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Thank you once again ma'am

Yours sincerely

Rohan Kataria
RM - 08

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Children – the unseen victims of COVID – 19 with multiple side – effects



Photo source – The Hindu

Abstract –

In December 2019, WUHAN city of china reported the first case of COVID – 19. Initially it was named as 2019-nCoV, and now knows as SARS-CoV-2. In a very few time, it has covered the entire world. Over 9.8 million cases have been reported all over the world. This is now becoming like a WORLD WAR III.as more than 500k people have died due to this pandemic.

The aim of this study is to find out the impact of COVID – 19 on children. Although children have very less chances of getting infected but it has several other impacts on their mental, social & physical health. The children are going through very tough time as their daily routine life is changed due to school closures and social isolation. This paper tells about various problems which are faced by the children during this lockdown and also about the possible solutions to prevent children from being depressed. Finally, it is suggested that we have to cope with this disease and keep ourselves away from stress by keeping ourselves busy in our daily work

Introduction

Over the previous couple of months, humans are facing one of the greatest predicament after WORLD WAR II. The globe is combating with this Pandemic that is COVID – 19 or the Corona Virus Disease – 2019. With over 9.8M confirmed cases and a death toll of more than 475K, this disease has created global health crisis that has had a deep impact on the lives of all the creatures on the earth.

Although, medical literature shows that children are less susceptible to the virus but still there is an enormous impact of COVID – 19 on children. The impact is not only to their physical health but also to their mental and social health.

OBJECTIVE

- 1. To find out the impact of COVID – 19 on children's health*
- 2. To find the impact of lockdown on children*
- 3. To find out impact of school closures on children*

METHODOLOGY

The research type is qualitative because the study aims to find out the impact of COVID – 19 on children. The research is done on the basis of secondary data available on different official sources. Those research sources having the related information are used for this research. The main source of data collection is articles in newspapers such as The Hindu & Times of India.

Sources of data

The following articles were studies for the research.

- 1. THE HINDU newspaper*
- 2. Policy brief: The impact of COVID – 19 on children By United Nations*
- 3. Impact of COVID-19 on children: Special focus on psychosocial aspect – Researchgate.net publication*
- 4. Protecting the most vulnerable children from the impact of coronavirus: An agenda for action – UNICEF*
- 5. Multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children and adolescents temporally related to COVID-19 – WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION*
- 6. A wake-up call: COVID-19 and its impact on children's health and wellbeing - JOURNAL*
- 7. The Indian express*
- 8. Times of India*

Abbreviations

- 1. COVID – 19 – CORONA VIRUS DISEASE -2019*
- 2. Etc. - Et cetera*

Impact on physical health – Infection by virus

Thankfully children are minimum susceptible to the corona virus disease. As compare to adults, few cases are reported of infants that are infected by this virus. Those who are infected have mild symptoms. Children do not get direct contact with virus, most of them caught the infection from someone they lived with or a family member. The virus usually causes minimal infection in children as compare to adults.

Children with health conditions like heart disease, lung disease or weak immune system are more susceptible to serious COVID-19. And even in the high-risk children, the chances of death are very low.

In a Chinese research study, researchers observed that severe symptoms of COVID-19 were less common among children than in adults. Children who were infected in China mostly displayed mild symptoms or no symptoms. Out of 2100 child patients, only single child died. So, the death percentage is minimal.

In another research paper publicised by the American Academy of Paediatrics, researchers found that around 85% of child-patients in China were symptom free or had very mild symptoms.

The impact of COVID – 19 on health of children also depends on general health of the children. The children having low immunity are more prone to the disease and to the death.

So, in this scenario the children belonging to poor families that are schedule casts and schedule tribes are more vulnerable because they do not have proper health facilities, and many of them lives in slums, which are not sanitized or cleaned and they have more chances to get infected by the virus.

