

ABSTRACT

The Impact of COVID-19 on Family Relations

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Abstract: Corona virus disease, commonly known as COVID -19, is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered corona virus. Most people infected with the virus experienced mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. Older people and those with underlying serious medical problems are more likely to develop serious illness leading even to death. The impact of the virus is varied depending on the physical condition of the person, the age, the living conditions, economic conditions and so on. By and large the virus has left its impact on the person and the community in some way or the other. The article reflects the situation with Marx's theory of alienation that describes the social alienation of people from aspects of their human nature as a consequence of social structure in a society. Marxian analysis of estrangement, in fact, reflects the life during COVID pandemic. It is said COVID -19 is a magnifying glass; it has forced our attention to matters big and small. For some, along with many hard issues COVID -19 has brought to the heightened awareness of the family estrangement. During the pandemic many estranged people have become more conscious of not having family to support them. For some, it has brought the realisation that their well-being is not important to other family members, and compounded the feeling of being unloved and uncared for. Hence, lockdown restrictions have not brought estranged family members closer. COVID -19 social isolation measures also have had a profound impact on the psychological and mental well-being of individuals across society. There has been an increase in domestic abuse incidents too. The social-distancing and sheltering-in-place measures are essential to minimising the spread of COVID -19; however, they are likely to increase the risk of domestic and inter-family violence. Further, the COVID -19 pandemic is posing unprecedented challenges to the mental wellbeing of healthcare workers. There are some instances where those with estranged relationships reached out to the person they had a falling-out with after a life-altering event. The pandemic had been that catalyst. This paper analyses the impact the virus had on the family life and the family relations. On the one hand, if it has left a traumatic experience on the members, leading to estrangement, fear and anxiety; on the other, it has positive impact of reconciliation, resulting in bringing back the shattered members together and spending time and life together.

Key words: Corona Virus, Estrangement, Self-isolation, Family Relationships, Social Impact