



Burnout of doctors during COVID-19 pandemic

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Abstract

When any new disease spreads most people do not have the immunity to fight against it and it spreads faster causing a high mortality rate. It spreads without any control. An epidemic is a spread of disease within a community or region within a specific time. Whereas Pandemic is an epidemic that spreads throughout the world crossing international borders and affects people all over the world. A pandemic is a global outbreak of a disease. In March 2020 Corona Virus emerged as a pandemic and took the lives of millions of people. The people affected most and who lost their lives were the health care professionals like doctors, nurses, and paramedics. The pandemic created chaos, and confusion among the health workers and the public. The health care professionals were not aware of the medications to suggest, or knowledge of mutating viruses when thousands of people with COVID-19 symptoms were attending hospitals to save their lives. While performing their duties in the COVID-19 wards, and hospitals they got exposed to the virus and lost their precious lives. All government hospitals were running short of sanitizers, and masks PPE kits. This resulted in burnout among health workers. Burnout is a state of arose due to prolonged stress due to physical mental and emotional exertion. The present research study is intended to find out the burnout of doctors during pandemic in relation to their physical and mental health, provision of stipends during the pandemic, material facilities in the hospitals, and availability of medicines.

Keywords: COVID-19; pandemic; doctors

1. Introduction

When any new disease spreads most people do not have the immunity to fight against it and it spreads faster causing a high mortality rate. It spreads without any control. An epidemic is the spread of disease within a community or region within a specific time. Whereas Pandemic is an epidemic that spreads throughout the world crossing international borders and affects people all over the world. A pandemic is a global outbreak of a disease.

An infectious microbe with nucleic acid surrounded by the coat of protein is called a virus. The virus cannot grow by itself. It needs a host to develop. Corona virus belongs to a family of viruses that cause cold and flu and acute respiratory syndrome. SARS & MERS virus also belong to the corona virus family. In March 2020 corona virus emerged as a pandemic and took the lives of millions of people. The people affected most and who lost their lives were the health care professionals like doctors, nurses, and paramedics.

Present research articles aim to find out the burnout of doctors during pandemics concerning their physical and mental health, provision of stipends during the pandemic, material facilities in the hospitals, and availability of medicines.

1.1. Research Overview

1. Shabbir Amanullah and Rashmi Ramesh Shankar (2020) researched the topic entitled "The Impact of COVID-19 on Physician Burnout Globally: A Review" The researchers analyzed the factors contributing to burnout amidst the pandemic; It also suggests some intervention programs for medical practitioners. A systematic review was performed using the database Medline and Embase (COVID-19) to search for relevant papers on burnout, pandemic, and healthcare workers. They concluded that increased workload and sleep deprivation lead to increased burnout. They also said that conclusions cannot be made from a few studies. On medical professionals burnout.

2. Ruchira W Khasne, Bhagyashree S Dhakulkar, Hitendra C Mahajan, and Atul P Kulkarni (2020) worked on Burnout among Healthcare Workers during COVID-19 Pandemic in India: Results of a Questionnaire-based Survey. The researchers have taken Copenhagen Burnout Inventory and administered it to HCWs looking after COVID-19 patients. They found 44.6% personal burnout, 26.9% work-related burnout, and 52.8% pandemic-related burnout. Female doctors had more burnout rate than male doctors.

3. Menon, G. R., Yadav, J., Aggarwal, S., Singh, R., Kaur, S., Chakma, T., & Panda, S. (2022) Conducted research on " Psychological distress and burnout among healthcare workers during COVID-19 pandemic in India—A cross-sectional study". The main objective of the study was to study burnout levels and factors associated with psychological distress among health workers. A cross-sectional study was conducted in 12 cities in 10 states. General health Questionnaire -GHQ-5 and levels of burnout were assessed using the ICMR-NIOH Burnout questionnaire. Multivariable logistic regression analysis was done .52.9% of participants had psychological distress due to long hours of work.

2. Data

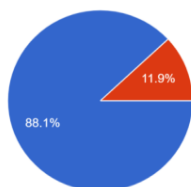
2.1. Research Methodology

- **Type of research:** This research is descriptive survey research.
- **Sampling technique:** Random sampling technique was used to collect the data for the research.
- **Tool:** Questionnaire was prepared by the researcher. It has 24 items which are close-ended.
- **Data collection procedure:** The researcher prepared a questionnaire and Google form link was shared with the doctors to collect the data.

