

Significance of Social Distancing during COVID-19 pandemic

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ABSTRACT

Social distancing is one of the key measures to prevent COVID-19 transmission. It is the initial policy used to minimize the spread of the virus that causes covid-19. We should maintain social distancing in various places such as educational institutes, workplaces, health care facilities and other public locations like market etc. Social distancing avoiding large gathering and close contact with others. To reduce the coronavirus, limitation of face to face contact with others is the best way. By the awareness programme necessary precautions to be adopted among people to prevent COVID-19 pandemic. Everyone has a vital role to play in slowing the spread and protecting themselves, their family and their areas. This is a common practice which has been carried out over generations to minimize the spread of virus by limiting its reproduction rate among communities. To win this war it is necessary that all of us need to stay at homes, washing hands with soap and water, sanitization, mask-wearing, maintain social distancing and respect all our warriors. This coronavirus disease is attacking human lives and there is no effective vaccine or a specific drug against this virus still date. It is invisible enemy. So, social distancing is one of the major tool of coronavirus to protect all of us.

Keywords: *Social distancing, health sector, workplaces.*

INTRODUCTION

Social distancing is the initial policy used to minimize the spread of the virus that causes COVID-19. It is an essential way to slow this virus. It is one of the key measures to prevent COVID-19 spread. We should maintain Social distancing in various places such as workplace, healthcare facilities and other public locations like market etc. Limiting face to face contact is the another way to reduce the spread of corona virus disease 2019 (COVID-19). A recently recognized corona virus, SARS-Cov 2, is spreading across the whole world. Social distancing means avoid spending time in crowded places or in groups. It means not going

out unless it is required. Necessary reasons to go to include buying food, getting medical care. If we have to go out then we are at least 6 feet (2meters) away from other people. Virus can grow when someone sneezes or coughs out tiny droplets. These droplets usually travel more than 6feet before falling to the ground. Social distancing is important for their, those who are at higher risk for severe illness from covid-19. In our day to day life preventive action to help prevent their spread of respiratory viruses should be followed, these include-frequently hand wash with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. We wear face mask, cover coughs and sneez-

ers with a tissue, throw the tissue away and then wash our hands with soap and water. When a person is suffering from disease and can not wear a cloth face covering or face mask then caregivers should wear one while they are in the same room.

There is something within our control that each of us can do to contribute in the fight against COVID-19 that is social distancing. It is a non-pharmaceutical infection prevention and control intervention implemented to avoid contact between those who are infected with a disease causing pathogen and those who are not so as to stop or slow down the rate and extent of disease transmission in a community. In late December 2019 a new strain of corona virus originated in China (Wuhan) which was unknown to humans before. It came to be known as the novel corona virus disease or COVID -19. Chinas first phase of public health response to COVID-19 focused on short term measures to stop the virus spreading from Hubei to the rest of the country and within the general population. School closures, transport bans and working place shutdown helped to limit transmission of COVID-19.

COVID-19 pandemic is caused by tiny entity, which does not even have the capacity to survive outside a living cell, has brought the world almost to a standstill leading to major medical, social and economic problems. The lockdown and physical distancing have disrupted social fabric.

The medical facilities including infrastructure trained manpower have been stretched to the limit and even frontline workers are falling prey to this scourge compounding the problem. Many industries and business establishments have closed down and millions of workers have lost their livelihoods. On top of that, there are fear, anger, hatred, suspicion and other negative psycho-social factors weakening the very edifice of a civilized society. But the pandemic of Spanish flu in 1918, which claimed about so million live, still evokes horror in our minds. While there were Asian flu in 1957 and HIV/AIDS in 1981, the new millennium witnessed many newer viral disease- SAARS (2003), Swine flue (2009), MERS (2012), Ebola (2014), Zikavirus (2018), Nipahvirus (2018) and now the novel coronavirus causing COVID-19. That is what we are doing now for COVID-19 with emphasis on lockdown, social distancing, personal hygiene, respiratory hygiene, quarantine and treatment etc. Globally, about 120,057,512 people are affected, closed cases 99,249,064 (series 2) out of 2,659,830 (3%) have died, recovered 96,589,234 (97%), currently active cases 20,808,448 (series 3) out of 20,719,136 (99.6%) in mild condition and 89,312 (0.4%) serious or critical and many more are living with fear of disease and death as on 14th March, 2021, shows in Figure 1 & 2 (source worldometers.info).

