

Psychological and Socio-Economic Impact of COVID 19 among the OPD Patients in a Tertiary Care Hospital, Bangladesh

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Abstract

Background: The outbreak of Covid-19 is a new but one of the most intense pandemics in the world now. Although this disease is accountable for limited symptoms and complications like severe acute respiratory syndrome, fever, headache, diarrhea, malaise, and weakness, its probability of affecting people is very high. For this reason, its psychological and socio-economic impact demanded more attention from the world community. **Aim of the study:** The aim of this study was to evaluate the psychological and socio-economic impact of Covid 19 among the OPD patients in a tertiary care hospital in Bangladesh. **Methods:** This was a prospective interview-based study conducted in the Department of Medicine, Ibn Sina Specialized Hospital, and Dhaka, Bangladesh during the period from July 2020 to December 2020. In total 120 patients with several health problems, physically or virtually attended the OPD of the mentioned hospital were enrolled as the study population. The ethical committee of the mentioned hospital had been approved the study. All data were processed, analyzed, and disseminated by MS Office and SPSS version as needed. **Result:** In this study analyzing the negative impact of Covid 19 on the mental health of participants, we found feeling of suffocation, exhaustion, fear of falling ill, anxiety about the future, and feeling of loneliness were found as some major negative mental impacts on the respondents which were 11.67%, 10.83%, 8.33%, 7.5%, and 6.67%. Besides these, due to Covid 19 continuing, remote socialization, intolerance to others, random commitment violation, and ended social life were found 10%, 5.83%, 4.17%, and 1.67% participants respectively. In analyzing the negative impact on the economy of participants, we observed, the monthly family income was decreased up to 25%, 50%, 75%, and 100% of 21.67%, 12.50%, 5%, and 1.67% participants respectively. That means negative impact like decreasing monthly family income was found around 49%. **Conclusion:** Pandemic of Covid 19 is a new experience for the world community. The psychological and socio-economic impact of Covid 19 among patients as well as general people demanded more concentration now. Besides general people and patients, the whole economy and social structure of Bangladesh have already been affected by COVID-19. Unemployment and uncertainty of family income are responsible for secondary negative impact on the mental, physical health of general people as well as patients here. So, government policymakers, as well as world leaders, should be more conscious about these impacts and find out the proper way to resolve such pandemic.

Key words: Covid 19, psychological, socio-economic impact, pandemic, Bangladesh.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is a new but one of the most intense pandemics in the world now. Although this disease is accountable for very limited symptoms and complications like severe acute respiratory syndrome, fever, headache, diarrhea, malaise, and weakness, its probability of affecting more people is very high. For this reason, its psychological and socio-economic impact demanded more attention

from the world community. We have very limited research-based information regarding this issue. Former infectious disease outbreaks have significantly affected individuals' mental health along with the expected physical health outcomes.¹ The COVID-19 is the most concerning outbreak of atypical pneumonia since the 2003 outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS),² which has been declared an international public health emergency by the World Health

Organization (WHO).³ As of July 1st, 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has infected over ten million people across the world, causing more than 5,00,000 deaths.⁴ Experts are still uncertain of the trajectory of the COVID-19 pandemic, the projected number of cases and deaths, or to what extent quarantine measures will disrupt daily life.⁵ The unpredictable nature of this situation and uncertainty regarding COVID-19 can often trigger psychological distress and mental illness, including depression, anxiety, and traumatic stress.⁵ A recent survey by the Indian Psychiatric Society shows a 21% increase in mental illnesses since the coronavirus outbreak in India.⁶ Day by day the Covid situation in Bangladesh is worsening. The government of Bangladesh suspended or closed all educational institutions and both public and private offices on March 16th, 2020 in an effort to contain the outbreak of Covid 19. Public gatherings were also banned, ⁷ and travel from countries with high transmission risk, such as China, Iran, and Italy, was suspended.⁸ Despite these efforts, COVID-19 has reached all 64 administrative districts in Bangladesh by July 1st, 2020, causing over 145,000 cases and 1,874 deaths thus far.⁹ High density of population, poor hygiene practices, and poor economic conditions make the majority of the Bangladeshi population particularly vulnerable to this virus (Covid 19). Fear of becoming sick, the isolation of lockdown, the financial necessity to work and the inability to avoid venturing out in public for essential items such as food, idle life, and the irregular daily routine may increase psychiatric problems within the general population. During the COVID-19 pandemic, recent publications suggest mental health is associated with gender, socioeconomic status, occupation, having COVID-19-like symptoms, perceptions of COVID-19 impacts, interpersonal conflicts, social media use, and social support.¹⁰ Older adults and individuals with low incomes are at increased risk for poor mental health.¹¹ There is no information yet on mental health associations with or during this COVID-19 pandemic in the general population of Bangladesh even among the expert communities.

II OBJECTIVES

General Objective

- To evaluate the psychological and socio-economic impact of Covid 19 among the OPD patients.

Specific Objective

- To collect information regarding the socio-demographic status of participants.
- To collect information regarding the negative impact of Covid 19 on mental health, social life and economic impact (family income) of participants.

