

COVID-19: Challenges to Accept New Normal Life

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Abstract: *COVID-19 has turned the dynamic normal life into a stagnant life by disseminating the fear of infection to all. It is a period of exigency. The main objective of this study is to explore different challenges that common people are envisaging to accept a new normal life. The paper has been prepared based on the survey of 250 respondents divided into three categories: students, job holders, and businessmen. Four questions mentioning several challenges, ways of outgrowing, recommendations for authority and different opinions of the respondents have been added to the survey questionnaire, where 'Challenges' is an independent variable and 'Accepting new normal life' is a dependent variable. The study elicits that financial crisis, mental anxieties, frustration, technological adaptation, shortage and higher costs of transportation, and price hike are the common challenges for all. The findings of the study recommend that in this unpropitious period, authority should take appropriate initiatives to help common people get relief from several challenges and adapt to new normal life. Those initiatives will reduce the pernicious impact of COVID-19 on the common people and ultimately on the economy of Bangladesh.*

Keywords: COVID-19, Challenges of COVID-19, New Normal Life and Bangladesh.

Introduction

From December 31, 2019, an exigency named Novel Corona Virus or COVID-19 upsurged in Wuhan, China (Zhu et al, 2020) is undergoing in all respects of the world which has made a bad impact on the human life including cultural, environmental, educational, economic, and political ambience (Amiri et al., 2020). COVID-19 has deflected the normal life of the people and now it is the query whether the world will be extricated from this lethal virus and that is not possible to reply infallibly (Bárcena et al., 2009). In the meanwhile, it has been diaphanous to the earth that human life and their safety will be endangered gradually (Gralinski and Menachery, 2020). Moreover, it has induced the closure of educational institutions and in this way has encumbered the educational system (Jordan, 2020).

Every single day is putting together thousands of lives to death list. People are being affected with this virus, which has made people frightened about their lives (Haleem et al., 2020). This virus has emerged as a destructive disease which is stretching itself exponentially and rehashing people to avoid human gatherings (Huang et al., 2020) as well as compelling them to hold down social distancing, using masks, gloves, hand sanitizer etc. (Haleem et al., 2020). Over and above, staying at home is now a requisite factor to reduce the infection of this epidemic and on account of this,

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some preventive measures have been taken such as work from home, lock down, prohibition of public outing, online meeting etc. (Anwar et al., 2020).

Everybody is now exhausted to subdue this pandemic virus because this pandemic is affecting economy, society, education and human life at a time (Begum et al., 2020). So, the upcoming normal days will not be regressed as before (Bueji and Ahmed, 2020), and everyone is facing some challenges to acclimatize with this ambience. All-pervading efforts can now be the only way to get away from this critical circumstance and to get adjusted to the present new normal life.

This data has been arranged in such a way that it would demonstrate the introduction as well as a literature review that elicits the previous research about this issue. In addition to that, in the methodology part, both primary and secondary data have been used. Furthermore, the main purpose of this research is to find out the several challenges faced by the people to accept the new normal life due to COVID-19 with some recommendations. Finally, the paper has been concluded with the main theme of this concerned topic leaving some scope for oncoming research.

2. Literature review

The critical epidemic has astounded the entire world now (Anand et al., 2020) that was first identified in 1937 in birds' body (Wang et al., 2015) and in 1960 in human body (Gaunt et al., 2010). On 30 January 2020, WHO declared the novel corona virus as a public health emergency of international concern (Pogrebna and Kharlamov, 2020), and as a pandemic on 11 March 2020 (Balkhair, 2020). In Bangladesh, this pandemic was first identified on 8 March 2020 and since then the gruesomeness of this virus is going on (Alam et al., 2020) and first Covid patient died on March 18, 2020 (Imtiaz et al., 2020).

