

## COVID-19 LOCKDOWN- A BLESSING OR CURSE?

**Dr. Milind Peshave**

Professor, AISSMS College of HMCT, Pune.

**Dr. Jyoti Peshave**

Associate Professor, BVDU IHMCT, Pune.

### Abstract

Most of us had heard about this word from fiction novels and movies. And no one had imagined that this fiction word would be a reality soon. This period made us feel how inferior and dependent we are on the materialistic pleasures of life. Doctors and psychologists do suggest that this ongoing situation of COVID-19 lock down is not only a social problem, but it is also taking a toll on people's mental health. Such occurrences affect individuals and society on many levels, causing disruptions. This study aims at analyzing the impact of COVID 19 lockdown and how each individual has found his way out to deal with this situation. The findings suggest that the government's decision of COVID-19 lock down for 21 days got overwhelming support from the citizens and they are prepared for the increase in the lockdown period. Maximum time of the lockdown period was utilized in "Contributing with family members in household chores", "Enhancing family bonding" & "Increasing consciousness in personal/work hygiene". "Reduction in noise/air pollution", "Increased sensitivity towards the hygiene and sanitation practices for wellbeing" & "Reduction on unnecessary expenses" are the most impacted positive parameters. "Increased use of social/digital/electronic media" is the most impacted negative parameters.

**Keywords:** Lockdown, Corona, COVID 19.

### Introduction

24th March, 2020, a biggest milestone in the history of modern India! All eyes and ears were glued to the television when PM Narendra Modi was addressing the nation on the backdrop of the pandemic. His address seemed to be a game changer and was shocking to the entire nation while he uttered the words "LOCKDOWN". Till then, most of us had heard about this word from fiction novels and movies. And no one had imagined that this fiction word would be a reality soon. Most of us may have googled the meaning to understand what's coming our way. Initially it seemed to be a relaxing mood, wherein we would be staying at home without travelling through the chaotic traffic and be away from the buzzing city. Soon, this thought of momentary happiness was gradually turning into a nightmare. In due course of time, people who were dying to reach back home had started dying to leave their homes.

The sunshine, soothing breeze, and busy roads were never missed so much by anyone, but in this lockdown period.

This period made us feel how inferior and dependent we are on the materialistic pleasures of life, however, it was a great opportunity to peep within and live the life that we always dreamt for, carefree, stress free, pollution free. What more would one want from life. Although, most of us are working

from home, but in reality we all are also working at home.

Soon we realized that extreme social distancing is the only way available for individuals to stay healthy, and to break the chain of transmission - giving more susceptible population a fighting chance of surviving this pandemic.

Doctors and psychologists do suggest that this ongoing situation of COVID-19 lock down is not only a social problem, but it is also taking a toll on people's mental health. Such occurrences affect individuals and society on many levels, causing turmoil.

COVID-19 lockdown has created fear and anxiety amongst people. Amidst this global panic scenario, COVID-19 has been pondering over deepest corners of everyone's mind and life in general.

This lockdown taught us that these challenges can be overcome by keeping right social distancing, keeping in touch with friends and family via telephone, email or social media. Involving with family and children in various indoor fun activities, household chores, watching, cooking, exercising etc are few of the effective ways to utilize time and keep people together and create positive environment. We need to minimize the negative impact it has on our children by explaining them the facts.

Everyday learning new things, reading and looking after one self is becoming lifestyle now. People have started doing their daily household chores by helping each other in the family. This has developed sensitivity amongst people towards the domestic helpers and other support systems that they rely upon. Importance of hygiene practices is getting followed by people meticulously. Relationships amongst spouses, children, parents, in laws and extended families are becoming better as people are investing in relationships now. People are getting time to know their neighbors from their daily hectic schedules as there is limited access to socialize in the given scenario.

Daily household and luxury expenses have significantly reduced due to lockdown and people are judiciously using the available resources that are required to run a family.

As every coin has two sides, there have been individuals who are taking the advantage of the situation and are doing illicit activities like inflating prices of groceries, vegetables, bread etc. to earn that extra buck. Illegal goods are also been traded at hiked prices.

This study aims at analyzing the impact of COVID 19 lockdown and how each individual has found his way out to deal with this situation.

## Literature Review

Annabelle Timsit (March 2020) states that no social science research will be able to measure the effects of cancellation of millions of events like birthdays, marriages, funerals etc. on a population level. And the impact will depend on an individual's circumstances and individual's resilience. She further adds that in the meantime people may treat this pandemic into an opportunity to make meaningful memories that can mellow down the blow of those missed milestones. This will lead to bring people closer to each other. Thus, such crisis teach people about what really matters and what does not by providing that clarity."

Sfoorti Mishra, (March 2020) suggests that at such times of crisis where social distancing is must, people should try and keep in touch with their friends and family via telephone, email or social media.

Arti Anand, consultant clinical psychologist at Sir Gangaram Hospital, opined to IANS that the results of such pandemic may be multi-fold on the mental health of the masses. She further suggested that activities like meditation, following hobbies, reading and so on can assist to negate the effect of



isolation.

