

## PEER REVIEW HISTORY

BMJ Open publishes all reviews undertaken for accepted manuscripts. Reviewers are asked to complete a checklist review form (<http://bmjopen.bmj.com/site/about/resources/checklist.pdf>) and are provided with free text boxes to elaborate on their assessment. These free text comments are reproduced below.

### ARTICLE DETAILS

<b>TITLE (PROVISIONAL)</b>	When COVID-19 enters in a community setting: An exploratory qualitative study of community perspectives on COVID-19 affecting mental well-being
<b>AUTHORS</b>	ali, naureen; Feroz, Anam; Akber Ali, Noshaba; Feroz, Rida; Nazim Meghani, Salima; Saleem, Sarah

### VERSION 1 – REVIEW

<b>REVIEWER</b>	Arnout, B King Khalid University
<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	27-Feb-2021

<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	Thank you for share this important study. With my best wishes
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<b>REVIEWER</b>	Webb, Lucy Manchester Metropolitan University
<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	12-Mar-2021

<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	<p>Thank you for submitting your paper on covid-19 and wellbeing to BMJ Open.</p> <p>This is a timely study and one that can add to the global evidence on impact of Covid-19 on mental health. It is useful to have reports on this impact across the globe, and this paper gives insight into impact within Pakistan. It needs to be recognised that this journal reaches an international readership and so it would be useful to have more socio-economic and political details on the population included in this study to better understand cultural and environmental contexts. for example, are these rural or urban communities, is there easy access to internet communication and alternatives for religious attendance (i.e. online). There are interesting points made about national broadcasting which respondents have commented on but this is not re-visited in the discussion. The role of national broadcasters via TV and radio has been a key influence globally so putting these comments into the local context would be informative.</p> <p>There are many limitations to qualitative studies and there are likely to be more here than are mentioned. For instance, it is not clear who and how many refused or were unable to take part and if there was an inherent bias here.</p> <p>there are also a few language errors which need addressing. please proof read the work. I have attached the manuscript with annotations to suggest re-wording in places.</p>
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<b>REVIEWER</b>	Zhou, Xiaoyun Princess Alexandra Hospital, Centre for Online Health
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<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	16-Mar-2021
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<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	<p>This timely study explored the psychological impact of COVID-19 on Pakistan general population. The findings illustrated how the citizens' mental health was impacted by COVID-19 and how they coped with the difficult situation. The findings are interesting and of significance. The finding that COVID-19 has impact on people's religious life is especially interesting to me.</p> <p>In spite of the strengths mentioned above, I have few comments for the authors' consideration:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The way the research question was raised needs to be refined—that's to say why the authors wanted to study the impact of COVID-19 on people's mental health. The rationale of this research is not clearly stated in the introduction (Page 8, Line 17-22).</li> <li>2. In addition, the research question needs to be stated clearer, in the Introduction, it is stated that "we explored perceptions and attitudes of community members' towards the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on their mental well-being" (Page 8, Line 17-22). If I understand it correctly, it seems that this study had two research questions: Q1 what are the perceptions of general population on COVID-19 and Q2 what is the impact of COVID-19 on general population's mental health. It is easier to understand if the research questions can be stated separately.</li> <li>3. In the Data Collection Procedure section, the sentence—"each interview lasted around 35 to 45 minutes in duration" (Page 9 Line 46-51)—better be moved to Result section.</li> <li>4. In "Additional file -2 In-Depth Interview Guide for interviewing community members" (Page 32 Line 28-40), some interview questions seem irrelevant to research questions. For example, Q1 and Q2 (Page 32 Line 31-33) asked about the knowledge about COVID-19, rather than the perceptions on COVID-19. The information got from these questions was not used in the Result section.</li> <li>5. Some quotes seem not to match the sub-themes. For example, IDI-17 (Page 15 Line 3-8) seems to illustrate that the participant thought media has a negative effect and the participant did not</li> </ol>
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<b>REVIEWER</b>	Ho, Roger National University of Singapore, Department of Psychological Medicine
<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	22-Mar-2021

