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IMPACT OF CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19) PANDEMIC ON PETTY TRADERS LIVELIHOOD IN RURAL BANGLADESH

Shajahan Kabir

Bangladesh Agricultural University, 2202, Mymensingh, (BANGLADESH)

Email: shajahan.rs@bau.edu.bd

Shakawath Hussain

*Faculty of Bangladesh Institute of Professional Management, Mymensingh,
(BANGLADESH)*

ABSTRACT

COVID-19 pandemic is going to be the greatest pandemic in all times of planet earth. It is still threatening the normal life. Scientist, statistician, economist and some other important part of the wings of a states or nations are struggling with the impact of pandemic. They still do not know where the ending of this impact is. The aim of the study is to find out the COVID-19 pandemic impacts on petty trader's life. What a pandemic situation directly and indirectly effects on small business in Bangladesh to explore this causative relation is the main purpose of this study. The study conducted in four districts of Mymensingh divisions in ten different small businesses and in every type of business there are at least ten businesses included for data collection. The study uses mixed method for data collection. The conducted research study finds that COVID pandemic creates the situation like, lockdown approach which is taken by government of Bangladesh; this lockdown disrupted the running business. The 100% of the respondent believe that this disruption badly affected to petty trade and their life. All the respondent of the research exposed the negative consequences of their business which stop their income and surviving path. Petty trader and those who are associated with informal sectors, they are terribly affects by pandemic. The government has taken some steps to aid the vulnerable groups who are affected by COVID-19 pandemic but it is not sufficient to them. Finally, Bangladesh is not such welfare state which can take care each and every citizen of it in the pandemic situation, but to protect the petty trade and other informal sector, government can take the decision about lockdown approach because this is the denominator fact of financial, social and all other activities.

Keywords: Covid-19, petty trade, daily life

JEL Classification: F1, G1

INTRODUCTION

The planet earth has been facing and passing through various and many more types of pandemic situation from its beginning to modern era. But in the time of technological advancement and postmodern era, the earth people never see and imagine such a pandemic situation of virus like COVID-19. This unimaginatory virus suddenly stops the whole world's dynamism and the world economy; social, cultural and other activities become static. As the planet earth becomes a global village, Bangladesh has also impacted by this pandemic disease.

The world people didn't know and much hear about Corona virus even 13 months ago, but now no one can find who doesn't know about COVID-19 virus.

Corona virus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered corona virus. The COVID-19 virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment.

Older people and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness [8]. They recommend several protocols for preventing the transmission of the COVID-19 such as detecting and isolating cases, contact-tracing and quarantine, social and physical distancing (at least one meter). All those mechanisms are vital to contain the COVID-19 pandemic from peaking at unmanageable levels. Social distancing is stopping the possibilities of contacting infected persons with non-infected persons, such as cancelling events, closing schools and businesses, work from home, island-wide curfew, and travel restrictions, nonetheless, it is economically painful [1].

The exponential growth of COVID-19 pandemic is a great global economic problem and it has received magnificent worldwide attention. The vulnerability of the pandemic with lower economic immunity is greater in developing countries. To mitigate the pandemic situation, there have been taking some strategies and protocols those have come at high economic and human costs, and gravely sullied the SMEs in Sri Lanka including the shortage of materials, decline in both global and local demand for their products and services, difficulties in repaying loan and interest, cancellation of orders, dire cash deficit (inflows) and lack of savings (even problems with payroll and utility bills), limitations in recalling the employees back to work, high cost in preventing workplace COVID-19 strategies, absence of new orders, etc. The COVID-19 pandemic is emotionally challenging for both employees and operators of the SMEs [7].