People of all classes are envisaging of different challenges to adjust to the new normal life. Such as, students are dealing with the closure of educational institutions which is minifying the eagerness of the students to be acquainted with knowledge (Amiri et al., 2020) and also this closure has domino impact (Richardson, 2020) on the local economy like indigenous restaurants, shops, or others. COVID-19 has already slowed down the market growth and businessmen are experiencing a big loss due to the behavioral alteration (Amiri et al., 2020). Besides, medical officers and healthcare workers are also combating this epidemic relentlessly, but they are not having enough privileges where they are the most requisite weapon to fight against COVID-19 (Walsh, 2020).

Students' dropout rate will be augmented due to school closures for the long period (Ngatane, 2020). As a results college and university students are encountering different challenges including financial (BBC news, 2020), mental, frustration, anxieties etc. Online classrooms through Zoom or related apps have become the mode of distance learning for the students (Mustafa, 2020) through which teachers are getting in touch with their students to lessen disruption of education that is causing more difficulties for the students who are outside of internet access (Chinadaily, 2020).

The greater risk of job losses, and less payment is making people more dejected in this crisis moment (Evan and Dromey, 2020). Even human health and social rapport have been changed owing to

COVID-19 (Amiri et al., 2020). Contrariwise, businessmen are compassionated with less transaction in import and export, slump in private investment, an adverse balance of supply-demand, etc. (Reza et al., 2020). Negligence towards normal patients affected with other disease, much protection, interdiction in any kind of celebration is making people much irritated (Haleem et al., 2020) as well as nutrition and food shortages are the bad issues for the middle-class people (Mustafa, 2020).

At this moment, COVID-19 is the mono-dimensional theme in everywhere. Hence, in the meanwhile many authors have rummaged about this issue. For instance, impact of COVID-19 on human social life (Amiri et al., 2020) on education (Mustafa, 2020), on psychological health (Khan et al., 2020) on labor market (Evans and Dromey , 2020), on economy (Banna, 2020), in daily life (Haleem et al., 2020) are some exploration of several authors. In addition to that many authors have explored about the new challenge for human beings (Yang and Wang, 2020), present and future management in Bangladesh due to COVID-19 (Alam et al., 2020), characteristics of an outbreak (Hossain et al., 2020), implications and treatments (Law, P., 2020; Hafeez et al., 2020) etc. Notwithstanding this study has focused on different challenges that people are facing to accept new normal life and also the different ways how they are outgrowing themselves from those challenges with some recommendations.

2.1. Conceptual framework

The study has designed the conceptual framework in discretion of the challenges of the people to accept the new normal life on account of COVID-19.

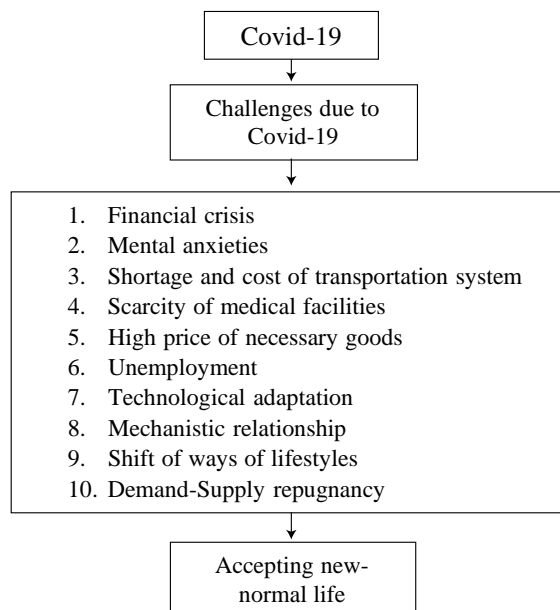


Figure 1: A proposed conceptual framework

The hypothetical framework parades the miniature of the study, which subsumes two types variables. One is an independent variable that is challenges owing to COVID-19 demonstrating several challenges of the three well-marked categories of respondents, including students, job holders and businessmen. Some common challenges shared by all the respondents are financial problem, mental anxieties, problems in maintaining mutual relationship, transportation shortage, dejection, slow speed network, etc. from which the target respondents are trying to outdo. They are comprehending variant measures to outgrow from those challenges containing being busy with diverse issues such as studying, functioning in land, internet browsing, job preparation etc. Then the dependent variable is accepting the new normal life, which depends on the severity of the challenges, whether they are being susceptible to accept the new normal life or not.

