



## A Qualitative Study To Assess The Living Experiences Of People Suffered With Covid-19

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** COVID-19 pandemic has upended the lives of people and their families across the globe and has significant changes to patient lives in terms of psychological and physiological. Covid-19 Pandemic had a noticeable impact on People views about this illness.

Aim and objective of the study was to assess the living experiences of People suffered with Covid-19 Pandemic.

**Material and Methods:** A qualitative descriptive phenomenological research design was adopted. A total of 20 People were suffered from Covid-19 Pandemic. Who met the inclusion criteria were interviewed with open ended interview guide. Interviews were face to face interaction through videocall and transcribed verbatim. Rigor was maintained using Lincoln and Guba model. A theoretical framework was developed and thematic analysis was done to synthesis the data. Interview of each person were transcribed using Giorgi's method of analysis.

**Results:** People explored their experiences with Covid-19 Pandemic related to physical, mental and emotional aspects, care and support from health care professionals and family and problem faced during, and after the diagnosis. A total of four themes and ten subthemes were identified from the analysis of qualitative data. The major themes emerged were Corroboration of Illness, Illness and Impact, Treatment and expectations and Quality of Life. Covid-19 Pandemic had a noticeable impact on People views about this illness.

**Conclusion:** The study concluded that most of the participants worried about confirmation of Covid-19 Pandemic as they had many questions in their mind that what would happen after the confirmation. Participants expressed that the Covid-19 Pandemic can affect their health and also stated that they were afraid about the consequences but participants showed positive attitude towards the management of Covid-19 Pandemic. As they knew very well that it could be treated. Participants expressed that Covid-19 Pandemic not only affect them but could also affect their family and friends.

**Key words:** Covid-19 Pandemic, People experiences, descriptive phenomenology, qualitative research.

### Introduction: -

COVID-19 pandemic has upended the lives of people and their families across the globe and has significant changes to patient lives in terms of psychological and physiological. Covid-19 Pandemic had a noticeable impact on People views about this illness.<sup>1</sup>

Currently, several studies have been conducted on how the general population experiences emergencies related to pandemic infectious diseases In analyzing the impact of infectious diseases such as SARS or Ebola, report experiences such as fear and anxiety for themselves and their families, separation anxieties, impotence, depression, as well as anger and frustration. In the case of COVID-19, scholars have highlighted several psychological effects of the pandemic on adult samples in China and in Italy and found psychological symptoms related to posttraumatic stress disorder. In a recent review, anxiety, depression, psychological stress, and poor sleep have been reported to be the main psychological outcomes of living with the COVID-19 emergency.

Considering children and adolescents, several studies have specifically explored psychological experiences related to the global emergency and lockdown experience of COVID-19 but evidence from autobiographical narratives are lacking<sup>2</sup>.

### Aim and objective

Aim and objective of the study was to assess the living experiences of People suffered with Covid-19 Pandemic.

### Methodology

A sample of 20 people participated in this qualitative study with the prior permission from the Ethical committee of Maharishi markendeshwer University and also consent was taken from the Participants. Data saturation was achieved after interviewing 18 patients with Covid-19. Researcher interviewed 2 more Covid-19 positive patients to explore the possibility of any new code and to confirm that saturation had been achieved. Before starting the study the investigator maintained the rapport with participants and introduced him to the participants and introduction of the study was given to the people. The ethical clearance was obtained from university research ethics committee of Maharishi Markandeshwar University Mullana, Ambala. Informed consent was obtained from the respondents and respondents were assured about the confidentiality of their response. Sample characteristic data was collected from the participants using Interviewing technique. Open ended interview guide was used to explore living experience of people with Covid-19. Researcher started with general questions and proceeded with interview guide which consist of 14 items to explore feelings, expectation, and issues of people having Covid-19 Illness. Qualitative research approach and Descriptive phenomenological design was used in this study. Data was collected by using Sample size comprises of 20 Covid-19 positive people included in the study by criterion sampling technique

**Ethical Consideration:** -After the administrative approval the Pilot study was conducted on 2 people who have Covid-19. The willingness consent was taken from the participants. Length of interview lasted from 20 minute to 40 minute. Interviews were conducted telephonically. Data collected and result obtained from the pilot study ensured the feasibility for conducting the final study