III. METHODOLOGY & MATERIALS

This was a prospective interview-based study conducted in the Department of Medicine, Ibn Sina

Specialized Hospital, and Dhaka, Bangladesh during the period from July 2020 to December 2020. In total 120 patients with several health problems, physically or virtually attended the OPD of the mentioned hospital were enrolled as the study population. The ethical committee of the mentioned hospital had been approved the study. Properly written consent was taken from all the participants before collecting data. A pre-designed questionnaire containing the data options of mental physical and socio-economic conditions as well as other relative necessary information was used in patient data collection. According to the inclusion criteria of this prospective study, both male and female patients of several ages and professions attended the mentioned hospital regarding several health problems were included as the study population. On the other hand, according to the exclusion criteria of these study severely ill patients, cases of surgery, very aged geriatric patients, and ICU patients were excluded. Participant's opinions were the basic source of information in this study. All data were processed, analyzed, and disseminated by MS Office and SPSS version as needed.

IV. RESULT

In this study, among total 120 participants 45% (n=54) were male and the rest 55% (n=66) were female. So female was dominating in number and the male-female ratio was 1:1.22. The highest number of participants was from the 41-60 year's age group which was 40.83%. Besides this, 9.17%, 31.67%, and 18.33% of participants were from ≤ 20 , 21-40, and >60 year's age groups respectively. In analyzing the family status of the participants according to the monthly income (DMFI) we observed, the highest number of participants was from lower-class families which were 48.33%. Besides this, 39.17% belonged to middle-class families and the rest 12.5% belonged to upper-class families. In this study, about two-thirds (64.17%) respondents were from rural areas whereas the rest one-third (35.83%) participants were from urban communities. In this current study, in analyzing the negative impact on the mental health of participants we observed the feeling of suffocation, feeling of exhaustion, fear of falling ill, anxiety about the future, and feeling of loneliness were found as some major negative mental impacts of Covid 19 on the respondents which were among 11.67%, 10.83%, 8.33%, 7.5% and 6.67% participants respectively. On the other hand, due to Covid 19 continuing a negative impact on the social life of participant's remote socialization, intolerance to others, random commitment violation, and ended social life were found among 10%, 5.83%, 4.17%, and 1.67% participants respectively. In analyzing the negative impact of Covid 19 on the social life of participants we observed the monthly family income was decreased up to 25%, 50%, 75%, and even 100% of 21.67%, 12.5%, 5%, and 1.67% participants respectively. That means negative impact like decreasing monthly family income was found around 49% of total participants.

Table-I: Socio-demographic status of participants (N=120)

Characteristics	n	%
Gender distribution		
Male	54	45.0
Female	66	55.0
Age distribution in year		
≤20	11	9.17
21-40	38	31.67
41-60	49	40.83
>60	22	18.33
Family status (Economic)		
Lower	58	48.33
Middle	47	39.17
Upper	15	12.50
Living are distribution		
Rural	77	64.17
Urban	43	35.83

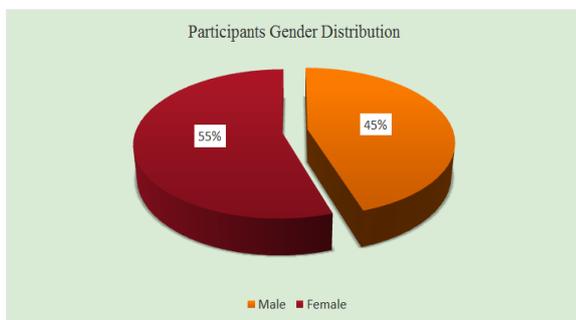


Fig-1: Participants Gender Distribution

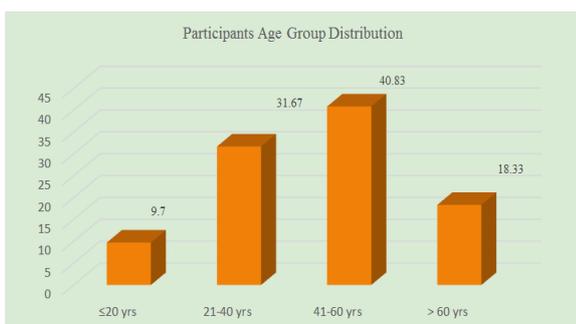


Fig-2: Participants Age Group Distribution

Table-II: Negative impact on mental health of participants (N=120)

Negative impacts	n	%
Feeling suffocation	14	11.67
Feeling exhausted	13	10.83
Fear of falling ill	10	8.33
Anxiety about future	9	7.5
Feeling loneliness	8	6.67
Feeling sadness	6	5.0
Intolerance to others	5	4.17
Extreme cleaning practices	3	2.5
Feeling extreme tiredness	2	1.67
Total	70	58.34

Table-III: Negative impact on social life of participants (N=120)

Negative Impacts	n	%
Continuing remote socialization	12	10.0
Intolerance to others	7	5.83
Random commitment violation	5	4.17
Ended social life	2	1.67
Total	26	20.67