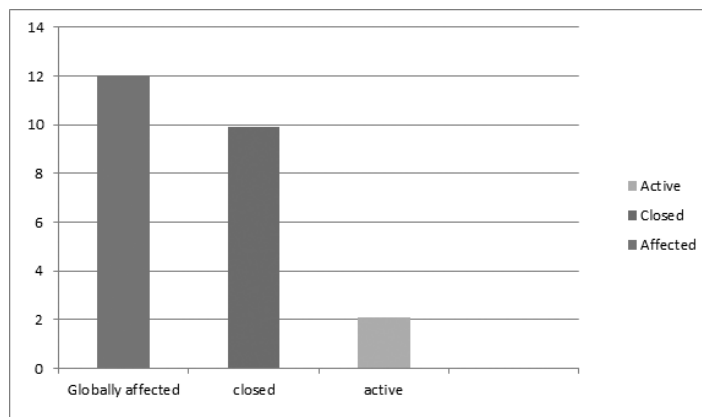


Figure 1. COVID 19 world data.

Significance of Social Distancing

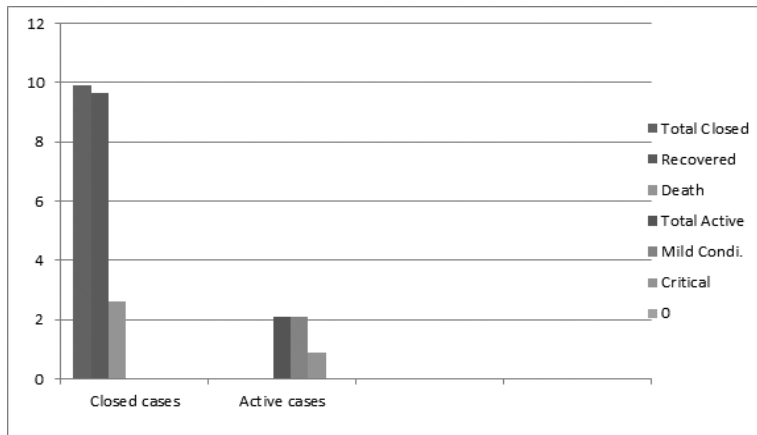


Figure 2. COVID-19 world data.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the review of research work I find *Maharaj, S. and Kleczkowski, A. (2012)* attempted about “Controlling epidemic spread by social distancing”. *Yu, D; Lin, Q; Chiu, A. P. and He, D (2017)* attempted to explain “Effective of reactive social distancing on 1918 influenza”. Again *Fahin Aslam (2020)* attempted about “COVID-19 and social distancing”. But nobody attempted the area of the “significance of social distancing during COVID-19 pandemic” So I attempt to fulfill the gap by this research study.

OBJECTIVES

- To prevent transmission of novel corona virus among the people
- To aware the societies about COVID-19 for control
- To fight against COVID-19 pandemic

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In case of collection of primary data I depend on information from observation, survey and experi-

ments. On the other hand secondary data are collected from e-journal, Newspaper, reports, etc. I also adopt the descriptive analytic method in my research work.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The pandemic of COVID-19 is one of the biggest challenges that societies and business have faced. Overcoming this challenge will be possible if we work together to stop the spread of the virus and provide a safe and healthy working environment for both home based teleworkers and those returning to their usual workplaces. The world of work is severely affected during the crisis, therefore all section of society including business, employers and social partners must play role in order to protect workers, their families and society at large.

By COVID-19 Over 221 countries and territories have been affected, which has infected millions of people and killed lacs. At the beginning the developed countries, apart from China (Wuhan) and Iran, had been the most afflicted. But now the clouds are darkening over the skies of Asia, Africa, Central and South America and there is death and disruption all over the world. Globally

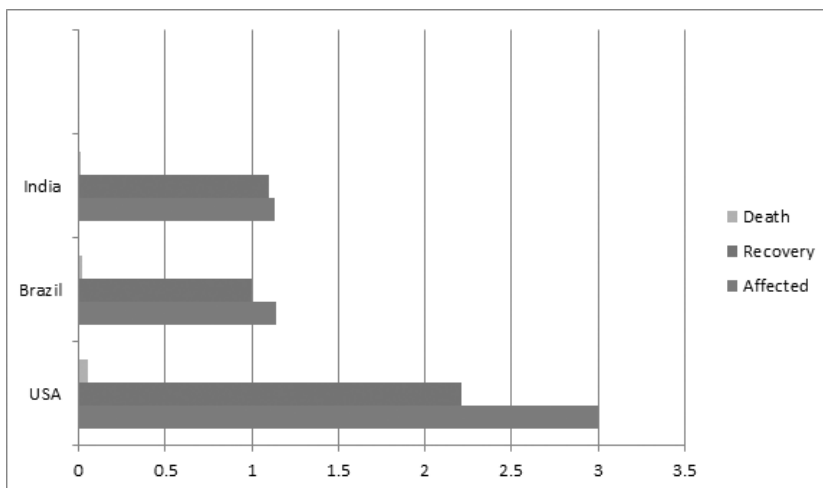


Figure 3. Total affected , death , recovery and active cases of India

three highest affected countries are USA, Brazil and India. In USA total affected people 30,046,128, death 546,661 recovery 22,108,944 and active cases 7,390,52. In Brazil affected people 11,439,250, death 277,216, recovery 10,036,947 and active cases 1,125,087; In India total affected people 11,382,610, death 158,750, recovery 11,003,784 and active cases 220,076; respectively as on 14th March, 2021, shows in Figure 3 (Source: world in data).

