Micro level response to Covid-19 catastrophe in India: A Social Worker's reflection on the Pandemic

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Abstract: This paper tries to carve out niche of short ethnomethodical research, experienced by a Social Worker during the Covid-19 pandemic. This narration enumerates disorder, distraction, and discoveries to cope this novel situation. However, it has also offered moments of optimism and insight as Social Workers also witness acts of courage and cooperation. It has given us raison d'être to take a break, amidst the chaos, and take account of it. Thus, the role of professionals such as doctors, Medical Social Worker, Teachers becomes very crucial. Consequently, this research enumerates and exhibits the value of spontaneous practices linked with qualitative inquisitions.

IndexTerms – **Covid-19, pandemic, social worker, reflection, distraction, discoveries.**

I. INTRODUCTION

The advent of the pandemic Covid-19 has given us the opportunity to retrospect each every aspects of life. The problems to the human worlds are not new. Problem is bound to occur. The history had witnessed human sacrifices, sometimes man made, sometimes natural. It is the response to the problem that makes us different. The preexisting social problems and unable to deal with those problem are like self-suicidal. Things go even worst when 'we together' (thesis & anti-thesis) aggravate the problem in spite of having real intension to solve it. With the disappearance of the disease, what really important was the attitude, opinion, and perspective to deal with the disease, of course the technically matters the most. Illustratively, the low death rate in Japan, Taiwan, Singapore and South Korea is due to their living habits such as greetings from distance, sneezing etiquette, wearing mask etc.

The pre conditions that existed before the arrival of Covid-19 in India should be analyzed which made things go bad to worst while dealing with the disease. Just before the advent of corona virus, India was struggling with the massive protest against Citizen Amendment Act (CAA) & National Register of Citizen (NRC). The problem caused as the section of minority community feels insecure under the rule of majority backed and ruled government. The health parameters and social confrontation that had been designed in the various societies till date seems to be useless to some extent. Some countries earlier considered themselves 'developed'; some in the process of 'developing' and some unfortunates are looked down as underdeveloped countries. Considering the case of Italy where they boast upon some world ranking on providing better Health conditions to its citizen as compare to the rest of the world. The small virus has made these developed nations to kneel downed, including United States of America and England. In India this pandemic was invaded mainly by the countries like United Kingdom, United States of America, Thailand, Philippines, Italy, Canada, Indonesia, and Myanmar. The pandemic not only arose Health issues throughout the world but also Social, Economical, Political and Religious issues as well. The human world was not ready for pandemic, neither the Social Work discipline. Social Work disciplines always strive for giving best social services to the people. Apart from understanding the various problems that arose out of recent Pandemic Covid-19 reflecting upon the problems from Social Work intervention techniques may help the frontline workers and it will support them. This essay tries to carve out the intervention areas of the social work.

The pandemic which was a health issues, now also has sigficantly become, Social, Economical, and Political as well as religious problem in India. 1. Social- recently those who recovered from the infection were subjected to social stigma by their own communities. 2. Economical- In last midyear, Indian Government had already withdrawn a huge sum of money from its central bank of India which was kept to encounter the emergency situation. The lockdown proves havoc on the daily wage earners and migrants workers too. 3. Political- The non transparency in showing the numbers of Covid-19 cases due to vested interest. Power to know the exact cause of death. But lacking the use of wisdom to use the power to curve this pandemic. 4. Religious- Prof. Y. N. Harari believes that the widespread of hatred between different segments may be the greater problem than the disease itself. Jamaat , victimization of minorities in the false accusation of Covid-19. Tibetan died after returning from the United States. Social Stigma has caused aggravated the pain; consequently, a case of Muslim man hanged himself despite being tested negative. Since he returned from the international Islamic congregation popularly known as Tabelique Jamaat of Markaj Nizammudin. Where media made much hyped that he has to suffer intense social discrimination. Now the uninterrupted running of the media, targeting a particular minority community to the extent that insecurity and fear looms around them. Forcing the individual to go for quarantine despite being healthy by the administration. And, eventually their own community where he lived. Eventually, hatred rise to the extent that some hospitals denied admission to the Muslims, some segregated Muslims patients from Non-Muslims. Now, reflecting on this scenario, few questions are to be answered. Can there may be any social work intervention. If yes, what it could be? Before Social Work interventions, diagnosis of the problem should be done.

II. PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

Confinements may leads to psycho social problems too. Infodemic- The influx of too much information on particular issue or any situation. This creates the individual to dilute, delusion and sometimes diversion from the basic knowledge of the problem. This may happened in the case of cronavirus itself. Sometimes the influx of unwanted and undesirable knowledge aggravates the

problem rather than solving it. The news of drinking Sanitizers or alcohol based disinfects killed the individual before the diseases can do any harm to them.

Psychological support to the care gives is very important and social workers need to understand the role and areas of intervention.

III. ROLE OF SOCIAL WORKER

As a result Social Worker has to work with different care givers- Identification of need based work in different sector, Type of Worker having specialized skill and knowledge, range of Care giving Team, Managing and Evaluating the work done in the given setting. Interventions of the social work- In such a disaster situation, namely; Dealing with unhealthy coping mechanism ; How to keep oneself Healthy; Proper Ventilation; Providing Psycho-social support. Running away because no reassurance given to them. Protecting and promotion of psycho-social support; The use of manpower by Volunteering; In Drug de-addiction- Since Men are more affected- chance factor, men travel outside more than the female; Care to Old Age- WHO clearly speaks about the aged people are more prone to Covid-19. How, Express the care and support to them by talking and resolving their basic needs such as feeding habits, Medicines, Physical support (if any); How you can do it by empathizing the conditions of the Old age People like, habits of wearing of Mask; observing home based rituals and culture and spirituality; what is the best way inscribed in one's religious books and one can watch past memories pictures, albums, videos and cherries the old memories. Not talking much about the Covid-19 with the Old age people will help them to live normality. One needs to understand the differences between getting prepared for the crises in a healthy way and making all other insecure about a crisis.

8. Dealing with Domestic Violence- There is sharp rise during this lockdown area. How to maintain Healthy Life Skills Habits that needs to be adopted in daily basis: 1. Watching movies, Creative Ideas-story telling, playing indoor games 9depends on the living condition) Connect with the family and friends, Follow 2. Immunity boosting – by Food, by Steam, by remaining actively involving with the family. 3. Connecting with the Personal and Professional. 4. Referral Services- Connect with the NGOs working nearby, Supporting the Police and Administration in all possible way .and first by reaming in home, of course. 5. Regular Exercises, Yoga & Music - For boosting energy and remain active. 6. Opportunity to learn and Adopt- In front of the Social Worker peoples are at pathetic situations. They may be dying or sometimes you cannot do anything during the crisis situation. 7. Relaxation Techniques- Meditation techniques are very important. There are various ways. Various Hospitals have the facilities to take power nap. Breathing Techniques may also can help during the crisis situation. 8. Dealing with the Marginalized Group- Community participation though volunteer donation or forced donation. Community which are already marginalized and the government attitude and behavior is not favorable. Rumors' are born to happen. They don't have faith on government missionaries. Why? because they are not been given certain privileges which other community or religion is enjoying. Now that community starts feeling insecure towards. Targeting certain group, communities or certain section society members leads to distract from the underperformance or brutal decision on the lack planning. So in order to distract they blame certain communities for supporting the crisis. This is more fatal because when the government really wants to intervene and wants genuine participation than the non-cooperation. During polio eradication program, there are hurdles in its implementation as and lots of cases had lots of extra resistant houses because certain religious group does not have faith on the governance system. The Capacity Building of Local people during the disaster time are very important. The various stakeholders and their common problems are as narrated below;

IV. DOCTORS AND POLICEMEN

They are the frontline workers during the pandemic crisis. So, the reflection and identification of the stress in terms magnitude and Source is important to deal with it. For example whether the stress is due to Infrastructure, Communication, Logistics, untimely eating food, water etc. Anger management techniques should be very effective during the burnouts. Sometimes the reaction is more than the needed during the family time- identifying the source and speaking to the various platforms may help us to cope up the emergency situation.

Ventilation- Share your feelings may release the stress, Confidence level, and strengthening the defenses, regular exercises by using sing you tube channels. Burn out situation- No results, No cooperation, less infrastructure,

Threat- The lockdown has caused more stress among the masses, consequently, people are more Stressed and more livelily to go for alcohol and Substance abuse. As a result, people waiting outside the liquor shops are seen.