Table-IV: Negative impact on family income of participants (N=120)

Change (Monthly)	n	%
Decreased up to 25%	26	21.67
Decreased up to 50%	15	12.50
Decreased up to 75%	6	5.0
Decreased up to 100%	2	1.67
Total	49	40.84

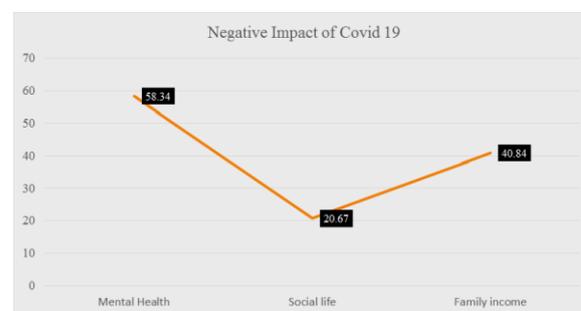


Fig-3: Negative Impact of Covid 19 among participants

V. DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to evaluate the psychological and socio-economic impact of Covid 19 among the OPD patients of a tertiary care hospital in Bangladesh. Because of the physical health effects of the coronavirus and the psycho-social effects of the isolation, quarantine, and physical distancing measures adopted, many people have been facing various type of fear (fear to die, losing the loved ones, or losing the income), many of them struggling with the harsh economic conditions and many people have to survive without the support of their common social networks. Moreover, terms of the course of the pandemic can lead to triggering dysphoric moods in the current uncertainty. Regarding the specific group and their vulnerabilities, those challenges also can be elaborated. Children and adolescents have been facing exacerbated psychological problems and affecting their emotional and mental development in virtue of social isolation, interrupted education, economic stressors of family life. To increase the risk of abuse, women, and children are facing a vast number of stressors at home, and additionally. Having the feeling of uncertainty towards the future, men, on the other hand, are experiencing the deterioration of livelihood opportunities. As briefed by the UN (2020), 12 there is widespread psychological distress within the communities resulted from the pandemic conditions. On the other hand, due to Covid

19 continuing in this study, a negative impact on the social life of participant's remote socialization, intolerance to others, random commitment violation, and ended social life was found among 10%, 5.83%, 4.17%, and 1.67% participants respectively. To control the spread of this disease, governments all over the world have taken several measures that have had an enormous impact on the lives of billions of people. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and of the resulting measures on mental health has also been an important concern, even though physical health is understandably the first priority during a pandemic.¹³ In this current study in analyzing the mental conditions of our respondents, we observed the feeling of suffocation, feeling of exhaustion, fear of falling ill, anxiety about the future, and feeling of loneliness were found as some major negative mental impacts of Covid 19 on the respondents which were among 11.67%, 10.83%, 8.33%, 7.5% and 6.67% participants respectively. Past research has indicated that, compared to adults, young people's mental health is often disproportionately affected by calamities.¹⁴ In addition, loneliness precipitate depression, anxiety & social isolation in children and adolescents.¹⁵ There are three main ways via which the COVID-19 pandemic can affect mental health.¹³ First, for adults and youth alike this pandemic is a long-term, extensive, high-stakes adversity that interrupts daily routines for a long time and creates severe uncertainty about the present and the future. Therefore, the pandemic is a significant source of stress.. Second, it is a multisystemic disaster, as it affects and disrupts individuals, families, communities, states, and economies, having long-term effects on the micro, and macro-system.¹⁶ Finally, the subjective levels of stress regarding COVID-19 explain part of the debilitating effects of the pandemic on psychological well-being.¹⁷ Third, as Gruber *et al.*,¹³ points out, this pandemic disrupts several protective factors for mental health under stress, such as supportive social interactions, access to mental health services, etc. Besides this economic distress is a potential factor of worsening the pandemic situation. In our study in analyzing the negative impact of Covid 19 on the family income status of participants, we observed the monthly family income was decreased up to 25%, 50%, 75%, and even 100% of 21.67%, 12.50%, 5%, and 1.67% participants respectively. In the current study, fewer than one in five families with financial stress or concerns about having enough food to meet their basic household needs had recently accessed federal benefits or food programs, respectively, warranting further investigation into the ease of access to these services.¹⁸ Furthermore, after the COVID-19 crisis has subsided, many of these underlying causes of health inequities will remain,¹⁹ suggests that many of these interventions should be sustained irrespective of the pandemic.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The pandemic of Covid 19 is a new experience to the world community. The psychological and socio-

economic impact of Covid 19 among several patients as well as general people demanded more concentration now. Besides general people and patients, the whole economy and social structure of Bangladesh have already been affected by COVID-19. Unemployment and uncertainty of family income are responsible for secondary negative impact on the mental, physical health of general people as well as patients here. So, government policymakers, as well as world leaders, should be more conscious about these impacts to find out the proper way to resolve such pandemic. For getting more reliable information we would like to recommend conducting more studies in several places with larger sample size.

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