



## Battle of Modern Heroes: Healthcare Provider's Crisis Experiences During Covid-19 Pandemic

*Christabel Evadne P. Fale\*, Jiesa Ada Stella D. Fano, Ralph Patrick B. Salvador*

Sultan Kudarat State University, Tacurong City, 9800 Sultan Kudarat, The Philippines

Correspondence: E-mail: [cristabelevadnefale@sksu.edu.ph](mailto:cristabelevadnefale@sksu.edu.ph)

### ABSTRACTS

This paper aimed to describe the coronavirus experiences of the healthcare workers. Numerous studies showed the experiences of healthcare workers during the pandemic, but no information is available on the overall experience. The novelties of this study are the overall experiences and the perception of the healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. We used a screening tool to determine the suitable participants with an emphasis on the length of their work hours during the pandemic. The interview was conducted online, and the screening tool form was sent to the participant's online messaging account. The result showed the experiences and perspectives of health workers during the pandemic, especially the challenges, difficulties, and changes in work functioning and environment. They also noted the difficulties in their work and personal life. It also showed their weaknesses and threats to their personal life. There were also coping mechanisms and strategies to deal with the challenges. The practitioners during the pandemic have experienced significant difficulties during the pandemic and brought awareness and comprehension to the current situation. This study would not only help the present health response during the pandemic but also any future pandemic to protect the wellbeing of our health workers.

### ARTICLE INFO

**Article History:**

*Submitted/Received 20 Mar 2021*

*First Revised 15 May 2021*

*Accepted 12 Aug 2021*

*First available online 20 Aug 2021*

*Publication date 01 Sep 2021*

**Keyword:**

*Coronavirus,*

*COVID-19,*

*Crisis,*

*Healthcare provider,*

*Modern heroes.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

As of the 17th of November of 2020, Hasetline (2020), reported 300,000 cases of CoVid-19 are from Health workers. A study of health workers caring for patients showed that these services had considerably more depression, anxiety, insomnia, and distress (Wu, 2020), the well-being of clinical specialists is significant for the control of pestilence and their wellbeing (Kang, 2020). The view of attendants of ill patients encountered stress and uneasiness (Gahledar, 2020). In the view of healthcare workers, it is difficult for them, to wear defensive garments and gear (Qian Liu, 2020). Isolation is also brought up as a manifestation of a compounding medical issue for healthcare workers (Nguyen et al., 2020).

There are numerous studies (Jeong, 2016) that have shown that there are negative emotional effects during isolation, but most of the studies are from the view of an admitted patient, and few studies have been done regarding COVID-19, which would benefit in increasing the knowledge of psychology.

## 2. METHODS

The province of Sultan Kudarat has numerous healthcare workers assigned in different areas of the hospital or the COVID facility area. Only 5 participants are chosen by the researchers especially those who are exposed to COVID-19 patients as subjects of the study. The researchers use a narrative research design.

A researcher-constructed instrument utilizes a screening tool, to determine the suitable participants of the study and the demographic profile for the participants involved to gather the necessary and basic information. They also use individual, virtual one-to-one verbal interchange recorded interviews. Questions are asked related to the experiences of the healthcare workers and validated by the professionals. Responses of the participants are transcribed verbatim and behavioral observations are noted down. As for the preparation in the analysis of the data gathered, researchers employed data cleaning and data analysis was done to interpret the responses.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study gathered are the experiences of the medical practitioners during the coronavirus pandemic. This newly discovered virus originated in Wuhan, China that later on news reported that there were active cases around the world, and on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) had declared a pandemic. In this study, the researchers gathered data from the experiences of the medical practitioners during the pandemic through a semi-structured interview of 5 practitioners assigned in COVID facility areas.

In line with this, medical health workers were the first-line fighters who handled COVID-19 patients. They faced a high risk of infection every day and were subjected to lengthy and distressing work hours to satisfy health demands (Wu, 2020). The interview began by explaining the purpose of the study to give a principal idea of the research.

The participants stated that the pandemic has created limitations and uncertainties on things that have been accustomed. It must be noted first for their definite safety. There were changes in how they usually work before the pandemic. They have put adjustments and practiced the new normal. The findings also show their weaknesses and potential threats to their personal life. They are all affected psychologically as perceived the danger they are in. Despite this, there are coping mechanisms that the health workers have been practicing as one of the strategies to deal with the challenges amid the pandemic.

It was found that healthcare workers were not wearing the proper equipment during their shift, due to the medical equipment shortage that the pandemic has brought, lowering their overall productivity and increasing their chance of infection. They also experienced discrimination from a wide range of places, from basic public transportation to verbal and physical abuse. Thus, it took a toll on the mental health of the workers. They also said they experienced an overload of work since they have mentioned that they worked more than 24 hours straight during their shift. Some of the interviewed said that these factors, led some healthcare workers to a mental breakdown or even suicide as mentioned by a doctor. On a brighter note, they experienced tighter family bonding during their off-hours after their isolation period, even just a few days before re-entering back to service. It was also mentioned that the pandemic reminded them of their beliefs, thus bringing them closer to their religion. In addition, one of the benefits of the pandemic was that it reminded the community of the importance of a robust public health system.

It was observable how there were various effects brought to humans by the coronavirus pandemic and the quarantine. Therefore, this pandemic has positive and negative impacts on health workers.

The first line of defense is the health workers thus putting themselves at a high risk of infection. The demand for cures is outnumbered, hence the health workers are still to the extent of their limitations.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

The findings of the study showed the different experiences and perceptions of healthcare workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The participants have experienced stresses, affecting functions as medical practitioners, changes in the work environment, and encountered challenges and problems. Contrarily, the participants also mentioned that there were opportunities brought by the pandemic. Most responses were integration with the family became much greater.

#### **5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

We would like to express their heartfelt gratitude to the individuals for their contributions to the study's success especially for giving the researchers suggestions, knowledge, and guidance throughout the study.

#### **6. AUTHORS' NOTE**

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. The authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

#### **7. REFERENCES**

- Jeong, H., Yim, H. W., Song, Y. J., Ki, M., Min, J. A., Cho, J., and Chae, J. H. (2016). Mental health status of people isolated due to middle east respiratory syndrome. *Epidemiology and Health*, 38(2016), 1-7.
- Kang, L., Li, Y., Hu, S., Chen, M., Yang, C., Yang, B. X., Wang, Y., Hu, J., Lai, J., Ma, X., Chen, J., Guan, L., Wang, G., Ma, H., and Liu, Z. (2020). The mental health of medical workers in Wuhan, China dealing with the 2019 novel coronavirus. *The Lancet Psychiatry*, 7(3), e14.

Nguyen, L. H., Drew, D. A., Graham, M. S., Joshi, A. D., Guo, C. G., Ma, W., Mehta, R. S., Warner, E. T., Sikavi, D. R., Lo, C. H., Kwon, S., Song M., Mucci, L. A., Stampfer, M. J., Willet, W. C., Eliassen, A. H., Hart, J. E., Chavarro, J. E. and Zhang, F. (2020). Risk of COVID-19 among front-line health-care workers and the general community: A prospective cohort study. *The Lancet Public Health*, 5(9), e475-e483.

Qian Liu, M. (2020). *The experiences of health-care providers during The COVID-19 crisis in China: a qualitative study*. *The Lancet Global Health*, 8(6), 790-798.

Wu, P. E., Styra, R., and Gold, W. L. (2020). Mitigating the psychological effects of COVID-19 on health care workers. *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, 192(17), E459-E460.