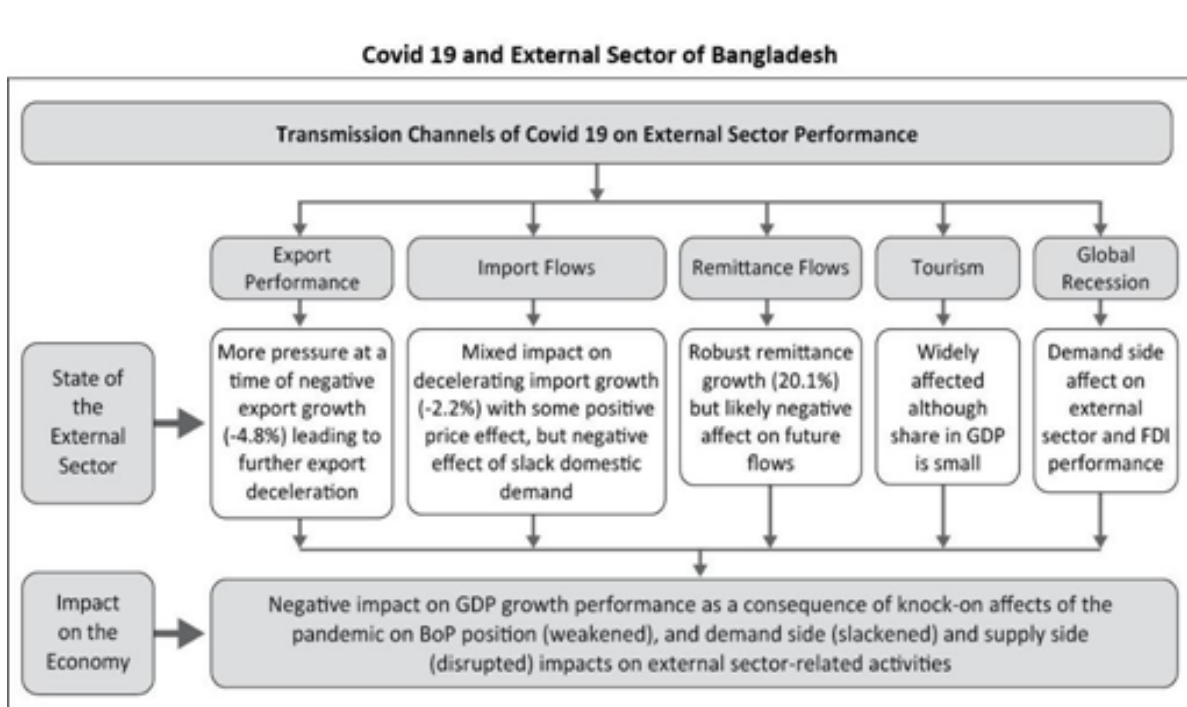
The COVID-19 has caused gigantic negative effects on populace wellbeing, society, education, and the economy in Bangladesh. It mostly effects on dairy farmers, vegetable producers, pharmaceuticals, poultry farmers those who are in deep crisis due to lower prices. Also, the pandemic has seriously affected educational systems, banking, FDI, ready-made garments, remittances, etc.

Finally, it is not possible to mitigate the effects of pandemic individually but the integrated effort from the state authority as well as concern people of all sectors need to come forward [2].

The whole globe is going under a devastating threat of economic depression amid impact of COVID-19 pandemic. Almost No country can deny the fact propelling to the economic ramification of this diseases suggesting a confirmed apropos plan to recuperate any unavoidable circumstance in forthcoming economic arena. Bangladesh with no exception is also capitulated under a significant threat of economic disparity navigating a colossal crisis during and after this epidemic. COVID-19 impacts on the economic crisis for Bangladesh and government along with all other stakeholders will respond to sustain socioeconomic developments achieved during the recent fiscal years in spite of being submerged by the depressing mode of major economic indicators such as inverse trade growth, vigorous revenue deficit, mounting nonperforming loan, falling private sector investment, volatility of market interest rate, capital market unrest and imminent horrid of global economic recession [6].

