

Research Article

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON WORKERS OF THE INFORMAL SECTOR: EVIDENCE FROM URBAN SLUMS IN DHAKA NORTH CITY CORPORATION, BANGLADESH

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ABSTRACT

The coronavirus pandemic was an unavoidable situation worldwide. The study's objective is to determine the impacts of COVID-19 on the livelihood of informal workers and the associated challenges. The primary and secondary data regarding the livelihoods of informal workers were collected and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 26.0. The primary data were collected through a semi-structured questionnaire and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The study found that many COVID-19 cases among residents impact a wide range of incomes, especially for those with lower incomes. The research was conducted among workers in informal sectors and low-income individuals, including rickshaw pullers, hawkers, drivers, waste pickers, and housemates. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, maintaining social distancing and hygiene behaviors exacerbated the livelihoods of informal workers. Moreover, workers in the informal sector were affected in various ways, including disruptions to the food supply chain, health insecurity, and limited working opportunities due to movement restrictions during the lockdown. Therefore, people in informal sectors lost their purchasing power due to job losses and movement restrictions. The study helps policymakers and victims understand how to better prepare for the pandemic next time.

Keywords: *COVID-19, informal sectors, Urban slums, Dhaka North City Corporation, Bangladesh*

Introduction

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak (previously 2019-nCoV) is a new problem of humanity that has had a profound impact on daily life globally and is slowing down the economy (WHO, 2020). This epidemic has impacted millions of individuals; some of them are sick, and some of them have died as a result of this virus (WHO, 2020). The virus outbreak was detected in Wuhan, China, and reported by the World Health Organization (WHO) in December 2019 (WHO, 2020). The virus has spread to more than 213 countries and continues to spread globally

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without allowing time to identify the challenges and direction for work (Sharma, 2020). The shocks and stresses of the COVID-19 pandemic are not limited to health; they have also had a severe impact on every sphere of life, from socioeconomic, religious, cultural, and educational aspects to political aspects (Bhuiyan *et al.*, 2020). The virus's rapid spread has jeopardized the lives and livelihoods of people from all walks of life (Rahman *et al.*, 2020).

A pandemic does not directly attack the economic framework; instead, it originates from the general living system of the community during the pandemic. In a policy note entitled "Impact of COVID-19 on Informal Workers," the FAO characterized the COVID-19 crisis as a substantial labor market disruption, resulting in considerable unemployment and underemployment among informal workers, who may ultimately resort to detrimental coping mechanisms such as distress asset sales, borrowing from informal lenders, or engaging in child labor (FAO, 2020; Firoj 2021). This poses a threat to our population, a risk to human life, and causes economic distress, as well as invisible emotional strain, which significantly affects the health of global society (Ananda, 2020).

Even Bangladeshi vulnerable groups were not exceptional due to lockdown and other measures to curb the spread of the virus; almost 20 million workers in the informal sector, such as the agriculture, export-oriented readymade garments, and other labor-intensive service providers, e.g., rickshaw pullers, construction workers, day laborer and owners of small grocery shops lost their jobs in Bangladesh (Gautam *et al.*, 2022). According to Rahman *et al.* (2020), out of 60.8 million working people, both in formal and informal settings, 10 million workers are day laborers, and 27 million are self-employed with small businesses. These two groups of people went jobless and were left with zero earnings (Rahman *et al.*, 2020). Readymade Garments (RMG) workers were also severely impacted by the COVID-19 crisis, despite Bangladesh being the second-largest exporter, with its RMG sector being particularly hard-hit by the pandemic (Gautam and Gautam, 2021; Hossain, 2021). Due to the halt and cancellation of orders, more than 350,000 workers lost employment (Russell, 2021). It has also created an unprecedented situation for farmers, including those involved in vegetable and fruit production (Gautam and Gautam, 2021). They sold their products at a low price, which resulted in significant losses for them. Besides these sectors, Bangladesh also recorded the 15-month lowest remittance in March 2020 (Gautam and Gautam, 2021).

According to Ali and Bhuiyan (2020), many people have recently become jobless, while many more are in danger of losing their jobs. Primarily, the poorest segment of the population, with very little or no savings, is the most severely affected by the economic meltdown (Bhadra, 2021). It is estimated that COVID-19 has pushed 16.5 million people, mainly rickshaw pullers, transport workers, day laborers, street vendors, hawkers, construction laborers, and employees of hotels, motels, and restaurants back into poverty (Islam and Jahangir, 2020). Approximately 20 million people who solely rely on the informal sector for their livelihoods have already lost their jobs and become temporarily unemployed due to the government's measures to limit the spread of the coronavirus (Hossain, 2021). Dhaka, one of the largest cities in the world, has residents with a wide range of incomes and has experienced a high number of COVID-19 cases (Rahaman *et al.*, 2023).

