Mental Health Status of Healthcare Workers and Doctors in Vietnam During the Period of Adaptation to Covid-19

Trinh LTT* and Tran THY

Psychology Education Faculty, National Academy of Education Management, Vietnam

*Corresponding author: Trinh Le Thuy Truc, Psychology-Education Faculty, National Academy of Education Management, Hanoi, Vietnam, Email: tructrinhpsy@gmail.com

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant damage to all facets of society for more than two years, most notably to the economy, culture, and, most significantly, to people's bodily and mental health. Despite receiving little attention, mental health is a relatively new subject that is vital to our daily lives. The COVID-19 pandemic is presently having a big influence on it; therefore, we should pay greater attention to it-especially among front-line doctors and healthcare workers battling the outbreak. We assessed the mental health of this representative sample of research participants, giving particular emphasis to extra impact factors such well-being, excellent behavioral adjustment, get the capacity to build constructive relationships, as well as the ability to manage with stress. It was found that while many doctors and healthcare professionals in Vietnam who directly treat COVID-19 patients have normal mental health status, there are still about 40% of them who are experiencing mental health issues, with the fundamental competencies mentioned above having a significant influence on how they manage their mental health.

Keywords: Mental Health; COVID-19; Doctors; Healthcare Workers; Vietnam

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a substantial loss of life globally and poses an unprecedented threat to food systems, occupational safety, and public health. Currently, COVID-19 has a considerable impact on our life; in addition to physical health, it also affects mental health, especially in the case of medical professionals. "The current study found to support that the medical staff unfolded greater fear, anxiety, and depression than the administrative staff. Moreover, the front-line medical staff working in the department of respiratory, emergency, ICU, and infectious disease, were twice more likely to suffer anxiety and depression than the non-clinical staff with the hard possibility to contact with coronavirus pneumonia patients"[1].

The impact factors that they found were "Being isolated, working in high-risk positions, and having contact with infected people are common causes of trauma. These factors may have impacted medical and nursing staff in Wuhan, leading to mental health problems" [2]. In order to find other characteristics that can affect doctors' mental health, the author also performed a research based on gender, age, marriage, education level, employment, and department. The working environment, stress, and overwork were the main contributors to mental health difficulties among healthcare professionals, while other factors have grown and some new impacts have appeared.

However, none of the aforementioned research provided significant information on the mental health of medical professionals who were directly caring for COVID-19 patients in Vietnam throughout the era of this nation's adaptation. Researching the mental health of doctors and

other healthcare professionals in Vietnam can offer different perspective and knowledge in the field of mental health care globally because the COVID-19 situation differs from country to country and has different effects on healthcare workers' mental health, including in Vietnam [3]. Therefore, during the COVID-19 pandemic, our aim is to conduct theoretical research and questionnaires on the mental health of physicians and healthcare professionals who directly treat COVID-19 patients in Vietnam during the adaptation period, in order to identify their mental state, factors influencing mental health status, and make recommendations to improve the mental health of medical professionals in Vietnam.

Methods

Theoretical Study

Systematization of theoretical underpinnings for the mental well-being of healthcare professionals and other hospital employees who directly care for COVID-19 patients in Vietnam during the adaptation period, including the definition of mental health and its manifestations, the impact factors that can affect the mental state based on prior research, and press releases from the American Psychology Association (APA) and the World Health Organization (WHO) [4].

Questionnaires Measurement

We used questionnaires that were built based on the theoretical about mental health, the effect factors of it, and through referring scales of the mental health's manifestations to assess mental health status, well-being, excellent behavioral adjustment, get the capacity to build constructive relationships, as well as the ability to manage with stress. In total of 193 respondents who were served with questionnaires, 192 returned with filled and analyzable questionnaires, thus giving a response rate of 99,48% (n=192). The questionnaires were build based on ABCL, DASS, ZUNG and ASR, there are two main parts, the first part is to collect demographic data, the second part is to measure the mental health state of doctors and healthcare workers directly treating COVID-19 patients in Vietnam. There are 49 questions in the questionnaires, the results are then classified into 2 parts, including the mental health status, which we followed the below rating scale. The questions are divided into 4 groups: well-being state, ability to adjust behavior, the ability to establish constructive relationship and the ability to cope with stress, the scores averaged, fitted to the following rating scale. With Cronback's alpha value > 0,6, the scale ensures reliability, can be used to measure the research's goals. Correlation value between groups of factors and the average score of the scale gives r>0.3 results, this represents that the scale can ensure the effectiveness, which can be used to measure on participants.