**Procedure**

Data was collected from April to June 2021 Sample size comprises of 20 people having Covid-19 were included in the study by criterion sampling technique. Data saturation was achieved after interviewing 18 patients with Covid-19. Researchers interviewed 2 more Covid-19 patient to explore the possibility of any new code and to confirm that saturation had been achieved. Before starting the study the investigator maintained the rapport with participants and introduced him to the participants and introduction of the study was given to the Covid-19 suffering Patients. Informed consent was obtained from the respondents and respondents were assured about the confidentiality of their response. Sample characteristic data was collected from the participants using Interviewing technique. Open ended interview guide was used to explore living experience of Covid-19 patients Researcher started with general questions and proceeded with interview guide which consist of 14 items to explore feelings, expectation, and issues of people suffering from Covid-19. Duration of interview and number and order of question varied from one participant to another. Length of interview lasted from 20 minutes to 40 minutes. All interviews were conducted telephonically

**Analysis**

**Analysis for quantitative data** Frequency and percentage was used to analyses sample characteristics including demographical and clinical variables.

**Analysis for qualitative data**

Data analysis was guided by Giorgi (1985) Framework. The basic outcomes of this model are the description of the meaning of an experience often through the identification of useful themes. Themes are a way of describing large quantities of data in a condensed manner. A blueprint was prepared listing the items in six dimensions i.e. Observation and Identification, Feeling towards Covid 19 pandemic, Expectation and reaction of family Member, Preparation Towards living with Covid 19 pandemic, Issue and Impact of living with Covid 19 pandemic, Expectation and Experiences. The Open ended interview guide consisted of 14 questions to explore the experiences of people suffered with Covid 19 pandemic.

**Frequency, %age** was used to analyze sample characteristics

**Some Findings of sample characteristics**

- Half (50%) of people were in the age group of 50-85 years
- Majority (90%) of People has no history of Covid-19 in their family
- All (100%) the people have heard about Covid-19 before been diagnosed
- All (100%) the people had undergone Confirmation test.
- Further majority (70%) of people had no any associated health problem

**Thematic Analysis**

**Themes and subthemes**

| S. No | Themes                            | Subthemes  |
|-------|-----------------------------------|--|
| A     | <b>Corroboration of Illness</b>   | 1. Facts and Perspectives<br>2. Confirmation and worries |
| B     | <b>Illness and impact</b>         | 1. Fear of getting worse<br>2. Impact on Health          |
| C     | <b>Treatment and expectations</b> | 1. Mode of treatment<br>2. Finance and burden            |

|          |                        |   |
|----------|------------------------|---|
| <b>D</b> | <b>Quality of Life</b> | 3. Changes and satisfaction<br>1. Family and Supporter<br>2. Responsibilities<br>3. Future and Almighty |
|----------|------------------------|---|

**Themes and sub themes** derived from verbatim / data based on giorgi method to analyze open ended interview guide

**Result:-**

### **A) CORROBORATION OF ILLNESS**

#### **1.)Facts and Perspectives**

Covid 19 pandemic affects everyone- the young and old, rich and poor, men, women and children- and represents a tremendous burden. As this disease is full of facts, This is the single name assigned to more than 100 diseases. Likewise Covid-19.is a topmost illness among people and they do have certain preconceived opinions about it. In this regards some of the participants verbalized that.

*"It is known to be the worsted disease...., its name is not to be taken"* (P 2)

*"This illness is like a drop of poison".* (P 3)

*"Even you know that this disease needs to be given in the hands of a good doctor.... which means it requires a good amount of money"* (P 6)

**Mostly all of the respondents gave preconceived opinion regarding Covid-19.as sometimes it affects the patients psychological health as most of the participants verbalized that Covid-19 leads toward death.**

#### **2. Confirmation and Worries**

**In general it is a psychological nature of human that every individual wants to be healthy. If a person is having any symptom of illness he/she worries about symptom and about the confirmation of diagnosis. Mostly all the Patients have some fear that this confirmation may leads to some other formalities. In this regard many participants verbalized about how they came to know that they have Covid 19 pandemic and the worries attach to it. Some of the participants verbalised that**

*"I got my Covid-19 positive report in Y hospital... after the examination of RTPCR test, they diagnosed me with Covid-19 illness..."* (P 2)