Roma Kumar, Senior Consultant Clinical Psychologist at Max Hospital, tells IANS While stigma and xenophobia may be felt as a social aspect of the outbreak, it may impact the mental health of individuals too.

Kumar mentions that current situation has formed fear and panic creating a feeling of uncertainty amongst people and they hope that the spread will slow down in coming weeks. She further admits that it is a confusing and stressful time for everybody which at times can affect people's mental health. People's mind may get fuelled with any rumors or speculations.

The Economist Times, April (2020) states the condition of number of Covid-19 positive cases has jumped four times in India with the completion of the 10th day in lockdown. Dr Gangakhedkar of ICMR once again stressed that most people were not able to control the spread of disease by those who sat at home and avoided the increase of disease. A study projected by researchers from Shiv Nadar University states that social distancing measures during lockdown is an optimistic scenario to help at slowing transmission and "flattening" the Covid-19 curve".

B.Chandrashekhar ( The Hindu-Telangana), March 2020 states in "Impact of COVID: Bane for many, boon for some" that there is huge impact of coronavirus spread on the economy at large which includes wage loss for millions of workers in unorganized sectors whereas, it has been blessing in disguise for power distribution companies in Telangana which were running in losses as the demand for energy has slided over the period. On the other hand, the lockdown has been boon for many retailers of groceries, vegetables and daily needed goods with most of them making profits by hiking up prices.

World economic forum experts explain how to manage mental wellbeing during COVID-19 as this pandemic has increased mental health problems, abuse, job uncertainty, anxiety, fear etc. It has forced millions of people to maintain social distancing and isolate themselves. Social media, extensive news coverage on this pandemic, unknown future has been the major reasons for the anxiety to rise.

David Robinson ( April 2020) highlights on various threats of contagion that can change our psychological behavior towards people leading us to behave in disrupted manner. He further states that this fear of pandemic makes people become more conservative and less acceptance of their unconventional behavior. People's become harsh in moral judgments and their sexual behavior becomes more conservative.

Centre for Disease Control and prevention has advised various preventive measures to cope up stress and anxiety in the background of this contagion disease. It states various measures to take care of oneself, factors to reduce stress, mental health, behavioral changes of children, elderly and the measures to deal with them. It also summarizes on peoples behavioral reaction to this outbreak and advises various support tips to communities and individuals to deal with this.

Yeshna dindoyal ( March 2020) has blogged on Quarantine life lessons and humanity. She has shared her views on how postponement of exams, Europe trip etc has left her in void and mess. She further narrates that all of us share only religion that is humanity and such crisis bring out humanity out of the people. The world is changing in different ways. It is healing, pollution is declining thus restoring the

# Kalyan Bharati

equilibrium. And at the end of this, the world will heal teaching us so many life lessons.

## Objectives of the Study

1. To understand the perception of people on COVID-19 lock down.
2. To study the utilization of individuals time during the lockdown.
3. To analyze the positive and negative impact of lockdown on people's day today life.

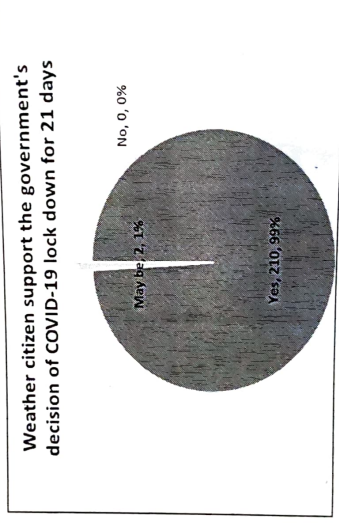
## Research Methodology

The data required for the research was collected using the following techniques:

- **Telephonic Interviews:** The researcher conducted telephonic interviews with the citizens of Pune city to get an insight on the problem under study.
- **Questionnaire:** A questionnaire bearing straight forward and relevant questions was drafted and handed over to the sample of 212 citizens.
- **Sampling Methods:**
  - Stratified sampling
  - Reference or Snowball sampling
  - Cluster sampling