Therefore, the study was designed to investigate the impacts of COVID-19 on the lives of informal workers, particularly in terms of their daily work, food supply, medicine supply, income, and jobs, in the slum areas of Dhaka North City Corporation. More specifically, the study focused on the impact of COVID-19 on the livelihood patterns (Personal, professional, social, economic, health, and food) of informal workers.

Study Area

Dhaka, the capital city of Bangladesh, is expected to be one of the five largest cities in the world by 2025, based on its population (Edelman, 2025). The city has undergone rapid urbanization, resulting in several public health challenges, especially among the urban poor (Lipi and Hasan, 2021). The research selected some slum areas in Mirpur and Gulshan, Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC), including Banani's Korail, Bhola, Molla, and Duaripara to conduct a sample survey (Fig. 1). Korail slum is situated between the affluent neighborhoods of Banani and Gulshan, and covers approximately 100 acres of Government land. Approximately 75% of slums in Mirpur are situated on Government property (Baser and Rahman, 2021; Amjads, 2019). Mirpur and Gulshan slums in the northeast of the city are rapidly expanding, featuring a mix of multi-story residential buildings, businesses, and industries, with a predominantly middle and lower-middle class population. The research was conducted among informal workers living in slum areas of this city. The informal workers are vendors, garment workers, rickshaw pullers, hawkers, and BBQ sellers. From this perspective, the slums of Dhaka city were selected as the study area.

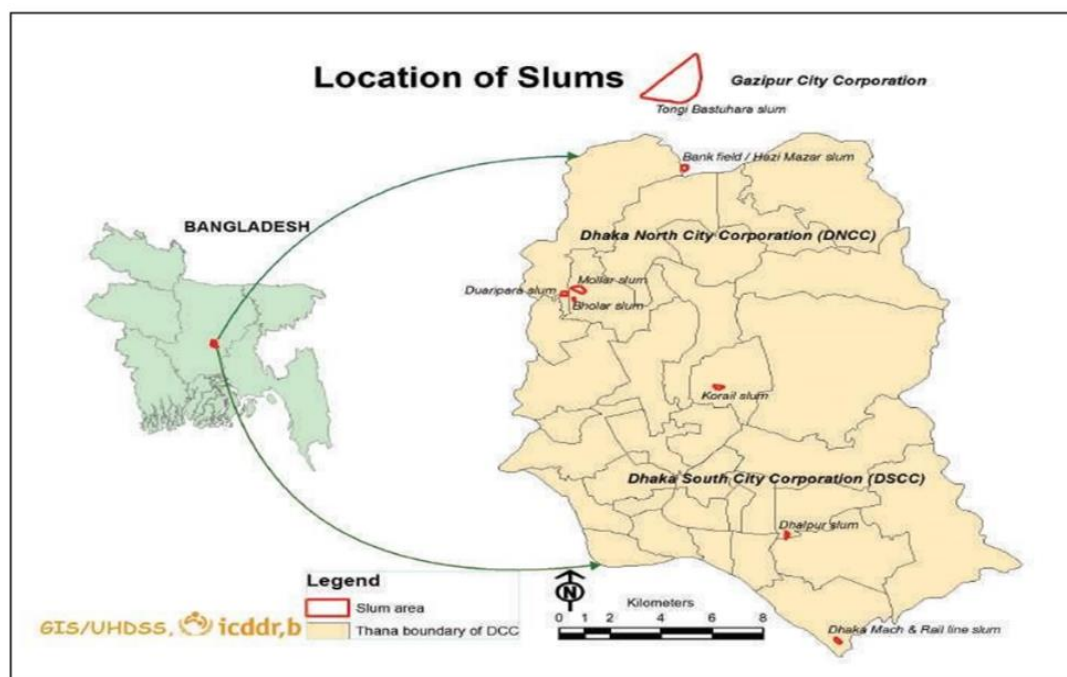


Figure 1. Location of the study area; Source: ICDDR, 2019

Materials and Methods

The research focused on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on informal sectors and developed a coping strategy to overcome the situation. The study has used both primary and secondary data. The primary data were collected through a field survey using a semi-structured questionnaire. Additionally, photographs, field observations, and community discussions were conducted with different people involved in informal sectors. The data was gathered by gender (both women and men) and multiple age groups (old and young) to evaluate the perspectives on the Impact of COVID-19 on their livelihood patterns. The secondary information and maps have been collected from various sources, including the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, the Local government and engineering department, and the IEDCR. Literature reviews and online sources are highly effective methods of identifying the rate of COVID-19 in urban areas.