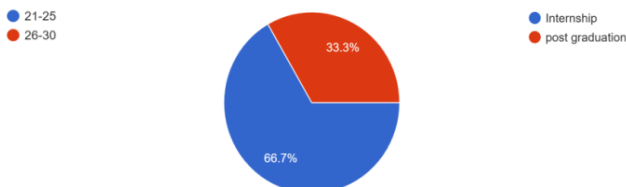
2.2. Participant information

- **Age:** The participants were between the age group of 21 to 30 years
- **Sample size:** It consists of 42 doctors from various colleges in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.
- **Population:** It consists of health workers who are working in hospitals.
- **Sample:** It consists of Postgraduate students who are pursuing various PG courses in government and private hospitals and MBBS students who are doing their internships in various hospitals.

Age
42 responses

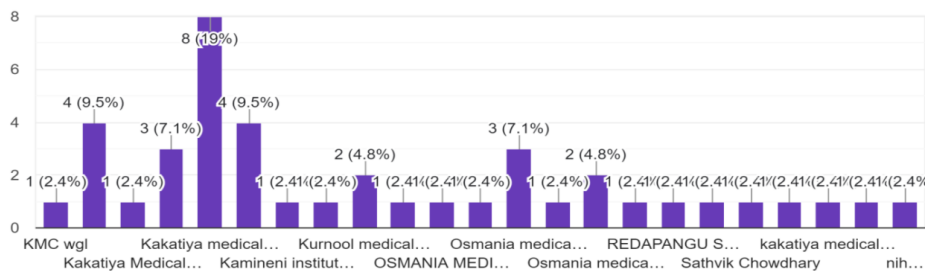


Course pursuing
42 responses



Name of the Medical college

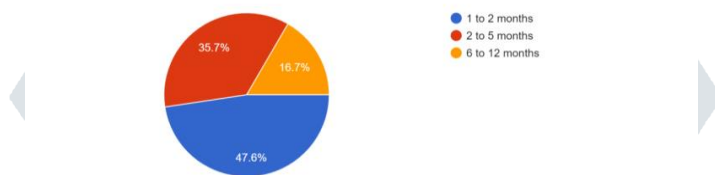
42 responses



2.3. Participant responses

Duration of work in Covid 19 ward

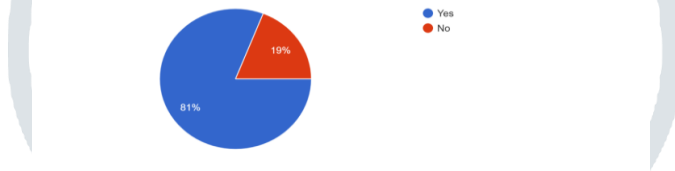
42 responses



Respondents were asked about the duration of work in COVID-19 wards. 47.6 % of respondents said that they worked for one to two months in COVID-19 wards. Whereas 35.7 % of doctors said they worked for two to five months and 16.7 % said that they worked for six to twelve months. Menon, G. R., Yadav, J., Aggarwal, S., Singh, R., Kaur, S., Chakma, T., & Panda, S. (2022). Also revealed that long hours of work lead to burnout in healthcare workers during COVID-19.

Did the hospital provide safety measures for doctors?

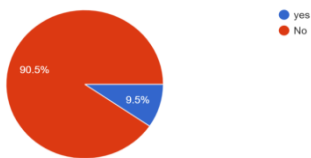
42 responses



When doctors were asked about the safety measures provided to them 81% of doctors said they were provided with safety measures to work in COVID-19 wards and 19% of doctors said they were not provided with PPE kits, sanitizers, and masks.

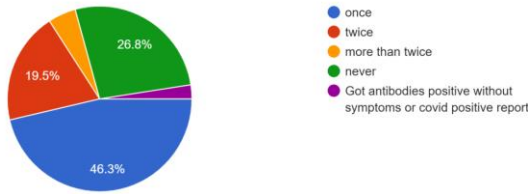
Did the hospital have sufficient equipment and medicines to cater to the needs of patients?

