

PEER REVIEW HISTORY

BMJ Paediatrics Open publishes all reviews undertaken for accepted manuscripts. Reviewers are asked to complete a checklist review form and are provided with free text boxes to elaborate on their assessment. These free text comments are reproduced below.

ARTICLE DETAILS

TITLE (PROVISIONAL)	COVID-19 and child marriage in Bangladesh: Emergency call to action
AUTHORS	Hossain, Md. Jamal Soma, Mahfuza Afroz Bari, Md. Sazzadul Emran, Talha Bin Islam, Md. Rabiul

VERSION 1 – REVIEW

REVIEWER	Reviewer name: Dr. Saiful Islam Institution and Country: Jahangirnagar University Competing interests: None
REVIEW RETURNED	26-Oct-2021

GENERAL COMMENTS	Very interesting and time-oriented topic.
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REVIEWER	Reviewer name: Dr. Md. Monirul Islam Institution and Country: 77, Shatmoshjid Road, Dhanmondi, Dhaka, 1205, Bangladesh Competing interests: None
REVIEW RETURNED	25-Oct-2021

GENERAL COMMENTS	Dear Editor, Thank you very much for inviting me as a reviewer for this manuscript. I have carefully studied the topic and reviewed the whole manuscript with full of my interest. The manuscript contains an interesting analysis based on the community data collected through various nationally recognized media platform. The current topic has an excellent interest to focus on. Overall, this is a clear, concise, and well-written manuscript. Sufficient information about the previous study findings is presented for readers to follow the present study rationale and procedures. These article can be published without correction. Thank you very much.
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VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

Manuscript ID bmjpo-2021-001328

Point by point responses

Editor in Chief Comments to Author :

Your letter would be strengthened by replacing one of your three references from the Dhaka Tribune with a scientific article or data from UNICEF. References 2 and 4 are similar. The need for scientific data needs highlighting - see comments of the Associate Editor

Responses

Thank you very much, dear respected Editor-in-Chief, for reviewing our manuscript and providing your kind comments. We have studied your comments and revised them accordingly. We have added one scientific article (ref. 1) by Afrin et al. (2021) in the reference section for strengthening the current

evidence. Besides, we have carefully read all the comments provided by the Associate Editor and revised them accordingly.

Associate Editor

Comments to the Author:

Both reviewers have suggested accepting the manuscript as is. However, I have a few concerns about the writing style and the simplistic messaging. While we acknowledge the significant concerns about child marriage rates increasing, the authors have limited their analysis mainly to media reports. There are a few contemporary references they could have used and they need to mention that there are big evidence gaps. I have made specific suggestions for changes needed in the Abstract and the main text in the attached file. Additionally, there will need to be final editing of language.

Responses

Thank you very much for your kind comments and concerns. We have considered all the comments and improved the manuscript accordingly. You are correct that we have reported the issue based on media reports due to its lack of country-wide surveillance. According to our best search knowledge that only a few surveys were conducted by several NGOs covering a few districts' scenarios, and no study was reported presenting the country-wide data so far. Among the reported data, the current revised version of the manuscript bears the data revealed by the BRAC, an International NGO, survey (Lines: 55-57; ref. no 3), the Daily Star surveillance for 13 districts, and Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) survey for 21 districts (Lines: 60-63; ref. no 4). Besides, several media journalists reported the data retrieved from several vulnerable districts' administrations such as Rajshahi, Khulna, Kurigram, and Bagerhat (Lines: 64-59; Ref. no 2,4,5). However, we also clearly mentioned the data or evidence gap for the country-wide situation in the main text (Lines: 57-59). However, the current report is crucial for understanding the alarming spike of child marriage cases in Bangladesh.

Moreover, we have carefully studied your shared three articles or data sources. We appreciate your kind efforts in this regard. However, these data are not demonstrating the current situation standing for 2021 to be cited here. Besides, we are very much grateful to you for your specific corrections in the Abstract and Main text. We have corrected these lines according to your suggestions in the revised version of the manuscript (Lines: 33-35, 38-40, 49, 52-53). Also, we have considered your concerns regarding the manuscript's linguistic status. We have carefully revised and improved its language.

Reviewer: 1

Dr. Md. Monirul Islam

Comments to the Author

Dear Editor,

Thank you very much for inviting me as a reviewer for this manuscript. I have carefully studied the topic and reviewed the whole manuscript with full of my interest. The manuscript contains an interesting analysis based on the community data collected through various nationally recognized media platform. The current topic has an excellent interest to focus on.

Overall, this is a clear, concise, and well-written manuscript. Sufficient information about the previous study findings is presented for readers to follow the present study rationale and procedures. The article can be published without correction. Thank you very much.

Response:

We, all authors of the manuscript, are very thankful to reviewer 1 for reviewing the manuscript and providing your kind appreciations and endorsement for publication of the manuscript.

Reviewer: 2

Md. Saiful Islam , Jahangirnagar University

Comments to the Author

Very interesting and time-oriented topic.

Response:

We are very much grateful to reviewer 2 for reviewing the manuscript and providing your kind comments.