

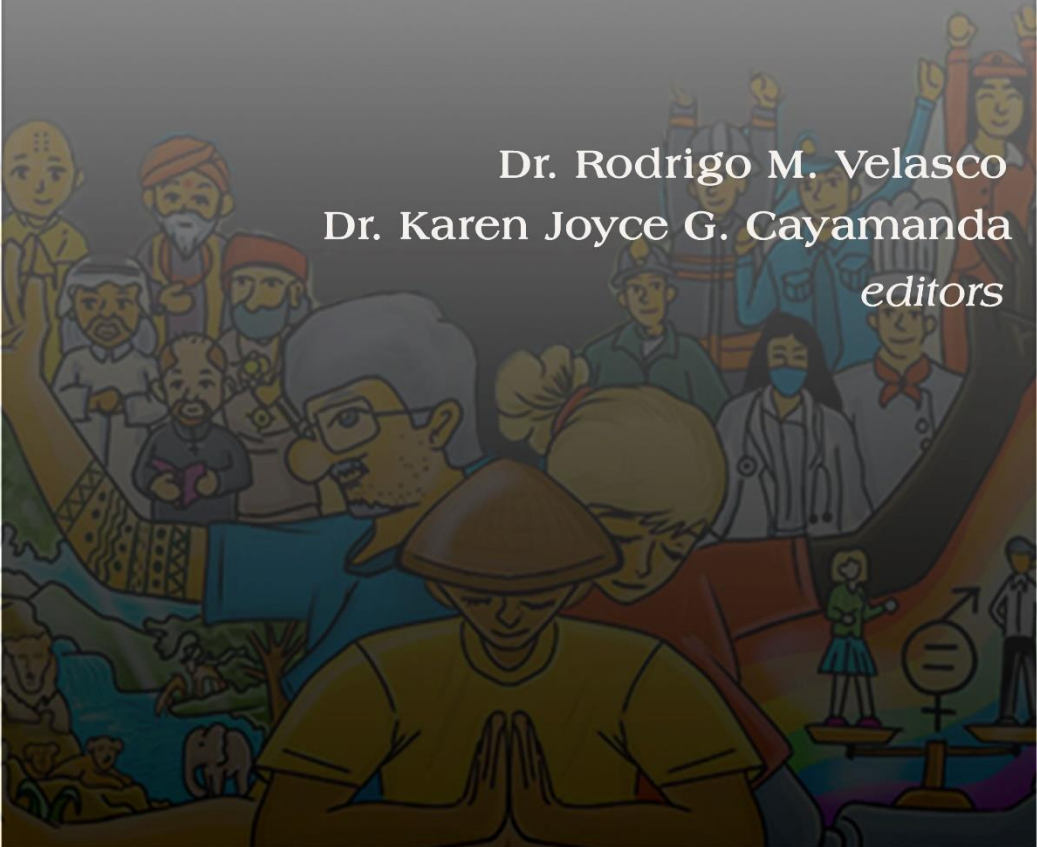
The WORLD

in Different PERSPECTIVES: Rebuilding Lessons after a Crisis

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editors



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Preface

The world is in chaos. The emergence of COVID-19 pandemic created the havoc that all parts of the globe had to deal with. In addition, there are still other personal and social crises that everyone endures.

Rebuilding Lessons after a Crisis attempts to present the whys, whats and hows of humanity's risk perception across the world as we embark on this challenging journey and help define the most appropriate and most effective risk-related behaviors for survival.

The current pandemic has brought about the abrupt shift in all sectors of the society in different parts of the world. It has resulted to immediate adjustments and development of coping mechanisms to transcend beyond the challenges of this pandemic. Like any other crisis, the current situation taught us to reflect and manage its overwhelming effects.

This book compiles articles that reflect the different perspectives in varied concerns such as health, economy, education, and social transformations. Its impact to the physical, emotional, psychological and financial conditions of humanity across the world are also presented.

Part I as the opening chapter attempts to describe the situation in terms of how a crisis has been evaluated in different lenses as to the risk perception and the risk related behaviors as to how various sectors have adapted to the situation.

Part II describes the varied effects of the pandemic and the adjustments and coping responses manifested by the different sectors.