42 responses



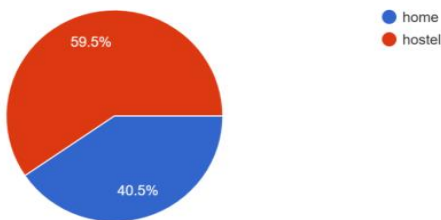
When the doctors were asked about the sufficiency of equipment and medicines in the hospitals during COVID-19, 9.5% of doctors said hospitals have sufficient equipment and medicines whereas 90.5 % of doctors said that the hospitals don't have sufficient equipment and medicines.

Were you tested positive at any time?
41 responses



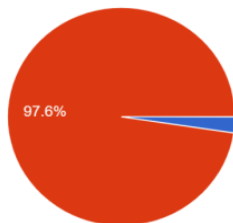
When asked about their contact with COVID-19, 46.3% of doctors said that they tested positive once during their service in the COVID-19 ward and 19.5% of doctors said they were tested positive twice and 26.8 % of doctors said that they were not tested positive.

Were you staying at
42 responses



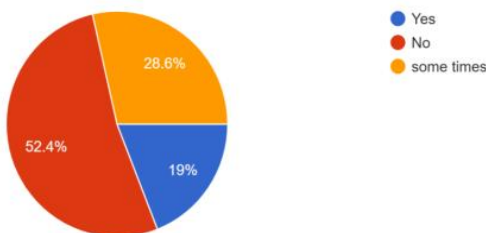
When the doctors were questioned about their stay, 59.5% of doctors said that they were residing in hostels while performing their COVID-19 duties and 40.5% of doctors said that they were residing at home.

Are you married?
42 responses



When questioned about the marital status of the doctors, 97.6 % of doctors said that they are unmarried 2.4% of doctors said that they are married.

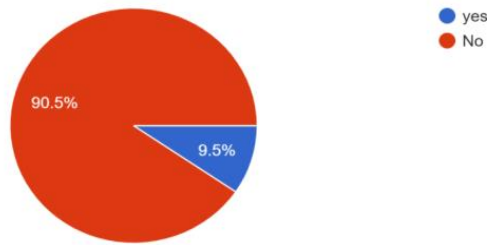
During the time of pandemic did you regret choosing this profession ?
42 responses



When asked whether they feel regret for choosing the medical profession during a pandemic, 19% of doctors said yes they do regret choosing a medical profession and 52.4% of doctors said they do not regret choosing a medical profession. Whereas 28.6% of doctors said that they regret some times.

Did you get your regular stipend on time?

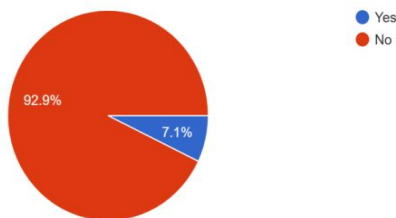
42 responses



When the doctors were asked about the stipend they get, 90.5% of doctors said that they did not get a stipend during a pandemic and 9.5 % of doctors said they got it.

Were you paid extra for doing Covid duties?

42 responses

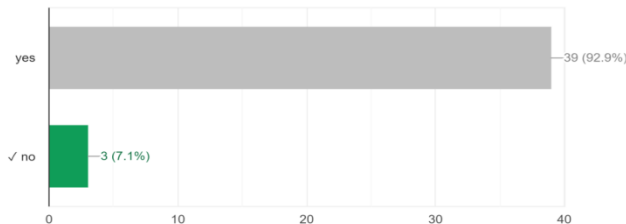


When the doctors were asked about the extra payment declared by the government, 7.1% of doctors said that they have received extra payment and 92.9% of doctors said that they have not received extra payment for COVID-19 duties.

The following questions were asked to collect the data and the doctors responded in the following way.

1. I often felt physically and mentally drained during my Covid duties.

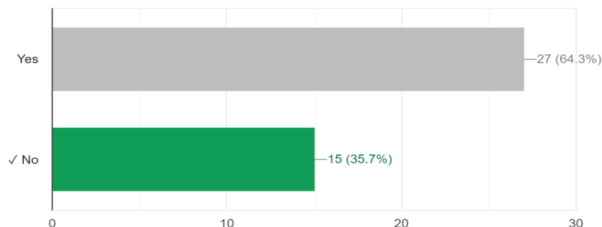
3 / 42 correct responses



92.9% of doctors said that they were physically and mentally drained during COVID-19 duties and 7.1% of doctors said no they have not.

