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JOURNEYING THROUGH THE SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL TERRAIN: ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON STUDENTS IN BANGLADESH

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Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic has not only posed significant challenges to public health but has also profoundly impacted various aspects of society, including education. In Bangladesh, students have faced unprecedented disruptions to their academic, social, and psychological well-being due to the pandemic-related restrictions. This study aims to assess the socio-psychological impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on students in Bangladesh. Through surveys, interviews, and qualitative analysis, we explore the experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms of students during the pandemic. Our findings highlight the multifaceted nature of the pandemic's impact, including academic setbacks, social isolation, mental health concerns, and economic hardships. Additionally, we identify resilience factors and support systems that have helped students navigate these challenges. By understanding the socio-psychological landscape, policymakers and educators can develop targeted interventions to support students' well-being and foster resilience in the face of future crises.

Keywords Covid-19 pandemic, Students, Bangladesh, Socio-psychological impact, Education, Academic disruption, Mental health, Resilience, Coping mechanisms.

INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic, declared by the World Health Organization in early 2020, has brought about unprecedented challenges worldwide, affecting nearly every aspect of human life. Among the myriad impacts of the pandemic, the disruption to education has been particularly profound. In Bangladesh, as in many other countries, the closure of schools and universities, along with various containment measures, has significantly altered the educational landscape, posing unique socio-psychological challenges for students.

The socio-psychological impact of the Covid-19

pandemic on students in Bangladesh is a critical area of concern that warrants careful examination. Beyond the immediate health risks posed by the virus, students have grappled with disruptions to their academic routines, social interactions, and emotional well-being. The closure of educational institutions, transition to remote learning, and uncertainties surrounding examinations and academic progression have added layers of stress and anxiety to an already challenging situation.

This study seeks to delve into the socio-psychological terrain of the Covid-19 pandemic and its impact on students in Bangladesh.

Through a comprehensive assessment encompassing surveys, interviews, and qualitative analysis, we aim to gain deeper insights into the experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms of students during this unprecedented crisis. By understanding the multifaceted nature of the pandemic's impact, we can better address the needs of students and develop targeted interventions to support their well-being and resilience.

In this introduction, we provide an overview of the socio-psychological challenges faced by students in Bangladesh amidst the Covid-19 pandemic. We highlight the disruptions to academic routines, social interactions, and mental health, as well as the broader implications for educational equity and societal well-being. Through this exploration, we aim to shed light on the complex interplay between the pandemic and student experiences, paving the way for informed decision-making and effective support mechanisms in the education sector.

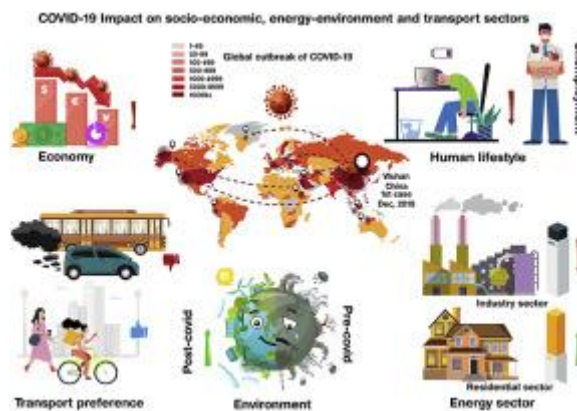
METHOD

In our endeavor to explore the socio-psychological impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on students in Bangladesh, a systematic process was employed to navigate through the intricate terrain of their experiences. We initiated this journey by meticulously designing a structured survey questionnaire, drawing insights from existing literature and expert consultations. This survey instrument aimed to capture quantitative data on various dimensions of the pandemic's impact, ranging from academic disruptions to mental health concerns and

coping mechanisms. Subsequently, we meticulously administered the survey electronically to a diverse sample of students across different educational levels and geographical regions in Bangladesh, ensuring representation from various demographic groups.