<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	<p>I have the following comments for the authors to address and I am happy to review this paper again.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The authors stated " The pandemic has not only incurred massive challenges to the global supply chains and healthcare systems but also has a detrimental effect on the overall health of individuals [2]." It is important to state the impact of COVID-19 on mental health in the world. I recommend to talk about the finding of this systematic review:</li> </ol> <p>Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on mental health in the general population: A systematic review [published online ahead of print, 2020 Aug 8]. J Affect Disord. 2020;277:55-64. doi:10.1016/j.jad.2020.08.001</p>
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	<p>2) Under the Introduction, the authors stated "Moreover, social distancing is often an unpleasant experience for the community". It is important to talk about the specific impact of social distancing, lockdown and face mask use:</p> <p>Social distancing: Impact of COVID-19 on Economic Well-Being and Quality of Life of the Vietnamese During the National Social Distancing. <i>Front Psychol.</i> 2020 Sep 11;11:565153. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2020.565153. PMID: 33041928; PMCID: PMC7518066.</p> <p>Lockdown: Anxiety and Depression Among People Under the Nationwide Partial Lockdown in Vietnam. <i>Front Public Health.</i> 2020;8:589359. Published 2020 Oct 29. doi:10.3389/fpubh.2020.589359</p> <p>Facemask use: The Association Between Physical and Mental Health and Face Mask Use During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Comparison of Two Countries With Different Views and Practices. <i>Front Psychiatry.</i> 2020;11:569981. Published 2020 Sep 9. doi:10.3389/fpsyt.2020.569981</p> <p>3) Under discussion, the authors need to compare the findings with the following multi-nation study in Asia:</p> <p>The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on physical and mental health of Asians: A study of seven middle-income countries in Asia. <i>PLoS One.</i> 2021 Feb 11;16(2):e0246824. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0246824. PMID: 33571297</p> <p>4) There are other important information not mentioned by this study. Please discuss the following points under the discussion:</p> <p>Contact with an individual with suspected COVID-19 or infected materials was associated with anxiety: Reference: Immediate Psychological Responses and Associated Factors during the Initial Stage of the 2019 Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Epidemic among the General Population in China. <i>Int J Environ Res Public Health.</i> 2020;17(5):1729. Published 2020 Mar 6. doi:10.3390/ijerph17051729</p> <p>Not confident in doctors in diagnosing COVID-19: Reference: A Longitudinal Study on the Mental Health of General Population during the COVID-19 Epidemic in China [published online ahead of print, 2020 Apr 13]. <i>Brain Behav Immun.</i> 2020; S0889-1591(20)30511-0. doi:10.1016/j.bbi.2020.04.028</p> <p>Discrimination was associated with higher level of anxiety: Psychological impact of COVID-19 pandemic in the Philippines. <i>J Affect Disord.</i> 2020 Aug 24;277:379-391. doi: 10.1016/j.jad.2020.08.043. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 32861839.</p> <p>Somatic symptoms were associated with anxiety: A chain mediation model on COVID-19 symptoms and mental health outcomes in Americans, Asians and Europeans. <i>Sci Rep</i> 11, 6481 (2021). <a href="https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-021-85943-7">https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-021-85943-7</a></p> <p>5) The authors should talk about strategies to reduce anxiety:</p>
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	<p>Providing health information: Coverage of Health Information by Different Sources in Communities: Implication for COVID-19 Epidemic Response. Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health 2020, 17, 3577.</p> <p>Engaging grassroots leaders: Feasibility of Intersectoral Collaboration in Epidemic Preparedness and Response at Grassroots Levels in the Threat of COVID-19 Pandemic in Vietnam. Front Public Health. 2020 Nov 17;8:589437. doi: 10.3389/fpubh.2020.589437. PMID: 33313040; PMCID: PMC7707108.</p> <p>The operational readiness capacities of the grassroots health system in responses to epidemics: Implications for COVID-19 control in Vietnam. J Glob Health. 2020 Jun;10(1):011006. doi: 10.7189/jogh.10.011006. PMID: 32566168; PMCID: PMC7294390.</p> <p>Increase operational readiness: The operational readiness capacities of the grassroots health system in responses to epidemics: Implications for COVID-19 control in Vietnam. J Glob Health. 2020 Jun;10(1):011006. doi: 10.7189/jogh.10.011006. PMID: 32566168; PMCID: PMC7294390</p> <p>Telemedicine to treat anxiety: Telemedicine in the COVID-19 Pandemic: Motivations for Integrated, Interconnected, and Community-Based Health Delivery in Resource-Scarce Settings? Front Psychiatry. 2020 Sep 11;11:564452. doi: 10.3389/fpsy.2020.564452. PMID: 33061919; PMCID: PMC7518034.</p>
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### VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