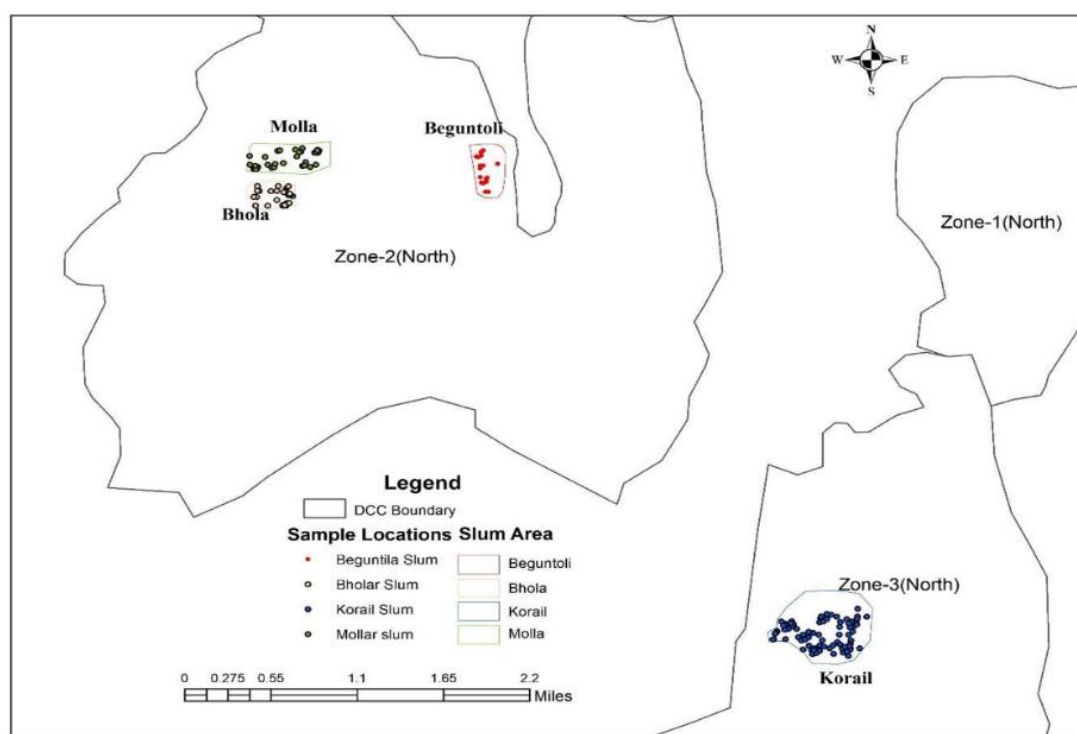


Figure 2. Location of the sample survey; Source: Prepared by authors, 2019

The primary data have been collected through a sample survey using a semi-structured questionnaire (Fig. 2). The semi-structured questionnaire survey was conducted with individuals from informal sectors, such as rickshaw pullers, drivers, housemates, fruit sellers, and waste pickers, in the middle range. The sample size was determined using Slovin's calculated formula; thus, the sample size (n) was calculated based on the population size (N) and a margin of error (e). It is computed as $n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$ (Susanti *et al.*, 2019). In addition, field observations and community discussions will be conducted with informal workers in the high-risk areas of the DNCC. In this process, 300 samples (with a 93% accuracy level) were selected from the survey

frame using purposive sampling techniques among informal workers for the semi-structured questionnaire. The respondents were chosen between the ages of 18 and 70. The questionnaire information from the field studies was examined and processed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) 26.0 software. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the field data.

Results and Discussion

Socio-demographic Profile of the respondents

The survey result revealed that more than 90% of respondents are male, above 55% of the respondents are illiterate, and 96% are muslim. In contrast, 31% and 10% of the respondents had elementary and secondary education qualifications, respectively. On the other hand, 42 percent of people active in the informal sector have been living in the city for five to ten years. The socio-demographic profile of respondents is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Socio-demographic Status of the respondents

Socio-demographic Parameters	Sub-parameters	<i>f</i>	%
Gender	Male	284	94.7
	Female	16	5.3
Education Status	Uneducated	176	58.7
	Primary	93	31.0
	High School	31	10.3
Religion	Muslim	289	96.3
	Hindu	11	3.7
Length of staying in the city	Less than 5 years	41	13.7
	5-10 years	126	42.0
	11-15 Years	89	29.7
	16-20 Years	29	9.7
	More than 20 Years	15	5.0
Household size	2	39	13.0
	2- 4	235	78.3
	5- 6	26	8.7

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Livelihood conditions of the respondents

Occupational status

A huge variation was found in occupational status in Dhaka. Among the respondents, the percentages of drivers, day laborers, garment workers, and tea stall owners are 12.3%, 10.33%, 9%, and 8.3%, respectively. During the survey, rickshaw pullers, trailer drivers, grocery and fruit

sellers, and waste pickers were found in the slum area who are affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, shoe-shine workers, construction laborers, and housemaids accounted for a small percentage of approximately 1.3%, 0.7%, and 0.7%, respectively (Fig. 3). Many people in urban areas of Bangladesh are involved in informal activities (Mohiuddin, 2022). This study also revealed that many urban residents are engaged in informal activities within metropolitan areas.