Part III offers the strategic actions and coping mechanisms that can help recover and sustain ways of life in these challenging times.

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Table of Contents

Part 1 – The Nature and Extent of Crisis

| | |
|---|----|
| Classification of the Transition Patterns of the Number of COVID-19 Patients <i>Hiroko Kanoh</i> | 2 |
| Mental Health in Diverse Population <i>Surbbi Chandra, Vooturi Lasya, Megha Garg & Kavya Abuja</i> | 17 |
| Resilience in community urbanization <i>Pauline B. Malabanan & Emilia S. Visco, PhD</i> | 30 |
| Mental health and the teaching profession <i>Marco R. Publico</i> | 40 |
| The social amplification of risk, risk perception, and risk-related behavior <i>Ged Xavier A. Fruto</i> | 53 |

Part 2 – The Varying Effects of Crisis

| | |
|---|-----|
| The Socialization and Self-acceptance of the Extrajudicial Killings’ Left behind Families <i>Jherwin P. Hermosa</i> | 85 |
| Cyber Bullying Tendency among Young Generation <i>Md. Alamgir Hossain</i> | 100 |
| Cognitive Vulnerabilities and Depression of Children with Single Parents <i>Portia R. Marasigan, Ph.D.</i> | 111 |
| Elderly Parent Caring for an Adult with Down syndrome <i>Thessalonica M. Sinobin</i> | 124 |

Part 3 – The Strategies to Overcome a Crisis

| | |
|--|-----|
| Theoretical Perspective on Covid-19 Related Social Problems <i>Farhana Yasmin</i> | 141 |
| Personalities Characteristics and Entrepreneurial Success <i>Saijullahi Adam Bayero & Adams Adeizga</i> | 156 |
| Brief cognitive restructuring and cognitive defusion techniques <i>Portia R. Marasigan, Ph.D.</i> | 174 |

Mental Health in Diverse Population

Surbhi Chandra, Vooturi Lasya, Megha Garg & Kavya Ahuja

Introduction

Humans have over time witnessed many crises. Some were limited to a particular region such as the crisis in the state of Uttarakhand, India that resulted in loss of life and infrastructure, whereas others, less common types are the ones that affect the entire race of humans like the current crisis of COVID-19.

In the beginning, when this disease was detected in Wuhan and was yet to spread in other countries, it was thought of only as a medical crisis posing a threat to the physical health of people, but as the time progressed, coronavirus spread its wings to almost the entire world and was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO). As countries began to impose lockdown in an attempt to control the spread of this deadly virus, mental health professionals started to recognize its repercussions on the mental health of people. A number of factors were identified that might lead people to experience mental discomfort ranging from mild symptoms to the development of a severe disorder such as depression. Each sector has been affected in a different manner with students experiencing anxiety over their future course, employees worried about their job security and older people feeling lonely.

The discussion in this paper has been divided into three sectors and takes on each part individually with a focus on the steps to be undertaken in order to facilitate the people in each of these sectors separately.

Discussion

Education sector

Many changes occurred as a result of COVID-19, and it took some time for everyone to adjust to the new normal. The impact

of COVID-19 was felt all over, resulting in the closure of schools and other educational institutions (Suresh, 2021).

The study done by Vidyadhara, et al. (2020) represents a mental health survey conducted on students in South India after the COVID-19 outbreak's one-month quarantine period was completed, which concluded that during the COVID-19 outbreak in India, an alarming number of students were found to be suffering from mental health issues as a result of the outbreak, with higher levels of stress, anxiety, and depression.

Psychological effect of academic stress

Students in secondary and higher school are known to be subjected to a variety of continuing normative stressors as a result of their on-going academic expectations (Richards, 2009). However, the current situation, which has been exacerbated by the pandemic's social constraints, has resulted in extreme levels of academic stress among students. There is ample data to show that severe and long-term academic-related stress has a negative impact on children's and teenagers' academic achievement, mental health, and well-being. Academic stress has been linked to lower academic motivation and academic disengagement in students (Liu, 2015; Liu & Lu, 2011). As a result, they are more likely to drop out, face future unemployment, and develop psychiatric illnesses like depression, anxiety, and substance abuse. Long-term stress exposure in children and adolescents can lead to physical health issues like metabolic syndrome, obesity, and decreased insulin sensitivity, as well as a shorter life expectancy. Because of the current circumstances, recent graduates in India are concerned that job offers from corporations would be withdrawn. In early April, the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy reported that unemployment had risen to 23 percent, with the urban jobless rate at 30.9 percent (Mahapatra & Sharma, 2020).