S. No.	Reviewer 1 Comments	Point by point response
1.	Thank you for share this important study.	Thanks for your feedback

S. No.	Reviewer 2 Comments	Point by point response
1.	<p>Thank you for submitting your paper on covid-19 and wellbeing to BMJ Open.</p> <p>This is a timely study and one that can add to the global evidence on impact of Covid-19 on mental health. It is useful to have reports on this impact across the globe, and this paper gives insight into impact within Pakistan. It needs to be recognised that this journal reaches an international readership and so it would be useful to have more socio-economic and political details on the population included in this study to better understand cultural and environmental contexts. for example, are these rural or urban communities, is there easy access to internet</p>	<p>Thanks for your response. We have added the important information in the section “Data Collection Methods and study participants” and in Table 2</p> <p>The changes are highlighted on page no. 8 and line no. 3 – 8</p>

	communication and alternatives for religious attendance (i.e. online)	Changes are also highlighted in the table no. 2, page no. 26
2.	There are interesting points made about national broadcasting which respondents have commented on but this is not re-visited in the discussion. The role of national broadcasters via TV and radio has been a key influence globally so putting these comments into the local context would be informative.	Thanks for your response. We have noted the reviewer suggestion and added this point in the discussion section.  We have highlighted changes on the page no. 23 and line no. 4 - 10
3.	There are many limitations to qualitative studies and there are likely to be more here than are mentioned. For instance, it is not clear who and how many refused or were unable to take part and if there was an inherent bias here.	Thanks for your response. We have added information in the result about number of participants that did not take part in the study.  Changes are highlighted on page no. 9 and line no. 19 - 20  We have added limitation under the section "strengths and limitation"  Changes are highlighted on page no. 24 and line no. 4 – 6
4.	There are also a few language errors which need addressing. please proof read the work. I have attached the manuscript with annotations to suggest re-wording in places	Thanks for your response. We have incorporated all your suggestions for re-wording.

S. No.	Reviewer 3 Comments	Point by point response
1.	This timely study explored the psychological impact of COVID-19 on Pakistan general population. The findings illustrated how the citizens' mental health was impacted by COVID-19 and how they coped with the difficult situation. The findings are interesting and of significance. The finding that COVID-19 has impact on people's religious life is especially interesting to me.	Thanks for your response.

2.	<p>In spite of the strengths mentioned above, I have few comments for the authors' consideration:</p> <p>The way the research question was raised needs to be refined—that's to say why the authors wanted to study the impact of COVID-19 on people's mental health. The rationale of this research is not clearly stated in the introduction (Page 8, Line 17-22).</p>	<p>Thanks for your response. We have revised the rationale of the study.</p> <p>Changes are highlighted on page no. 6 and line no. 14 – 17 &amp; 19-23</p> <p>Changes are highlighted on page no. 7 and line no. 1- 2</p>
3.	<p>In addition, the research question needs to be stated clearer, in the Introduction, it is stated that “we explored perceptions and attitudes of community members' towards the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on their mental well-being” (Page 8, Line 17-22). If I understand it correctly, it seems that this study had two research questions: Q1 what are the perceptions of general population on COVID-19 and Q2 what is the impact of COVID-19 on general population's mental health. It is easier to understand if the research questions can be stated separately.</p>	<p>Thanks for your response. We have mentioned the research questions.</p> <p>Changes are highlighted on page no. 7 and line no. 3-5</p> <p>Changes are also done on page 3 (Abstract section), line no. 5-6 &amp; 15-16</p>
4.	<p>In the Data Collection Procedure section, the sentence—“each interview lasted around 35 to 45 minutes in duration” (Page 9 Line 46-51)—better be moved to Result section.</p>	<p>Thanks for your response.</p> <p>We have noted the reviewer suggestion and moved these lines in the result section.</p> <p>We have highlighted changes on the page no. 9 and line no. 19-20</p>
5.	<p>In “Additional file -2 In-Depth Interview Guide for interviewing community members” (Page 32 Line 28-40), some interview questions seem irrelevant to research questions. For example, Q1 and Q2 (Page 32 Line 31-33) asked about the knowledge about COVID-19, rather than the perceptions on COVID-19. The information got from these questions was not used in the Result section</p>	<p>Thanks for your response.</p> <p>In the light of the reviewers comment the In-Depth Interview Guide has been revised</p> <p>Revised guide is present in the supplementary file on the page no. 3.</p>

