

The webinar brought out some startling facts about the rising incidents of domestic violence

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Expanding your own self is the key to have mental wellbeing during Covid-19, says Dr Pankaj Gupta, President, IIHMR University

**The webinar brought out some startling facts about the rising incidences of domestic violence
Prof Nusrat Husain said the main cause of stress is uncertainty**

Dr Prakriti Poddar heighted that even youth are stressed thinking about the future

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With cases of domestic violence and child abuse are on rise as we are dealing with the global health crisis, IIHMR-University Jaipur recently conducted a webinar on 'Unseen epidemic of mental health wellbeing' to address the serious mental health crisis women, children and youth are facing. Dr Pankaj Gupta, President, IIHMR University, Jaipur has opined that one really needs to expand the life state to overcome these issues.

Besides Dr Gupta, the one-and-half hour webinar was addressed by esteemed panelists working in this field extensively including Prof Nusrat Husain, Mental Health Expert, The University of Manchester, UK; Dr Shankar Das, Director, IIHMR Delhi; Dr Usha Manjunath, Director, IIHMR Bangalore; Dr Prakriti Poddar, Expert, Mental Health, Director Poddar Wellness Ltd & MD, Poddar Foundation.

Dr Pankaj Gupta, President, IIHMR University, Jaipur states that "Most of the people are carrying the burden of the past or anxiety about the future due to which they feel mental sickness. Referring ancient wisdom, he explains the difference between being lonely and being alone. The word lonely comes with a negative mindset which might require other things to compensate while being alone is a state which comes within oneself. This state comes with maturity or can be achieved through yoga, meditation and mindfulness and does not require any dependence. One can be in a state of complete happiness and fit in a state of being alone."

Prof Husain, who mostly has South Asian clientele in the United Kingdom, said south Asian are the ones who are mostly affected by the coronavirus pandemic. He further added that stress of losing job or money is the main reason behind such unruly behavior.

“We have the second highest number when it comes to Covid-19. One of the worrying fact is, people who are of south Asian origin are more likely to have complications and are more likely to die of Covid-19. We understand what the mental health difficulty is. We need to understand what kind of emotions it can create. It is more associated with stress..People need to migrate back to their home place. They may have lost jobs, money besides other losses. We have to look at the social situations around it. In UK, lot of my work is with British South Asian,” he said.

Dr Das highlighted that coronavirus has brought many mental health challenges like suicide, alcohol related dependency and death, huge amount of aggression on the street and violence against the healthcare professional

“There is a huge case of mental health because of such uncertainties because of the Covid-19. The whole world is battling with so many apprehensions today and we are confronted with unfamiliar physical ill health like death and consequently we have huge amount of mental health challenge example. Mental health has been the centre of discussion since the beginning. And, today also we have come up again with huge mental health morbidity. In India, 44 days of complete lockdown in our home with the sense of huge apprehension and fear of future, health and livelihood and this crisis has reoriented our life once again in a dramatic way. Today, we live in a more virtual world of communication drafted minimal living condition,” Dr Das added.

Dr Poddar, who has been running many toll free helpline services to aid people suffering from mental health issues, said they have been seeing a lot of anxiety in those children and youth.

“One can see a massive upsurge on the kind of abuse be it psychosocial, personal or emotional. Youth in India have the largest risk of having poor mental health. There is lot of stress in them not only for their home life but also often in terms of their future planning. In a flux, they do not know what is going to happen. If we talk about the students, who have graduated, they do not have internships. They have loads of questions around it. Their future is at stake. As we all know, there is so much pressure on them in terms of their performance. There is a lot of violence going around. When it comes to relationship, lot of people are suffering being in so much proximity of their partner. A lot of women reaching out to our helpline. But most of them do not talk about their problem because they don’t have that space to call,” she added.

Dr Manjunath brought out some startling facts about the women, who have been at the receiving end and how the cases of domestic violence not only increased in India but also around the world.

“Being in a lockdown isn’t easy and has resulted a more traumatic experience for women in India in terms of domestic violence. Across the world, there are more and more complaints. Even if we see health workers, most of them are women, and the way they are treated have become a challenge. 20 percent rise has been seen in the domestic violence cases during the lockdown across all the 193 UN-member states. In just 11 days of lockdown in India, we have seen 92,000 cases of domestic violence,” Dr Manjunath said.

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