

IMPACT OF COVID-19 AND GENDER DYNAMICS: INSIGHT FORM MIDDLE CLASS COMMUNITIES IN JAIPUR

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ABSTRACT

COVID-19 disease, caused due to novel corona virus, spread across the world in year 2019 from Wuhan City of China. The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared it a pandemic considering its spread, causes and impacts and nature of the disease. The pandemic forced an uncomfortable atmosphere for individuals, business firms and public authorities at global level. The pandemic caused by the Coronavirus (Covid-19) has badly affected the economic activities of world economies. The several economic activities have been halted in India as well as a resultant of lockdown restrictions “Janta Curfew”. The imposition of such restrictions has impacted the life of people as far as social, political, cultural, and psychological; aspects are concerned. The people with certain diseases like heart problems, respiratory disease, diabetic patients badly affected by the disease and impositions escalated the problems for them wherein their social relationships, psychological and mental life became worst.

Keywords: COVID-19, World Health Organization, Psychological Aspects, Janta Curfew.

Introduction

The people of every segment of society have faced several issues related to social, economical and health due to outbreaks of disease and imposition of the lockdown thereafter. The individuals in different age groups like children, adults, elderly and women are severely affected by the disease by different degree of intensities. The absence of family atmosphere, loss of jobs, abnormal behaviour and unavailability of medicines for other diseases' patients, forced psychological and mental health issues to rise at peak during the lockdown and thereafter. The lack of communication, absence of values and bad habits lead to stormy relationships and abnormal behavioral patterns for self and family. Historically, quarantine has been a fruitful step taken on wide-reaching in irresistible infections outbreaks; be that as it may, it deals with a pessimistic stumble for the population. Development constraint, detachment from family, constrained chance and trepidation of an unsure prospect are largely factors that might intensify negative mental impact (Brooks et al. 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought many changes to our lives. People are now relying more on the internet for education and managing things online. This means more online shopping, working from home, and studying online. These changes have also made students think differently about their future careers because our social lives have changed. Some studies from around the world also say that family life has improved. The pandemic has caused a lot of stress, worry, and fear for people. Our daily routines have changed because we now work from home, some people have lost their jobs temporarily, and kids are studying from home. All of this is affecting our mental and physical health, as well as the healthcare system and the economy globally (WHO, 2021).

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Review of Literature

The COVID-19 pandemic, identified by the United Nations as more than a mere health crisis, has transcended into a multifaceted human, economic, and social upheaval (United Nations). Its far-reaching impacts have been felt across all sectors of society, with vulnerable groups bearing a disproportionate burden. Individuals grappling with poverty, lacking secure shelter, face heightened exposure to the virus's threats, amplifying the crisis.

Vulnerable populations, including older persons, people with disabilities, migrants, refugees, and displaced individuals, confront additional challenges due to limited opportunities for employment, housing, and the surge in xenophobic sentiments. This pandemic has catalyzed policies addressing the resultant social crisis, contributing to increased inequality, exclusion, discrimination, and global unemployment in the medium and long term (United Nations). Establishing affordable, universal social protection systems emerges as a critical long-term strategy, acting as automatic stabilizers to mitigate poverty and safeguard workers.

During the launch of the COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan in March 2020, the UN Secretary-General emphasized the urgent need to assist the ultra-vulnerable, who are least equipped to shield themselves. This call for solidarity acknowledges the fundamental importance of supporting the vulnerable in combating the virus (United Nations).

The impact on older people, particularly those with chronic illnesses, has been pronounced. Despite the necessity of social distancing, older individuals often struggled to care for themselves in isolation and quarantine, increasing their susceptibility to the virus. Meanwhile, people with disabilities faced heightened challenges accessing healthcare due to limited availability, accessibility, and discrimination. Basic preventive measures became more complex for them, as physical impairments, environmental barriers, and interrupted services hindered activities like home cleaning and frequent hand washing (United Nations).

