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## Parenting Stress During the Covid-19 Pandemic

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### Abstract:

*The outbreak of covid-19 pandemic shook the entire globe, it caused public health emergency which forced the governments to enforce lockdown in order to control the vigorous spread of the virus. During these challenging times parenting must have been highly stressful and difficult since they have now to parent the energetic young children who now are locked within the houses. Along with physical health issues the pandemic accelerated mental illness among the parents due to rise in childcare responsibilities and lockdown. The study examined the parental stress experienced by the during the covid-19 lockdown. To examine this survey were collected from parents through snow ball sampling. The sample size of 100 was put into study. The research tools such as correlation, one sample chi-square test and one sample Kolmogorov-simrnov test were used to examine the data. The result revealed that during the pandemic there was an increase in parental stress due to children' restlessness, which also affected the mental health wellbeing of the parent. Moreover, the study also found out that seeking help regarding parenting with friends and family was helpful and people have started concentrating more on mental health wellbeing in the post-pandemic era.*

**Keywords:** Parenting, Parental stress, Mental health wellbeing, covid-19

### **INTRODUCTION:**

The epidemic of the 2019 novel coronavirus, which led to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). The virus first broke out at the Wuhan region in China which then rapidly spread through the entire Europe and turned into a global pandemic affecting over 200 countries. It caused a global public health emergency, with multifaceted and severe consequence. The virus turned out be a serial killer as there was huge hike in the death rate around the world. Due to

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the increase in public health emergency situation the government of India enforced lockdown to control the rapid spread of the disease. Since there was no cure or vaccination for the virus government had to impose lockdown. Schools, Colleges, temples and all public places were shut down and people could not move anywhere out. the covid-19 pandemic also had an adverse effect on mental health wellbeing across various domains. Depression and anxiety were the major mental illnesses faced by the public. During these difficult situation parenting must have been highly stressful and difficult, since parents had to take care of young energetic children who were immature to deal with the sudden drastic change in the day to day life. For the children were unable to go to schools or even to play due to lockdown. This caused a restlessness among the children and had to manage their online mode of education (online classes) during these difficult times. The pandemic led to an increase in quality time between parents and children since both were locked inside their houses. Now the parents also had to have a work life balance along with the raise in childcare responsibilities. The research aims to understand the parental stress during the covid-19 pandemic. This research is mainly based on the review on literature on the same theme. This research is also helpful to know the mental illness undergone by both parents and children during the lockdown and how it has contributed to the parenting stress. Overall the study provides various information regarding parental stress, mental illness, mental health support and various other factors. The study is useful to create new parenting strategies so the parents could cope up in the rapidly changing world.

#### **OBJECTIVE:**

- To analyse the increase in parental stress during the covid-19 lockdown
- To find the various mental illness undergone by parents during the pandemic
- To find the behavioural changes that children went through due the lockdown and its effect on parenting
- To find the concentration on mental wellbeing post pandemic

#### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE:**

- **Parental burnout during the COVID-19 pandemic (2022)**, Nora Skjerdingsstad, Miriam S. Johnson, Sverre U. Johnson, Asle Hoffart, Omid V. Ebrahimi  
Increased and long-term parental stress related to one's parental role can lead to parental burnout. In the early phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, families experienced intensified pressure due to the government-initiated contact restrictions applied to prevent the spread of the virus in the population. This study investigates the risk factors and predictors of parental burnout in a large sample of parents (N = 1488) during the COVID-19 pandemic in Norway. Demographic and psychosocial factors were assessed at two timepoints: at the beginning of the pandemic outbreak in March 2020 (T1) and at 3 months' follow-up (T2). A hierarchical regression analysis was applied to identify the factors that contribute to parental burnout at T2. Parental burnout was additionally explored across subgroups. Findings revealed that younger age was associated with more parental burnout. Concurrent (T2) use of unhelpful coping strategies, insomnia symptoms, parental stress, and less parental satisfaction was significantly associated with the presence of greater parental burnout (T2). Additionally, parental stress and satisfaction measured in the earliest phase of the pandemic (T1) were associated with

parental burnout 3 months later (T2) over and above concurrent parental stress/satisfaction. Unemployed parents and individuals with a mental health condition were identified as subgroups with substantially heightened levels of parental burnout.

