

PROS AND CONS ON THE MEASURES TAKEN BY THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT TO CURB THE MENACE OF COVID 19 - A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT:

Aim: This review gives an overview on the pros and cons of the measures taken by the Indian government and also its impact on the public health and economy.

Materials and methods: The review is done by collecting and analyzing the articles from pubmed, google scholar and other government websites and were analysed. Period of the article retrieval ranges from Jan to May 2020 with proper inclusions and exclusions on the articles towards the data.

Results: When the articles were analysed pros outweigh the cons of the measures and had severe impact in the control and spread of Covid 19. Social distancing and lock-down measures were such measures taken with significant reduction in the covid 19 transmission. But they also resulted in certain specific adverse effects like disruption in the supply of basic amenities, fall of economy and unemployment.

Conclusion : We conclude that the public must strictly abide by the government measures since it has resulted in certain unforeseen events, albeit, advantageous results too. Together with the public support, the menace of covid-19 can be put to an end.

KEYWORDS: Covid 19, Hand hygiene measures, Social Distancing, chloroquine prophylaxis.

INTRODUCTION:

CoronaVirus (SARS-CoV-2) is a new pandemic that stormed the nations across the world in the year 2019. It originated in the Wuhan State, China and remains stable in cold conditions. Since the virus is made of fat envelope it is proven that use of hand wash mix with alcohol content is effective in destroying the virus. The virus is spherical or pleomorphic in morphology and is enveloped [1]. Corona uses the same receptor ACE2- as SARS-CoV which spread through the respiratory tract[2]. The envelope of the virus consists of club shaped glycoprotein (spike proteins) which are responsible for causing the infection as they attach themselves to the skin or mucous membrane of the human body. They also consist of single stranded RNA. The virus is a further extension of SARS virus. Person to person transmission has warranted compulsory isolation of patients [3]. Indirect transmission of virus is also possible through use of the same objects or things by different persons where anyone is already infected with the deadly virus. Virus aerosol is in confined space [4] but there are unconfirmed reports that they are in open air also. SARS virus devastated various countries in the year 2003. Coronavirus is similar to SARS in

transmission and symptoms. Implementation of appropriate infection control measures can bring the outbreak to manageable levels and eventually its end [5].

Being a new virus with peculiar traits and features it is being researched as to how to overcome its effect on humanity. It is less virulent in Tamil Nadu and it is being explored whether antimalarial medicines could be served as a prophylactic. Indian Government (both Central and State) has taken strict measures to control Coronavirus. Rapid actions like suspending the issue of visas, and quarantining the incoming travellers have led to reduction in inflow of infection into India. It is also advised to avoid or postpone the official meetings, social gatherings, celebrations and even minimize the crowd for funerals [6]. Quarantine kits and spray machines are being made available in public and private hospitals and use of sanitation and increased frequency of their use is recommended. The challenges faced are such as unauthorized meetings conducted and travel made by the public, without heeding to the Government's advisory and it is accentuated by circulation of fake messages in social media as well. There has also been disruption in the supply of essential items such as milk, vegetables and medicines. Containment strategies are being implemented to curb the spread of Corona. Early screening and large scale testing has also been introduced to monitor the spread of the pandemic through Rapid & Diagnostic (R&D) kits [7]. This review thus gives an overview on the advantages and disadvantages of the government measures to stop the spread of covid disease.

RETRIEVAL OF DATA:

The number of articles collected were about 20. They were collected from search engines like pubmed and google scholar. Articles were also collected from a website called www.covidin.org and covid9india.org. There was also a database called covid warriors to utilize the service of volunteers. The period of article retrieval was from January 2020 to May 2020. The search terms are n-CoV control, covid 19, government measures like advantages and disadvantages. Steps which are important in finalising the data include identifying the objectives, relevant article selection, data compiling, with final analysis and report.

IMPACT ON LABOURERS AND ECONOMY:

It is extremely important to keep the morale of a nation high during trying times and this will inspire people and give them hope. India's early handling of foreign immigrants, handling of migrant workers and inadequate support for industry are debatable issues. It is understandable that when a nation is fighting against an invisible enemy viz; virus, such issues arise in retrospect. Some of them say the unprecedented 21 day lockdown has halted the economic activity and pushed the economy into a deeper crisis even as pain on the employment front looks inevitable [8]. These difficulties are only dwarfed by hardships and devastation faced by millions of workers and daily wage labourers with little economic buffer or welfare safety net. But according to another study it is stated that lockdown was a timely decision and any delay might have escalated the number of cases to innumerable proportions [9].

SCREENING TESTS AND ITS IMPACTS:

Government insists people undergo screening tests as it helps to detect and isolate whoever is affected or show early signs of symptoms. Also appropriate measures are taken such as closure of schools, educational institutions and cancellation of examinations to minimise the risk for students by creating disconnect in transmission of this deadly virus[10]. Also, the Government has mandated download of Aarogya Setu App to trace travel history and forewarn the presence of any afflicted person when we go to any other place. Quarantining the immigrants inter-nation, inter-State and even inter-district have helped in controlling the transmission of disease [11]. It is proven that vertical transmission i.e from pregnant woman to foetus is not possible. But some previous reports say that vertical transmission had occurred in

two cases and were detected. The duo was subsequently recovered on treatment [12]. Since there is possibility of asymptomatic transmission of the virus, persons with certain medical conditions such as diabetics, cardiovascular disease[13] and respiratory diseases should practice strict and standard protocols to control the contact based transmission, which is emphasized in strict terms by the Government [14].