Mental Health of students in schools

Pre-lockdown learning for children and teenagers mostly entailed one-on-one engagement with mentors and peer groups around the world. Over 91 percent of the world's student population has been significantly impacted by nationwide school and institution closures (Lee, 2020). Children and adolescents who are confined to their homes experience uncertainty and anxiety as a result of disruptions in their education, physical activity, and socialization chances (Jiao et al., 2020). Absence of a structured school setting for an extended period of time causes disturbance in routine, boredom, and a lack of inventive ideas for engaging in various academic and extracurricular activities. Because they are unable to play outside, meet friends, or participate in in-person school events, some children have exhibited decreased levels of affect (Lee, 2020; Liu et al., 2020; Zhai & Du, 2020). Because of the long-term change in their routine, these youngsters have grown more clinging, attention-seeking, and reliant on their parents. It's expected that children would avoid returning to school once the lockdown is lifted, and that they will have trouble re-establishing contact with their mentors once the schools reopen. As a result, the restriction of their activity may have a long-term negative impact on their general psychological well-being (Singh, 2020).

Mental Health of students in universities

It has also resulted in a great deal of stress within the university community, including students. This stress may have negative consequences for students' academic and mental health. International students who are studying away from home are concerned not only about their own health, safety, and education, but also about the well-being of their families. Students who were able to return home are concerned that they will not be able to continue their studies at their current universities.

The COVID-19 pandemic could have a significant impact on this year's university graduates' jobs. In the last stages of their education, they are encountering significant disruptions in instruction and evaluation. Due to the postponement of the final

examination, they will most certainly graduate late. Furthermore, the graduates will be confronted with the harsh realities of the worldwide recession brought on by the COVID-19 crisis (Sahu, 2020).

Measures to be taken for the betterment of education system during pandemic (Agrawal, 2021)

Three crucial components make up the educational system which are admission, education, and examination. Only by achieving excellence in all three subsystems can a good education system be developed. The current pandemic has resulted in a slew of educational ideas. The majority of these breakthroughs are around digitization. The education industry is one of the areas that has entirely changed its operation.

The education industry is divided into three categories: basic education, secondary education, and higher education. Adjustments have occurred at all levels, although the majority of the changes have centered on classroom participation. Physical classes have been replaced with online classes at schools, colleges, and universities.

Flexibility in Indian education system

Flexibility is a significant development that will become a permanent part of the Indian education system. The majority of courses offered by any Indian university have only one entry and exit point. The film Pandemic taught us about life's uncertainties. As a result, the higher education system must be more adaptable, allowing for multiple entry points and exit points. This area of education, whether referred to as executive education, continuing education, or any other name, requires additional attention. Executive education, which is currently limited to business education, can be expanded to include technology and science education if properly addressed.

More emphasis should be paid to the examination subsystem. Proctoring is required for the final test. Edtech companies are working on a number of AI-based solutions for better proctoring

in online exams. Physical examinations, on the other hand, come the closest to such a solution. This enables the evaluation system to be revisited depending on the final written examination. The evaluation of pupils in a class should be done on a regular basis. Assessments should be created in such a way that they pique students' interest in learning. The assessment procedure should be woven into the learning process. It is unquestionably past time to review the assessment process in order to lessen exam anxiety and encourage better learning.

Competitive admission process

Since the pandemic, the coaching sector has been disrupted, and most students are studying at home. It has the potential to be another game-changer in the Indian education industry, reducing the need for coaching. If we examine the entrance test procedure, we may evaluate the holistic personality of students for a specific program rather than only examining some tactics to get into the program. The Indian education industry have to become more tech-savvy and adaptable, focused on continuous evaluation rather than a final exam, allowing for various sorts of executive education and a more student-friendly admission process.

