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A cross sectional survey on estimating the prevalence of post-COVID depression in 3rd wave among homoeopathic students of MNR homoeopathic medical college

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Abstract

Depression is the most burning issue in public and has a most substantial effect on the health and wellbeing. COVID-19 pandemic has caused disruptions to the livelihoods of people. It had shown its commendable influence in the psychological health of youth. Because of the impact of covid-19, the prevalence of stress and depression on young generation is been increasing day by day. In this scenario, this study was conducted to find the prevalence of depression among homoeopathic medical students of MNR Homoeopathic medical college of Sangareddy district Telangana.

Using a purposive sampling method, an online survey using PHQ-9 questioner was send to covid positive students (turned positive in last 2 months) of MNR Homoeopathic medical college, Sangareddy were asked to fill the questioner via Google form. The statistical scores for the responses were calculated and analysis was performed.

In this study overall 88% of the study participants are depressed where 20.5% students with minimal depression, 47% students with mild depression, 17.6% with moderately depression 11.7% with moderately severe depression and 2% are having severe depression.

Early screening will help for early detection of depression so that interventions either supportive or medicinal can be provided in the very early stage according to the grades of depression so that we can prevent morbidity and suicide rate of young generation.

Keywords: Depression, students, prevalence, PHQ-9 questionnaire, sangareddy

1. Introduction

Depression is a bipolar mood Disorder ^[4]. It is an accelerated cause of disability around the world and contributes very much to the global burden of disease. The effects of depression can be long lasting or recurrent and can gravely affect a person's ability to function and live an illuminating life. Lack of interest and enjoyment, feeling of worthlessness, reduced energy, and slowness ^[6] and sleep problems are the common symptoms of depression ^[5]. If the symptoms of depression is persisting for 2 weeks, then we have to be cautious and according to the grades treatment if needed to be started immediately ^[2]. Because of covid 19 infection, drastic changes had taken place in each and every student life. A rapid change in the mode of learning from offline to online classes, spending round the clock at home without social interactions and financial crisis which took place within the family had induced stress and due to which most of them to slip into depression.

A study was done by Mr Chaudhuri and group to assess the prevalence of depression and risk factors among adult population of Siliguri subdivision of Darjeeling district, West Bengal. They had done a community based cross sectional study. By this study they found out that 36 percent of study participants are depressed. This study was published in Journal of family medicine and family care in issue 2, April June 2017. By this study we can understand the prevalence rate of depression is increasing every year ^[8].

In a research article titled, "Anxiety and depression in COVID-19 survivors: Role of inflammatory and clinical predictors" published in journal Brain, Behaviour and Immunity In this study they found Covid 19 survivors are presenting with high prevalence of psychiatric sequel like anxiety depression etc. A cross sectional single centre study was done to assess depressive symptoms in patients with covid 19 during the second wave of epidemic in Myanmar by Ye Minn Htun and group. 142 patients are selected for this study, 38.7 percentage of patients are found to have depression.

This study is published in Plos one Journal June 4 2021. In a research Article Titled Global prevalence and burden of depressive and anxiety disorders in 204 countries and territories in 2020 due to the covid-19 pandemic which is published in The Lancet volume 398, Issue 10312, P1700-1712, November 6, 2021. In this study they found SARS-CoV-2 infection rates and reductions in human mobility, were associated with increased prevalence of major depressive disorder and youngsters are affected more than old age people.

Psychiatric consequences to Covid 19 infection can be caused by both immune responses to virus itself or by psychological stressors such as social isolation, concerns about infecting others, psychological impact of severe and potentially fatal illness and stigma.

When a person is in stress, his body will release adrenaline, norepinephrine and cortisol. These hormones make your brain more alert, cause your muscles to tense, and increase your pulse. In the short term, these reactions are good because they can help you handle the situation causing stress. Right amounts of cortisol can be lifesaving. It helps to maintain fluid balance and blood pressure. But when you are in chronic stress the body continuously releases cortisol, and chronic elevated levels can lead to serious issues. Because of Covid-19 pandemic every individual is in continuous stress and once a person get covid infection it will trigger his stress level and can leads to emotional problems such as depression, panic attacks or other forms of

anxiety and worry [7].

Once a person got covid infection his stress levels will increase so in this study we want to know the severity of depression youth is going through and we want to know the prevalence of depression in MNR Homoeopathic students after infecting with covid.

Materials and Methods

In this cross sectional prevalence study using non randomized purposive sampling method by an online survey using PHQ-9 questioner via Google form was send to first, second, third and fourth BHMS students of MNR Homoeopathic medical college, Sangareddy, Telangana State. This study was done on February 2022. Students who turned covid positive between December 2021 and January 2022 months had participated in the study. Their scoring was then calculated, assessed and analyzed by the feedback obtained from PHQ-9 questioner to evaluate the degree of depression.