2. I often get angry over little issues while at work

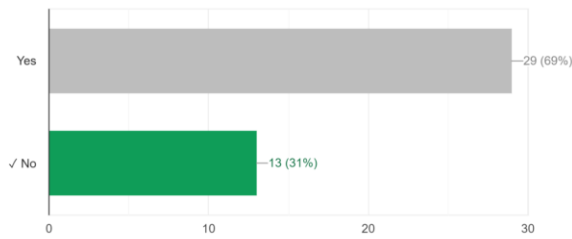
15 / 42 correct responses



64.3% doctors said that they were getting angry about little things during their duty. Whereas 35.7% of doctors said that they were not angry at little things during work.

3. I often experienced headache

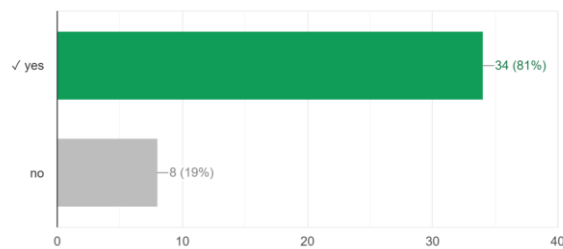
13 / 42 correct responses



69% of doctors said that they have experienced headaches during their COVID-19 duties whereas 31% of doctors said they didn't experience any headache.

4. My family members feel proud of me because i work at Covid ward.

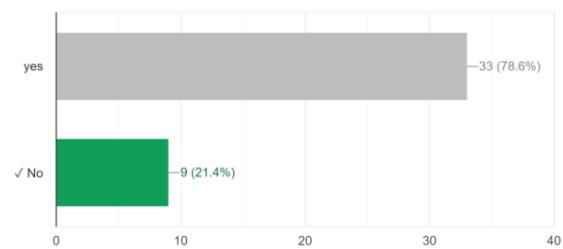
34 / 42 correct responses



81% of doctors said that their family members were proud of them for working in the COVID-19 ward where as 19% of doctors said that they were not feeling proud.

5. I often like to talk about things not connected with my job

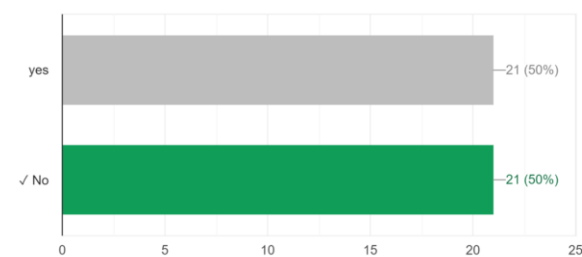
9 / 42 correct responses



78.6% doctors said that they do like to talk about things not connected to their job during COVID-19 whereas 21.4% of doctors said they like to talk about their job during COVID-19.

6. I often feel slight difficulty in breathing during my duty

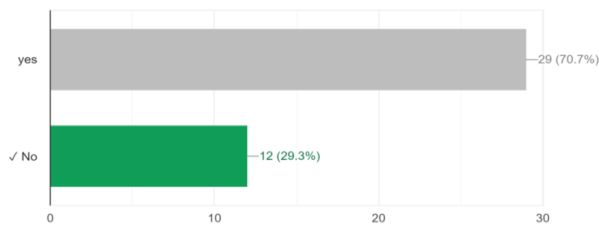
21 / 42 correct responses



50% of doctors said that they felt slight difficulty in breathing while performing COVID-19 duties and 50% of doctors said they didn't feel any breathing difficulty during their COVID-19 duties.

7. I often seek other doctors help for illness.

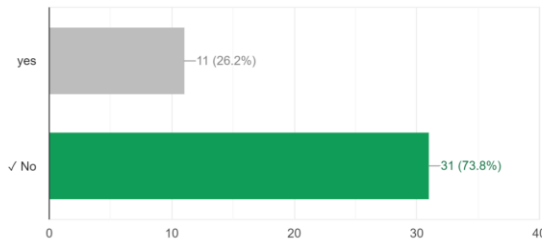
12 / 41 correct responses



70.7% of doctors took the help of other doctors and 29.3% of doctors said they performed duties themselves without the advice and help of other doctors.

