

Understanding the impact of COVID-19 global pandemic on the psychological and behavioural patterns of a group of youth and young adults repatriated back to Sri Lanka from the UK due to COVID-19: a qualitative study

Short Study Title: Impact of Covid-19 on Youth and Young Adults

We would like to invite you to take part in this project. Please take some time to read this information sheet. Ask us if you would like more information. You are free to decide whether or not to take part.

Why are we doing this project?

The COVID-19 Pandemic resulted in a sudden and abrupt change to our academic and daily lives due to the lockdown, university closure, social distancing and self-isolation procedures in the UK. Since then, most of us had to deal with many challenges till we were being able to move to Sri Lanka.

It is not clear how long the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to limit our academic activities and regular life styles. Clearly, there are challenges of continuing academic activities such as attending online virtual classes and completing assignments while being under quarantine with limited resources and distractions. However, despite the negativity, we may also experience some positive changes happening in our lives, like new friendships established while undergoing quarantine in Sri Lanka.

We thought it would be interesting to explore these and planned a research study among ourselves. This study aims to understand the impact of COVID-19 on our psychological status and behaviour while being under lockdown, self-isolation in the UK, repatriation and being quarantined here in Sri Lanka.

Why am I being asked to take part?

We are interested to hear from you, because you are an international student who had to repatriate to motherland from the UK, due to COVID-19 pandemic and also because, you are under quarantine procedures at the moment. Since the COVID-19 pandemic is still ongoing, this research paves the way to identify potential psychological and behavioural patterns of youth and young adults like us, that will arise because of the pandemic situations such as COVID-19.

What would I need to do if I take part?

- If you are interested to take part, you will be asked to complete an online survey via WhatsApp or email.

- We will also invite you for two short interviews (via WhatsApp or face-to-face), to share your views with us, during the quarantine period and also after going home.

What will happen if I don't want to carry on with the project?

- Your participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason. We won't feel bad about your decision at all.
- We are hoping to use our personal journals with notes on our objective observations from the Heathrow airport throughout the quarantine period as a data source for this study. However, if you do not consent for the study we will not use any journal information relating to you.

What are the benefits of taking part?

- By sharing our experience with each other, we can understand the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on our lives. It also will give us a chance to be aware of our own behaviour and psychological patterns during this entire process. Possible outcomes from this study will help to identify and address psychological and educational needs, challenges, coping strategies of youth and young adults like us and help the relevant authorities to develop guidelines to manage similar situations in the future and increase resilience.

Are there any risks associated?

- This study has been approved by the Ethics Review Committee of Rajarata University of Sri Lanka (No: ERC/2020/XX).
- There are no significant risks associated with participation. You may feel disturbed to recall some hardships during the interviews. However, we are there to support you if you feel any distress or disappointment.
- However, if you feel that you are uncomfortable, distressed or intrusive when answering certain questions, you are always free to refrain from answering them.
- If you feel negative thoughts and disappointment after taking part in the study, you are more than welcome to speak to us or Professor Athula Sumathipala from IRD (www.ird.lk)

Is the project confidential?

- All the information you give us will be kept confidential and only used for research purposes. Only the research team will have access to this information.
- We will anonymise all transcripts (both interviews and our journal entries) before commencing data analysis. You will not be identified in any reports/research papers. This means that we will not associate your name or any other information that might enable you being traced back. Data will be processed and handled in accordance with General Data

Protection Regulations of the Institute for Research and Development in Health and Social care (IRD) -Sri Lanka.

If you like to participate in this study or have any questions that are not answered here or prefer to discuss the project in more detail, please contact us.

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