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A Critical Survey On University Community Engagement Services In Perspective Of COVID-19

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ABSTRACT- University Community engagement (UCE) has been an integral part of previous outbreaks such as Ebola, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), Middle East Respiratory MERS etc. However, there is apprehension about the dearth of community participation and bottom-up methods that have been applied so far in the COVID-19 responses. Understanding how community engagement methods have been used in previous epidemics can assist a more vigorous response to COVID-19 pandemic. The study examines the effective training programs for university students in promoting UCE. This study reviewed training programs on three interrelated human behavioral practices: rational, emotional, and spiritual. The effects of rational, emotional, and spiritual education on university students have been studied to foster UCE. Recent literature shows that university students play a positive role in community engagement, but students have less interest or are unable to engage in community. The main objective of the study is to comprehend the level of student's involvement in UCE practices in the perspective of training courses offered to the students.

Keywords: University Community Engagement, COVID-19 Pandemic, Training, Change Agents, Technology

1. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 crisis is an continuing pandemic of the coronavirus started in 2019 (COVID-19), The WHO announced the outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on January 30, 2020, and a pandemic on March 11, 2020 (WHO, 2020). COVID-19 has emerged as a worldwide crisis which has brought changes in the daily life of all communities. The mode of business, consumption pattern, buying behavior, and even preferences have changed to a larger extent. Public Health and Social Policy Adaptation (PHSM) considerations had to be applied to get ready for and act in response to this new health disastrous scenarios. The Arab GCC states, comprising Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, have applied PHSM on a huge extent, including movement constraints, shutdowns of schools, universities, business organization, smart quarantine and global travel restrictions with extensive Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing and country wise vaccination program along with social media awareness programs. The social and economic implications of such measures continue. Various concerns about the mental health and well-being of individuals are growing due to the ongoing pandemic. However, despite all these global health catastrophise, a balance needs to be struck between following the recommendations of the health authorities to tackle the lethal virus and maintaining the physical and mental health of people altogether to

keep the community healthy and socially prosperous. The dependence on technology is at its peak which is in line with the 4th industrial revolution. Despite these changes, the awareness of its potential harm is still limited. This requires the community to be ready for the upcoming crisis through awareness and training programs (Burgess, R. A., Osborne, R. H., Yongabi, K. A., Greenhalgh, T., Gurdasani, D., Kang, G., & McKee, M. 2021).

One way to deal with pandemic is community service, which is any type of work that is done by either one person or a group of people to help others. Universities all over the world play a major role in community service. The university can make use of students as an important tool of community engagement. Currently, community services are done by universities with less or almost no involvement of students. The students are either not interested or lack the skills to effectively engage in the community. COVID 19 pandemic urges universities to re-think their role in community engagement and involvement of students to start working for the community (Gilmore, B., Ndejjo, R., Tchetchia, A., De Claro, V., Mago, E., Lopes, C., & Bhattacharyya, S. 2020).

2. Literature Review

There are currently 1.8 billion youth population between the ages of ten and twenty-four in the existing world, the greatest generation of young individuals in human history. Almost ninety percent of this youth population exist in developing countries. Moreover, their figures are likely to continue to expand, particularly in the minimum developed areas. With these young populations, it is obvious that sustainable development and harmony can only be accomplished if we engage young population and establish the circumstances in which they can build their full capabilities. In the arena of public health exploration, the confidence and allure of community engagement is the contribution it can make to the comprehension of health difficulties and the significance of interventions to tackle these important issues. Community engagement is anticipated to lead to higher participation rates, insightful interpretation of results, and better steadfastness and authenticity of involvements in community-based environment (Cargo & Mercer, 2008; Jagosh et al., 2011; Minkler, 2005; Wallerstein & Duran, 2010). These community engagement process modifications can, in turn, enhance the quality of research performed in distinct population clusters (Cargo & Mercer, 2008; Jagosh et al., 2011, 2012; Nueces et al., 2012). Moreover, validation of the categorized issues is attained through partnership and consent development, public relations and networking of constituencies and municipalities, communication including negotiations, organization at the grassroots level and efforts related to organizational development (Adler and Goggin, 2016; Zakus and Lysack, 1998). The current pandemic is not only a community health catastrophe, it is a calamity that will alter every field of life. Therefore, all every person of a community and field needs to be engaged in the fight against pandemic as per statement of stated the WHO Director General in March 2020.