6.	Some quotes seem not to match the sub-themes. For example, IDI-17 (Page 15 Line 3-8) seems to illustrate that the participant thought media has a negative effect and the participant did not believe in news. This cannot prove that it is due to COVID-19. It is the same with quote IDI-22	<p>Thanks for your response.</p> <p>IDI-17 quote has been replaced</p> <p>Changes are highlighted on the page no. 13 and line no. 16 - 18</p> <p>IDI-22 quote is properly reworded</p> <p>Changes are highlighted on the page no. 15 and line no. 15 - 17</p>
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S. No.	Reviewer 4 Comments	Point by point response
1.	<p>I have the following comments for the authors to address and I am happy to review this paper again.</p> <p>The authors stated " The pandemic has not only incurred massive challenges to the global supply chains and healthcare systems but also has a detrimental effect on the overall health of individuals [2]." It is important to state the impact of COVID-19 on mental health in the world. I recommend to talk about the finding of this systematic review:</p> <p>Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on mental health in the general population: A systematic review [published online ahead of print, 2020 Aug 8]. J Affect Disord. 2020;277:55-64. doi:10.1016/j.jad.2020.08.001</p>	<p>Thanks for your response.</p> <p>As per reviewer feedback, we have added suggested study.</p> <p>Changes are highlighted on the page no. 5 and line no. 5-7.</p>
2.	<p>2) Under the Introduction, the authors stated "Moreover, social distancing is often an unpleasant experience for the community". It is important to talk about the specific impact of social distancing, lockdown and face mask use:</p> <p>Social distancing: Impact of COVID-19 on Economic Well-Being and Quality of Life of the Vietnamese During the National Social Distancing. Front Psychol. 2020 Sep 11;11:565153. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2020.565153. PMID: 33041928; PMCID: PMC7518066.</p>	<p>Thanks for your response.</p> <p>As per reviewer feedback, we have added suggested study.</p> <p>Changes are highlighted on the page no. 5 and line no. 10 – 14.</p>

	<p>Lockdown: Anxiety and Depression Among People Under the Nationwide Partial Lockdown in Vietnam. Front Public Health. 2020;8:589359. Published 2020 Oct 29. doi:10.3389/fpubh.2020.589359</p> <p>Facemask use: The Association Between Physical and Mental Health and Face Mask Use During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Comparison of Two Countries With Different Views and Practices. Front Psychiatry. 2020;11:569981. Published 2020 Sep 9. doi:10.3389/fpsyt.2020.569981</p>	<p>Changes are highlighted on the page no. 5 and line no. 16 – 17.</p> <p>Changes are highlighted on the page no. 6 and line no. 10 – 13.</p>
3.	<p>Under discussion, the authors need to compare the findings with the following multi-nation study in Asia:</p> <p>The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on physical and mental health of Asians: A study of seven middle-income countries in Asia. PLoS One. 2021 Feb 11;16(2):e0246824. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0246824. PMID: 33571297.</p>	<p>Thanks for your response.</p> <p>As per reviewer feedback, we have added suggested study.</p> <p>Changes are highlighted on the page no. 19 and line no. 23 &amp; on page no. 20 line no 1-2.</p>
4.	<p>4) There are other important information not mentioned by this study. Please discuss the following points under the discussion:</p> <p>Contact with an individual with suspected COVID-19 or infected materials was associated with anxiety: Reference: Immediate Psychological Responses and Associated Factors during the Initial Stage of the 2019 Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Epidemic among the General Population in China. Int J Environ Res Public Health. 2020;17(5):1729. Published 2020 Mar 6. doi:10.3390/ijerph17051729</p> <p>Not confident in doctors in diagnosing COVID-19: Reference:A Longitudinal Study on the Mental Health of General Population during the COVID-19 Epidemic in China [published online ahead of print, 2020 Apr 13]. Brain Behav Immun. 2020; S0889-1591(20)30511-0. doi:10.1016/j.bbi.2020.04.028</p>	<p>Thanks for your response.</p> <p>As per reviewer feedback, we have added suggested study.</p> <p>Changes are highlighted on the page no. 19 and line no. 15 – 16.</p>



