and manual work load increased (74%). The results have a resemblance with a survey report of IANS C-VOTER Gallup International Association (Corona Tracker survey) which was conducted in the month of April, 2020, a large (87.2%) number of Indians have become attentive towards their hygiene during corona virus pandemic.

A strong body needs a good immunity which can

be gained by balance and healthy diet was a reason behind the pressure on the mind of homemakers that they have to provide fresh food to increase immunity (66%) of their family members. Lock down resulted in a clean environment which led to happiness due to clean surroundings (98%). A large number of the respondents (96%) didn't face any abusive activities like violence (physical, economic, sexual) but admit that they were victim of violence. It has very less resemblance with NFHS-4(2018) data, which stated 31per cent of ever-married Indian women have experienced some form of spousal violence. The again contrary to a report by the *BBC* (2020), which showed that couples spending more time together at home during a total lockdown were more prone to domestic violence, especially those from Asian countries including India.

Satisfaction of women regarding the impact of lock down on their life

Women who suddenly encountered with heavy workload due to non-availability of helpers

Table 5. distribution of respondents on the basis of their response on impact of lockdown on health (physical and mental). N=270

Sr. No.	Statement	Yes (%)	No (%)
1.	Going to doctor or hospital for your routine checkup	22	78
2.	Increased pressure to maintain cleanliness/ hygiene	74	26
3.	Pressure to provide fresh food to increase immunity	66	34
4.	Concern to keep everything clean	90	10
5.	Happiness in mind due to clean environment	98	02
6.	Faced any form of violence (physical, economic, sexual)	04	96

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Table 6. Satisfaction of women regarding the impact of lock down on their life. N=270

Sr. No.	Particular	Extremely satisfied (%)	Moderately Satisfied (%)	Not satisfied (%)
1	Non-availability of house helpers	34	46	20
2	Relationships with spouse	69	25	6
3	Responses of the family members towards the work done by you for them	65	31	4
4	Balance between your family and work (domestic chores/ office)	54	41	5

during lock down were either extremely satisfied (34%) or satisfied (46%) that with the absence of their servants in life, because it gave them an opportunity to explore the help within the family which was helpful in relation building and skill development among them. They were happy from their relationship with their spouse (69% extremely satisfied and 25% moderately satisfied). In case of lockdown it was known to everyone that source of entertainment were limited, no outings and no food outside, in this all members have to stay together.

During lock down the schedules were completely different from routine because of non-availability of helper. However, a very good number of respondents were extremely satisfied (54%) or satisfied (41%) with their daily life while keeping balance between domestic chores and office work.

CONCLUSION

Life of women is a multi tasked and emotional support for the family. The overall results showed that not only the life of women was changing but the men in the society also changed. Men as a husband and son were being full support for their wives and mothers. This change will definitely work as a foundation stone for happy family. COVID-19 would defiantly become successful in term of giving a break in the normal functioning of nature but nature is far behind this. The economic impact may take time to heal but the repaired relation will definitely give power to human race to survive and win.

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