8. I am frequently bothered by night dreams

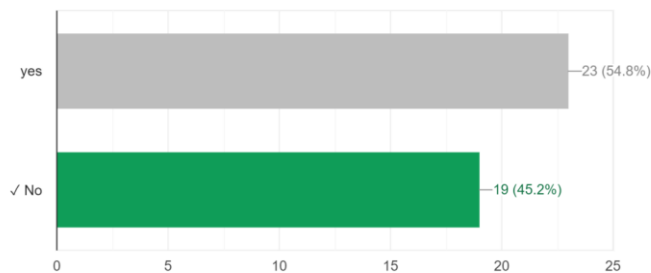
31 / 42 correct responses



26.2% doctors responded that they were bothered about their night dreams while performing COVID-19 duties in the wards. Whereas 73.8 % of doctors said they did not get any dreams.

9. I usually remain normal at home but I feel uneasy and tired at work

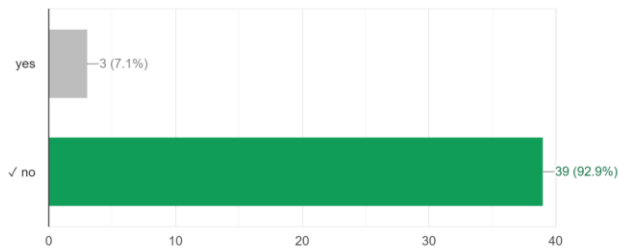
19 / 42 correct responses



54.8% doctors said that they were normal at home but felt uneasy and tired at work .45.2% doctors said they were normal at home and at the hospital performing covid duty.

10. I often feel stomach pain

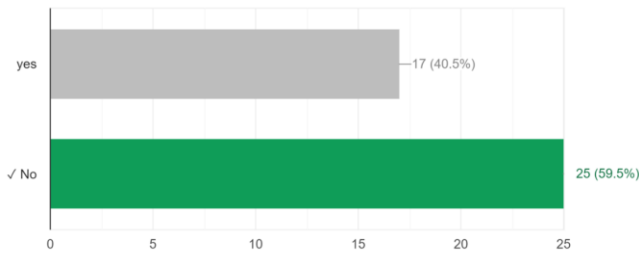
39 / 42 correct responses



7.1 % of doctors experienced stomach pain during covid duties and 92.9% of doctors did not feel stomach pain.

11. I am often worried about work related problems while at home

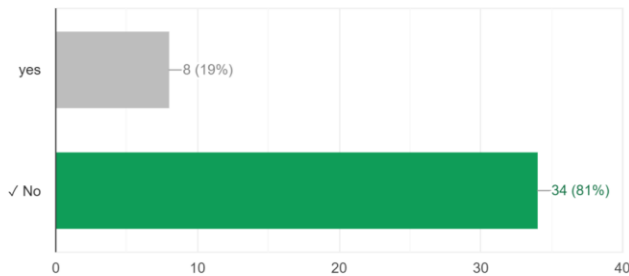
25 / 42 correct responses



40.5% doctors said that they were worried about work-related problems while at home and 59.5% of doctors were not worried about work-related problems.

12. I often feel trembling in my hands and legs while working .

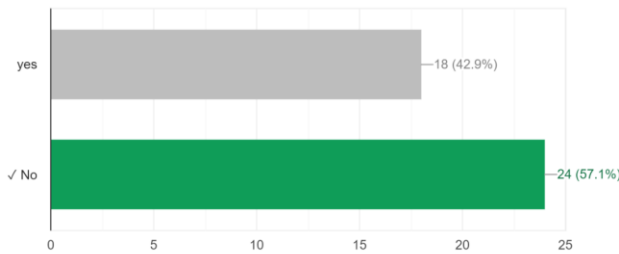
34 / 42 correct responses



19% of doctors said that their hands were trembling while performing COVID-19 duty and 81% of Doctors said no such symptom was found in them.

13. often lose my temper over job related matters

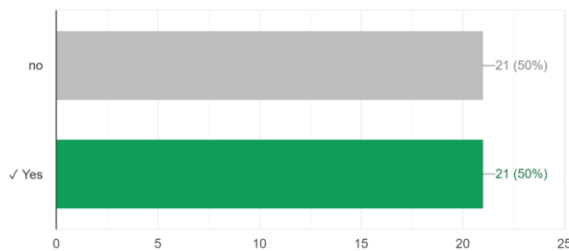
24 / 42 correct responses



42.9% doctors said that they lost their temper over job related matters while 57.1% doctors said they did not feel in such a way.

