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### ABSTRACT

Mental health can be defined as a general state of well-being and state of mind. It is something that needs to be looked after. It affects how we perceive things, how we react and behave. Mental health is really important throughout childhood to adulthood but unfortunately it is highly neglected. A report by NDTV stated that the scenario of mental health in India has still not changed much and how the pandemic has made it worse. Massive number of citizens were exposed to numerous psychological problems during the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in Delhi. In this study we assess the prevalence of mental health problems in youth and their perception towards this. For this an online survey of 162 participants aged 17-25 years was conducted for quick assessment. The findings from the survey indicated that 69.2% of the samples have faced some sort of mental issues but out of these only 21% of these got mental health support. This finding shows that there is a high prevalence of mental health problems among respondents but still they were reluctant to seek help due to fear of being stigmatized or due to lack of knowledge etc. This study implies that parents as well as the government need to acknowledge mental issues more seriously and people need to be more open regarding this topic and change their illness belief and perception as it can adversely affect the future of the new generation.

**Keywords-** Mental Health, Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), Stigmatized, Illness belief and Perception.

### INTRODUCTION

An international health emergency came into light when coronavirus (COVID-19) broke out in Wuhan, China on 30 January 2020, which later spread all over the world. On 25 March 2020 lockdown of three weeks was implemented nationwide in India which was later extended. Isolation along with 14 days quarantine is considered a useful method in controlling transfer and quick spread. As a consequence, people were supposed to keep them isolated at homes and interrupted their outside daily activities. It led to the shutdown of educational institutes, which are considered to be a way to deal with various mental and financial issues for students. Covid break out has adversely affected the physical as well as mental health condition of health workers, students and the general public. During the lockdown exposure to social media has also increased which may lead to misinformation overload which may in turn contribute to mental health problems. However, a speedy assessment of pandemic related mental disorders for both frontline workers and the general public is needed as the type of mental issues that are prevalent is not known.

A report by Nepal Journal of Epidemiology states that "This pandemic can cause traumatic experiences to patients, caregivers, those quarantined and frontline healthcare providers which may lead to PTSD". Many previous studies have shown that all over the world how COVID outbreak has triggered their post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), increased domestic violence, child abuse, exploitation and neglect. This study mainly focuses on psychological problems that youth of Delhi may have experienced during this current lockdown. As there were many studies which examined the mental health of people who were stuck at home. Keeping in mind the current situation, there is an urgent requirement to conduct more surveys to study the influence of extended closure of various universities, colleges and schools as mental health issues will definitely last for a long term.