- **Stress and parenting during the global COVID-19 pandemic (2020)**, Samantha M. Brown, Jenalee R. Doom, Stephanie Lechuga-Peña, Sarah Enos Watamura , Tiffany Koppels

This study examined the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in relation to parental perceived stress and child abuse potential. Tests of group differences and hierarchical multiple regression analyses were employed to assess the relationships among demographic characteristics, COVID-19 risk factors, mental health risk factors, protective factors, parental perceived stress, and child abuse potential. Greater COVID-19 related stressors and high anxiety and depressive symptoms are associated with higher parental perceived stress. Receipt of financial assistance and high anxiety and depressive symptoms are associated with higher child abuse potential. Conversely, greater parental support and perceived control during the pandemic are associated with lower perceived stress and child abuse potential. Results also indicate racial and ethnic differences in COVID-19 related stressors, but not in mental health risk, protective factors, perceived stress, or child abuse potential. Findings suggest that although families experience elevated stressors from COVID-19, providing parental support and increasing perceived control may be promising intervention targets.

- **Parents' Stress and Children's Psychological Problems in Families Facing the COVID-19 (2020)** Maria Spinelli<sup>1</sup>, Francesca Lionetti, Massimiliano Pastore and Mirco Fasoloreak , The present study aimed to explore the effect of risk factors associated with the COVID-19 outbreak experience on parents' and children's well-being. Parents of children aged between 2- and 14-years-old completed an online survey reporting their home environment conditions, any relation they had to the pandemic consequences, their difficulties experienced due to the quarantine, their perception of individual and parent-child dyadic stress, and their children's emotional and behavioral problems. Results showed that the perception of the difficulty of quarantine is a crucial factor that undermines both parents' and children's well-being. Quarantine's impact on children's behavioral and emotional problems is mediated by parent's individual and dyadic stress, with a stronger effect from the latter. Parents who reported more difficulties in dealing with quarantine show more stress. This, in turn, increases the children's problems. Living in a more at-risk area, the quality of the home environment, or the relation they have with the pandemic consequences, do not have an effect on families' well-being.

## **METHODOLOGY:**

The study collected descriptive survey. The parents were the major target population. Through snow ball sampling a sample of 100 (N=100) were collected from the parents and put into study. the sample of 100 parents included 45-Mother, 45-father and 10-sibling. The major tools used for analysis of the primary data are correlation, one sample chi-square test and One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

**ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:**

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant change when support received from friends and family regarding parenting during the lockdown

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is a significant change when support received from friends and family regarding parenting during the lockdown

**Table-1.1**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Test</b>	<b>Significance level</b>
Received any support regarding parenting from friends, family, or community organizations during the lockdown period = No and Yes occur with probabilities .500 and .500.	One-Sample Binomial Test	.036
Did the support help your parenting positively? = No and Yes occur with probabilities .500 and .500.	One-Sample Binomial Test	<.001

**Inference:**

Using the one-sample binominal test, the P-value is less than 0.05 which shows the null hypothesis is rejected. therefore, the support received from friends, family and community regarding parenting was helpful to parents during the lockdown period.

**H<sub>0</sub>:** Parents did not undergo any mental illness due to parenting stress in the pandemic

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Parents did not undergo any mental illness due to parenting stress in the pandemic

**Table-1.2**

<b>Mental illness</b>	<b>Test</b>	<b>Significance level</b>
experienced it during the covid-19 pandemic [ <b>Depression</b> ] occur with equal probabilities.	One-Sample Chi-Square Test	.034
experienced it during the covid-19 pandemic [ <b>Anxiety</b> ] occur with equal probabilities.	One-Sample Chi-Square Test	.004
experienced it during the covid-19 pandemic [ <b>Bipolar Disorder</b> ] occur with equal probabilities.	One-Sample Chi-Square Test	<.001
hard to stop <b>worrying about parenting</b> is normal with mean 3 and standard deviation 1.084.	One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test	<.001
Difficult to concentrate is normal with mean 3 and standard deviation 1.154.	One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test	<.001

**Inference:**

From the above table we can conclude that the P-value for all mental illness such as depression, Anxiety and bipolar-disorder are below 0.05, hence reject null hypothesis. Therefore, parents have undergone mentally illness such as depression, anxiety and bipolar disorder and other mental illness during the covid-19 lockdown.