14. I feel mental satisfaction with this service

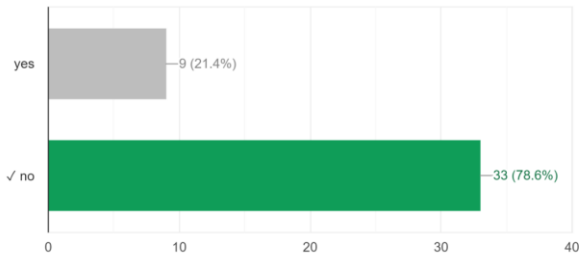
21 / 42 correct responses



50% of doctors said that they are mentally satisfied performing COVID-19 duties and 50% of doctors said no such mental satisfaction was found during their service.

15. some times my blood pressure tends to be very high or very low.

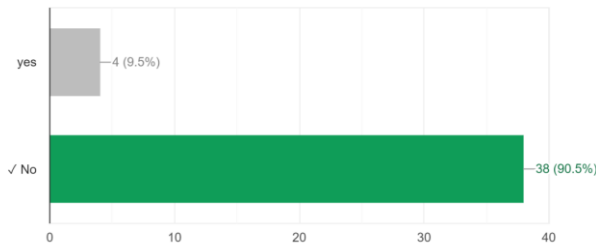
33 / 42 correct responses



21.4% doctors said that their blood pressure was high or low during their service at the COVID-19 ward and 78.6% of doctors said no such variation was found.

16. I have started taking intoxicants too much

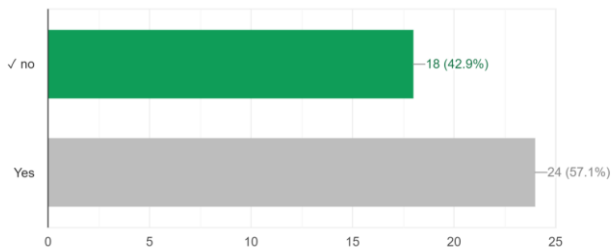
38 / 42 correct responses



9.5 % of doctors said that they took too many intoxicants and 90.5 % of doctors said they did not take any intoxicants.

17. I frequently do not have sound sleep.

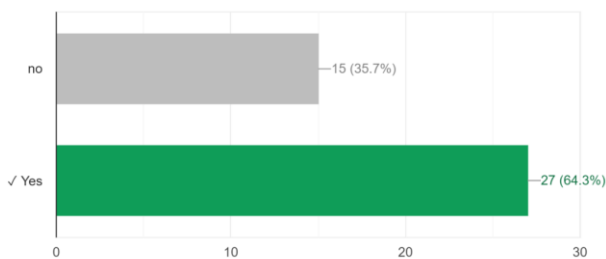
18 / 42 correct responses



57.1% of doctors said that they did not have sound sleep during COVID-19 duties and 42.9 % of doctors said that they had sound sleep. Shabbir Amanullah and Rashmi Ramesh Shankar's (2020) study also revealed sleep deprivation leads to an increased burnout rate among medical professionals.

18. I feel encouraged and happy with my profession

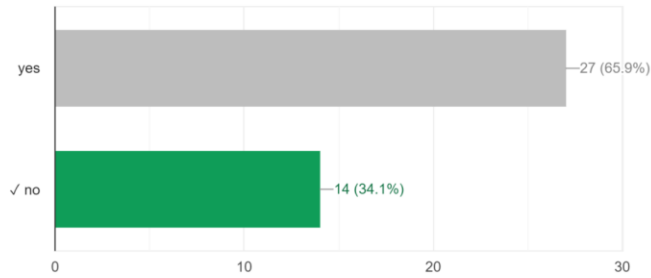
27 / 42 correct responses



64.3% of doctors said that they feel encouraged and happy in their profession whereas 35.7% of doctors said that they are not happy with their profession.