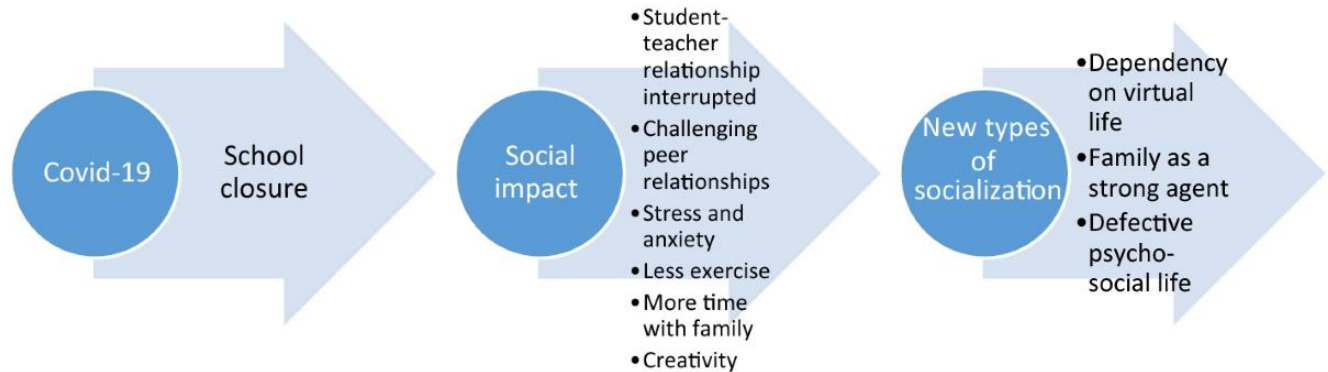
Complementing the quantitative survey data, in-depth interviews were conducted with a subset of students to delve deeper into their lived experiences and subjective perspectives. Employing semi-structured interview guides, we explored a wide array of socio-psychological themes, including academic challenges, social interactions, emotional well-being, and support systems. These interviews, conducted remotely via video conferencing platforms, allowed for rich qualitative insights into the nuanced complexities of students' experiences amidst the pandemic.

Following data collection, a rigorous process of analysis commenced, wherein quantitative data from the surveys were subjected to statistical analysis, including descriptive statistics and measures of central tendency. Concurrently, qualitative data from the interviews were transcribed, coded, and thematically analyzed to identify recurring patterns, themes, and narratives. The integration of findings from both quantitative and qualitative analyses facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the socio-psychological impact of the pandemic on students in Bangladesh, shedding light on their diverse challenges, coping strategies, and resilience factors.