In Bangladesh, the first three known cases of COVID-19 were reported on 8 March 2020. On 22 March, a 10-day shutdown effective from the 26th of the month was declared; subsequently government asked the army to enforce social distancing strictly, with teams of soldiers deployed across the country, leaving the streets empty in the capital Dhaka and most roadside shops closed. Forced to stay home for under lockdown regulations, most informal workers have lost all their income, as they cannot work from home. Having no formal employment, they are not registered for unemployment insurance so they have no social protection to support them through this period of zero income. The first announcement of the lockdown from the government was like a vacation but when the lockdown was increasing compound, it became curse to the worker of informal sectors and petty traders [3].

CPD reported that the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on Bangladesh economy at two levels. These were ‘from global to national’ and ‘national’. The study putted spotlight on five sectors which were critically important for the Bangladesh economy [9]. These were: external sector performance; disruption of supply chains in major economic activities; healthcare; public finance; and monetary policy. The COVID-19 pandemic is impacting on the increasingly globalizing economy of Bangladesh are diverse in nature (see the Diagram below). Export outflows are getting disrupted; import inflows are facing delays; outmigration has ground to a halt; tourist arrivals are virtually non-existent; business contacts are getting delinked; investment flows are facing growing uncertainties. The early signs of the likely adverse implications of the COVID-19-afflicted external developments are already being felt in the Bangladesh economy, at the levels of financial transactions and on the real economy, as well as on business, commerce and consumers at the levels of enterprises, entrepreneurs and workers.



[4]

Petty trading can be referred to as an economic activity that involves selling (and buying) goods and services in small scale, ranging from agricultural produce to imported consumer goods. A livelihood is a means of making a living. It encompasses people's capabilities, assets, income and activities required to secure the necessities of life. A livelihood is sustainable when it enables people to cope with and recover from shocks and stresses (such as natural disasters and economic or social upheavals) and enhance their well-being and that of future generations without undermining the natural environment or resource base [5].

COVID-19 pandemic badly effects on petty traders in Bangladesh while lockdown and other rules and regulation applied to maintain social distance and protection against spreading the virus.

The above literature shows and represents that the COVID-19 pandemic condition greatly affects to our daily, economic, financial, social, cultural activities and above all in every sphere of life. Pandemic situation disrupted and stopped the normal lead of life in everywhere like rural or urban area of Bangladesh [10]. To stop the spreading of virus, the government take the 'Lockdown' and 'social distancing' approaches those rules and regulation adversely stopped and breakdown the normal economic and social activities. In this circumstance, petty trader and who are involve in the informal sectors, they are badly affected by this situation.

The study is going to reveal and explore the causative relation between COVID-19 Pandemic situation and its effects on the practical life of petty traders in Bangladesh which is very relevant issue to research or study.

OBJECTIVES

The aim of the study is to explore the effects of COVID-19 pandemic situation on small traders in rural Bangladesh. The aim of the study related some objectives which are given below:

- To find out the relevant literature of COVID-19 pandemic effects in Bangladesh;
- To explore how the Small or petty traders are affected by pandemic situation;
- To assess the relation between government step against pandemic situation and petty traders' livelihood.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Questions

The study is conducted by several questions those leads the research aim and objectives. The questions are:

- Does COVID-19 pandemic lead negatively impact on petty trader's life?
- Does COVID-19 pandemic situation and imposed government rules and regulation interconnected to affect to petty trade?
- Does these factors relevant to SMEs in Bangladesh?
- How do they overcome the COVID related problems?

Research Philosophy and Approach

The study conducting the deductive approach where the different kind of data and information of COVID-19 pandemic situation and petty trader's livelihood collected through the previous study and analysed for generalization about the effectiveness of these factors. The study is operationalized by the existing theory and research on relevant issue. In this study, data are collected by survey and interview for find out the cause-and-effect relation of COVID-19 pandemic situation and petty trader's livelihood in Bangladesh. These attempts and procedures clearly denote the deductive research approach because it is going to compare and contrast the existing findings and theory as well as find out the new causal relationship.

Research Design & Strategy

The study is following quantitative/qualitative research design where all steps constructed with sequence and interrelated way by the researcher.

Research design follows the research purposes. There are three types of research purposes available in research. These are exploratory, descriptive and explanatory research.