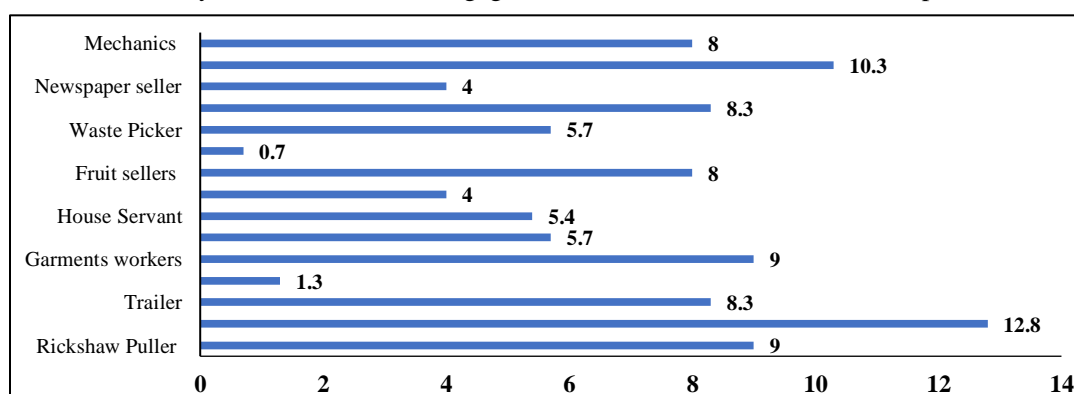


Figure 3. Occupational Diversity of the respondents involved in informal sectors (Source: Field Survey, 2022)

Monthly Income Variation (During and after the pandemic)

The study found significant variations in monthly income among the respondents, both during and after the pandemic. During the pandemic, the respondents' income levels ranged from 6000 to 12000 BDT. However, the range increased from 12000 to 14000 BDT after the pandemic. They were unable to attend the workplace properly due to their lower income levels during the pandemic. Consequently, the respondents' income was low during the pandemic. The highest income reported by 27.3% of respondents was 6000 BDT during the pandemic situation. Conversely, 22.3%, 13.7%, and 11.3% of the participants reported monthly incomes of 8,000, 10,000, and 12,000 BDT, respectively.

After the pandemic, only 3% of respondents were found to have an income of 6,000 BDT. Under the respondents, 22.7% fall within the middle-income range of 8,000 BDT. Among the respondents, 22.7% fall within the middle-income range of 8000 BDT, while only 6% of the respondents reported a monthly income of 14000 BDT after the pandemic. Hence, the income level of informal workers has been significantly affected during the pandemic period due to the fear of infection and multiple prevention measures for COVID-19 (Table 2). A prior investigation also revealed insights concerning income fluctuations during and after the COVID-19 pandemic (Hacıoğlu-Hoke *et al.*, 2021).

Monthly expenditure variation (During and after the pandemic)

The findings indicated that the respondents' monthly expenditures during and after the pandemic exceeded those of the pre-pandemic period. During the pandemic, 18.3%, 33.7%, 22.7%, and 11.3% of respondents reported monthly expenditures of 6,000, 8,000, 10,000, and 12,000 BDT, respectively. Post-pandemic, monthly spending rose to 8,000 and 9,000 BDT, reflecting increases

of 8.3% and 0.3%, respectively. The expenditure levels for respondents at 10,000, 12,000, and 14,000 BDT are 52.7%, 27.3%, and 11.3%, separately. Hence, the findings indicated that expenditures increased after the pandemic (Table 2). A previous study showed that expenses increased during the pandemic compared to regular periods, resulting in higher costs for individuals (Cox *et al.*, 2020).