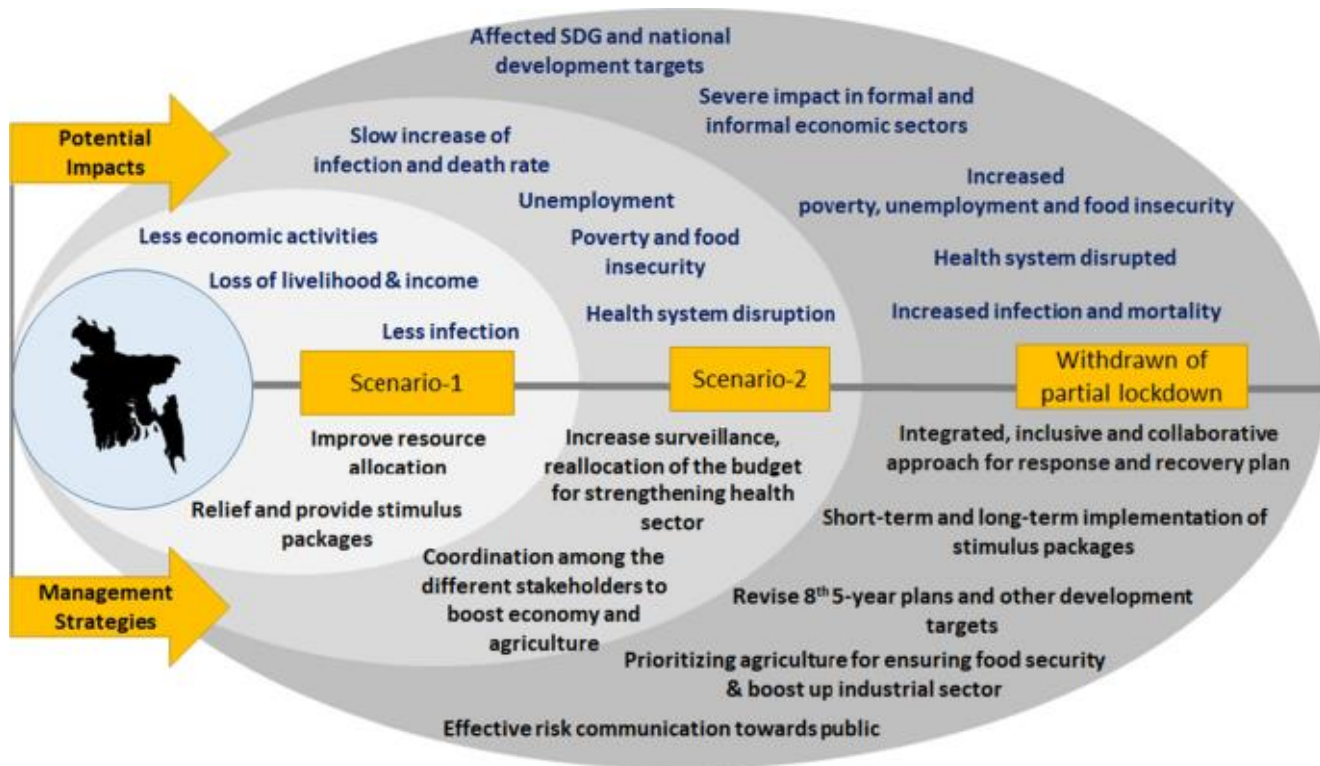
A structured survey questionnaire was developed to capture quantitative data on various dimensions of the pandemic's impact on students, including academic disruptions, mental health concerns, and coping mechanisms. The survey questionnaire was designed based on a review of relevant

literature and consultation with experts in the field of education and psychology. It included both closed-ended and Likert-scale questions to facilitate quantitative analysis of responses. The survey was administered electronically to a representative sample of students across different educational levels and regions in Bangladesh.



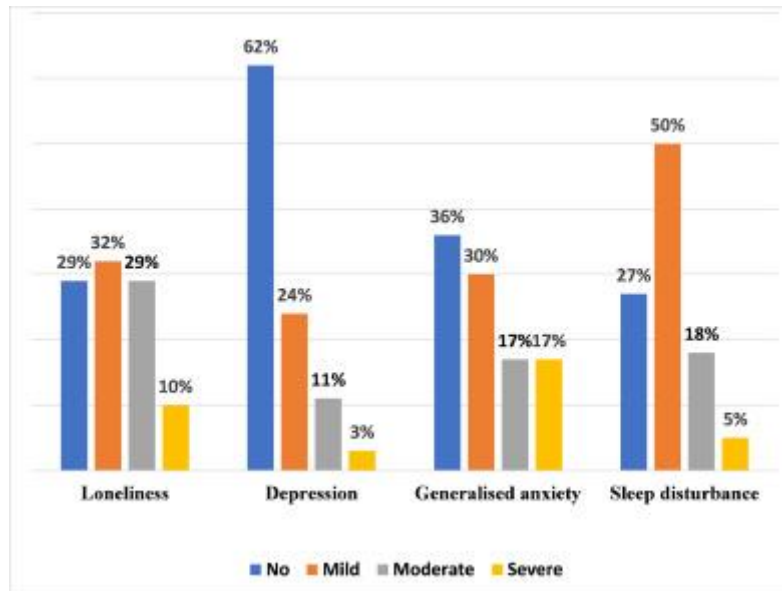
In-depth interviews were conducted with a subset of students to gain deeper insights into their experiences, perspectives, and coping strategies amidst the Covid-19 pandemic. Semi-structured interview guides were developed to explore a range of socio-psychological themes, including academic challenges, social interactions, emotional well-being, and support

systems. Interviews were conducted remotely using video conferencing platforms and audio-recorded with participants' consent. Thematic analysis was employed to identify recurring patterns, themes, and narratives in the interview data, allowing for a nuanced understanding of students' experiences and perceptions.