Among the three classifications of research purposes, the existing research study is conducting by explanatory research. The study is trying to explain the relation between COVID-19 pandemic situation and petty traders' livelihood and

it will also explore the effectiveness of this relation leads the terrific food insecurity. The study will expose these relationships in the context of small and petty traders.

The research strategy of the study is survey. It is usually associated with deductive approach. This strategy leads a questionnaire to sample and collected data are standardized for easy comparison. It allows the quantitative data and can analyse by quantitatively using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Data& Data Collection Method and technique

Data is a raw-material for research. There are two types of data used in a social and business management research. These are primary data and secondary data. According to secondary data is that data which have already been collected for other purposes. This data helps to direct research question. On the other hand, primary data indicate the new data which collects for new purpose. Primary data gives the answer of research question.

The study uses secondary and primary both data. Secondary data uses in the literature review part where previous or existing related theory and research data discussed. This discussion directed to the researcher to make research question about the research objectives and that way researcher is going to collect new data or primary data. There are some choices or method for data collection. These are mono method, mixed method and multi method. The study has used mixed method technique and procedure for collecting and analysing primary data. As mixed method quantitative technique, the study is using survey ‘questionnaire’ to the owner of a small and petty trade. This interview is semi-structured which lead quantitative and qualitative both data.

Designing the Questionnaire

In this research, researcher is conducted survey through the self-administered questionnaire to owner of petty trade to get the answer of research questions.

These questionnaires are quantitative. It is also conducted semi-structured interview to the owner to get the research objectives. The semi-structured interview is quantitative and qualitative.

Sampling and Sample size

This part is important for any researcher and research. To understand this part, there are some basic concepts those are related to sampling. These are **target population** the population for which information is required, **survey population-** the part of the target population that is studied, **sample-** the part of the survey population that is to be studied and **sampling-** the procedure by which way take out samples for study. Sampling enables the researcher to study a relatively small part of the target population which represent the whole data or population.

It is not possible to collect data from every single population. For some research question it might be possible to collect data from entire population if the

size is manageable. When data are collected from every single respondent, it is called census. The researcher prefers sampling rather than census because census indicates some negative consequence for quantitative research. Such as impracticable to survey entire population, budgets constraints, time constraints and large data leads late result.

This study also intended to use sampling for collecting data from large population. The reason is to save time, money and conduct accurate and quick result from collected data. This research study conducted non-probability sampling, as researchers do not know the quantity of survey population. The study is going use the survey and interview method for collection data from different two SMEs. I selected 10 different small and petty traders like 1. Vegetable shop keepers, 2. Barber shop keepers, 3. Grocery shop keeper, 4. Small farmer (who produce vegetables), 5. Small farmer (who produce milk and poultry), 6. Car business owner, 7. House renter, 8. Small Clothing shop, 9. Restaurant owner and 10. Private schools/Institutes.

Using quota sampling there were distributed 120 survey questionnaire and interviewed to the owners of petty traders and different farmers. Finally, the 100-survey questionnaire and interview were completed and returned to the researcher.

The petty traders and farmers were selected in Mymensingh, Netrokona, Jamalpur and Sherpur district of Mymensingh division which was easier to researcher.

Analysis of Data

The collected data were analysed by the descriptive statistics, such as percentage, frequency distribution, bar chart and pie chart. Though the research question indicates the inferential statistics such as correlation and bi-variety analysis, for the short time it did not apply. The qualitative data were represented by word similarity and dissimilarity.

Ethical Consideration of Research

Research ethics is important and significant for researcher and accurate research operation. Research ethics indicate the researcher's behaviour in relation to the rights of respondent or subjects who are affected by the research.

This study is conducted appropriate way where every part of research maintained by methodological and rational way. It maintained and took account the privacy of actual participants, consent of participants, confidentiality, reaction of participants, discomfort, pain and harm of participant. It also maintained the behaviour objectivity of researcher. The respondents were not mad or under aged.