Table 2. Monthly income variation of the respondents

During Pandemic	Amount (BDT Taka)	Percentage (%)	After Pandemic	Amount (BDt Taka)	Percentage (%)
Monthly Average income	6000	27.3	Monthly Average income	6000	3
	7000	12.7		8000	8.7
	8000	12.7		9000	22.7
	9000	22.3		10000	13
	10000	13.7		12000	49.3
	12000	11.3		14000	6
Monthly Average Expenditures	6000	18.3	Monthly Average Expenditures	6000	0
	7000	14		8000	8.3
	8000	12		9000	0.3
	9000	21.7		10000	52.7
	10000	22.7		12000	27.3
	12000	11.3		14000	11.3

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Monthly savings variation (During and after the pandemic)

Table 3 describes the monthly savings of the respondents during and after the pandemic. During the pandemic, the savings of informal workers were meager. At that time, they were unable to go outside frequently for work. At this time, 86.3% of respondents were found to have 0 BDT in savings. Only 8.7% and 5% of respondents had 1000 and 1500 BDT savings during the pandemic period. During the post-pandemic, 61.3% of respondents reported having no savings due to inadequate employment opportunities, 21.7% managed to save 1,000 BDT, 12.3% saved 1,200 BDT, and a mere 0.3% were able to save 3,000 BDT (Table 3). The financial burden of family life during the pandemic was significant for low-income individuals, who were unable to earn and save (Parolin *et al.*, 2020).

Table 3. Monthly saving variation of the respondents

During the pandemic		After the Pandemic	
Amount of Monthly Savings (BDT Taka)	Percentage (%)	Amount of Monthly Savings (BDT Taka)	Percentage (%)
0	86.3	0	61.3
1000	8.7	1000	21.7
1500	5	1200	4.3
		2000	12.3
		3000	0.3

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Impact of COVID-19 on the livelihood pattern of informal workers

The COVID-19 pandemic profoundly impacts lives and businesses, hindering the manufacturing of goods and affecting the economy on both national and global scales. This pandemic also affects the source of supply and travel, but if these were open, it could increase the cases of infection due to COVID-19; many cases have been reported as a result of these activities. In this section, the significant Impact of COVID-19 on livelihood is explained below.

Impact on daily life

Figure 4 illustrates that the informal sector was significantly impacted by COVID-19, as workers' daily lives were disrupted. During the pandemic, 36% of respondents reported that their daily routine had changed, while only 4.7% mentioned that it had rarely changed. Conversely, 40.3% of respondents always feel hesitant to hang out with friends, and 33.7% are hesitant sometimes; just 4.7% don't feel hesitant about this. On the other hand, 37.3% of respondents rarely experience sleeping sickness, about 37.3% of respondents feel traumatic stress, and 37.3% of respondents live with a fear of infections when they are outside. Furthermore, 22.7% of respondents express no worry of job loss post-pandemic, whereas 14% consistently hold fears of job loss after the pandemic. Among the participants, 48.7% rarely believed they had inadequate information regarding the virus, while 5.3% of respondents frequently felt they lacked sufficient information about it.

Income issues are currently being experienced by 26.3% of respondents, with 20% experiencing them frequently as a result of the pandemic. In this circumstance, the percentage of individuals who consume alcohol increases to 34.7% on occasion, while 32.3% infrequently consume alcohol. About 32.3% of respondents never feel lonely after this pandemic, and 10% always feel lonely. During this pandemic, 38.7% of children reported no effect on their health, and 4.7% always thought it would have an adverse impact on children. Furthermore, 31.3% of respondents occasionally believed that COVID-19 would affect the mental health of children, while 12% thought that it would never have an impact on their mental health. Due to the pandemic, 33% of respondents infrequently believe that chronic illnesses have increased, while 8.3% consistently believe that chronic diseases will rise as a result of the pandemic. Previous research has also

shown that the daily routines of urban residents were disrupted during the COVID-19 pandemic, and individuals maintained social distancing (Haleem *et al.*, 2020).

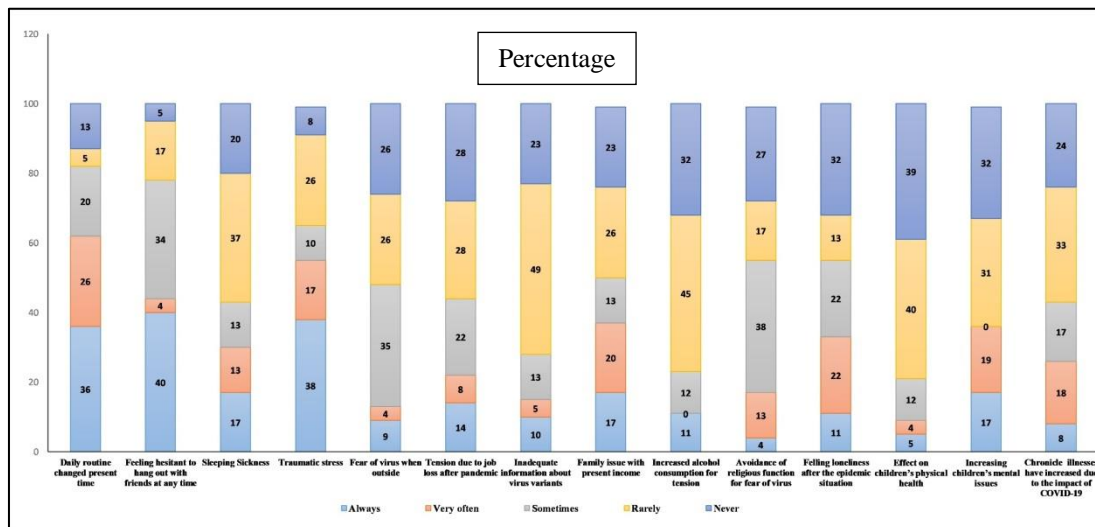


Figure 4. Percentage of participants whose daily lives are affected by COVID-19 (Sources: Field Survey, 2022)