	<p>Discrimination was associated with higher level of anxiety:  Psychological impact of COVID-19 pandemic in the Philippines. J Affect Disord. 2020 Aug 24;277:379-391. doi: 10.1016/j.jad.2020.08.043. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 32861839.</p> <p>Somatic symptoms were associated with anxiety:  A chain mediation model on COVID-19 symptoms and mental health outcomes in Americans, Asians and Europeans. Sci Rep 11, 6481 (2021). <a href="https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-021-85943-7">https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-021-85943-7</a>.</p>	<p>Changes are highlighted on the page no. 19 and line no. 18 – 20.</p> <p>Changes are highlighted on the page no. 20 and line no. 8 – 10.</p> <p>Changes are highlighted on the page no. 21 and line no. 17 – 20.</p>
5.	<p>5) The authors should talk about strategies to reduce anxiety:</p> <p>Providing health information:  Coverage of Health Information by Different Sources in Communities: Implication for COVID-19 Epidemic Response. Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health 2020, 17, 3577.</p> <p>Engaging grassroots leaders:  Feasibility of Intersectoral Collaboration in Epidemic Preparedness and Response at Grassroots Levels in the Threat of COVID-19 Pandemic in Vietnam. Front Public Health. 2020 Nov 17;8:589437. doi: 10.3389/fpubh.2020.589437. PMID: 33313040; PMCID: PMC7707108.</p> <p>Increase operational readiness:  The operational readiness capacities of the grassroots health system in responses to epidemics: Implications for COVID-19 control in Vietnam. J Glob Health. 2020 Jun;10(1):011006. doi: 10.7189/jogh.10.011006. PMID: 32566168; PMCID: PMC7294390</p> <p>Telemedicine to treat anxiety:  Telemedicine in the COVID-19 Pandemic: Motivations for Integrated, Interconnected, and Community-Based Health Delivery in Resource-Scarce Settings? Front Psychiatry. 2020 Sep 11;11:564452. doi:</p>	<p>Thanks for your response.</p> <p>Changes are highlighted on the page no. 23 and line no. 10 – 11.</p> <p>Changes are highlighted on the page no. 23 and line no. 12 – 13.</p> <p>Changes are highlighted on the page no. 23 and line no. 17 – 19.</p>

	10.3389/fpsy.2020.564452. PMID: 33061919; PMCID: PMC7518034.	Changes are highlighted on the page no. 23 and line no. 14 – 17.
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**VERSION 2 – REVIEW**

<b>REVIEWER</b>	Zhou, Xiaoyun Princess Alexandra Hospital, Centre for Online Health
<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	19-Apr-2021

<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	This timely study explored the psychological impact of COVID-19 on Pakistan general population. The findings illustrated how the citizens' mental health was impacted by COVID-19 and how they coped with the difficult situation. The findings are interesting and of significance. The finding that COVID-19 has impact on people's religious life is especially interesting to me. The questions raised up in the manuscript has been adequately addressed in the revision.
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<b>REVIEWER</b>	Ho, Roger National University of Singapore, Department of Psychological Medicine
<b>REVIEW RETURNED</b>	04-Apr-2021

<b>GENERAL COMMENTS</b>	I recommend publication.
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