FINDING

About petty traders:

Types of petty traders and their staff

Serial	Business Name	Amount of Respondent	Staff
1	Vegetable Shop	10	12
2	Barber Shop	10	40
3	Grocery Shop	10	30
4	Small farmers (who produce vegetables)	10	16
5	Small farmers (who produce milk and poultry)	10	22
6	Car Business	10	12
7	House Renter	10	05
8	Small Clothing Shop	10	50
9	Restaurant	10	45
10	Private Schools/Institutions	10	65
	<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>297</i>

Table. 3.1

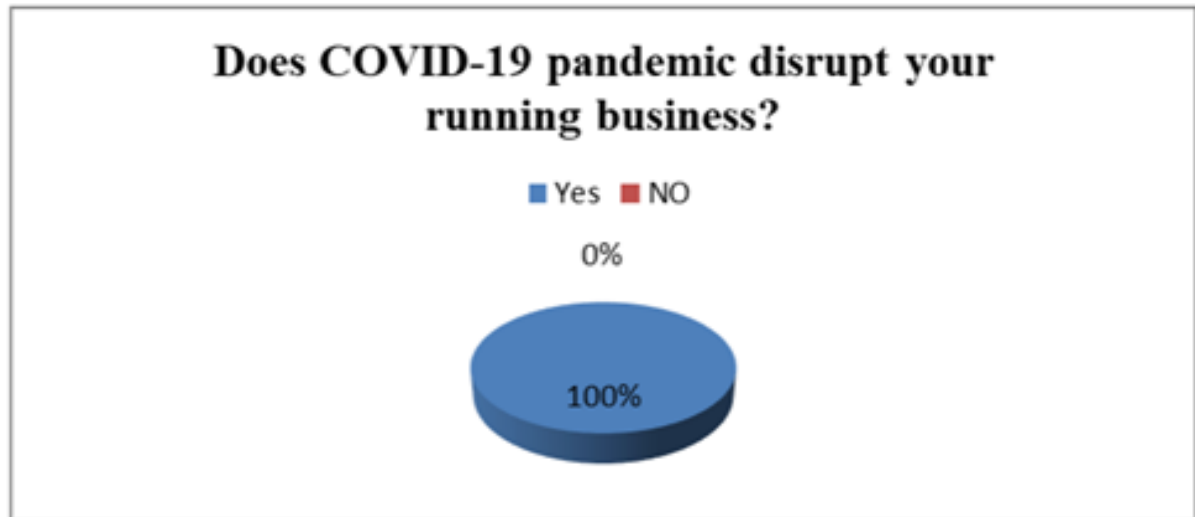
The Ten different types of petty traders presented in the response of data collection where 297 employees including owners are associating with the 100 traders. (See the table 3.1)

The impact of COVID-19 on petty trader's life

Does COVID-19 pandemic disrupt your running business?

Types of Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	100	100
No	0	0
Total	100	100

Table. 3.1.2

*Fig. 3.2.1*

100% of the respondents believe that COVID-19 pandemic situation directly disrupts their running business. (See the table and figure 3.2.1)

3.2.2 Why does disrupt your running business?

Types of Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Govt. imposed lockdown	100	100
Other cause	0	0
Total	100	100

Table. 3.2.2*Fig. 3.2.2*

100% of the respondent also believe that COVID-19 pandemic situation directly disrupts their running business because of government imposed

lockdown system whereas no one believe that other causes associate with this disruption. (See the table and figure 3.2.2)

3.2.3 How does your running business hampered during lockdown?

Types of Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
No sale and supply	72	72
Limited sale and supply	28	28
More sale and supply	0	0
Total	100	100