Leisure time utilization – Spend time with the family and children, calling the relatives on the leisure time is very important otherwise relatives will call them at your peak hours. Dancing, playing or singing with the children and family may release our stress and increases the strength.

Religion and Spirituality - Praying may help during the time of emergencies releases the stress.

Relaxation Techniques- Laughing on jokes, doing yoga, Asana, Switching off the mobile numbers, watching comedy based movies. Coping Mechanism Tool for the front line workers- First need to develop and apply then only come to know the exact reliability. Source of stress should be understood correctly. Even they really need counseling or they need some physical or manpower help. Social Worker needs to understand it. Cognitive Behavior Technique for the Corona virus patients, muscles relaxation techniques, massages, hair oiling, counting number from one to 100 and then the backwards. Nurses, health workers, Drivers, Staff- They sometimes lives outside the home so that they can reduce the risk of transmitting to the family and relatives. To handle the stress and crises times makes things bad to worst.

Handling Psychological Crisis- May not feel like eating, reduced sleep, early wakening, fearful environment, feeling of constant pressure. These increase the irritability.

What are applied Skills needed from the Social Worker- The frontline workers who are working in the crisis situation are seen more prone to dreadful disease. The use of costly sanitizers and behavioral adaptation also proved to be very challenging in developing country like India. Even some cases of sanitizer burns are also happened. Online courses are the serious threat of online spying also. Now a person's identity and secrecy is at stake.

Aarogya Setu - Various innovations in digital and computer world had helped to encounter the problem. Like, Government of India launched Aarogya Setu mobile app which aimed to educate & advise, inform, by contact tracing, in addition to self-assessment test based on Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) guidelines. Also, it can monitor the movement of the

individual by the integration of e-Pass system. App calculates the risk of infection by securely exchange the digital signature of their travel history, interactions; recency and proximity, including time, proximity, location and duration. Dr. S.K. Mandal (2020), emphasis for developing outcome based learning in Social Work. No rote learning method will work in the field of social work practicum, without any skill or purpose.

Engagement. Equip Student with the digital Knowledge and Skill. In Social Work if educators do not develop skills, no education is complete. How to develop those "SKILL" which is not available in the goggle or any other pedagogy. So the emphasis is to develop the skill not the information among the students. The other important aspects among Indian education system are to, how one can develop attitude and behavior. How should be the mechanism to develop continuous improvement and upgraded knowledge and skill? The biggest challenge during the lockdown is, "How to Test those Skills."? If given a societal problem, how those Skills can be used by the students "NOT what Student knows but what student doesn't know?" The Social Work educators should develop self improvement learning. Proper initiatives to encourage the student to lifelong learning which ultimately become more effectively and efficient. As a teacher what I should do that every student should be engaged in Social Work education. The basis of designing the teacher student ratio should be aptly adopted for the quality learning. In an ideal condition the best ratio is the 1:1. Most of the time all variable is the dependent on the student's learning style. Educator's can adopt Bloom's Taxonomy of asking question during lockdown period. It can be done by using the technology by setting various milestone of learning evaluation by asking pertinent questions whether it's related with social work theory or field work assessment called as personalized learning. The use and development of the technology so that the teaching should enhance skill of the student. It is very challenging and important to reinforce students learning during lockdown period. There should be clear approach towards developing the learning outcome; consequently, assessment should be more qualititative rather than quantitative. Even educators should learn to gather data about student's competence. Evaluation should be based on the skill which we want to develop in the student. Question and Answer should match the Skill that we want to judge in the student. Learner –learning style of the learner. Module based learning for the student should be there. Accreditation based learning. Personally, there are various drawbacks of the online learning, but this is the need of the hour. Still, many questions hammer the educators such as, how to motivate students continuously to learn effectively; how to check students whose video participation has been switched off and he is away from the learning process; which resources will serve educators purpose of learning will be a herculean problem; how to motivate educators for taking online classes, in spite of lack of resources. Not good for the kinesthetic learners; where does the learner will develop the skill by doing the task such as e-content designing.

Conclusion

Indeed the disruptions created by the pandemic were very sudden. In spite of kneeling down in preparing the vaccine of covid-19; various discoveries and courage makes the human life hopeful for future consequences. Though, empathy during social stigma is the need of the hour. Discovering and identifying the problem correctly and progressing should be part of this contingency.

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