Occupational Impacts of COVID-19

The consequences of this pandemic also affect the professional lives of informal workers. Table 4 illustrates the impact of COVID-19 on various aspects of professional life. About 63% of respondents reported facing job loss problems at this time, while just 4% didn't. Upon securing new employment, 39% of respondents consistently obtained positions from far locations, 26.3% often discovered opportunities in such areas, and 8.7% encountered jobs in proximity. Furthermore, 59.7% of participants believe that their employment prospects will continue to diminish after the outbreak, while 44% have consistently seen a reduction in wages during their working lives. Currently, 45.7% of respondents believe their workloads have increased, while 37.3% report a consistent decrease in salaries following the pandemic. The survey indicated that the pandemic has led to a decline in sales at street shops, with 28% of respondents believing this to be the case and 27% asserting that sales have decreased frequently. The Impact of COVID-19 on occupation is severe because nobody can move from their homes due to the pandemic (Kramer and Kramer 2020).

Table 4. Occupational impacts on informal workers due to COVID-19

Impacts of COVID-19 on Occupation	Always	Very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Job loss problem	63	18.7	7	7.3	4
Shift of work location from local area to far place	39	26.3	15	11	8.7
Decrease the job opportunity	59.7	18.7	4	9	8.7
Decrease the rate of wages	44	33	6.3	9.7	7

Increase workloads	14.7	45.7	30.7	5	4
Decreasing working hours	26	22.3	22.3	5.3	24
Decrease the salary	37.3	21.3	12.7	18.7	10
Decreasing employment places	18.3	13.7	43.7	14.3	10
Loss of income	28	13.3	8.3	30.3	20
Sales have dropped in the street shop	17.3	27	28	13	14.7
Hard rules and regulations in the hospital	17.7	17.7	9.3	41.7	13.7

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Impact on movement for daily activities

More challenges exist beyond the adverse effects of personal and professional consequences resulting from COVID-19 (Fig. 5). The study identifies obstacles to social interaction as a result of the fear of contracting COVID-19 again. The findings indicate that approximately 37% of the participants always avoid connections with others, while 13.3% occasionally avoid social interactions due to concerns about the possibility of recurrent infections. Respondents also encounter challenges in their professional environments, as 26.7% of respondents reported experiencing delays in receiving services due to a lack of a health certificate. Approximately 26.7% of the respondents encountered government restrictions on festivals and cultural events, while 41.3% of the participants were frequently inactive in sports activities during public gatherings. In contrast, 25.3% of respondents reported encountering restrictions on entry without a vaccine certificate, while 20.3% indicated that they never experienced any limits. The results suggest that approximately 27% of informal workers reported difficulties with mobility, while 31.7% did not encounter any mobility issues. On the other hand, after the pandemic, 34.7% of respondents indicated that they rarely adhere to social distancing measures within their local community, while 18.7% reported that they never practice social distancing at all. The findings are consistent with the US labor market (Albanesi and Kim, 2021).

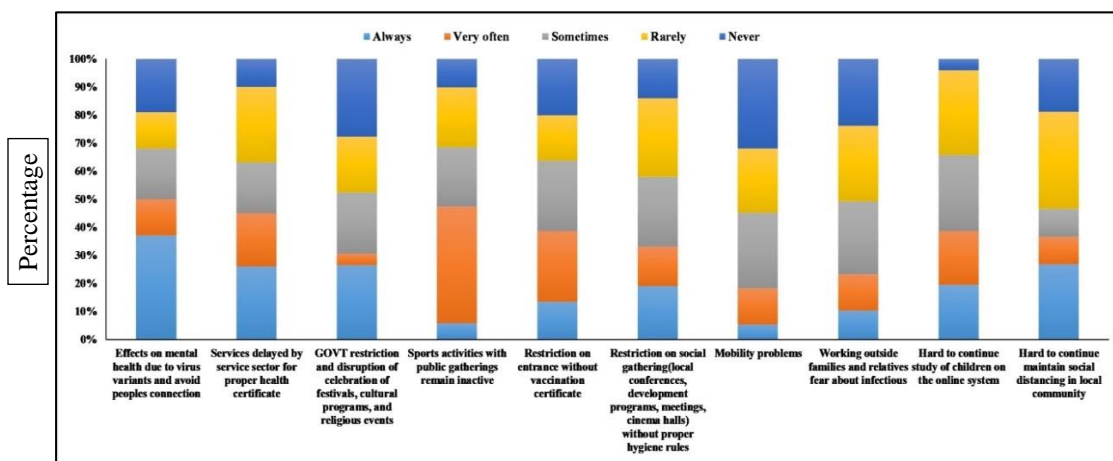


Figure 5. Impact on movement for daily activities (Source: Field Survey, 2022)