Infants - *Children under age 1- 2 (infants) are at higher risk of severe illness with COVID-19. This is mainly due to their weak immune systems, which make them more likely to develop breathing issues with respiratory viral infection.*

New born babies can be affected by this virus during delivery or by infected beds etc.

A paper published in “the lancet child and adolescence health” says that that infants younger than one month of age are more likely than older children to need intensive care.

So, precautions such as hand washing and breastfeeding should be taken. And at this times Social events such as baby shower before birth or naming ceremony after birth should be performed in a symbolic way only & gathering of relatives for giving best wishes to the family should be avoided till this disease gets over.

20-day-old in Jaipur dies of COVID-19

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
JAIPUR

A 20-day-old infant, who died of complications relating to COVID-19 here on Friday, could be the world's youngest victim of the disease. The boy was treated for septicaemia at the J.K. Lon Children's Hospital, where the paediatricians ruled out intrauterine infection.

The infant was admitted to the hospital early on Friday with complaints of diarrhoea and vomiting. No member of his family was earlier detected as positive and nor did the family have a travel history.

After brief treatment, the child died during the day. As his family resided in the Chandpole area of the Walled City where a large number of COVID-19 positive cases have been found, the hospital authorities sent his samples for viral test, which turned out to be positive.

Photo source – The Hindu newspaper

Impact on mental health – lockdown pressure

Although the chances of children getting infected with COVID 19 is low. But this virus and the ongoing lockdown has adverse effect on mental health of the children.

As the physical and social interaction of the children is restricted, the children are getting lonely and this leads to anxiety & depression.

The lockdown has disturbed the children's daily routines with the physical as well as social isolation, mostly in the age group 5 – 10 years. This has impacted their school time, playing time, outing with parents etc. some of the children are very small and they don't understand why their parents are wearing masks, why they are washing their hands very often and they have many more questions in their mind but they are unable to understand this situation.

Impact of quarantine – mental health.

Home quarantine or quarantine in centres both impact child positively as well as negatively.

Children whose families are stable economically and socially, quarantine had a positive impact on them. Because their parents were with them at home, they spent a good time with their parents by playing games, having a good sleep, learning new things, enjoying food etc. their parents also had a plenty of time, no rush of time. These children have access to all the technology required for their online learning so they also studied well.

Various reports have shown that many children are happier and less stressed due to lockdown. Earlier they have to go to school daily. But now mostly they have two days online class. So, in short lockdown is a blessing for many children.

On the other hand, lockdown is a tragedy for most of the children whose families are struggling financially. Some children who don't have siblings feel lonely at home. They don't have anyone to play because their parents are busy in searching some work so that their children can eat well.

Coming to the children who were tested positive for the COVID – 19, they were taken to hospitals. They were not allowed to meet their family members till they were tested negative. These children have a drastic impact on their mind. They feel scary even after returning back to their homes.

Impact of COVID – 19 on children of migrant workers.



"The poor do not seem to abjectly surrender to their fate – they are willing to take huge risks and return home, not die of hunger when abandoned by governments." Migrant workers in Ahmedabad. ■ AP

Photo source – The Hindu newspaper

As we all know that migrant workers faced a lot of problems due to this pandemic. They had various problems such as food, shelter, healthcare, fear of getting infected, loss of jobs etc. These all issues affected the lives of not only 40 million workers but it affected the lives of 40 million families including small children of these workers. After the lockdown, the daily wage workers have no money for food for their families. They were migrating to their own cities, but due to lockdown they don't have any source to travel. This lead them, to go on foot to their cities. After the start of the special trains for the workers, there were various problems like food, hot weather etc.