Table 1: Screening questioner send to students in online mode

Name
Age
Studying in which year of BHMS
When you turned covid positive
Which treatment adopted
Whether hospitalized
Within how many days you had recovered

Table 2: PHQ-9 Questioner

S No	Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?	NO	Sometimes	Alternate days	Almost everyday
	Do you have Trouble in falling or staying asleep, or sleeping too much	0	1	2	3
	Do you feel tired or having little energy	0	1	2	3
	Do you have poor appetite or over eating	0	1	2	3
	Do you have trouble in concentration or things like reading newspaper or watching television	0	1	2	3
	Do you have little interest or pleasure in doing things which you had done previously with lots of interest	0	1	2	3
	Do you feel depressed or hopeless or feeling down	0	1	2	3
	Whether you are feeling bad about yourself or feeling like you are a failure or felt like because of you your family members are suffering	0	1	2	3
	Whether you are restless and moving and speaking so slowly to yourself that other people could have noticed	0	1	2	3
	Do you have thoughts like it would be better to die or trying to hurt yourself in some way	0	1	2	3

Table 3: Grading criteria of depression according to PHQ-9 questioner

Total Score	Grades of depression
1-4	Minimal depression
5-9	Mild Depression
10-14	Moderate Depression
15-19	Moderatly Severe depression
20-27	Severe depression

Results

The study was done in online mode (Google form). Students of MNR Homoeopathic medical college who turned positive between December 2021 to January 2022 months were included in this study. This study was done on February 2022. 77 students participated in this study, where 68

students are depressed in the post covid infection period, in which 14 students were having minimal depression, 32 students with mild depression, 12 students had moderate depression, 8 students presented in moderately severe depression and 2 students had shown severe depression.

Table 4: Prevalence of Depression

S No	Degrees of depression	Score
1.	No Depression	9
2.	Minimal Depression	14
3.	Mild depression	32
4.	Moderate Depression	12
5.	Moderately Severe Depression	8
6.	Severe Depression	2

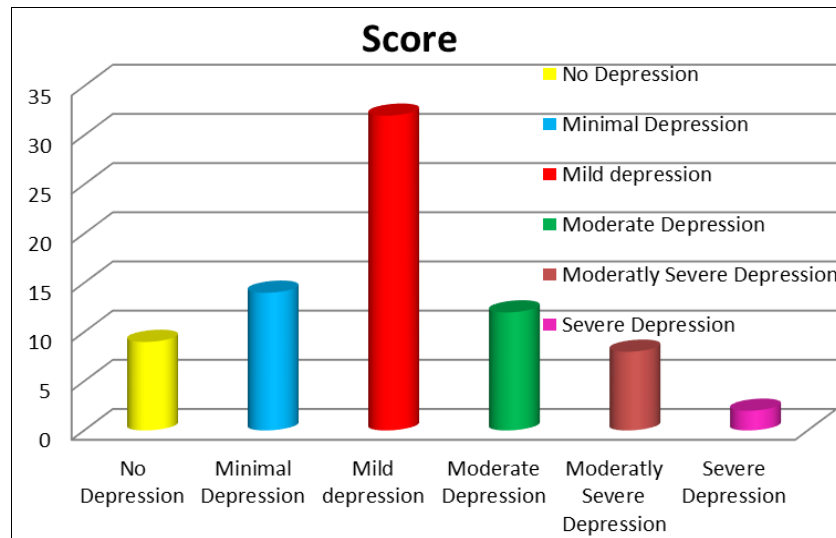


Fig 1: Prevalence of depression

Discussion

Depression is one of the most prevalent and treatable mental disorder of major public health. Because of covid pandemic there is surge in the prevalence of depression among youth. Among 350 students, 77 students turned positive during 3rd wave of Covid which accounts to 22%. Among these 77 students, 88% of students showed various degrees of depression. Minimal depression, mild depression, moderate depression, moderately severe depression and severe depression were found in 20.5%, 47%, 17.6%, 11.6% and 2% respectively.

Among 17 male students 15 were having depression which is 88.23%. In 60 female participants 53 students were having depression which accounts to 88.3%. Therefore, no significant difference in prevalence of depression was found between male and female.

Conclusion

In this study overall 88% of the study participants are depressed. It is observed that covid infection may have caused psychological changes which leads to depression. If not treated promptly will hamper the social wellbeing and lower the quality of life.

Early screening will help for early detection of depression, so that intervention can be assisted by either supportive counseling or necessary medication according to the needs and grades of depression.

Further there is a need to assess the post covid depression among victims in larger scale to help them overcome at the earliest.

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