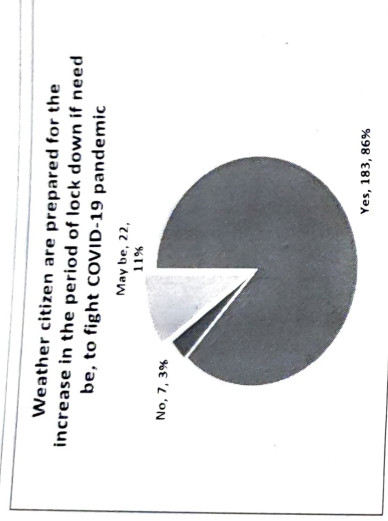
## Findings

- Support to the government's decision of COVID-19 lock down for 21 days



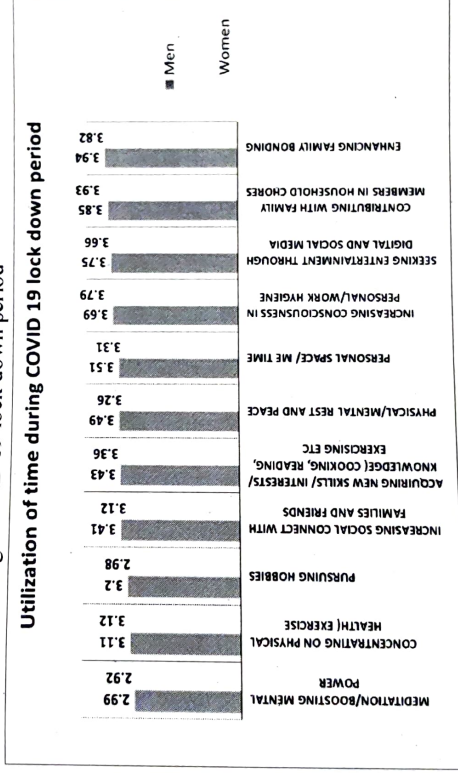
## Findings:

- The government's decision of COVID-19 lock down for 21 days got overwhelming support from the citizen.
- Weather citizen are prepared for the increase in the period of lock down if need be, to fight COVID-19 pandemic



## Findings:

- The citizens are prepared for the increase in the lockdown period over 21 days.
- Utilization of time during COVID 19 lock down period

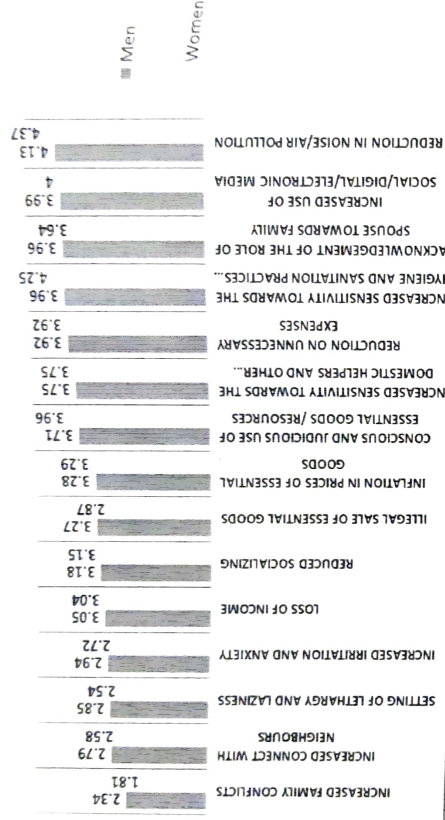


## Findings:

- Maximum time of the lockdown period was utilized in "Contributing with family members in household chores", "Enhancing family bonding" & "Increasing consciousness in personal/work hygiene"
- Physical activities and enhancing mental power through meditation were low on priority.
- Impact of COVID 19 lock down period



## Impact of COVID 19 lock down period



### Findings:

- “Reduction in noise/air pollution”, “Increased sensitivity towards the hygiene and sanitation practices for wellbeing” & “Reduction on unnecessary expenses” are the most impacted positive parameters.
- “Increased use of social/digital/electronic media” is the most impacted negative parameters.
- Overall the lockdown period have greater influence on positive attributes.

### Suggestions & Recommendations

1. It's the need of the hour that the citizens support the lockdown by confining to their homes.
2. Although, it's permitted to go out and shop for essential commodities, it is advised to keep the frequency to minimal.
3. All precautions as prescribed by the WHO should be meticulously followed and social distancing is a must.
4. The government should gradually relax the lockdown in phases to avoid overcrowding of people and should be prepared for any emergency situation.

### Bibliography & References

1. Timsit, A. (2020, March 18th). Corona Virus is causing people to miss once in a life time moments. China.
2. Times, S. M.-E. (2020, April 4th). Living with COVID-19How lives have changed? India.
3. Agast, R. (2020, March 29th). Impact of COVID-19 on everyday worklife. India. Living with COVID-19-How lives have changes? (2020, April 4th). India.
4. Robson, D. (2020, April 2nd). R-BBC Future. UK. prevention, C. f. (2020, April 1st). Stress and Coping.

5. Dindoyal, Y. (2020, March 18th). Covid-19 Quarantine, Life and lessons. India.
6. Banerjee, D. (2020, March 18th). Nature India. India.
7. Henri..Kluge, D. (2020, March 27th). Retrieved from [http://www.euro.who.int/en/home/Mental health and psychological resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic](http://www.euro.who.int/en/home/Mental_health_and_psychological_resilience_during_the_COVID-19_pandemic)
8. Living with COVID-19-How lives have changes? (2020, April 4th). India.
9. Times, S. M.-E. (2020, April 4th). Living with COVID-19How lives have changed? India.
10. Liu, S. et al. (2020). Online mental health services in China during the COVID-19 outbreak. Lancet Psychiat.
11. Chen, Q. et al. (2020). Mental health care for medical staff in China during the COVID-19 outbreak. Lancet Psychiat.