*"I thought that everything will be normal, there will be no difficulty and it might get recovered by medication."* (P 4)

*"I thought to go for checkup and treatment in general hospital where they came to confirmation about Covid-19.. I have got this deadly disease, the only trouble I had was thinking about what will happen to me now?..."* (P 6)

**Several tests are used to confirm the Covid-19. Most of the participants have undergone these screening test as well as most of the participants worried about confirmation of Covid-19. as they had many questions in their mind that what will happen after the confirmation.**

### **B. ILLNESS AND IMPACT**

#### **1) Fear of getting Worse**

**When you face the worst situation, if your mentality is positive you can graciously overcome the situation. Covid-19 and its treatment are worry for every patient. Generally patient has fear of getting worse and in relation to this subtheme most of the participants verbalised that**

*"I didn't tell to any of the family members that I have this disease... Everything I hid myself. Sometimes, I think that I will inform to family members but I worried that they start to take tension....there is no benefit to tell them. One thing is certain that I cannot overcome the pain in my body."* (P 1)

*After the realization of Covid-19. I got stressed thinking that will I get recovered or die?"* (P 2)

**Fear of getting worse is a biggest issue, all the patient experiences certain issues related to treatment of Covid-19. like extreme tension and worry and many of the participants verbalized that they had to face fear as its usually happen in Covid-19.**

#### **2. Impact on Health**

**Health is a relative state in which one is able to function well physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually in order to express the full range of one's unique potentialities within the environment in which one is living. If a person is having Covid-19.he has lots of impact on health which may not allow an individual to perform activities of daily living. In this regard some of the participants verbalized that**

*"Doctor told me about the way of Precautions. They inserted the Oxygen mask. When cough come with itching I feel like carrying a bag of 2 kg weight in my throat which made me difficult to speak . But, I can perform all my activities even though I am suffered with Covid-19."* (P 1)

*"It impacted me a lot, I became weak. My skin complexion got changed to dark... but, now it started getting better. But, all I can feel is my bones become very thin. I was not able to understand what to do? ... I became so irritable that when someone spoke to me. I use to abuse them."* (P 3)

Most of the participants have lots of impact on their health as they became weak and their physical health is much affected as their skin complexion is also changed. But many of the participants are not having any impact on health as most of them are pension holder.

### C. TREATMENT AND EXPECTATIONS

#### 1. Mode of Treatment

There are different methods of treatments to treat Covid-19. The treatment Oxygen therapy and ventilator could be helpful in managing but there are certain issues with the patients as they have to face N number of side effects. In this regards some of the Participants verbalized that

*“ Directly I came to X hospital and was admitted here by Dr X. They did all the investigations by taking my blood samples and then informed me that the treatment was available in this hospital. They informed me that I had to undergo Oxygen therapy. Dr. X gave me oxygen therapy in 15 days and now I am undergoing in treatment. Let’s see what happens....” (P 14)*

Most of the Participants had taken good and expected treatment to overcome Covid-19. like Oxygen therapy, some of patients gone on Ventilator. Most of the participants have good faith that Covid-19. treatment is possible with Hospitalization

#### 2. Finance and Burden

Time, not money is a biggest asset in life but the Finance plays an important role in treatment. Everyone needs time to invest in relationship (with yourself and your family) because each and every family member play an important role in helping each other as well as support each other, to grow together and always be willing to lend a helping hand to other. Covid-19 patients need to have help from others. In this regards some of the participants verbalized that

*“We also had problems for paying our hospital cahrges fare as it cost 1000 rupees.” (P 6)*

*“In relation to finance I faced family problem as my children need to spend money for my treatment rather than spending it for their urgent needs.... because of me, they were unable to spend money for themselves. Moreover we had to borrow money from our neighbors and adjust for my treatment “ (p 18).*

Most of the Participants were supported well enough by their family member with regards to financial issue. Even their children also supported them well enough by spending for patient rather than for own expenses.