3. Research methodology

The study has accentuated the current challenges to adapt with COVID situation. Now people have to accept all the difficulties on account of COVID-19 to start the new normal life. The sample size was formed of 250 respondents, including 3 specific categories including students, job holders and businessmen from different areas of Bangladesh. Hence, the study can be defined as applied research.

Here the study is descriptive in nature, as the problem is already diaphanous that is COVID-19 and the motive is to sift through different challenges of the common people to accept a new normal life in COVID situation, their measures of outgrowing from those challenges and recommendations. Primary and secondary sources were used to collect data. A questionnaire with 4 general questions about the respondents and 4 open-ended questions was provided to gather primary data from 3 categories of respondents. Further, face-to-face interviews were done to collect primary data and different articles, journals, websites, newspaper, and magazine were used for secondary data collection.

The theme is “Challenges to accept new normal life”. Here, two variables have been covered. The independent variable is “Challenges that they are facing” and the dependent variable is “Accepting new normal life by common people”. In this paper, collected data has been represented in a well-organized way to clearly describe the challenges of the people due to COVID-19 with the ways of outgrowing those challenges and their recommendations about authority initiatives.

4. Findings and analysis

Table-1 dictates the demographic characteristics of respondents. There are three categories of respondents of which students (53.2%) are the highest after that Job holders (28.8%) and Businessmen (18%). Most of the respondents are Male (84.8%) and highest percentage of respondents are between 21 to 30 years old.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of respondents

Characteristics	Description	Frequency	Total Number	Percentage	Total Percentage
Gender	Male	162	250	64.8%	100%
	Female	88		35.2%	
Education	College student	20	250	8%	100%
	Bachelor’s degree	138		55.2%	
	Masters	92		36.8%	
Age	Less than 20 years	20	250	8%	100%
	21-30 years	174		69.6%	
	31-40 years	25		10%	
	41-50 years	24		9.6%	
	More than 50 years	7		2.8%	
Type of respondents	Student	133	250	53.2%	100%
	College (20)				
	Public university (108)				
	Private university (5)	72		28.8%	
	Job holders				
	Public (33)				
	Private (39)				
Businessmen	45	18%			

Source: Survey

Table 2. Challenges for category 1: students

Challenges	Ways of outgrowing	Authority initiatives
1. Lack of freedom to go out and engage in crowd.	1. Maintaining social distancing, using necessary protection, avoiding populated area.	1. Promulgate awareness.
2. Hampering daily works.	2. Adjustment and adaptation.	2. Stop spreading rumor.
3. Educational session jam, difficulties in online study continuation because of weak network and costs of network connection, impediments in higher study.	3. Job preparation, acquiring new skills and knowledge, online class and courses, training.	3. Abate vat on phone calls and internet, offer better internet service at students’ friendly cost, provide students scholarship and loan with easy terms.
4. Mental attenuation, dejection, disturbances, anxiety, loneliness.	4. Diverting mind from bad creativity, daily meditation, Gymnastics.	4. Appoint police and other voluntary force to make people conscious.