Impact on healthcare

The COVID-19 pandemic has primarily impacted the global healthcare system. The coronavirus has also impacted informal workers in Bangladesh. Table 5 presents the results. This pandemic has increased respiratory problems among 41.3% of the respondents. The results also found that treatment costs had already increased due to the pandemic situation, as mentioned by 22.3% of respondents. Additionally, 20% of the respondents reported being unable to access government hospitals. However, about 26.7% of respondents can get proper treatment from government hospitals, and 22.7% very often get adequate treatment. A private hospital is a costly option, as 37% of workers never receive treatment from private hospitals, and 23.3% can sometimes access them. To access healthcare facilities during this pandemic, 18.7% of participants have sometimes been asked to provide a COVID certificate, which creates difficulties.

Sometimes, 36% of respondent hide their illness in public places, and 22.7% very often hide it. Due to doctor's reluctance to treat unknown conditions after the outbreak, 37.3% of responders were never able to get treatment. During this time, the COVID variant has also changed worldwide. Sometimes, 28% of respondents have information about new disease variants, while 22% have never received any information about them. Following the pandemic, a notable gap has emerged in the medical supply chain; 31.7% of participants believe it constitutes a shortage. The pandemic situation puts pressure on the medical system. For example, 27% of respondents always feel there is an overload of medical health workers (Table 5). During the COVID-19 pandemic, people were concerned about occupational diseases due to the need for close office collaboration (Carlsten *et al.*, 2021). The people in Canada are mentally severely affected due to the coronavirus pandemic (Beland *et al.*, 2022).

Table 5. Impact on health

Impacts on Health	Always	Very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Increase in respiratory problems	41.3	17.3	8.3	18.3	14.7
Costly treatment for the respiratoryly infected person	22.3	22.3	18	22.3	15
I can easily access government hospitals (for any respiratory problem)	35	14	13.3	17.7	20
Get proper treatment from the government hospital	19	26.7	22.7	12.3	19.3
I can easily access Private hospitals (for any respiratory problem)	8.7	12.7	23.3	18.3	37
To get a health facility, I have to show a new COVID-19 certificate	15.3	18.7	17	17.3	31.7
Some patient hides their illness in public spaces, which increases the possibility of being affected	4.3	22.7	36	22.3	14.7
After the pandemic, doctors do not agree to treat unfamiliar illnesses	22.3	17.7	13	9.7	37.3
Lack of information regarding the new COVID-19 variant	9	20	28	21	22

Lack of medical supply chain (instruments, medicine, test kits) after the pandemic	21.7	31.7	13.3	29	4.3
Overload on medical health workers (Nurse, physician, gatekeeper)	27	13.7	25.3	27	7

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Impact on income and business

The current COVID-19 situation significantly impacts the economy and financial markets across various sectors, with economic risk being more substantial than health risk. About 54.7% of respondents mentioned that a price hike is a significant consequence of COVID-19. Additionally, the supply of necessary goods has decreased due to COVID-19, as 45.7% of respondents mentioned. According to 26.7% of respondents, there is a decrease in customers at the street restaurant. On the other hand, as COVID-19 is a respiratory disease, 45% of the participants claimed that the smoking business decreased after the outbreak.

Another consequence of COVID-19 is the reduction in the job market. For instance, 40.3% of participants reported that they were unable to secure work scope without a vaccine certificate. According to 39.7% of respondents, loan interest rates in the economic sector have also increased. In contrast, 36.7% of street vendors stated that street products should be sold at a reduced price. Due to the pandemic, 47% believe informal businesses rarely increase. Due to a decrease in wage rates, 26.7% of workers are engaged in part-time jobs to support family expenses. Furthermore, 28.3% of respondents reported experiencing diminished logistical support as a result of the pandemic. Hence, the Impact of COVID-19 on business and income was severe during the pandemic, and people in business and investors lost their money, consistent with the literature (Fairlie and Fossen, 2021).