Working class

Before the pandemic, the customary way of thinking had been that workplaces were basic to efficiency, culture, and winning the battle for ability. Organizations contended seriously for prime office space in major metropolitan revolves all throughout the planet, and many zeroed in on arrangements that apparently promoted coordinated effort. Densification, open-office plans, hosteling, and collaborating were the calls to war.

According to researches by Boloand et.al (2020) 80% of individuals addressed report that they appreciate telecommuting. 41% say that they are more useful than they had been previously and 28 percent that they are as useful. Numerous representatives freed from long drives and travel have discovered more useful approaches to invest that energy, appreciated more prominent adaptability in adjusting their own and expert lives, and

concluded that they like to telecommute as opposed to the workplace. For the individuals who can telecommute (around 40% of laborers generally from the higher taught quartile), their day by day experience of work changed altogether.

Workers, both frontline and corporate employees who are working from home have been experiencing difficulties like stress, burnout, uneasiness, sadness and moral injury. In this manner, the circumstance requests prompt direction on assisting them with decreasing the effect of stress and enjoy ideal self-care. Suburbanites have restored an hour on normal in their day and appraisals recommend that post pandemic, some part of the week will include telecommuting – from one to three days rather than seven days. A cross breed model is required that will attempt to adjust the efficiencies acquired by far off work with the advantages of social connections and to imagination and development produced by operating in the physical presence of others.

In any case, the best test present in regards to work is the thing that happens to the next 60% of laborers who can't telecommute (Fogarty, 2020). The decrease in every day suburbanites just as business travel has a thump on impact on those whose positions are backing and serve these laborers and workplaces. Entire one-in-four specialists are in the transportation, food administration, cleaning and support, retail and individual consideration ventures. These positions, regularly packed in urban areas and lower paid, are vanishing or are in danger of vanishing in the close to term. Now that the world knows about video interchanges, the manner in which organizations and people impart and interface will be always showed signs of change.

Medical services, instruction, money and organizations enormous and little are developing and improving with the assistance of video correspondences. This year alone, a huge number of entrepreneurs – yoga and piano teachers, advisors, bookkeepers and others – kept up with and even developed organizations utilizing video to associate with clients.

Sooner rather than later, a few associations will embrace a half breed work model, with certain days in the workplace and others distant, and might adjust representatives' in-office and far off timetables to make value. Different organizations will utilize video correspondences to be totally distant. The two models will appreciate expanded usefulness and more profound cooperation, and the capacity to draw in a more different labor force.

A gigantic expansion is seen, popular for far off work on the foundation, one that will affect the work market. Around the world, there has been an increase in the number of occupations that offer distant work since spring. Additionally, it is seen that pattern reflected from jobseekers: the volume of quests for new employment utilizing the "Far off" channel on LinkedIn has expanded ~60% since the start of Spring, and the portion of Distant Requests for employment has expanded almost 2.5 occasions worldwide from Spring. The coming of distant work and an undeniably virtual world appears to have diminished boundaries for individuals to interface and assemble their organizations. Recently, LinkedIn individuals are bound to interface with others outside of where they live. With the ascent of distant work, quite possibly the most thrilling patterns that will be seen is a democratization of chance and development of abilities from one side of the planet to the other.

Mental health in working class

Managing the pandemic is probably going to contrarily affect workers emotional wellness. This unremitting weight on workers could trigger mental issues of pain, nervousness, dread, alarm assaults, post-horrendous pressure indications, disgrace and evasion of contact, burdensome inclinations, rest aggravations, powerlessness, relational social disengagement from family friendly help and concerning openness to their loved ones. Instructors need to advance quiet, form versatility and imparts trust in the workers During this worldwide pandemic, workers can utilize all the passionate support/proficient guiding to move beyond a difficult time. The pandemic has unmistakably mentally affecting the entire populace, expanding joblessness,

isolating families and different changes which are for the most part considered as major mental danger factors for nervousness, discouragement and self-mischief.