Many children died while travelling to their places. A 12-year-old girl child died after walking for 3 days to reach her home in Chhattisgarh district. She was 11 kilometres away from home. She was not died due to Corona Virus disease but she died because of hunger, walking for 3 days without having proper food. The name of girl was Jamla Makhdam,

Another child was seen on railway station, Muzaffarpur. He wants to play with his mother on the platform but he didn't know that his mother is lying dead. The name of the women was Arvina khatun and her age was 35. She died due to extreme heat, hunger and dehydration. And the child loses her mother due to COVID 19



Child uncovering his dead mother on railway platform

Photo source – The Hindu

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Video of baby with dead mother goes viral

In another incident, the body of a woman was deboarded at Mansi station

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
PATNA

Amid several videos showing the woes of migrant workers returning to Bihar these days, a chilling video went viral on social media on Wednesday. A baby is seen playfully tugging at a sheet partially covering his dead mother at the Muzaffarpur railway station in Bihar. The woman, said to be Arvina Khatun, 35, is seen lying dead on the platform, with two bags stuffed with her belongings kept away from her.

An older child, with a water bottle in hand, too, appears for a moment in the video. "The woman had reached the Muzaffarpur railway station on May 25 along with her two children,



The video of the child went viral on social media. • PTI

sister and brother-in-law. She was from Katihar district. Only the doctor can say how she died," Government Railway Police official Ramakant Upadhyay told presspersons.

A local journalist in Mu-

zaffarpur told *The Hindu* that the woman and her two small children had arrived by a Shramik Special train on May 25 from Ahmedabad. She collapsed immediately upon reaching the station, possibly due to extreme heat, hunger and dehydration. The woman is said to have boarded the train on May 23.

Sharing the video on his Twitter handle, Sanjay Yadav, political adviser to Bihar's Leader of Opposition in the Assembly Tejashwi Yadav, said, "The little child does not know that the cloth he is playing with is the shroud of his dead mother. She died because she did not have food and water for four days. Who is responsible for

such deaths in trains? The Opposition should ask the hard questions or not?"

In another incident, a the body of a woman was deboarded at the Mansi railway station in the State on Wednesday.

"Some people took out the dead body of a woman on platform number 3 of Mansi railway station from a train coming from Surat in Gujarat to Purnia in Bihar. Her name is Uresh Khatun and she was from Katihar district. The relatives of the dead woman said the woman was suffering from a heart ailment and had surgery on March 22, 2020," the Sonapur division of East Central Railway said in a statement.

Photo source – The Hindu Newspaper

COVID – 19 affecting children's education - School closures

To avoid spread of COVID 19 in India, the state governments across the country started shutting down school in the second week of march. Education of around 300 million students was affected due to school closures. Although after some time, many schools have started online classes but still the education system is affected a lot due to this pandemic.

There are various barriers in conducting online classes such as no internet connectivity, no availability of laptops or phones and many more.

There are many students from the poor family background who don't even have proper availability of daily food, how they can afford laptops and costly internet packs. And even if they can afford these things, most of the labourers and daily wage workers and poor people are illiterate, they don't know how to operate laptops and the apps needed for online class.

'Children need laptops to access online classes'

Plea in HC also seeks free Internet

STAFF REPORTER
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Friday asked the Centre and the city government to respond to a petition seeking directions to provide free laptops, tablets or mobile phones to poor kids so that they can access online classes during the COVID-19 lockdown.

A Bench of Justice Manmohan and Justice Sanjeev Narula also issued notices to the municipal corporations and 10 private unaided schools here seeking their stand on the plea by an NGO – Justice for All – by the next date of hearing on June 10.

The NGO has contended that the private unaided schools' decision to conduct classes via videoconferencing would affect over 50,000 students belonging to the economically weaker sections (EWS).

The petition has contend-



ed that not providing the laptop, phone and high-speed internet, free of cost, to the poor kids would amount to a violation of their fundamental right to education.

"The children belonging to EWS or disadvantaged group category are protected under Article 21A of the Constitution for getting an equitable quality education and the State is duty-bound to remove all financial barriers coming in the way of getting quality education in the same manner as their counterpart fee-paying students," the NGO said.