**Ho:** There was no significant change in child's behaviour

**H1:** There is a significant change in child's behavior

**Table-1.3**

<b>Behavioural change</b>	<b>Test</b>	<b>Significance level</b>
<b>Restlessness</b> is normal with mean 3 and standard deviation 1.137.	One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test	<.001
<b>Irritable</b> is normal with mean 3 and standard deviation 1.185.	One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test	<.001
<b>lack of Concentration</b> is normal with mean 3 and standard deviation 1.117.	One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test	<.001

**Inference:**

In the above table p-value is below 0.05, hence reject null hypothesis. Therefore, children have gone through behavioural changes such as lack of concentration, irritation and restlessness during the lockdown

**Ho:** There is no significant change concentration on mental health in the post- pandemic and not accessible to mental health support

**H1:** There is significant change concentration on mental health in the post- pandemic and not accessible to mental health support

**Table-1.4**

Factor	Test	Significance level
Access mental health support during lockdown	One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test	<.001
Concentrating more on mental health wellbeing post pandemic.	One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test	<.001

**Inference:**

From the above table we could conclude that the P-value for all behavioural changes is less than 0.05, hence reject null hypothesis. Therefore, people have started concentrating more on mental health wellbeing post-pandemic

**Ho:** There is no significant change in parental stress and mental illness caused by the stress level in the lockdown

**H1:** There is a significant change in parental stress and mental illness caused by the stress level in the lockdown

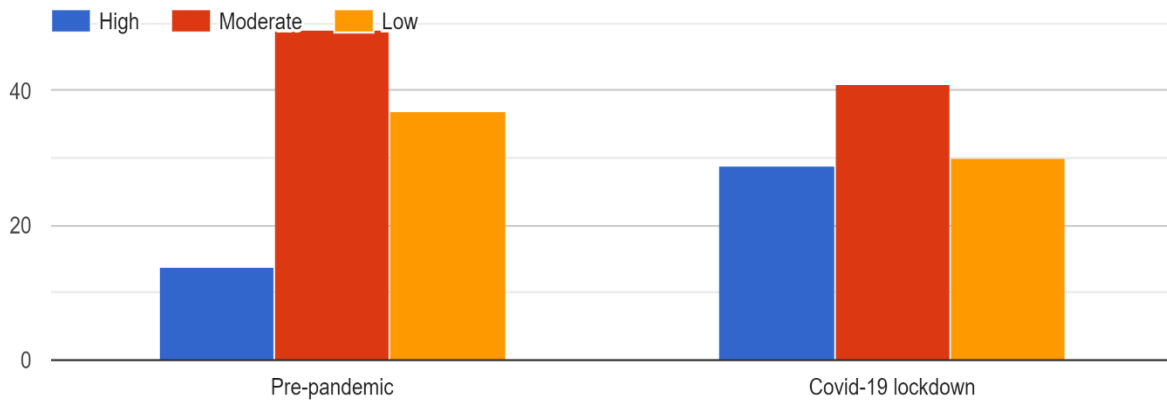
**Table1.5 -Correlation**

Stress level	Depression	Anxiety	Bipolar disorder
Pre-Pandemic	0.328	0.290	0.333
Covid-19 lockdown	0.531	0.562	0.421

**Inference:**

From the above table we see that the correlation between parental stress and mental illness is high compared to the pre-pandemic. Hence reject null hypothesis. There is significant increase in the parental stress and mental illness caused by the stress level.

### Parenting stress



### CONCLUSION:

The study explored the parental stress level and we could find out that there was an increase in parental stress level during the covid-19 lockdown. Further the study discovered that due to the curfew there was a change in child's behaviour (restlessness, irritable and lack of concentration) which led to difficulty in parenting and hence creating a stressful parental scenario. It did not end there but led to creation of mental illness such as depression, anxiety and bipolar disorder among the parents, the pleasure in parenting was slightly reduced in the tough situation too. But parents have overcome the situation with the parental support from friends, family, community and organisation, moreover it had a positive impact on the parenting. Along with personal hygiene, Mental wellbeing is one of the greatest take away from the tough lockdown period. Both WHO and UNCIEF have released guidelines and tips for parenting during the pandemic. We could also discover from this paper that parents have started concentrating more on mental wellbeing post-lockdown.

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