COVID-19 caused death of more than 4,049,372 people worldwide and infected over 187,519,798, while around 172,777,860 people have recovered from the COVID19, a total of 3,400,884,367 vaccine doses have beenadministered globally according to World Health Organization, 13 July 2021. The novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV [SARS-COV-2]) was discovered in humans in December 2019 in Wuhan, China, triggering 24,554 cases in 27 countries on February 5, 2020. Four major cities in China like Wuhan, Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou were effected in general (Haider, N. et al., 2020). COVID-19 has influenced many nations on all populated continents and is now deemed a global pandemic due to its high level of contagion. Study associated to this disease is key to assessing infective characteristics and devising medicinal approaches (Chahrour, M., 2020).

As a case, Saudi Arabia, the total number of infections recorded increased to 504,960 till date according to Ministry of Health Saudi Arabia, 15 July 2021 statistics. To manage this pandemic, Saudi Arabia announced SAR 120 billion to combat the Covid-19 pandemic. 21,103,903 vaccination doses have been

administered for general public irrespective of nationalities. Saudi Arabia played an important role in alleviating the effects of pandemic via various initiates and extraordinary actions to help all business sectors especially private sector and SMEs through financial assistance and health support. Moreover, even illegal residents were also given support in restoration of their health and sustenance. Saudi Central bank (SAMA) has also declared a funds of SAR 50 billion in assistance of the banking sector, financial institutions, and SME's due to pandemic as a community service. The Covid-19 pandemic has an increasing effect on the international financial system, and it has impacted businesses in every possible manner, particularly their working capital (SAMA, 2020). Serious questions like the effect of pandemic on small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Saudi Arabia and the way small can perform better in pandemic situation need thorough investigation.

The 4th Industrial Revolution helped in many ways to deal with this pandemic, as it allows more work to be done online. Education, reporting, access to information, shopping, delivery services, payment gateway and more are all achievable electronically from home. Also, small businesses in communities needed to change their system. Safe to say, this pandemic prepared local communities and people in general to get familiar with technological advancements (Marinoni, G., Van't Land, H., & Jensen, T. 2020). The objective of the article is to introduce a shift in the university community engagement perspective and make it an effective tool in this situation. Moreover, train university students to help the community in the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, this article aims awareness at community uplift through university students and to develop a mechanism for better performance of small business in the community in COVID-19 pandemic.

Sensitivity analyzes and numerical simulations show that improving the proportion of timely diagnosis and shortening the waiting time for diagnosis does not eliminate COVID-19, but can effectively reduce the base number of reproductions, significantly reduce the risk of transmission and effectively prevent the endemism of COVID-19 (Rong, X. et al., 2020). This means that diagnosis can be done when there is awareness in community. Universities plays an important role in awareness in public regarding these upcoming pandemics. Research related to this disease is crucial to gauging morbific characteristics and expressing therapeutic strategies (Chahrour, M., 2020).

Chen et al., (2020) proposed a mathematical model to investigate the COVID-19 pandemic in Wuhan, China. Their model described the diverse routes of transmission in infection and highlights the role of the ecological reservoir. Yang et al. (2020) utilized a simple linear regression model to approximate the mortality rate (CFR) of each cluster. Linton et al., (2020) used openly accessible event data from the continuing epidemic. The study examined the incubation period and other time intervals that find the epidemiological dynamics of COVID-19 infections. The outcomes showed that the incubation time was 95% certain to be in the range of two to fourteen days, with a average of about five days. The mean time from onset of illness to hospitalization was estimated to be 3-4 days without shortening and five to nine days. Based on the 95^{th} percentile estimate of the incubation period, the authors recommended that the quarantine length should be at least 14 days. The average time delay of 13 days from onset of illness to death (17 days) should be deemed when approximating the danger of COVID-19 death.