Government had also set protocols on the initial screening and confirmatory tests for covid disease detection. Preferred clinical samples for diagnosis include the nasopharyngeal and oropharyngeal swabs since it mainly affects the respiratory system [15]. The guidelines which are presently in vogue, help in recommending the packaging of samples [16]. These rapid diagnostic kits are being provided by the Indian Government to local authorities for testing people so that they can obtain results in 15 minutes and that would help in better identification of afflicted individuals [17]. There are reports that the rapid test kits gave contradictory results over a period and the imported kits were kept unused and ultimately not put to use due to technical defects. It is reported that we can detect the virus even from stool samples. When we collect the urine sample also we may find some other bacteria which can lead to further drug resistance and loss of immunity [18]. Co-infections with drug resistant bacteria need to be considered to prevent the public who are much more prone to infections [19–21]. Oral pathogens must also to be as a check measure and to stop certain other complications of the upper respiratory tract infections [22,23]. Government has also taken various measures to detect and diagnose the covid positivity. Also various preliminary screening rapid test protocols were also followed to detect the community spread of the virus. The tests are also sensitive, however requires proper training to the technicians so that they can provide reliable results.

PROVISION OF PROPER TREATMENT STRATEGIES:

Anti-malarial drugs are being provided as a prophylactic measure by public and private sectors though there is no confirmed research finding about its validity or correctness. The official malaria control program of our Government has been providing 25% to 30% of chloroquine distribution. The Government is taking strict actions against unofficial drug sellers in domestic markets [24]. Over dosage and indiscriminate use of this medicine i.e.chloroquine could lead to serious side effects which could be avoided now by spreading awareness amongst the public to prevent further catastrophic scenarios at this juncture. To control the misuse of drugs, the Government has decided to ban the unauthorised distribution as well as the production of the hydroxychloroquine drug . Prophylaxis is usually given to people with greater risk of infection so that they can protect themselves from the spreading pandemic. When prophylaxis are being provided we should be sure that the virus does not become resistant to it due to its usage [25–27]. Now acinetobacter baumannii is emerging to be a dental pathogen[28]. People with medical conditions like hypertension and cardiovascular diseases are mostly at high risk of infection and are advised on their hypertensive related medications as CoV entry occurs through the ACE receptors [29].

CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTATION OF HAND HYGIENE PRACTICE IN PUBLIC PLACES:

Government is recommending installation of hand hygiene stations in the front office of every public as well as private sector establishments i.e from kirana stores to district collectorate. The cost of hand sanitisers was costly at the initial days of lock down which could not be afforded by the public. The locally produced alcohol based hand rub solutions are used presently under the supervision of authorities with the guidance of WHO and this has provided some relief to petty shopkeepers [30]. The Government however is also taking measures to install the same in bus and railway stations. They are also implementing multi-model programmes to rapidly ensure availability of adequate quantities of quality hand sanitisers supply

across the country [31]. Proper hand hygiene is considered as the best preventive strategy as implemented by the government [32]. Hand hygiene must also be followed strictly in the dental set-ups too [33]. All health care workers and medical professionals must follow the proper guidelines of handwashing as recommended by the National health organisations [34] [35]. Students should be made aware of the hand-hygiene protocols [36]. Oral manifestations of viral diseases are important in covid 19 transmission and from various other public spots, the government has set the hand-hygiene protocol to be strictly followed at the entry level of each office or shops [37] [38] [39]. Natural products have antibacterial and anti-inflammatory actions which are found to be effective against some oral pathogens, it can also be incorporated in the hand-sanitizers and many governmental organisations have started producing their own indigenous preparations and supplies [40,41].

LIMITATIONS:

In India, there are about 13 crore people who live below the poverty line (BPL). They suffer the most due to lockdown though liberal public distribution has somewhat mitigated their plight. The economy is brought to grinding halt as valuable 60 days or so of productive man days are lost due to lockdown. Daily wage labourers are displaced due to lockdown as their daily wage is reduced to zero [42]. The fall in GDP would have long-term effects on the overall well being of the people. Labourers deciding to migrate to their own State, has put severe strain on them psychologically besides denting the overall morale of the nation. All educational institutions across the nation are shut down and the huge productive learning hours are lost in the process. Students are also low in morale as their academic pursuit is stifled by the pandemic and consequent lockdown. The vicious cycle of the pandemic is such that it has not spared any one sector or sphere of economic activity or society. It has displaced employment of millions and increased the number of people below the poverty line by a few millions. Economy is falling below the normal level [43]. Students are getting affected while educational institutions are facing a massive blow.

CONCLUSION:

This review had given an overview on the various measures taken by the Indian government to curb the covid transmission and to reduce the mortality rates. Though it had major effects in the aim proposed, it had also had a great negative impact on the nation's economy, employment opportunities and public health. Various measures implemented had also rendered a positive impact on reducing the transmission rates. However, the review had emphasized the necessity to follow the guidelines prescribed by the government to free ourselves from the clutches of this covid pandemic.

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