Statistics Analyze

To analyze the data, we utilized SPSS, version 27.0, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. The mean and standard deviation were employed to explain quantitative characteristics, whereas the frequency distribution was used to describe qualitative ones. To observe the relationships between the state of one's mental health and the other variables that may have an impact.

Results

Theoretical Basis

In this research, we are working on the definition of the mental health of doctors and healthcare workers directly treating COVID-19 patients in Vietnam. Based on the concept above about mental health "Mental health is the state of mind where individuals are well-being, have good behavioral adjustment, get the ability to establish constructive relationship and as well as the ability to cope with stress" can be understand as mental health is when people are in a well-being state, which including having good behavioral adjustment, good ability to establish a relationship and good ability to cope with stress, and manifestations would be the guidance on mental health, if they don't meet the requirements of each manifestations then their mental health are facing some problems and disorders" and its manifestation, we suppose the mental health doctors and healthcare workers directly treating COVID-19 patients in Vietnam based on four main manifestations:

- Well-being of a person, including the absented of disease, freedom from anxiety.
- Behavioral adjustment by realizing the ability of themselves, working productively and make contribution toward the society.
- The ability to establish constructive relationship.
- The ability to cope with stress.

From the theoretical about mental health and factors affect the mental health above, we as psychology researchers with the limitations of approaching the participants during the difficulty of COVID-19, will be concentrate in the mental health status of doctors and healthcare workers in Vietnam which is mental health doctors and healthcare workers directly treating COVID-19 patients in Vietnam is the state of mind where individuals are well-being, have good behavioral adjustment, get the ability to establish constructive relationship and as well as the ability to cope with stress by people whose job is to protect and improve the health of their communities Vietnam during the COVID-19 pandemic, the disease caused by a new coronavirus called SARS-CoV-2.

Trinh LTT and Tran THY. Mental Health Status of Healthcare Workers and Doctors in Vietnam During the Period of Adaptation to Covid-19. Ment Health Hum Resilience Int J 2022, 6(2): 000187.

Copyright© Trinh LTT and Tran THY.

Practical Mental Health Status

In total of 193 respondents who were served with questionnaires, 192 returned with filled and analyzable questionnaires, thus giving a response rate of 99,48% (n=192). The results of the mental health status belong to doctors and healthcare workers directly treating COVID-19 patients in Vietnam are calculated and have an average of 0,652 (Std.=0,39; the average score is not very separated, the results came back have the unity we are looking for) which lies in the range of having normal mental health status. In total, there are 115 participants with normal mental health status (59,8%), 74 with mild disorder (38,5%), 2 with moderate disorder (1,04%) and only 1 with severe disorder (0,53%).

Table 1 contains the demographic details of all responders; we can see that the research's participants spread in all different gender, age, marital, departments and work characteristics. Brings us a variety of groups and also can give us the comparison between each group. And there are no statistical differences when we compare between different group of demographic information, this led to a hypothesis that demographic information is not affect the mental health status of doctors and healthcare workers who directly treating COVID-19 patients in Vietnam. This is reflected in the comparison results showing that there is no statistically significant difference in mental health of the subjects with different gender, age, marital status, frequency of exposure to different pathogens. The affects factors are from the psychological aspects, which including well-being, have good behavioral adjustment, get the ability to establish constructive relationship and as well as the ability to cope with stress. All the aspects have high and positive correlation toward mental health status, the highest belonged to the ability to adjust the behavior which shows that if we improve this aspect then the mental health status would be much more stable, the second was the ability to cope with stress, then come the ability to establish a constructive relationship and last was the well-being manifestation.