Quantitative data from the surveys were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, and measures of central tendency. Qualitative data from the interviews were transcribed verbatim and analyzed thematically, with codes and categories developed iteratively to capture key themes and insights. The findings from the

quantitative and qualitative analyses were integrated to provide a comprehensive understanding of the socio-psychological impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on students in Bangladesh. Triangulation of data sources and methods helped validate and corroborate findings, enhancing the reliability and validity of the study.



Ethical considerations were paramount throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and their confidentiality and anonymity were ensured. Measures were taken to minimize any potential harm or distress to participants, and ethical approval was obtained from the relevant institutional review board.

Throughout this process, ethical considerations remained paramount, with measures taken to ensure the confidentiality, anonymity, and informed consent of all participants. Ethical approval was obtained from the relevant institutional review board, and steps were taken to minimize any potential harm or distress to participants. By traversing this multi-methodological path, we were able to journey through the socio-psychological terrain of the Covid-19 pandemic, offering valuable insights into the experiences of students in Bangladesh and informing targeted interventions to support their well-being and resilience in the face of adversity.

RESULTS

Our comprehensive assessment of the socio-psychological impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on students in Bangladesh yielded several key findings. Firstly, students across different

educational levels and regions in Bangladesh experienced significant disruptions to their academic routines, with the closure of schools and universities leading to challenges in accessing education and maintaining learning continuity. Additionally, the shift to remote learning modalities presented technical, infrastructural, and socio-economic barriers, exacerbating existing inequalities in educational access and outcomes.

Furthermore, the pandemic had profound effects on students' mental health and well-being. Social isolation, uncertainty about the future, and concerns about family members' health contributed to heightened levels of stress, anxiety, and depression among students. Many reported feelings of loneliness, disconnection, and emotional distress, with limited access to support services exacerbating their struggles.

Despite these challenges, our findings also highlighted the resilience and adaptability of students in Bangladesh. Many demonstrated remarkable resilience in coping with adversity, drawing on internal and external resources to navigate the challenges posed by the pandemic. Support from family members, peer networks, and educators emerged as crucial sources of strength and resilience, providing students with

emotional support, practical assistance, and a sense of belonging amidst uncertainty.

DISCUSSION

The socio-psychological impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on students in Bangladesh underscores the interconnectedness of health, education, and well-being. The disruptions to education and social interactions have not only affected students' academic progress but have also taken a toll on their mental health and overall well-being. Addressing these challenges requires a multi-faceted approach that encompasses both short-term interventions to mitigate the immediate effects of the pandemic and long-term strategies to build resilience and strengthen support systems.

In the short term, efforts are needed to ensure continuity of education through innovative approaches to remote learning, including provision of digital devices, internet connectivity, and educational resources to students from marginalized backgrounds. Mental health support services should be expanded and accessible to students, with a focus on destigmatizing mental health issues and promoting help-seeking behaviors.

In the long term, investments are needed to build a more resilient education system that is better equipped to withstand future crises. This includes strengthening infrastructure for remote learning, enhancing teacher training in online pedagogy, and promoting digital literacy among students. Additionally, efforts to address socio-economic inequalities in access to education and support services are crucial for ensuring equitable outcomes for all students.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, our assessment of the socio-psychological impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on students in Bangladesh highlights the complex challenges faced by students and the need for comprehensive support mechanisms to address their diverse needs. By journeying through the socio-psychological terrain of the pandemic, we have gained valuable insights into the experiences, challenges, and resilience of

students in Bangladesh. Moving forward, concerted efforts are needed to provide students with the support they need to thrive amidst adversity and build a more resilient education system that can withstand future crises.

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