COVID-19 AND HYGIENE HABITS: FACTORS INFLUENCING ADHERENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY OF NEWLY ACQUIRED BEHAVIORS. A QUALITATIVE STUDY FROM DELHI, INDIA

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Theme 1: Catalyzing Transformational Change
Oral Presentation
Research-oriented abstract
HABIT CHANGE INFLECTION POINTS


HABIT CHANGE INFLECTION POINTS
OBJECTIVE

WHY THIS STUDY IS IMPORTANT?

COVID-19 CRISIS INDUCED HABIT CHANGE

YEAR 1 (2020)
• To identify the new hygiene behaviors adopted in first wave of Covid-19 pandemic

YEAR 2 (2021)
• Factors influencing adherence or discontinuation of habits as the second wave hit the nation

INQUIRY DOMAINS: Covid-19 threat perception, coping strategies, new hygiene behaviors adopted, behaviors that stayed, and those that didn’t, self assessed reason for the same.
1. Longitudinal qualitative study
2. Snowball sampling was used to identify mothers from middle income households from Delhi NCR as respondents for the study.
3. N=48 mothers over 2 rounds
4. In-depth telephonic interviews were conducted over two rounds (May-June, 2020 and April-May, 2021).
5. Protection Motivation Theory (PMT) provided the theoretical framework for this study.
COVID WAVE1: 2020
SANITIZING THE SANITIZER

NOVELTY | UNCERTAINTY | FEAR

- Covid-19: previously unheard of disease
- New Vocabulary: Contact tracing, pandemic, quarantine
- Unprecedented response: lockdown, inside home, migration
- No cure, evolving protective-preventive guidelines
- News & social media on overdrive
COVID WAVE1: 2020
PMT framework

FINDINGS

THREAT APPRAISAL
- Perceived Severity: HIGH
- Perceived Vulnerability: HIGH

COPING APPRAISAL
- Response Efficacy: LOW
- Self Efficacy: LOW
- Response Cost: LOW

HIGH BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS
- HIGH Protective Behaviors
COVID WAVE1: 2020
SANITIZING THE SANITIZER

ELABORATE HYGIENE RITUALS

ACROSS 3 DIMENSIONS
1. Frequency of cleaning
2. Strength of cleaning agent
3. Segregation

3 ASPECTS OF HYGIENE
PERSONAL HYGIENE (Self & family)
KITCHEN HYGIENE (including surfaces)
HOME HYGIENE (outside vs. inside)

"You can say I am paranoid...I am always scrubbing and sanitizing everything" ~Mother, 42yrs

“We have formed a Whatsapp group in our colony and we keep sharing new ways of cleaning and keeping safe. I learned about the vegetable wash from there only” ~Mother 39yrs
COVID WAVE2: 2021
WHAT WILL BE, WILL BE

An year of uncertainty took its toll

**FATIGUE**
Information overload + disproportionate burden on women
>> finding ways to rationalize reduced action

**COVID EXPOSURE**
Unknown becoming familiar family member >> recovery

**VACCINE AVAILABILITY**
Hope in a syringe
All will be well and back to normal once you get the shot.

Image source: Google
COVID WAVE2: 2021

PMT framework

**FINDINGS**

**THREAT APPRAISAL**
- Perceived Severity: MEDIUM
- Perceived Vulnerability: MEDIUM

**COPING APPRAISAL**
- Response Efficacy: LOW
- Self Efficacy: HIGH
- Response Cost: MEDIUM

**Behavioral Intentions**: MEDIUM
**Protective Behaviors**: MEDIUM-LOW
LEARNINGS FROM THE STUDY

• Risk perception and protection motivation are dynamic evolving parameters.
• More tailored relevant messaging would be required to bring about a sustainable behavior change.
• Findings from the study would help in designing more effective behavior change communication strategy in future.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

• The study was limited to one geography
• Increasing sample size and developing a quantitative study from these findings would help in behavioral modelling which in turn could help in developing frameworks for sustaining crisis induced habit change.