Table. 3.2.3



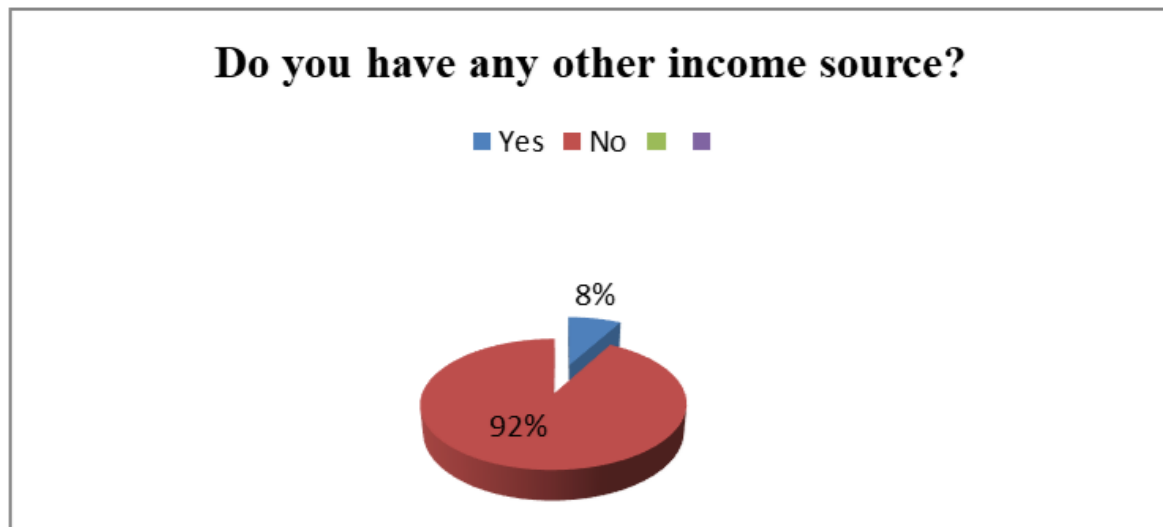
Fig. 3.2.3

The 72% of the respondents think that during the lockdown system, there is no sale and supply, on the other hand 28% of respondent believe that limited sale and supply is available in the lockdown system. No one believes that their sale and supply increased in the lockdown moment. (See the table and figure 3.2.3)

3.2.4 Do you have any other income source?

Types of Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	08	08
No	92	92
Total	100	100

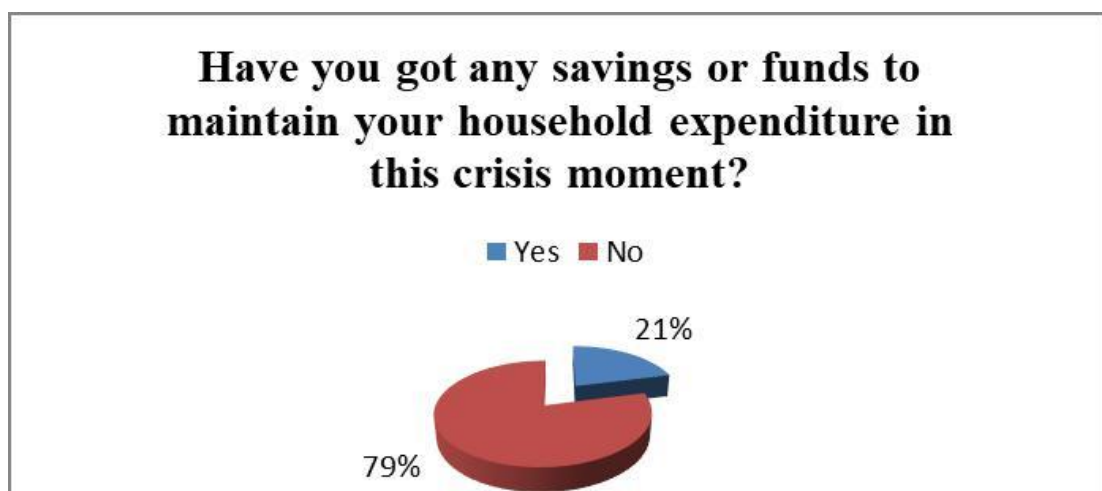
Table. 3.2.4

*Fig. 3.2.4*

92% of the petty business owners have no other income source. Conversely, 8% of the petty business owners have the income opportunity. (See the table and figure 3.2.4)