19. I am loosing appetite/over eating due to my work schedule

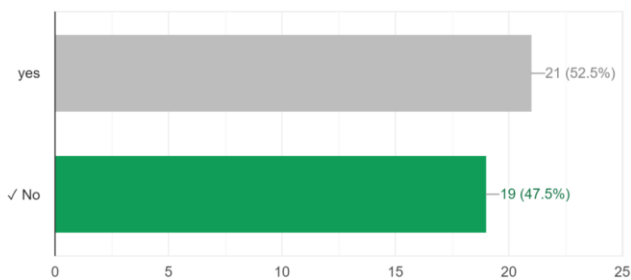
14 / 41 correct responses



65.9% of doctors said that they were losing their appetite due to work schedule.34.1% of doctors said they are not loosing appetite.

20. I feel that my job is harming my health

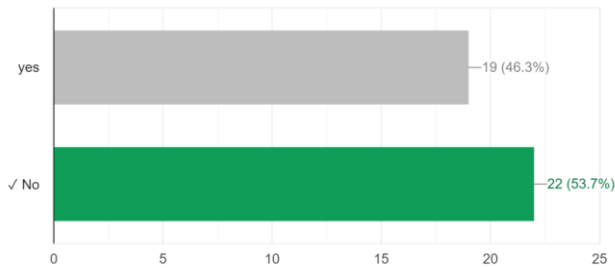
19 / 40 correct responses



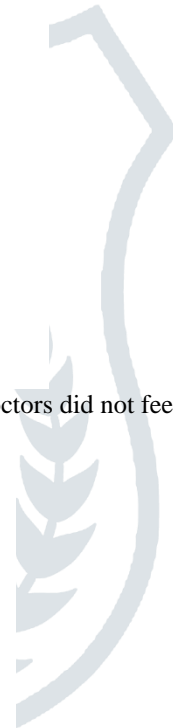
52.5% of doctors felt that their job is harming their health, while 47.5% of doctors did not feel that way.

21. My life has been dull owing to this service

22 / 41 correct responses

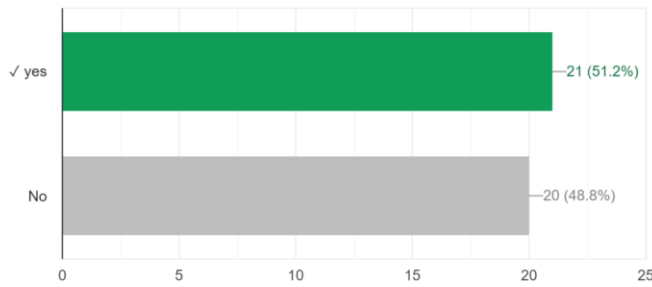


46.3% of doctors said that their life has become dull owing to their service and 53.7% of doctors did not agree with this question. Khasne, R. W., Dhakulkar, B. S., Mahajan, H. C., & Kulkarni, A. P. (2020). Burnout among healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic in India also supports the result.



22. I often feel fresh and happy every morning

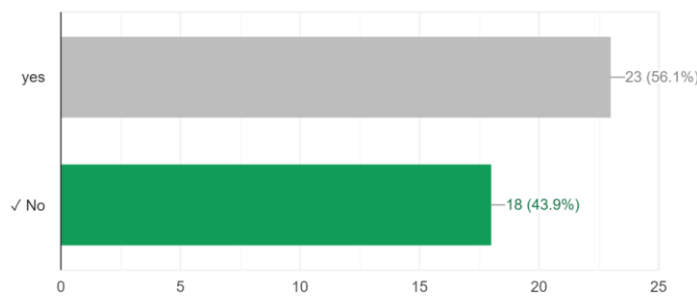
21 / 41 correct responses



51.2% of doctors said that they feel fresh and happy every Morning whereas 48.8% of doctors did not feel fresh and happy during their COVID-19 duties.

23. I am loosing/gaining too much weight

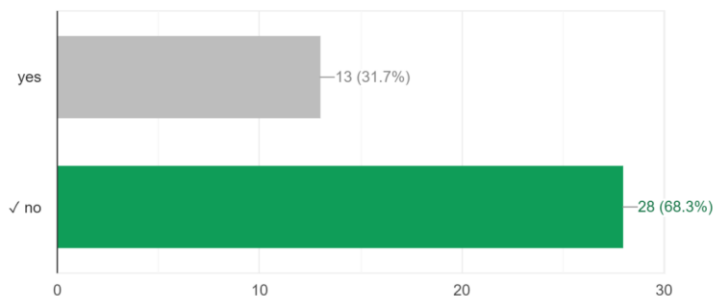
18 / 41 correct responses



56.1 % of doctors said that they are losing/gaining weight during their COVID-19 duties and 43.9% of doctors said no change in their weight.