Table 6. Impact on the food supply

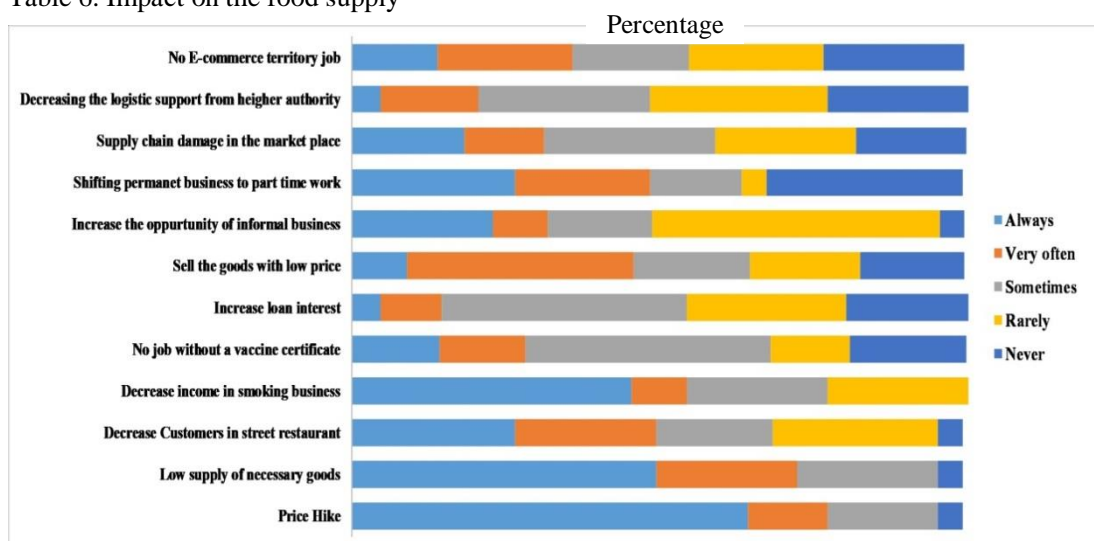


Figure 6. *Impact on income and business* (Source: Field Survey, 2022)

Impact on food supply

The COVID-19 pandemic has severely affected the food and agricultural sector. Table 6 highlights the impact of the food sector. This pandemic disrupts the trade flows for staple food, according to 31.7% of respondents. Conversely, 32.7% of respondents believe that the pandemic sometimes disrupts food security, while 25.3% assert that it frequently disrupts food security. The transport shutdown has resulted in food unavailability in local markets, as reported by 28% of respondents, while 26.7% believe that food is not available in the market. At that time, 26% of respondents consistently perceived an increasing demand for food, while 31.7% frequently altered their food habits post-pandemic, and 25.7% consistently modified their food habits.

Furthermore, 37.7% of respondents occasionally change their dry food system within a day, while 31% do regularly. Additionally, 32.3% of respondents frequently reduce their regular food intake, while 22% consistently engage in this behavior. The government donates some TCB food at a reduced cost to low-income individuals. In this context, 27% of respondents consistently wait for TCB food, 26.7% wait for it sometimes, and 23.7% never wait for it. Prior research has indicated that the coronavirus disrupted the food supply chain due to social distancing measures (Aday and Aday, 2020; Barman *et al.*, 2021).

Table 6. Impact on the food supply

Impacts of Food Supply	Always	Very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Pandemic disrupts trade flows for staple food (wheat and rice)	31.7	25	18.3	12.3	12.7
Disrupted food security	26.7	28	32.7	8.7	4
Increasing the food demand	26	25.3	21.3	22	5.3
Food unavailability in the local market	22.7	14	28	26.7	8.7
Changing regular food habits	25.7	31.7	23.7	8.7	10.3
Shifting in dry food (Bread, chira, puffed rice) once daily	22	31	37.7	5.3	4
Lower the frequency of regular food	22	32.3	17.3	18	10.3
Depending on TCB food	27	12.7	26.7	10	23.7

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Conclusion

In summary, in the post-COVID-19 era, there is an opportunity to rebuild social life, the economy, and the food sector in a new way. In the post-COVID-19 era, a new action plan is also necessary for the informal sectors of urban areas, particularly in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The main occupations of informal sector workers in urban areas include rickshaw pullers, hawkers, drivers, waste pickers, home servants, helpers, small business owners, and garment workers, which were disrupted during the COVID-19 pandemic. The informal workers were in trouble, mainly due to the impact on their livelihoods caused by hygiene and social distancing measures with movement restrictions. Moreover, their income was poor during the pandemic, and some lost their jobs.

Many of them were affected by COVID-19, but they did not get proper treatment, which is why their health condition was terrible. Furthermore, small businesses and labor faced problems mainly because they ignored investments, resulting in tremendous losses. The food supply was disrupted due to health and safety issues, resulting in problems with food and nutrition for the people. The study would serve as a guideline for policymakers if they were to work further.

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