The influence of the severe reduction in travel volume within mainland China in Jan/Feb 2020 was enumerated with respect to reports of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) infections outside China. Data on confirmed cases diagnosed outside China were examined using statistical models to approximate the influence of travel decrease on three epidemiological outcome measures: (i) the quantity of exported cases, (ii) the likelihood of a major epidemic, and (iii) the time lag to a major epidemic (Anzai, A. et al., 2020). Wang et al. (2020) presented that the backbone of Chinese society, Chinese universities have

achieved important milestones to emergency risk management. Such contributions have been achieved primarily in the subsequent fields: alumni contact, medical rescue, mental health, staff mobility, and novelty in online academic models. They proposed some consistent explanations for public distribution, including problems related to therapeutic security, emergency research, professional assistance, positive communication, and ranked information-based teaching etc.

Contact tracing is an significant approach needed to timely thwart and resist Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreaks in West Africa and specifically Nigeria. The indication obtainable suggests weak contact tracing was a reason of the EVD outbreak in West Africa, including Sierra Leone. The authors used assorted methods that included secondary data analysis of the EVD case and contact tracing records collected by WA over the 2014-2015 period, key whistle-blower interviews with contact tracers and their supervisors, and a review of available contact tracing reports were showed to bring data (Olu et al., 2016). According to Hellewell et al., (2020), case isolation and contact tracing is utilized to control pandemics and is widely used for COVID-19. Whether this approach attains control rely on the characteristics of the pathogen and the response.

According Tárnok (2020) the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML) and deep learning (DL) in COVID-19 (2019-nCoV) is very crucial in predicting the outbreaks. Universities and research centers can play important role while contributing their knowledge towards controlling and predicting various waves of pandemics. Various waves of (SARS-CoV) virus emerges in history. It emerged in 2002/2003 and then the Coronavirus for the Respiratory Syndrome in the Middle East (MERS - CoV) with occasional outbreaks since 2012 or influenza viruses such as the H1N1 pandemic in the years 2009/2010. According to Barry, et al. (2020) the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV) has overwhelmed the Middle East since it was first testified in 2012. In late December 2019, there were plenty of cases of pneumonia testified from Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China, associated with a seafood market with a new coronavirus known as the etiological agent called SARS -CoV-2 was recognized. Pan (2020) wrote a communication to the journal editor, reporting on various individual and cellphone-based information technologies that were recently developed and widely used during the COVID-19 outbreak in China. These technologies developed by R&D in universities with help of faculty and students to reduce the transmission of COVID-19. Most of work is done volunteer students using the online platform communities like GITHUB, KAGGLE etc. Training related to these new platforms is an important factor in community engagement for the upcoming generation.

This pandemic has severe impact on mental health of common people and especially on faculty and students at university level. In order to reduce these effects a formal training session of awareness and community service networks needs to be developed to produce change agents. In higher education, institutions are challenged to alleviate the dangers and factors that goes to or worsen mental health issues and the well-being of students and staff during COVID-19. As a community service practices, an effort to discourse this problem, an activity purposed at reinstating or upholding social joining between students and academics was led at the Mohammed Al-Mana College of Medical Sciences (MACHs).This medical college is located in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia, MACHs is an education facilitator for 1250+ students in the area of pharmacy, nursing, clinical laboratory science, physiotherapy and respiratory care and 100+ professors and staff. During the spring semester, an “Online Coffee Break” initiative (OCB) was established at the MACHs in order to virtually fetch the students together for relaxed and educational conferences call. In its development, "Social distancing is not social isolation" became the fundamental theme and general initiative of these interactive sessions. Various of the sessions were intended and carried out to motivate the students. Throughout the

planning of the OCB meetings, numerous topics were investigated interactively, summarized and presented in two-hour online conference. Participants were fortified to take part in various discussions to raise apprehensions and share experiences so that they can manage both physically and mentallyduring the Covid19 pandemic lockdown.

A comparableinitiative is the "Virtual Recharge Hour" at University of Kuwait. Prior to COVID-19, the "charging hour" for academic staff was organized into "face-to-face" sessions. The aim of these unplanned but organised sessions was to get teachers to share their classroom creativity to increase student engagement, use and assess innovative course design tools to keep the teaching community linked. In April 2020, these sessions were turned into virtual meetings to provide the peer support deemed necessary to address the challenges and disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. This novel initiative has shaped a community of practice that is most immediately desirable in periods of unlikelihood. Academic front-runners urge to play a active part in minimizing the influence on student mental health. Initiatives like those outlined above can assist and inspect ideas considered significant during and after the time period ofCOVID-19 for the developing the community engagement culturein universities.