5. Networking and communication problem.	5. Connected with social media.	5. Creating online platform for networking.
6. Financial problem, prolonged unemployment period, concernment about future walks of life.	6. Alleviating demand, doing agricultural tasks, online jobs and business, new venture, focusing on self-development.	6. Give away incentives to unprivileged students, collaborate with several private and voluntary organizations, provide virtual jobs.
7. Unavailability of transportation and other necessary products.	7. Using small vehicles like rickshaw or reserved vehicles, using online media to collect necessary goods.	7. Assuage price of daily necessary products, ensure proper safety in public transport.
8. Shortage of medical facilities and foods.	8. Taking health consultation from local doctors, working in fields to propagate food items.	8. Ascertain medical and telemedicine facilities, outgiving relief to the neediest person properly, keep on the production of food items, invest more in research on vaccine for COVID-19.
9. Restricted terms and conditions.	9. Adopting voluntary initiatives to create awareness.	9. Spread awareness.
10. Social crime and other ambience challenges.	10. Cautious about social crime.	10. Zero tolerance policy.

Source: Survey

Table-2 points out the overall findings from a survey of students, which subsumes challenges, contrivances of getting away from those challenges and which initiatives authority can take to repel those challenges. The study reveals that there is no freedom to go out. Furthermore, it's the boring time for many of the students as their educational institution is closed now. Students from the middle-class family are in more miserable condition. Majority of the college and university students are involved with tuition or part time job for bearing their own expenses sometimes also for bearing the family costs. But during this COVID-19, their earning ways are totally off that are creating more rogue state for them.

To fulfill their financial needs, many students living in rural area are working in their lands. Moreover, as a jobless person, staying home seems too much repellent because village people are pondering them as vagabond. COVID-19 has ended the hope of many students along with the suspension of several activities. Urban students are engaging themselves with online business or other virtual job opportunities that is almost impossible for the village students. Even village students are not being able to concentrate on online study owing to weak network connection. Many also are encountering the problem of reimbursing the high rent of house in Dhaka during this COVID-19. Now life is online based along with the mutual relationship. Frustration, solitariness,

anxieties, fear are their daily concomitant. Lockdown, isolation, and quarantine are now the most well-acquainted words nowadays. Deadline of all job examination, interviews, and courses have been rescheduled. As opposed to, this lockdown has brought a gracious time for many. They are imparting their time to their family. Even they are enjoying this as a vacation. This period has become a chance for self-development for many students.

Table-2 also elicits the measures of overcoming those challenges. They are starting their new normal life by keeping themselves busy with several activities, maintaining rules, using necessary protection, acquiring new skills. Many also figure out that honestly, they are not outgrowing, they are just adapting with credence to the on Almighty Creator.

They think that it would be easy for them to continue their new normal life if authority would take some initiatives favourable to them. They mentioned some contingent steps that authority may take have also been represented in table-2. The government has to give the rights to every person to express their own opinion without any hesitation and the stop spreading rumor. They think that the government should take and effectively implement those steps that will support the students, especially those who are leading very cumbersome live in this COVID-19 situation. Private and other voluntary organizations can play an illustrious role in that case. On the other hand, some of the respondents think that it is better to rely on self than to hope that authority will come forward and do something because it is a war for everyone not for a specific government or single person.

Table 3. Challenges for category 2: job holders

Challenges	Ways of outgrowing	Authority initiatives
1. Unusual shift in ways of life, fear of infections, mechanistic relationship.	1. Engaging with online marketing, social distancing, usage of safety stuffs, keep close to normal routine, changing life style, pursuing hygiene instructions.	1. Circulate positive news, upazilla based lockdown, customization, co-ordination.
2. Executing job responsibilities, work-life balance, technological adaptation.	2. Ameliorating technical knowledge, video conferencing and engaging with other IT resources.	2. Implement comprehensive digital transmission, flexible working hours.
3. Scarcity and high cost of transportation, travel restrictions.	3. Using personal or mini transport system to avoid public transport.	3. Available transport facilities at lower cost.
4. Mental pressure, depression, stress handling, decrease of morale, shrinking job market.	4. Getting exercise, diverting concentration.	4. Launch entertaining program, maintain the stability of job market.