Photo source – The Hindu newspaper

so COVID 19 has affected the education of billions of children in India. The parents are also worried about their child's education. There is another problem of school closure to parents, that is paying the fees of schools. The school fee of various private schools is very high and parents can't afford it as many people lost their job during lockdown. Parents in various states of India are saying that if the children are not going to schools then why they have to pay school fees.



Parents and protesters hold placards as they shout slogans against the court judgement in the favour of private schools during a demonstration in Amritsar.

Photo source – The Hindu

COVID – 19 has left many children hungry – Food insecurity

The lockdown has left too many children hungry. This is mainly due to two reasons that are unemployment and school closures. Due to the lockdown, many people didn't get any work to do, due to that they didn't get their wages. This affected their families a lot. They don't have money even for their daily needs such as food. So, there is food insecurity for children and this many affect their health and nutrition needs.

Coming to mid-day meal programme in India. A total of around 1.75 million children daily eat mid-day meal in India and these children are dependent on this meal only. Daily they get to eat rice roti dal etc and in some states like Rajasthan, milk is also provided to the children daily during lunch break. These children are badly affected by school closures. Many of them are very poor and they don't have food at home so this is leading to their nutrition problems.

Ensure children are not malnourished: NGO to govt.

It calls for implementation of SC order

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Mobile Creches (MC) – an NGO working for the rights of vulnerable children for quality Early Childhood Development – on Thursday said as a part of the COVID-19 emergency relief response, governments are not adequately addressing the needs of children such as care, balanced nutrition, health and hygiene. Also, early learning has taken a backseat, the NGO stated.

“The risks of increasing malnutrition levels is very high as a result of increased hunger among children during the pandemic,” the or-

ganisation said and called for the implementation of a Supreme Court order of March 18 that had said: “the schemes for providing nutritious food to the children and nursing and lactating mothers are not adversely affected” during the restrictions imposed due to COVID-19.

Sumitra Mishra, executive director, MC said thousands of people, including young children are living across construction sites, labour camps, temporary shelters, urban slums without access to basic food, health, safety and protection systems.

Photo source – The Hindu Newspaper

But there are some states who are providing food to children even during lockdown. One such state is Rajasthan; they have provided food grains to the parents of all the children in the month of June. Parents are provided with the total amount of food starting from the first day of lockdown till now ensuring that the children may not get malnourished and remains healthy during this pandemic.

Impact of COVID - 19 on children whose parents are front line workers

Frontline workers of COVID -19 such as Doctors, nurses, police staff, paramedical staff, cleaners, sanitization workers etc are playing a vital role in fighting with this pandemic. They are working day and night just to help the world in fighting with disease. During this time these people don't even have time for their family. They too have children who needs family time but they are not getting much time.

COVID-19 duty keeps administrators away from children on Mother's Day

'We have been separated by a floor in my official residence since pandemic preparations began 2 months ago: DC of Jorhat

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
GUWAHATI**

Roshni Aparanji Korati's sons Sanchit, 4, and Suchit, 2, are furious with her for being "so near yet so far". On the other hand Sashanka Ala's two-year-old son Prabir is used to her staying away, sometimes for a week.

Life was no different for the two district administrators about 900 km apart on Mother's Day.

Ms. Korati is the Deputy Commissioner of central Assam's Jorhat district and Ms. Ala is her counterpart in

Lawngtlai, Mizoram's southernmost district bordering Bangladesh and Myanmar.

"We have been separated by a floor in my official residence. They are upstairs with my parents who are above 65 years and I have been staying downstairs since the COVID-19 preparedness began two months ago," Ms Korati told *The Hindu* on Sunday.

The Jorhat DC has been on "perpetual home quarantine" for fear of infecting her sons and parents if she contracts COVID-19. "My



Roshni Aparanji Korati with her two sons in an old photo.

*** SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT**

responsibilities require meeting healthcare workers and others who deal with people on quarantine," she said. Her workload increased

after two women, who arrived from Mumbai in an ambulance tested COVID-19 positive on Saturday.

While she has been a reassuring figure in the district's fight against the virus, her sons are not amused.

"They see my vehicle. We see each other from the stairs. I cannot help it, better to be safe than sorry," she said.

On Sunday, Ms Ala returned to her official residence in the district headquarters Lawngtlai three days after a tour of some vil-

lages on the Myanmar border to ensure.

"The borders are very porous and long and we have to make sure no one sneaks in during the lockdown," she said.

'That's the way it is'

"He got used to my being away for a few days during the November 2018 elections. It hurts not to be able to give him more time, but that's the way it is," Ms. Ala said.

A local woman takes care of her son when she is away.

Photo source – The Hindu Newspaper

Apart from school closure and change of the daily routine, the children of frontline workers are experiencing something new. They are feeling alone at home because their parents are not coming home or coming daily. And even if they are coming home, the parents feel scared in going close to their children because of this disease. There are Children who are very small and dependent on their mothers for breastfeeding, they are facing a lot due to this.

Younger children are not even understanding why their parents are not coming home or why they are wearing these masks etc. On the other hand, there are children who understand this and they are feeling very proud of their parents

There are cases of children feeling insecure, fearful, and vulnerable, and this may lead to problems such as aggression, anger, and depression amongst children. So, during this time, children need time so that they may not feel depressed or scary.

Impact of COVID- 19 on Child labour & Forced labour

Worldwide, there are almost 152 million child labourers and out of which 10.1 million child labourers are in India (2011 Census). The COVID- 19 crisis has impacted the child labour in mainly two ways, firstly there is an increase in participation of child in labour and secondly it has increased the work poverty in legally working children.

As the schools around the world are closed. UNESCO has estimated that school closures has impacted around 89% of student population around the world. Due to school closures, children mainly in rural areas are at home and not learning, so due to poverty they are involving themselves in work. Children who are from marginalised community, poor, homeless, disabled, migrants etc do not have a proper source of food, due to this they are engaging themselves in work and thus increasing child labour around the world

This increase of child in labour is impacting the working youth (14- 17 years) in labour. As there is increase in supply of workers, their wages are suppressing.

There is other way of increasing child labour, that is forced labour. The vulnerable children are at high risk of getting trapped in the child labour forcibly.

Girl children are at a high risk of getting burdened by household chores and domestic violence

So, it can be seen that COVID – 19 is impacting the child labour in various surprising ways that are harming the children around the world.



Photo source – The Hindu Newspaper

Lockdown –Impacting girl child , Increase in child marriage

The lockdown had an adverse effect on the girl child, there is a steep increase in no of child marriages especallly in rural areas. The karnatka state commission for protection of child rights has reported an increase in number of complaints of child marriage since lockdown has started. As the schools are closed and girl children are at home, the parents have lose their job due to lockdown ,the poor parents feel burden of their daughters and forcing them to marry their daughter. The other reason for more child marriages during lockdown is that parents have to spend less during this time because gathering of people is not allowed due to government restrictions.



Photo source – The Hindu Newspaper

Conclusion & Recommendation

The world is going through a tough time, life has drastically changed around the world. the cases are rising rapidly and it is unpredictable, when will this gets over. The children all around the world are extremely disturbed by school closures, social isolation, cancellation of their planned trips and the fear of Corona Virus Disease.

. Although corona virus has come with a plenty of negative outcomes but we humans have learnt various lessons from the past few months. Such as Health Is Wealth, Life is very short and we don't need too much to survive. Parents should spend some time with their children after coming from work.

As the cases are rising rapidly, we should maintain social distancing, and keep ourselves clean and sanitized.

Earth has faced so many disasters in the past, and handled them in a very good way. Hopefully it will do it once again. And children will once again be seen in their school campuses wearing uniforms and living their life as they were living in the past.

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