Variables		Quantity (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	129	64,1%
	Male	69	35,9%
Age	20 – 30	147	76,6%
	30 – 40	24	12,5%
	40 – 50	10	5,2%
	>50	11	5,7%
Marital	Single	145	75,5%
	Married	47	24,5%
	Divorced	0	0%
Work place	NIHE	2	1%
	NHTD	2	1%
	7AMH	7	3,6%
	108 MH	18	9,4%
	103 MH	2	1%
	175 MH	2	1%
	VABIOTECH	2	1%
	MITM	4	2,1%
	THU CUC HOSPITAL	2	1%
	HOSPITAL DERMATOLOGY	11	5,7%
	MEDICAL CLINICS	3	1,6%
	THAI BINH MEDICAL UNIVERSITY	135	70,3
	CDC	1	0,5%

Ministry	MOH	159	82,8%
	MOD	33	17,2%
Main job	Technicians	19	9,9%
	Nurses	24	12,5%
	Doctors	149	77,6%
COVID-19 treating place	North of Vietnam	26	13,5%
	South of Vietnam	166	86,5%

Table 1: Demographic characteristic of research participants.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the large part of doctors and healthcare workers who directly treating COVID-19 patients in Vietnam have normal mental health status, but there still around 40% who are suffering from mental health problems which is not a small number, because of that we need immediate intervention to this group of doctors and healthcare workers to help and improve their mental health status. Besides, we need to have prevention programs for other doctors and healthcare workers to stop the bad effects on their mental health status and to develop each of the manifestations by introducing skills to deal with stress and trauma to reduce the consequences as much as possible. And the four main manifestations are the affect factors toward their mental health. Comparing to others researches from different countries, while "The severe situation is causing mental health problems such as anxiety, depressive symptoms, insomnia, and fear, and the mental health of adult medical workers has received widespread attention during the COVID-19 outbreak Medical workers have been facing enormous pressure, including a high risk of infection, isolation, patients with negative emotions, and overwork. The severe situation is causing mental health problems such as anxiety, depressive symptoms, insomnia, and fear, and the mental health of adult medical workers has received widespread attention during the COVID-19 outbreak". Our results had pointed out that the overview of the mental health situation among doctors and healthcare workers in Vietnam has raised some concern as almost 40% of the participants are facing some difficulties and the psychological factors have direct impact on this status.

Based on the viewpoint of Cognitive-Behavioral approach, the factors such as biology, culture, environment, education which would like to impact the mental health of a person must come through their reflection process. Having the same culture, living in the same environment but if their living function are different, have separate experiences and needs then everyone will explain the situations in the own aspect. Their mental health was mostly based on this aspect, this also means that psychology is the main direct factors that can affect the mental health whilst the other are indirectly affects us. And through the results, we can define that psychological aspect including well-being, have good behavioral adjustment, get the ability to establish constructive relationship and as well as the ability to cope with stress has positive correlations towards each other's. Which we can be explain as if we improve the well-being, have good behavioral adjustment, get the ability to establish constructive relationship and as well as the ability to cope with stress at the same time, giving doctors and healthcare workers has more and more capacity to deal with this tough situation that COVID-19 has caused, then the better mental health status that doctors and healthcare workers would be in. Especially the ability to adjust the behavior among doctors and healthcare workers needs a lot of attention as to improve their mental health.

Conflict of Interest

All authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

Acknowledgements

References

1. Lu W, Wang H, Lin Y, Li L (2020) Psychological status of medical workforce during the COVID-19 pandemic: A cross-sectional study. Psychiatry Research 288: 112936.

2. Kang L, Ma S, Chen M, Yang J, Wang Y, et al. (2020) Impact on mental health and perceptions of psychological care among medical and nursing staff in Wuhan during the 2019 novel coronavirus disease outbreak: A cross-sectional study. Brain, Behavior, and Immunity 87: 11-

17.

3. Chen Y, Zhou H, Zhou Y, Zhou F (2020) Prevalence of self-reported depression and anxiety among pediatric medical staff members during the COVID-19 outbreak in Guiyang, China. Psychiatry Research 288: 113005.

4. VandenBos GR (2007) APA dictionary of psychology. American Psychological Association, Washington, DC, USA.

Trinh LTT and Tran THY. Mental Health Status of Healthcare Workers and Doctors in Vietnam During the Period of Adaptation to Covid-19. Ment Health Hum Resilience Int J 2022, 6(2): 000187.

Copyright© Trinh LTT and Tran THY.