5. Financial crisis, high cost of living, unavailability and high price of necessary commodities.	5. Curtailing expenditure, attaching with online business and part-time job, collecting daily necessities for long time stock.	5. Making a pragmatic budget, initiative to supply daily commodities at lower prices, not cutting job or reducing salaries, incentives for middle class people.
6. Poor medical facilities, scarcity of safety equipment, high medical charge.	6. Being hygiene and taking medication, telemedicine service.	6. Sustainable improvement of health sector, proper medical treatment.
7. No proper distribution, lack of mass conscience.	7. Obey the government health policy.	7. Proper monitoring, social awareness.
8. Lack of co-operation, corruption, spread of illegal business.	8. Strong mentality, awareness.	8. Policy to curb corruption, zero tolerance policy.
9. Not allowed to handshaking, postponement of schedule for many activities.	9. Adaptation policy, rescheduling activities.	9. Digital platform.
10. Felonious activities, rumors.	10. Limited usage of media, knowledge from international news.	10. Follow the instructions of WHO, evaluate the opinions of the common people.

Source: Survey

Table-3 depicts the challenges for job holders. Contrariwise, job holders are envisaging with another kinds of challenges. But financial, psychological, frustration, price hike, shortage and cost of transportation are the common problems for all. They have to execute job responsibilities with the fear of infection of all time. Moreover, it is very difficult to perform duties without physical appearance, but they have to do numerous tasks in online basis. Besides they have to wear PPE, masks, gloves and use other safety equipment for the long period at office that are making an unpalatable situation for them. Apart from, many are not habituated to work through technology which is fetching a big hindrance. But survival is the main challenge to many of them in this COVID-19 situation. Lack of co-operation among related service systems are being manifested to them. Handshaking, conversation, mooching in the free time are the usual norms for common people nevertheless these are not permitted for the current predicament.

In case there is problem, there must have a solution. Hence to avert those challenges each one is trying as their own way. Those who are not that much efficient in using technology are endeavoring to ameliorate their technical knowledge to keep up with the going world. Taking a break from media coverage which is outstretching rumors is one way to obviate fear, to be positive and motivated. Also, many are reducing their expenditure and searching for new ways of earnings to reduce financial crisis. Proper safety system and awareness can confront corona virus so it is not the name of terribleness as well as any covid patient should not be treated trashily. It is better to avoid the negative side and focus on the positive aspect of this virus.

Sustainable development of health sector is needed to improve medical facilities for all because even normal patients are not getting treatment many times for the shortage number of doctors and other facilities. Also, it needs to follow the instructions from WHO. Middle class people are in more miserable condition so proper initiatives should be taken in this respect. Furthermore, the authority needs to give emphasis on public views and materialize zero tolerance policy effectively to resolve many challenges suchlike corruption, price hike etc. at a time.

Table 4. Challenges for category 3: businessmen

Challenges	Ways of outgrowing	Authority initiatives
1. Huge loss, decreased sales.	1. Balancing with previous profit, using strength and opportunities.	1. Giving incentives.
2. Financial crisis, increased expenditure of livings.	2. Receiving loan from relatives, banks or other financial organizations.	2. Providing loan at lower rate of interest.
3. Difficulties in supply chain, transportation shortage, price increment.	3. Collecting raw materials from local area.	3. Ensure transportation facilities for distribution of products.
4. Cancellation of buyer's orders.	4. Betaking newfound order, increasing production.	4. Make new opportunities.
5. Remuneration and safety issues of workers.	5. Cutting remuneration, retrenching workers.	5. Supporting the business to provide salaries, collaborate with different government and non-government organizations.
6. Losing buyers markets and opportunities.	6. Creating new opportunities.	6. Thrusting youth into several entrepreneurial activities.
7. Discontinuance of production and sales.	7. Starting from very premier level, adjusting difficulties.	7. Creating supportive environment.
8. Demand-Supply repugnancy.	8. Amplifying and shifting regular production items into safety products.	8. More job opportunities.
9. Psychological, immorality of others.	9. Strong mentality, adopting real news, managing mental stress.	9. Stop spreading of fake news.
10. Technological inefficiencies, communication challenges.	10. Technological progression, online communication platform.	10. Training on IT.