3.2.5 Have you got any savings or funds to maintain your household expenditure in this crisis moment?

Types of Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	21	21
No	79	79
Total	100	100

Table. 3.2.5*Fig. 3.2.5*

79% of the respondents have no savings to maintain their business and household expenditure whereas 21% got that opportunity. (See the table and figure 3.2.5)

3.2.6 Have you got any government allowance or aid to survive in this pandemic situation?

Types of Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	15	15
No	85	85
Total	100	100

Table 3.2.6

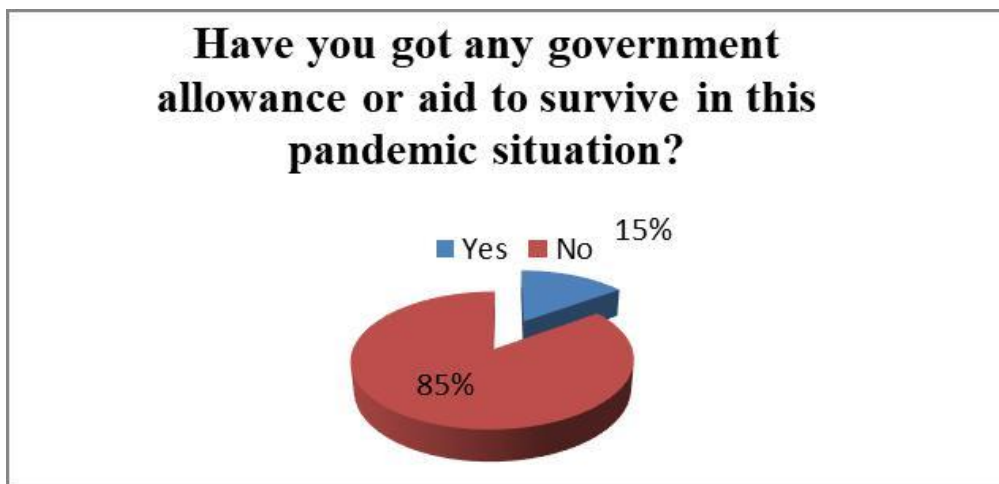


Fig. 3.2.6

15% respondents think that they are getting government aid or allowance in the pandemic situation. But the 85% of the respondents are not getting this aid.

They also mention that the aid is not sufficient to maintain their livelihood. (See the table and figure 3.2.6)

The case study of petty trader's livelihood

The research has taken five case studies among 'house renter' in the city and town area. The summary of the case studies was approximately same. The house renter told us, "Corona virus destroying their life cycle. They mentioned that because of lockdown in education sector, they lose their tenant because the entire tenant was the students and their guardians. As all the educational institutions are closed, the students and their guardians back to village which make our income source stopped". The respondent mentioned that they are surviving by house rent and it is the only income source of their household.

Another two case studies have taken on clothing shop in urban area. They also mentioned that "we usually take the order and prepare the dress and gown for the

schools and colleges. This is my business and only income source. I have seven women and two boys who are working here but because of lockdown the educational institution has been closing; we do not have any work or sale. My business badly affected by lockdown system in schools and colleges.”

Case study has taken upon farmers in the village who produce vegetables, poultry and dairy. They replied that “we lost huge when lockdown approach was taken in whole country. We could not sale our vegetables, milk and eggs. But now is okay, no lockdown, our business is normal.”

DISCUSSION

The discussion and analysis part will discuss step by step with the questionnaire and data analysis part for easy to understand.

A. About petty traders:

Types of respondents is very important fact to research because the data are collected from them to understand the livelihood of petty traders. Here, if we would like to understand the livelihood of petty traders than we need to directly study and interview them what is done in this study? Ten different types of petty trade included and every type at least ten business included, altogether 100 petty trades included where 297 people were engaged including owner and employee. (See the table 3.1) The respondents were mixed from rural and urban area both. (Begum, Farid, Alam, & Barua, 2020) Showed in their study that “The COVID-19 has caused gigantic negative effects on populace wellbeing, society, education, and the economy in Bangladesh. It mostly effects on dairy farmers, vegetable producers, pharmaceuticals, poultry farmers those who are in deep crisis due to lower prices. Also, the pandemic has seriously affected educational systems, banking, FDI, ready-made garments, remittances, etc.” In that case, the selection of respondent for the study is relevant and rational.