Governments are boosted to create and execute wellbeing activity programs virtually, where recognize activities on friendly determinants of wellbeing through intercessions in the wellbeing, financial and instruction areas, by mean of planning an arrangement to assets to set needs. As the pandemic has endured, however, unmistakably Coronavirus ought to be considered for its effect corresponding to practically any business related practice. What's more, the numerous manners by which Coronavirus has fluidly and differently affected individuals and work all throughout the planet warrants close consideration, concern and activity.

Impact on Elderly Mental Health

As the COVID-19 started to spread in India in the early 2020, the older adults or the elderly considered to be most vulnerable to the infection, experienced disproportionately greater adverse effects from pandemic which include higher mortality concerns about the disruptions may happen to their daily routines and access to care, difficulty in adapting the technologies like telemedicine, and the concerns isolation would worsen existing mental health conditions (Lee et al., 2019). As mortality rates of older adults started increasing in the country, it started scaring them. More than any other age group, older adults were considered to be easily prone to the COVID-19 infection and also deaths due to it. Usually older adults have low reactivity to stress, but due to the pandemic, there was a concern about the mental health of the older adults.

Social disconnectedness self-perceived and perceived isolation predicted higher depressive and anxiety symptoms (Mukhtar, 2020). It was seen that elderly developed feelings that bothered them like lack of physical touch, separation from their family members, sadness, feeling of vulnerability, lack of stimulation, fear, anxiety, and stress.

Challenges in Delivering Mental Health Care

A few of the challenges include:

- restriction in terms of the travel and mobility
- most of the psychiatric hospitals restricting their services to emergencies
- common advisory to the older adults to avoid hospital visits for minor and non-emergency issues
- family members prioritizing medical issues and neglecting the mental health issues
- decreased rates of referrals for mental health issues, most likely due to the busier work schedule of doctors
- decreased income of the family caregivers (Mukku, and Sivakumar, 2020)
- technology (eg, lack of access to smart technology like mobile phone)
- community (eg, few family members or friends)
- genetic or cognitive (eg, the inability to engage in physical exercise or take part in activities or routines) (Vahia, Jeste, and Reynolds, 2020)

Solutions

A few solutions by Mukku, and Sivakumar (2020) that could be implemented in order to improve the mental health condition of the elderly include:

- utilizing the digital media platform such as video-conferencing and the social media for increasing awareness about the mental health issues in the older adults or elderly
- starting the mental health helpline for the older adults or elderly
- telephonic consultations by the mental health professionals to address small psychiatric issues

- using concise tools (e.g., telephone version of minimal status examination) for cognitive assessment during the telephonic interview
- using electronic prescription for providing medication
- referrals to nearest health professional for older adults requiring depot antipsychotic
- home visits for bedridden/wheelchair-bound older adults with the mental health issues
- personal evaluations for older adults with psychiatric emergencies and
- conducting the online support group programs

Apart from the above mentioned possibilities, the following recommendations made by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) are also being implemented:

- attending workshops including awareness about mental health issues
- spending time with family
- spending time on recreational activities
- making time for physical exercises
- yoga
- meditation
- using brief tools
- getting involved in daily activities
- cut down to listening news
- connecting to loved ones
- cognitive, behavioral and other therapies delivering online or in-person

RWA – Resident Welfare Association (India) made small clusters of people wanting to give service, appointed head volunteer to that clusters and reached out to possible older adults and made sure they were supplied with enough food, resources (Hindustan Times, 2020).

Conclusion

The pandemic has caused a significant amount of stress among people. However, some of it has subsided owing to the various measures taken to adapt to the “new normal” and minimize its psychological impact. These measures have been different for different age groups such as improving the infrastructure of education sector for students, introducing a flexible system of assessment and better provisions for admission, etc. For the working class, it is engaging in well-being programs and expanding communication. This time has been especially hard for elderly who had the highest mortality in the beginning of the pandemic and were isolated, Resident’s Welfare Association (RWA) took measures to assist them in case of need and engage them remotely to prevent stress. Though the world was moving towards remote working, teaching and communication, the pandemic put things on fast-track and humans were forced to adapt according to this change. Mental health professionals giving tele-counselling and tele-therapy increased manifold and is expected to keep increasing in the future.

The crisis of COVID-19 has taught some important lessons, the ones which, if continued in the future can help in avoiding such mass destruction.

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