UNICEF's empirical findings, dated 2021, shed light on the pandemic's economic toll on households. Families with children have borne the brunt of the crisis, experiencing higher percentages of total income loss and wage income loss compared to those without children. The data indicates that households with children, especially many children, faced more significant challenges, reporting higher instances of adults going outside for work without meals due to the lack of food and shelter (UNICEF, 2021). This underscores the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on households with children and emphasizes the need for targeted interventions to alleviate their specific challenges.

Regarding the influence of COVID-19 on Indian families, a majority reported experiencing both income loss and disruptions in their children's education. Specifically, 79% of men and 78% of women noted a reduction in income due to the pandemic, while 78% of men and 77% of women expressed concerns about disruptions in their children's education. Interestingly, the respondents, both male (64%) and female (68%), highlighted positive changes in family relations amidst the challenges posed by the pandemic (Masa et al., 2021).

The surge in online selling has become a prevailing trend, shaping alterations in social life patterns. The prevalence of online marketing, the widespread adoption of remote work, and a heightened reliance on technology have become transformative forces. Live streaming, emerging as an efficient economic recovery tool, has further developed in this context. Addressing the evolving landscape, continuous advancements in e-marketing become imperative to meet the evolving demands of current customers (Warokka et al., 2020, as cited in Chen et al., 2020).

Certain population sub-groups are at privileged threat of mental disorders in view of more prominent candidness and failing to portentous societal, economic, and environmental surroundings, unified with sexual direction. Detriment starts prior to birth and collects all through life. A serious assemblage of work at present exists that underlines the requisite for a daily survival itinerary way to pact with conception and conducting mental and actual health difficulties (Brooks et al. 2020). Questionable anticipations, impending excessive deficiencies of belongings for trying and handling and for defending responders and health care suppliers from disease, hassle of novel public health calculates that intrude on personage flexibilities, vast and upward pecuniary sufferers, and incoherent signals from specialists are among the momentous stressors that without a distrust would emerge to far reaching emotional distress and prolonged peril for mental ailment related with Covid-19. (Zhu et al., 2020)

Objectives and Research Methodology

The objective of paper is to understand the impact of lockdown imposed by the pandemic caused by Covid-19 on gender aspects of people living in the city of Jaipur district of Rajasthan. The study aims to assess the dynamics of social interactions and relationships during the imposition of such restrictions due to pandemic.

- **Universe:** The proposed study will be conducted in the city of Jaipur having residents of diverse socio-economic, demographic and cultural backgrounds. The research endeavor will be undertaken in the city of Jaipur and deals with analyzing effects of lockdown during emergence of Covid-19 on middle class communities in the municipality area of Jaipur.
- **Sample:** A sample size of 200 respondents (out of which 100 will be Male respondents and remaining 100 will be Female *Respondents*) will be used form the population of middle-class communities in Jaipur employing the Random sampling technique. The sample will be selected considering the heterogeneous effects of Covid-19 on various segments of society like children, adults, women, elderly etc.

The descriptive statistics has been used in order to find the conclusions pertaining to study. Efforts will be done to answer the requisite questions pertaining to study and of relevance to the study such as gender factor, age factor, level of distressed due to over work of household without house help, load of teaching and grooming of children, changing structure of social system etc.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The gender dynamics within the study of this thesis unravel a complex interplay of experiences and challenges faced by individuals, particularly within the middle-class strata of Jaipur, during the lockdown imposed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

