

Emerging Mental Health Concerns While Managing the Crisis

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ABSTRACT

During the earliest phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, the threat presented by COVID-19 was unknown. The sudden, unanticipated declaration of emergency, the global lockdown, the lack of treatment, the exhaustion of infrastructures, the highly contagious nature of the virus, and the reports of large numbers of people dying in various parts of the world triggered significant psychological distress among the population. 11 to 14 persons experienced distress, independent of socioeconomic status or vulnerability. The need for mental health care among the populace as a whole increased dramatically. [11] Transport was interrupted, local healthcare facilities and routine healthcare services were closed, and consequently, the majority of people were unable to get vital mental health services, resulting in widespread chaos. Despite this, governments were able to appropriately handle the growing issues over mental health and other healthcare services. During this pandemic, the increasing use of internet-based healthcare services is a significant trend.

Keywords: humanitarian, catastrophes, nevertheless, vulnerability, experienced, distress.

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, the world has seen serious humanitarian catastrophes; nevertheless, the world has never been devoid of such crises. At the beginning of the previous decade, the humanitarian crisis was more localised and restricted to regions such as Syria, Afghanistan, the Rohingya refugee crisis in India-Bangladesh, Venezuela, and Sri Lanka. 7 Major worldwide problems like as the COVID-19 pandemic⁸ and the Ukraine-Russia war^{9,10} continue unabatedly, negatively impacting the lives of people in various nations. These occurrences are typically unexpected and sudden.

During the initial phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, people were unaware of the threat posed by COVID-19. The sudden, unanticipated declaration of emergency, the global lockdown, the lack of treatment, the exhaustion of infrastructures, the highly contagious nature of the virus, and the reports of large numbers of people dying in different parts of the world caused people to

experience significant psychological distress 11 to 14 individuals, regardless of socioeconomic status or vulnerability, experienced distress. The need for mental health services among the general population surged abruptly. [11] Transport was disrupted, minor healthcare institutions and regular healthcare services were closed, and as a result, the majority of individuals were unable to get crucial mental health services, resulting in widespread disorder. Nonetheless, the governments were able to adequately address the developing concerns associated with mental health and other healthcare services. During this pandemic, the growing adoption of internet healthcare services is a major trend. [15]

Despite the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic is the greatest global challenge owing to its scope and intensity, a number of key local and regional issues negatively impact mental health. The humanitarian situation in Afghanistan is one such instance that has a substantial effect on mental health. The dispute between Taliban leaders and the United States resulted in a protracted and bloody war.[16,17]According to a research by the World Health Organization, approximately 22 percent of those who have experienced war or other crises in the last decade will acquire some sort of mental illness. [18] Additionally, the ongoing conflict between Ukraine and Russia is anticipated to aggravate mental health difficulties in both nations. [9,19] Displacement en masse, war trauma, the death of a loved one, the loss of one's career, and human exploitation are all afflictions that trafficking, worry about the future, abuse, and violence are predicted to negatively impact the mental health of war victims.

Similarly, the Rohingya refugees were reported to have a number of mental health concerns.[20] There were outbreaks of various infectious illnesses in refugee camps.Negative life circumstances, difficulties in surviving, uncertainty about the future, and abuse and exploitation of human rights enhance susceptibility to mental illness. This effect was also observed among Iraq war veterans and the broader public as a result of the protracted fight with the United States. 17 The economic downturn in Venezuela and Sri Lanka The quick increase in the price of vital products, safety and security worries, poverty, and disruption of social cohesiveness and integrity are known to negatively impact the mental health of the community.

During a serious humanitarian crisis, nearly all impacted individuals endure at least some psychological discomfort.[18] However, the intensity of psychological anguish differs amongst individuals. Therefore, psychological discomfort can be reduced by boosting psychosocial support, enhancing the coping abilities of those afflicted, detecting psychological distress early, and treating it promptly.

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