Source: Survey

Table-4 highlights the challenges for businessmen. A huge amount of loss and financial crisis are their main challenges during this COVID-19 which are committing them to fall in frustration and anxieties. The businessmen dealing in the clothes were almost breakdown in the time of Pahela Baishakh and other special occasions as they were reckoned with the huge production of clothing products for those occasions but owing to this virus all were closed and they had to convey the total amount as loss project in this year. The previously placed orders have been nullified and there is no new order. For the discontinuance in the production of goods, demand-supply repugnancy has occurred which has made an impact on the price of every essential products as well as has affected the normal lifestyle of the common people. They are trying to overcome from this loss project either by taking loan or by adopting other ways. Sometimes they are being bound to cut remuneration or to retrench workers. Technological adaptation is another challenge for many businessmen as they are not habituated with this online procedure.

In this stagnant period, though the government has announced many incentives packages, these are not enough for this huge loss. Both the public and private organizations need to come forward to lift them up from this miserable condition. Generating new opportunities for the youths who are much efficient in technological progression can be an effective way to reduce the unemployment problem specially in this Covid situation. All of the challenges will fetch a bad impact on the economy of the country. So all-pervading efforts should be conferred to fight against this ongoing situation.

5. Conclusion and scope for the subsequent research

The corona virus has made the whole world almost stagnant. The medical science is engaged in disentombing vaccine of this pernicious virus, but it will take much time as the virus changes its character in every single moment. So, like the invention of the vaccine, people have to habituate with the new normal life facing numerous challenges.

The study is materially done to denote those challenges that people are facing in their new normal life during this covid situation by collecting raw data from 250 respondents through an open-ended questionnaire and face to face interview. In covid situation where going out is much risky, getting responses from 250 respondents was really tough as some respondents were much cooperative and others were not. The study shows “challenges” as independent variable and “accepting new normal life” as dependent variable. The common people are coming by many hindrances to acclimatize the new normal life for those challenges. The more the challenges the less chances of common people to be accustomed to this ongoing situation.

The study reveals some common challenges such as monetary issues, psychological problem, unavailability and high price of necessary goods, scarcity of medical facilities etc. Moreover, this study elicits that many are taking this lockdown period as a scope for self-development and maintaining a better mutual relationship with others.

The study has been done with the opinion of only 3 categories, including students, job holders and businessmen from different areas of Bangladesh. So, the scope of the study is confined only to these three categories, leaving other classes of people. Furthermore, the sample size needs to

be amplified to get more authentic and diversified opinion. So, considering these limitations of this study, future research can be conducted where this study will act as an adjunct source.

It can be concluded that though COVID-19 has made everything standstill, that day will come very soon when the common people will be able to acclimatize with this new normal life extruding challenges they are facing to overcome the situation. Everything will be normal as before if all come forward with their best level efforts and courage.

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Appendix

Questionnaire On the study of COVID-19: Challenges to accept new normal life

Section: A

1. Gender: (a) Male (b) Female
2. Educational Level: (a) College student (b) Bachelor's degree (c) Masters
3. Age: (a) Less than 20 years (b) 21-30 years (c) 31-40 years (d) 41-50 years (e) More than 50 years
4. Type of Respondents: (a) Students: (i) College (ii) Public University (iii) Private University
(b) Job Holders: (i) Public (ii) Private
(c) Businessmen

Section: B

1. What type of challenges are you facing to accept new normal life during this lockdown period of COVID-19?

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2. How are you outgrowing yourself from those challenges?

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3. What initiatives should the concerned authority take that will help you to outgrow from those challenges easily?

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4. Any other opinion you want to share.

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