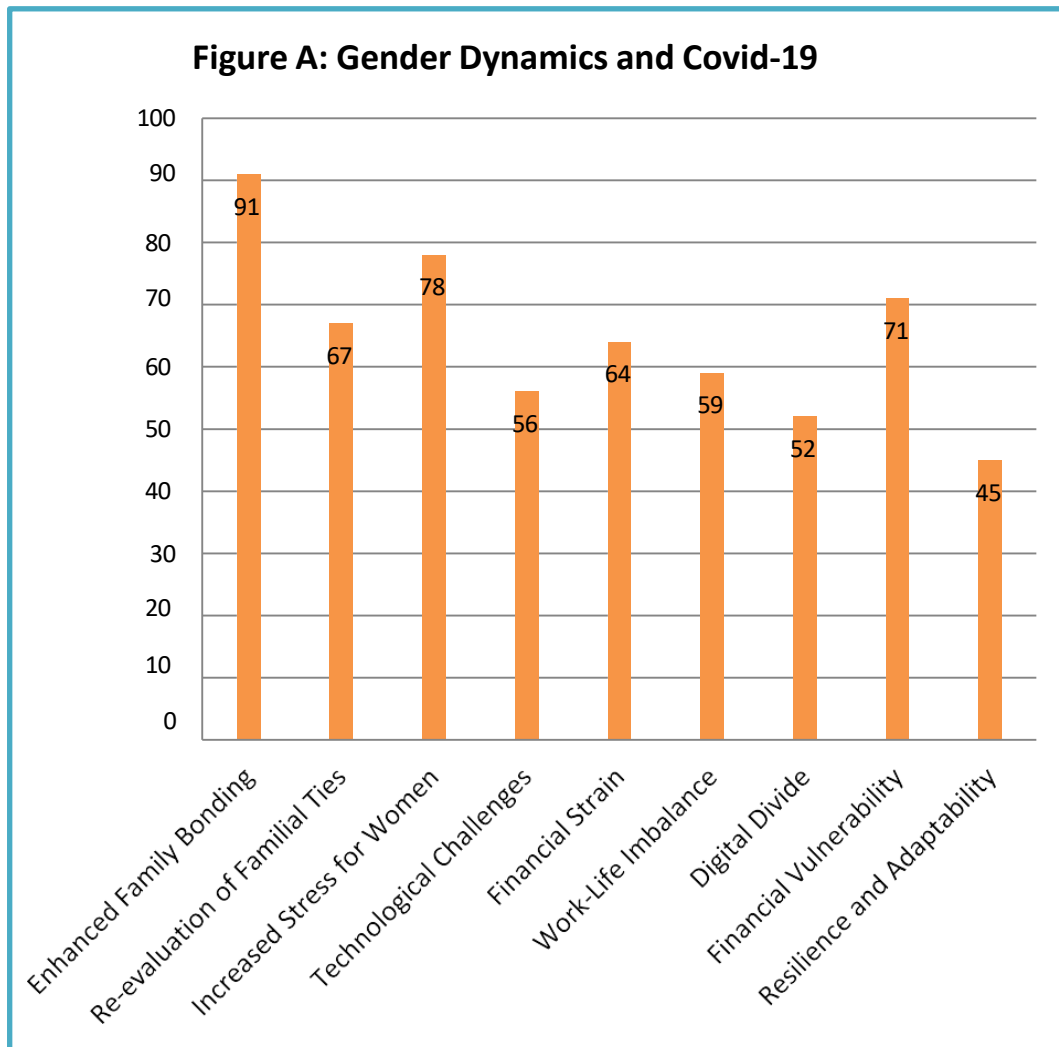
The gender dynamics revealed in the study underscore the need for targeted interventions and support systems to address the specific challenges faced by women in middle-class communities during the Covid-19 lockdown. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for formulating effective strategies that promote the well-being of women and, by extension, the overall health of middle-class communities in Jaipur.

In the data collection, respondents were asked about their choices their option regarding their impacts of Gender issues due to covid-19 and imposing of lockdown therein. The respondents have given more than one options considering the multifaceted impacts of the disease and circumstances created in psychological and social sphere of life of people of targeted samples.

