

EDITORIAL**COVID 19 AND ONLINE SURVEYS****Dr. Suvarna Shyam Ganvir(PhD)**

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ABSTRACT:

BACKGROUND: The COVID 19 outbreak is placing an overwhelming burden on health system & authorities to respond with effective and appropriate intervention, policies & messages. This pandemic has resulted in unprecedented research worldwide. It has curtailed most academic, industry, and government basic science and clinical research, or redirected research to COVID-19. It has strained healthcare services and personnel to the brink in many regions and will certainly deeply mark medical research both in the short and long-term.

KEY WORDS: COVID 19, Pandemic**Introduction:**

The COVID 19 outbreak is placing an overwhelming burden on health system & authorities to respond with effective and appropriate intervention, policies & messages. This pandemic has resulted in unprecedented research worldwide. It has curtailed most academic, industry, and government basic science and clinical research, or redirected research to COVID-19.⁽¹⁾ It has strained healthcare services and personnel to the brink in many regions and will certainly deeply mark medical research both in the short and long-term.⁽²⁾ On the other hand it has created the opportunities for researchers in the form of online surveys. An "online" has now become a dominant mode for survey delivery. In an era with high costs of other modes of administration, declining response rates, concerns about registered telephone numbers and increased internet penetration rates, everyone is on online survey.⁽³⁾ According to Oxford dictionary, survey is an investigation of the opinions or experience of a group of people, based on a series of questions.⁽⁴⁾ The survey is a familiar

tool used primarily in social research but its scope has widened to health science as well. Yet qualitative survey remain relatively novel or invisible or side lined method.^(3,5)

Since survey research is almost always based on a sample of population, the success of research is dependent on the representativeness of the sample with respect to target population of interest of the researchers. Hence, selection and approach to participants is critical for the success of any survey.⁽⁶⁾ There are conflicting evidences about the responses received from participants with the use of this research tool. On one hand research shows that the type and quality of responses one receives with online surveys are comparable with what one receive in paper based surveys⁽⁷⁾. The internet has become an everyday communication tool for countless peoples throughout the world. It has a variety of potential uses in education, practice and research. Whereas on the other hand, Roberts and Allen have suggested poor response rates from participants and summarize the reasons

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for poor response as faculty email address-es when emails are the primary mode of recruitment, irregular or non access of emails by potential participants, emails being filtered to spam folder and survey fatigue, a phenomenon common to all surveys.⁽⁶⁾ But with further involvement of technology, android or iphone use access mail and online survey has become easier and convenient. Though its effect is not documented or researched on. On a random check using Google Scholar, articles related to different aspects of impact of COVID 19 were available which have used online survey as a research tool. These aspects include Psychological, social, quality of life, health crisis, home education and many more. We have also conducted a study which in online survey was used as a re-search tool for exploring the adherence to Physical activity during lockdown.⁽⁸⁾ In our experience, though online survey is found to be an inexpensive time saving method, there is very limited control of researcher on the accuracy or specificity of respondents. Though online surveys look easy and cheap on first impression and have their own advantages and disadvantages⁽⁹⁾, a systematic search or review of research studies related to the use of online survey as a research tool will help to identify the challenges in its implementation, specially the ones that are published in this era of COVID 19 pandemic. Researchers considering conducting online surveys are encouraged to read carefully about how the principles of survey research can be applied to online formats in order to reduce bias and enhance rigor⁽¹⁰⁾. At the same time, the readers need to be careful while interpreting the results of online surveys and must take into account all variables before generalising and interpreting the results.

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