3. Responsibilities for the community during COVID-19

Helping the community during the COVID-19 era is not just the responsibility of the government or some specific organizations. Everyone has a responsibility to help for the community. The help is not just financial or physical. Universities play an important role in the community in training students for the community words during COVID-19. There are several ways to work for the community with the help of university students during COVID-19.

- **COVID-19 Awareness and health workers:**

Community Health Workers (CHWs) are respected public health resources in resource-poor environments. In general, CHWs work as community advocates, perform outreach and engagement in public health programs, and deliver health education and services. Home care supported by CHWs can help alleviate the significant burden on health systems from the COVID-19 pandemic around the world. CHWs are well suited to providing communities with the awareness, training, and support they need so that people with COVID-19 can be safely cared for at home. In the community, we can expect people of different ages and most of the people they don't know to keep up to date on COVID-19 care. The university has given students the responsibility to raise awareness of the COVID-19 precautions in their community.

- **Digitalization during COVID-19**

The COVID-19 pandemic had a substantial influence on the growth of online commerce, mainly driven by trade closure and mobility restrictions. This movement may have a wider scope and coverage. In parallel, the younger generations adopt their own routines of consumption of products and services in the digital society but on other hand the old age peoples are going to be neglected. During the pandemic, people are having a great deal of difficulty using laptops and the internet to shop online and get appointments for office work online. Students can help the community impart knowledge about digital systems.

- **E-Learning system**

COVID-19 effect teaching and learning system. The provision and use of online and e-learning systems

will be the greatest challenge for many universities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Successful use of the e-learning system depends on understanding the acceptance factors as well as the main challenges faced by the current e-learning systems. There is no consensus on the critical challenges and factors influencing successful use of the e-learning system during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, a clear gap in knowledge of the critical challenges and factors involved in using e-learning during this pandemic has been identified.

- **Information sharing about COVID-19**

The rules for COVID-19 rules change daily. The student should take responsibility for sharing the correct information with the community. In mostly countries, most of the people are not informed about the rule's regulation information even during travelling. This would be a big step from the students side as a community service and to become change agents.

- **Unemployment during COVID-19**

Due to lockdowns and business shutdowns, people are turning to be unemployed or are working on reduced wages, creating a distinctive type of career shock in the international job marketplace. The continuing crisis has disturbed labor markets around the world on an unparalleled scale. As per the new edition of the ILO Monitor, 114 million jobs were lost in 2020, which, including with the reduction in working hours within employment. This caused in about four times the loss of working hours in relevance to the 2009 financial crisis. The International Labor Organization approximate that lost time in 2020 (compared to pre-pandemic) equated to 255 million full-time jobs, translating into $ 3.7 trillion lost in work. This would be a good initiative for the students to help the people in need or help them find new jobs for them using offline or online resources like LinkedIn or other existing ATS systems etc. (Al-Youbi et al., 2020).

The above steps can give universities and students the idea of future help to the community. There are many different activities that universities and students can help the community.

4. Conclusion:

Community engagement was understood as an essential part of previous outbreaks such as Ebola, SARS, MERS etc. However, there is question about the lack of community participation and bottom-up methods that have been used so far in the COVID-19 responses. Understanding how community engagement approaches have been used in previous epidemics can support a more robust implementation within the COVID-19 response. The focused of university community engagement is driven by two goals: community impact and student learning. The required social and community responses has important role for the global presence and social transmission of COVID-19. This can be especially important in reaching out to marginalized populations and supporting equity-based responses. By aligning previous experiences with university community engagement and with the current community-based strategy recommendations of COVID-19, it becomes clear how communities can play an important and active role in prevention and control. Countries worldwide are encouraged to evaluate existing community engagement structures and use community engagement approaches to support context-specific, acceptable, and appropriate COVID-19 prevention and control measures.

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