B. The impact of COVID-19 on petty trader's life:

Disruption on running business: Due to COVID-19 disease pandemic, the running businesses are disrupted which directly effect on the associated life.

100% of the respondent believed that the running businesses are badly disrupted. (See the table and figure 3.2.1) and this disruption break their normal life cycle, food insecurity, social life even thread to surviving. (CPD Working Paper 133, 2020) Presented in their study that “disruption of supply chains in major economic activities is happening in Bangladesh due to COVID-19 situation.”

Why does the disruption occur? The prime question is that why does the business disrupted. The answer is easy, because of COVID-19 pandemic government-imposed lockdown system to stop the spreading virus. The 100% respondents of this study think that lockdown system directly responsible for the disruption on running business. (See the table and figure 3.2.2) And not only had

this disruption happened on business but their life. (Adolph, Amano, Bang-Jensen, Fullman, & Wilkerson, 2020) showed in their study that “COVID-19 pandemic circumstances created Social distancing approach is for stopping the possibilities of contacting infected persons with non-infected persons, which cancelling events, closing schools and businesses, work from home, island-wide curfew, and travel restrictions, nonetheless, it is economically painful.

How does running business hamper? The running business hamper because lockdown approach stops the people to go out, no travel, no schooling, restrictions to open shop and so on those are interconnected to hamper the running businesses. The 72% of the respondent believed that pandemic situation created the situation where no sale and supply. On the hand, the 28% of the respondent mentioned that sale and supply is very limited which make our business lose. (See the table and figure 3.2.3)

Do you have any other income source? As the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted their petty trade, it is important to know; is there any other income source to them which may help to mitigate their subsistence life. The only 8% of the population have alternative income whereas 92% of the population has not got any other income. (See the table and figure 3.2.4). [3] revealed in their research that “Forced to stay home for under lockdown regulations, most informal workers have lost all their income, as they cannot work from home. Having no formal employment, they are not registered for unemployment insurance so they have no social protection to support them through this period of zero income.

The first announcement of the lockdown from the government was like a vacation but when the lockdown was increasing compound, it became curse to the worker of informal sectors and petty traders.”

Have you got any savings or funds to maintain your household expenditure in this crisis moment? It is quite important to have crisis fund to overcome any critical period. The conducted research has found that only 21% of the petty traders have crisis fund but this fund is very small. It can continue their life only two or three months, not more than that. However, the 79% of the petty traders have no crisis fund. They are surviving their life by scaling different valuable goods such as cow, goat, ornament, land etc. (See the table and figure 3.2.5)

Have you got any government allowance or aid to survive in this pandemic situation? In the pandemic crisis government are providing many kinds of allowance or aid system. This aid can provide temporary food security and maintenance to the household level. But sadly, to mention that the only 15% of the petty trader have gotten the temporary aid which is not sufficient to survive.

Conversely, the 85% of the population have not got any allowance or aid.

C. Case Studies:

The result of case studies represents the hidden impacts on petty trader’s life by pandemic situation. Most of the multi-stored building and flat-houses are nearly empty in city area because of shutting down in educational institution.

Basically, it affects badly on those who are dependent on only house rent income. Moreover, Garment petty trade whose business depends on school, college students' dresses-gown-bag-cap, their business fall down unexpectedly.

CONCLUSION

COVID-19 pandemic badly effects on the livelihood of petty trader's and their household. Besides that, this impact greatly imposed to the social system of national and international level. It is like an ecosystem or life cycle. If one cycle or one level disrupted, the whole system will be breakdown. Pandemic situation destroys the petty trader's life cycle and its impact will sustain long time.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest

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