Need of social distancing in pandemic :

During pandemic so many communities cancelling events and gatherings of more than 10 people and closing shops, restaurants and bars, swimming pool, educational institute, gym etc. Social distancing is a method to minimize crowd interactions and prevent the spread of disease within groups of people. It is our responsibility, we should all take seriously. “Stop the spread” is a global campaign which aims to raise awareness about the risks of misinformation around COVID-19, and encourages them to double check information with trusted sources such as WHO and Na-

tional Health Authorities.

Someone infected with COVID-19 can be contagious before symptoms ever even being. To make matters worse, some people remain completely asymptomatic, but are still contagious. This means that, even if we feel healthy, we could be unknowingly spreading the virus if we are not practicing social distancing. Social distancing can include large scale measures, like cancelling crowded group events and closing public spaces. But it also includes a conscious, individual effort from each one us to practice the measures that help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Though virus pandemic COVID-19 is mild illness, it can make some people very ill. More rarely the disease can be fatal. Those who are already pre-existing medical conditions such as high blood pressure, heart problems, diabetes for their appear to be more vulnerable. There are two common practices followed using social distancing, one of them is social distancing and maintaining a distance of nearly 1 (one) meter within individuals and the other being staying indoors at home. This practice is important for a period of time to ensure the spread of the disease is minimized.

Social distancing is a public health safety intervention used to reduce the livelihood of transmitting communicable disease. It involves minimizing exposure to infected individuals by avoiding large public gathering in the **workplace**.

Many people have personal circumstances or situations that present challenges with practicing social distancing to prevent the spread COVID-19. It is a new disease and we are still learning how it spreads. If social distancing methods are ignored the effect could last on for the upcoming generations as the COVID-19 virus will be able to develop different strains where till date eight different strains of the virus has been discovered by scientists.

Health sector :

The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) has disrupted our lives in many ways, like healthcare system, education system, economic side etc. Due to the lockdown imposed by our country the spread and mortality has still been on the lower side of the graph. The present Government had introduced a scheme for some universal healthcare service in the country. This matter of an inclusive healthcare service for all in the country needs serious, urgent attention. The economic recovery challenge looms large, but the health and education services in the public sectors have to be revived simultaneously.

The outbreak of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) puts a spotlight on the resilience of health systems and countries emerging preparedness and response. The rapid expansion of COVID-19 emphasizes the urgent need for a strong health workforce as an integral part of every resilient health system. In the health system health workers are called the backbone. Without health workers we cannot imagine the health system. Due to the nature of their profession, millions of them risk

their own health doing their daily work. We should respect them who are protecting health workers, who are so critical to the fight to stem the COVID-19 pandemic.

In COVID-19 pandemic, Globally 90,000 healthcare workers infected. Government has provided to health care workers good quality personal protective equipment (PPE), kits and N95 face masks. Health care workers are being infected both in the workplace and in the community, most often through infected family members. To protect front-line health care workers, the WHO stressed the correct use of PPE like masks, goggles, gloves and gowns. PPE have been widely used by healthcare workers and staff to ensure the disease spread is limited within the hospital. The use of PPE, such as mask and eye protection, for an entire shift may cause discomfort due to heat, skin irritation and breathing difficulties. Preliminary data from Wuhan, China during the COVID-19 outbreak suggest a high prevalence (up to 97%) of coetaneous irritation and skin damage in association with the use of PPE, which increased with the duration of PPE use.

For well managed of health sector Government is constantly motivating the doctor's, nurses, paramedical staff and health care workers. More hospitals with the latest facilities, more beds, more well-cared for doctors, nurses and paramedics along with a nationwide awareness on hygiene and health habits are what the nation expects from its Government.

Every infected health worker means a further gap in the fight against the pandemic. Ensuring the safety and health of health workers is therefore a matter of high priority. The health **workplace** is particularly vulnerable to the risk of exposure to COVID-19. According to current knowledge, the two main routes of transmission are direct interaction with patients and contact with respiratory droplets in the space closely surround-

ing an infected person. Today the survival time of the virus on surfaces remains unknown. The further extends the risk of contact transmission to support personnel, such as laundry staff, cleaners and workers dealing with clinical disposal. The protection of healthcare workers focuses on the prevention of contracting and spreading COVID-19.