24. My job seems to be a burden

28 / 41 correct responses



31.7% of doctors said that their job seems to be a burden for them whereas 68.3% of doctors said that they did not feel a burden during their duty. Amanullah, S., & Ramesh Shankar, R. (2020, October). Study on The impact of COVID-19 on physician burnout globally: a review. Also revealed that increased burden leads to increased burnout rate in medical practitioners. Menon, G. R., Yadav, J., Aggarwal, S., Singh, R., Kaur, S., Chakma, T., & Panda, S. (2022) also revealed that long hours of work lead to burnout in healthcare workers during COVID-19.

3. Summary of the findings

1. 92.9% of doctors said that they were physically and mentally drained during COVID-19 duties.
2. 64.3% doctors said that they were getting angry about little things during their COVID-19 duty.
3. 69% of doctors said that they have experienced headaches during their COVID-19 duties.
4. 81% of doctors said that their family members were proud of them.
5. 78.6% doctors said that they do like to talk about things not connected to their job during COVID-19.
6. 50% of doctors said that they felt slight difficulty in breathing while performing COVID-19 duties.

7. 70.7% of doctors took the help of other doctors.
8. 26.2% doctors responded that they were bothered about their night dreams while performing COVID-19 duties.
9. 54.8% doctors said that they were normal at home but felt uneasy and tired at work.
10. 7.1 % of doctors experienced stomach pain during COVID-19 duties.
11. 40.5% doctors said that they were worried about work-related problems while at home.
12. 19% of doctors said that their hands were trembling while performing COVID-19 duty.
13. 42.9% doctors said that they lost their temper over job related matters.
14. 50% of doctors said that they are mentally satisfied performing COVID-19 duties.
15. 21.4% of doctors said that their blood pressure was high or low during their service at the COVID-19 ward.
16. 9.5 % of doctors said that they took too many intoxicants.
17. 57.1% of doctors said that they did not have sound sleep during COVID-19 duties.
18. 64.3% of doctors said that they feel encouraged and happy in their profession.
19. 65.9% of doctors said that they were losing their appetite due to work.
20. 52.5% of doctors felt that their job is harming their health.
21. 46.3% of doctors said that their life has become dull owing to their service.
22. 48.8% of doctors did not feel fresh and happy during their COVID-19 duties.
23. 56.1 % of doctors said that they are losing/gaining weight during their COVID-19 duties.
24. 31.7% of doctors said that their job seems to be a burden for them.

4. Conclusion

It is accepted truth that all the health workers especially doctors were overstressed, worried, and became emotionally unstable due to the death of thousands of people in front of their eyes. They were panicked, tensed, stressed, and anxious and carried the fear of contacting their family members and losing their beloved ones. Most of the doctors who worked in COVID-19 wards did not go home because of fear of contracting the disease to their family members. They were residing in hostels and hospitals. They worked for hours together wearing PPE kits to serve the people and save their lives. In the process of service, they lost their lives and their beloved ones.

Hence it becomes the prime responsibility of the government to provide better facilities to the doctors in the government hospitals, good restrooms, food, medicines, and relevant equipment, and be always ready to address any kind of medical emergency. Leo, C. G., Sabina, S., Tumolo, M. R., Bodini, A., Ponzini, G., Sabato, E., & Mincarone, P. (2021) Burnout among healthcare workers in the COVID 19 era: a review of the existing literature also suggested some measures like physical activates, balanced diet, good sleep hygiene, family support, meaningful relationships, reflective practices, and group discussions along with the blame-free environment, for sharing experiences and advice at the institutional and organizational level with multidisciplinary psychosocial support system safe areas to withdraw quickly from stressful situations, adequate time planning, social support), and cultural level (involvement of healthcare workers in the development, implementation, testing, and evaluation of measures against burnout". Government should allocate funds for the health of the people as nothing is more precious than the lives of the people.

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