Original Article

The effect of perceived stress on life satisfaction of general population in the time of COVID-19 Pandemic

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Objective: To examine the effect of perceived stress on life satisfaction of general population during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Methodology: This study included 300 individuals (150 women and 150 men) from general population of Islamabad from May to July 2020. The mean age was 30.96 ± 11.496 years. Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10) and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) were used to investigate the variable of interest. Data analysis were computed on SPSS version 23.

Results: There was high level of perceived stress and low level of life satisfaction among general population. It also found that perceived stress is a significant negative predictor of life satisfaction, higher the level of perceived stress lower the level of life satisfaction ($p<0.001$). There were significant gender difference on the level of perceived stress and life satisfaction. ($p<0.001$)

Conclusion: COVID-19 pandemic increased stress among general public as a result they have low satisfaction with life. (Rawal Med J 202;46:11-13).

Keywords: Covid-19, perceived stress, life satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

A new virus called SARS-CoV-2, made its first appearance in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China in December 2019, which caused an uncommon pneumonia and an acute respiratory distress syndrome. WHO officially declared it a Global pandemic on March 11, 2020 and the disease itself was called COVID-19.[1] Coronavirus is the biggest pandemic in the human population in the 21st century.[2-4] The clinical course of the ailment changes from gentle or even asymptomatic to serious respiratory failure and death.[5] As per WHO, COVID-19 mortality is around 5.2% and even higher in old patients with co morbidities like diabetes, cancer and cardiovascular disease.[6,7]

The quick increment in affirmed cases and deaths has made issues, like stress, anxiety, and depression both in clinical work force and in everybody.[8] Because of its fast spread, solid infectivity, mortality in extreme cases, absence of medication and immunization, COVID-19 and closure of schools and universities it affected the psychological wellness of the overall population.[9,10] Regardless of whether a great many people don't get disease and remain truly well, they regularly experience mental effects.[11,12]

Lot of efforts are being done to recognize affected individuals, control disease, search for a viable antibody and compelling treatment.[13] The psychosocial part of the pandemic isn't as altogether investigated as its clinical angle.[14] Stress and encountering troublesome life circumstances negatively affect human health and well-being.[15] COVID-19 expands the degree of depression, anxiety and stress, and diminishes life fulfillment.[16] The pandemic adds to the expansion of dread and anxiety among society.[17] Individuals experience dread of disease, loss of a relative and dread of contact with individuals who might be contaminated.[18] Numerous fatalities around the globe makes individuals experience stress, anxiety and mood disorders, negatively affecting their mental wellbeing.[19] The present study was aimed to examine the level of stress and life satisfaction and the predictive relationship between stress and life satisfaction.

METHODOLOGY

A total of 300 participants with mean age is 30.96±11.496 years belonging to different family structure and socioeconomic statuses from various sectors of Islamabad were included in the study. We used purposive sampling technique. Every participant was approached at their home. Brief introduction of the researcher and description of the research was explained to them. We used following scales:

Satisfaction with Life Scale is a 5 items scale. The scoring is based on seven-point likert scale (1 - "definitely disagree"; 4 - "neither agree nor disagree"; 7 - "completely agree"). This scale is highly valid and reliable Cronbach's α is 0.87.

Perceived stress scale (PSS-10) was developed by Cohen et al in 1983. PSS-10 contained 10 items. The scoring is based on five-point likert scale (0 - "never";4 - "very often"). PSS-10 has excellent validity and reliability Cronbach's α is ranged from 0.78 to 0.86.

Statistical Analysis: Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS version 26. Data were represented in terms of frequency and percentages.

RESULTS

There were high incidence of high level of perceived stress (59.7%) and moderate perceived stress (27.0%) less number of individuals have low level of perceived stress (13.3%) (Table 1). In case of life satisfaction maximum individuals were at side of dissatisfaction with life

Table 1. Level of life satisfaction and Perceived Stress in COVID-19 pandemic.

Stress	Frequency	%	Life Satisfaction	Frequency	%
Low Perceived Stress	40	13.3	Extremely Satisfied	12	04.0
			Slightly Satisfied	43	14.3
Moderate Perceived Stress	81	27.0	Satisfied	36	12.0
High Perceived Stress	179	59.7	Neutral	07	02.3
			Extremely Dissatisfied	07	02.3
			Dissatisfied	86	28.7
			Slightly Dissatisfied	109	36.3

Table 2. Gender difference in life satisfaction and perceived stress.

Variable	Gender	N	Mean±SD	df	t	Sig
Life Satisfaction	Male	150	19.91±6.601	298	5.047	.000
	Female	150	16.49±030			
Perceived Stress	Male	150	10.99±025	298	-5.447	.000
	Female	150	13.77±717			

Gender difference in the level of perceived stress and life satisfaction indicated that there is higher level of perceived stress in women and low level of perceived stress in men. As a result men have higher the level of life satisfaction and women have low level of life satisfaction. Gender differences are highly significant (p<0.0001) (Table 2).

DISCUSSION

Our results revealed that there was a significant negative predictive relationship between life satisfaction and perceived stress. Due to COVID-19 pandemic there was higher level of stress in general population in all over the world. Individuals were unable to continue their life normally lockdown was there. More woman were affected. The reason behind this is that women are more sensitive toward the perceived social stress, rejection and parting and have low coping abilities, as a result women experienced higher level of stress.

All routine life functioning were disturbed due to spread of Coronavirus. This situation decreases the individuals' satisfaction with their life and enhanced perceived stress in them. Abundant pervious research finding reported that stress and experiencing upsetting life conditions were negatively influenced individual health and well-being.[15,17]

On the basis of current circumstances, COVID-19 pandemic quick spread and adverse impact on well-

being, very little no of researches has been conducted in this regard. One of the recent Turkish study reported that fear of Coronavirus was significantly positively linked with that higher stress and anxiety and significantly negatively related with satisfaction with life.[16]

CONCLUSION

There was higher level of stress among general population, stress was negatively related to life satisfaction. There was significant gender differences in the level of stress and life satisfaction as men had higher level of life satisfaction and female had higher level of stress, low stress in men low life satisfaction in women.

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