The accredited social health activities, who are more popular among the people as ASHA workers, and who are at the forefront of the present battle against the dreaded COVID-19 pandemic. They are also actively working as part of the surveillance teams for alerting suspected covid-19 cases in their respective jurisdictions to the concerned health authorities. They said they are entrusted with the job of looking after the basic health needs of the people at the grassroots level, besides working tirelessly to oversee cases of institutional delivery, immunization, adolescent, nutrition, tuberculosis etc. and collecting blood samples of suspected malaria cases. They serve their duty through social distancing to reduce COVID-19 pandemic. Now, we are faced with a community challenge in the form of the COVID-19 pandemic. It challenges us to be creative in how we maintain our social connections and manage our mental and physical health. To control and prevention of corona virus the centers has recommended a policy of social distancing, which is a strategy to slow the infection rate to protect our most vulnerable community members. It preserves the ability of our health care system.

Health workers and employers should share the most recent information on clinical protocols, guidelines, measures and decisions to ensure effective implementation, as well as on workplace situation that expose health workers to risks. This highlights the need for a sustainable approach to safety and health at work as an integral part of the overall management of the health sector. In re-

sponse to the COVID-19 outbreak, many health workers are facing heavy additional workloads, long working hours and a lack of rest periods. However, globally health workers are actively engaged in COVID-19 pandemic. The recently published state of the world's nursing report, 2020 highlights the need to create at least 6 million new nursing job's by 2030 to address the projected shortages of nurses primarily in low and middle income countries, and to work towards a more equal distribution of nurses around the world.

The study found that all around the globe, mankind is fighting with the COVID-19 pandemic. The spread of the corona virus is on pace to overwhelm the whole world, but the public has a powerful tool to change this by social distancing. Social distancing measures like closing schools, cinema Hall, restaurant, gym, swimming pool etc. in the early stages of the outbreak experienced less disease transmission, as well as less death. Practicing social distancing is the most important thing we can all do right now to help fight the spread of COVID-19. The number of COVID-19 cases continue to rise in the whole world; so need for testing kits and PPE for healthcare workers should become the highest priority for every country to reduce and detect the disease early.

Policy suggestions:

There are various types of policies are found national and international to prevent covid-19 for the mankind in whole glob. Various types of policy suggested to prevent covid-19. These policies will be limited till vaccine or drugs outbreak. The main policies are described as follows :

1. To maintain social distancing i.e. (minimum 1 meter distance) in health sector, market place, educational institute, other public place etc. should be maintained by every individual to prevent the spread of virus.
2. To contain the spread of the novel virus and to

- keep infections at a manageable level lockdown will significantly slow the spread of covid-19.
3. Regular practice of yoga and Ayurveda for prevention of corona and also encourage people to spread awareness about yoga and Ayurveda. To increase immunity power to fight with this virus turmeric, ginger, garlic, tulsi, etc. will be consumed.
 4. Long term impacts can be achieved through a combination of policies that reduce the transmission of the virus including immediate quarantine or isolation of all individuals demonstrating symptoms of influenza like illness.
 5. Physical distancing and universal face masking, restrictions on large gatherings and event are strictly maintained can prevent the covid-19.
 6. Utilization of face masks, combine with social distancing and frequent hand washing and disposal of face masks are consider to be the basis assurances against covid-19.
 7. Non-essential travel should be avoided. Small vehicles, buses, trains and aeroplanes to maximize social distancing which use in public transport besides ensuring regular and proper sanitization of surface.
 8. Govt. and non-govt. employers to allow employees to work from home where feasible.
 9. Closure of gyms, swimming pools, cultural programmes, cinema halls, educational institutions etc are for a specific period.
 10. Education system should be promoted through online mode.
 11. Containment zone and red zone should be declared by govt. to control virus.
 12. Changes in government law relating to unlock
 - a) Working should be Monday to Friday
 - b) Working time should be reduced.
 - c) Night curfew should be imposed at least 10-12 hours, later on it should be removed.

- d) Non-wearing of face mask should be imposed finable.
 - e) Restriction of movement from one district to other, interstate and between the countries and left the restriction when situation improved.
13. Novel corona virus (COVID-19) testing facility and capacity should be enhanced.

CONCLUSION

There is no specific treatment for disease caused by a novel corona virus. Subsequently, COVID-19 is increased day by day. By the awareness programme necessary precautions to be adopted among people to prevent COVID-19. Everyone has a vital role to play in slowing the spread and protecting themselves, their family and their areas. To win this war it is necessary that all of us need to stay at homes, washing hands with soap and water, maintain social distancing and respect all our warriors. This corona virus disease is attacking human lives and there is no effective vaccine or a specific drug against this virus. It is invisible enemy. So social distancing is one of the major tool of novel corona virus to protect all until vaccine or specific medicine outcome.

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