Table 1: Gender Dynamics and Covid-19

Answer(s) of Respondents	% of Respondents
Enhanced Family Bonding	91
Re-evaluation of Familial Ties	67
Increased Stress for Women	78
Technological Challenges	56
Financial Strain	64
Work-Life Imbalance	59
Digital Divide	52
Financial Vulnerability	71
Resilience and Adaptability	45

Table given above delves into the gender dynamics of COVID-19, providing insights into how individuals responded to the pandemic based on their gender. The percentages indicate the prevalence of various dynamics reported by the respondents. The data reveals that a substantial 91% of respondents identified enhanced family bonding as a notable aspect of gender dynamics during the pandemic. This suggests that a significant majority perceived a positive impact on family relationships, indicating a shared experience of strengthened familial bonds amid the challenges brought by COVID-19. Re-evaluation of familial ties was acknowledged by 67% of respondents, indicating a nuanced response to the pandemic's impact on family structures. This finding suggests that a considerable portion of respondents underwent a reflective process, reassessing the significance of familial relationships in the context of the global health crisis. A noteworthy 78% of respondents expressed increased stress for women, shedding light on the gender-specific challenges faced during the pandemic. This indicates recognition of the additional burdens placed on women, potentially related to increased responsibilities in the household or other gender-specific stressors.



Technological challenges were identified by 56% of respondents, emphasizing the gendered aspects of navigating the digital landscape during the pandemic. This suggests that a substantial portion of individuals faced specific technological hurdles that may have varied based on gender. Financial strain was reported by 64% of respondents, indicating a gendered dimension to the economic impact of the pandemic. This finding suggests that a significant portion of respondents perceived financial challenges that may have disproportionately affected individuals of a particular gender. Work-life imbalance was acknowledged by 59% of respondents, shedding light on the gendered experiences of juggling professional and personal responsibilities during the pandemic. This suggests a collective recognition of the challenges individuals faced in maintaining a balance between work and personal life, with potential variations based on gender roles.

The digital divide was noted by 52% of respondents, highlighting disparities in digital access and literacy that may have gender-specific implications. This finding suggests that a considerable portion of respondents recognized challenges related to unequal access to technology and digital resources.

Financial vulnerability, acknowledged by 71% of respondents, underscores the gendered economic vulnerabilities that became apparent during the pandemic. This finding suggests that a significant majority perceived certain gender groups to be more financially vulnerable in the face of the global health crisis. Resilience and adaptability were recognized by 45% of respondents, indicating the diverse ways in which individuals responded to challenges during the pandemic. This finding suggests

that a notable portion of respondents observed gender-specific variations in the resilience and adaptability demonstrated in the face of adversity. In summary, Table 6C provides a nuanced perspective on the gender dynamics of COVID-19, revealing a range of experiences and challenges that individuals attributed to their gender. The findings highlight the complexity of gendered responses to the pandemic, encompassing both positive and challenging aspects across various domains.

Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted various facets of life, compelling individuals to adapt to new realities imposed by lockdowns and restrictions. The impact on socio-economic aspects, mental health, and family dynamics has been substantial, affecting individuals across age groups and genders. The study emphasizes the need to understand the nuanced gender dynamics that unfolded during the pandemic to formulate effective strategies and interventions for the well-being of women in middle-class communities.

Enhanced family bonding emerged as a predominant theme, with 91% of respondents acknowledging a positive impact on family relationships. The forced togetherness during lockdowns contributed to strengthened familial bonds, reflecting a shared experience of resilience and adaptability. Additionally, 67% of respondents recognized a re-evaluation of familial ties, indicating a reflective process regarding the significance of family relationships amidst the global health crisis.

However, the study also brings attention to the challenges faced by women, particularly in middle-class households. A significant 78% of respondents reported increased stress for women, highlighting the additional burdens placed on them due to overburdened household responsibilities and the absence of hired help. The digital divide, technological challenges, financial strain, and work-life imbalance were identified as gender-specific issues, underscoring disparities in access to resources and economic vulnerabilities.

The data suggests that women faced challenges in navigating the digital landscape (56%), experienced financial strain (64%), and encountered work-life imbalance (59%). The digital divide (52%) and financial vulnerability (71%) further accentuated gender-specific implications. Despite these challenges, the study also revealed the resilience and adaptability of women, with 45% of respondents recognizing their capacity to respond positively to adversities.

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