#### 3. Changes and Satisfaction

Any change in treatment or lifestyle of patient may bring positivity in patient and give sheer satisfaction. It is important to discuss all the treatment opinion, including changes and satisfaction. Mostly patient feel many changes and improvement due to regular treatment. In this regard most of the Participants verbalized that

*“The only problem that I observed is urinary problem I used to go 4-5 times in night time later on i felt abdominal pain then I went for checkup in hospital. (P 2)*

*“When I started recovering I felt certain changes in my body like when they removed my urine bag I started going to washroom by myself. Initially I had problem in eating food as I felt that I won’t be able to swallow it... so I refused. Secondly I use to feel high grade fever.” (P 3)*

Treatment satisfaction is a patient reported outcome .Good treatment leads towards the recovery and changes the patients living pattern as most of the patient recovered themselves by observing positive changes in their body

### D. QUALITY OF LIFE

#### 1. Family and Supporter

Men is not walking alone towards treatment, He is supported by number of people who can be family member, relatives, friends as well as other health care personnel. They accelerate the recovery from disease through support system which may enable the person to perceive their life in positive way. In regards to this most of the Participants verbalized that

*“My family members used to give me medicine on time. They didn’t get angry. In all aspect they cared me lot. Daily they used to awake me even though I was not able to walk. (P 5)*

*“My family members were thinking that report will come.... after noticing it they got upset even realized a lot. Their faces were down considering that how the disease occurs?... It never happens earlier. They were anxious about the confirmation of cancer. (P 6)*

Family members are the only one that care and help the most of the time as they never take it as burden and they voluntarily do all work regarding care and all. Support each other, to improve the quality of life. Most of the participant verbalized that they had enough support from their family member and nurtured with adequate love and affect to overcome this.

#### 2. Responsibilities

Responsibilities will usually show a men to be a far stronger creature as these put greater impact on men’s life i.e. they use to think a lot about their work to be done and also think deeply about their future if the responsibilities left unfulfilled either by themselves or by the impact of any disease. Most of the participants verbalized about their own responsibilities as

*"I can perform all my responsibilities even though I am suffering from prostate cancer." (P 1)*

*"After getting this disease, I am unable to do my daily activities like farming work and much other household work... that now a day's only my wife is doing." (P 4)*

*"By god's grace I have done all my Responsibilities." (P 6)*

**Every individual actualizes their life once they complete all their responsibilities. Most of the participants verbalized they were able to perform their given responsibility to some extent with proper care and support.**

### 3. Future and Almighty

**Imagination is the window in future. We strive to be bold in advancing the edge of possibility so that we can think better about future. Sometimes we leave everything on God's hand. In this regard maximum of the participants verbalized**

*"I had many plans in my life about seeing my grandsons wedding... but, nothing that I planned will happen as its all planned by god... we are only puppets of his hands." (P 6)*

*"What has to be done will be done ...everything is in God's hand." (P7)*

**A man without a vision is a man without a failure. Clearly most of the participants verbalized that, God knows the future to the extent of being in control of his own plans and universal design.**

### Discussion:

The first theme emerged from the study was corroboration of illness under which two subthemes identified were Facts and perspectives and confirmation and worries.

Current findings are similar with study conducted by **ChenhuiWu, Jianquancheng (2021)** found that first-hand accounts were critically and empirically analysed to identify emerging health and social issues, and provide potential solutions to improve survivors' quality of life in qualitative study of the experiences of sixteen hospitalized COVID-19 survivors from Nanning City, China, was conducted using semi-structured telephone interviews in May 2020. Where they also found that patients' assessment of satisfaction with care, quality of care, and outcomes affects the person whole life

**Moradi Y, Mollazadeh F, Karimi P, et al. (in 2011)** where they found that a better understanding of psychological disturbances of COVID-19 survivors throughout the disease crisis based on their lived experiences. Given the ambiguity in the time of the disease eradication and its continuing course, a deep understanding of these experiences in the current critical situation can help healthcare officials to make appropriate decisions.

### Conclusion

The present study revealed that most of the participants worried about confirmation of Covid 19 Illness as they had many questions in their mind that what would happen after the confirmation. Participants expressed that the Covid 19 illness can affect their health and also stated that they were afraid about the consequences. Most of the participants had undergone proper treatment. Most of the participants showed positive attitude towards the management of Covid 19 illness as they knew very well that it could be treated. Majority of the participants expressed that they faced problems in various aspects like unable to keep up with daily living activities and financial issues. Participants expressed that Covid 19 illness not only affect them but could also affect their family and friends. Most of the participants expressed that they had completed their responsibilities. They also expressed that only God could save them because most of the participants had strong faith in God.

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