



THE SCOPE

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Collecting quantitative data during the pandemic

2020 is a year of change and new challenges. COVID-19 brought additional stressors to parents of children with cancer. In this issue, the research team will share two studies conducted during the pandemic. We will also be sharing more about why conducting online surveys is now one of the safest and efficient way of collecting data during this period!



Riding through the pandemic: Parenting a child with cancer during COVID-19

by Zach Lee

The pandemic has significantly changed the caregiving experience of many Singaporeans. For parents of children with cancer, they now have to deal with the existing challenges from the illness, as well as new stressors arising from the pandemic.

This study aims to identify how the pandemic has affected parents and how they have been coping. A closed-ended online survey was conducted with 78 parents during October 2020. If you wish to read our findings in greater detail, click or scan the QR code on the right!

HOW HAS COVID-19 AFFECTED PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH CANCER?



In this issue, we will be discussing how certain groups of parents have been impacted by COVID-19 differently, resulting in different caregiving experiences during the pandemic.

1 PARENTS WITH CHILDREN AT DIFFERENT PHASES OF THEIR ILLNESS TRAJECTORY

PARENTS WITH CHILDREN WHO HAVE COMPLETED TREATMENT



PARENTS WITH CHILDREN WHO ARE UNDERGOING TREATMENT



Expressed **more concerns about the virus** and **took extra precautions** to protect their child from the virus (e.g. isolating their child)



Experienced a **greater increase in caregiving demands** during the pandemic



Faced greater financial and psychological impacts

SCROLL DOWN TO UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCES IN PARENTING EXPERIENCES



DIFFERENCES IN PARENTING EXPERIENCES

CAREGIVING DEMANDS OF PARENTS WITH CHILDREN IN TREATMENT



Existing caregiving demands associated with diagnosis



Additional caregiving demands due to the pandemic

This places parents of children who are still undergoing treatment in a vulnerable position as they have to deal with multiple stressors at once.

The difference between these two group of parents was the **additional demands associated with caring for their child in treatment** during the pandemic.

PARENTS WITH CHILDREN IN TREATMENT TAKE EXTRA PRECAUTIONS, BECAUSE THEY SEE IT AS...



A **NECESSARY ARRANGEMENT** DURING THE PANDEMIC



A **RESPONSIBILITY** TO SAFEGUARD THEIR CHILD'S HEALTH

Our results have also shown that these parents were more **psychologically affected** by COVID-19.



However, this is concerning as..

self-isolation and social distancing

can have

long-term implications

on the parents' and children's

physical and emotional well-being



2

PARENTS WITH DIFFERENT WORK ARRANGEMENTS

PARENTS WORKING FROM HOME



PARENTS WORKING ONSITE



Reported **greater tendency to use denial, planning and social support** to cope with parental stress during the pandemic



DIFFERENCE IN CAREGIVING DEMANDS

Parents who worked from home faced less of an increase in caregiving demands because they may have **adapted to new work arrangements** over time. This adaptation may have allowed parents to **reap the benefits of working from home.**



Greater control over their schedule



Ability to attend to the family's needs more readily



Faced a **greater increase in caregiving demands**



Faced more **financial challenges** during the pandemic

We found that the working arrangements of these parents were associated with the parental socio-economic status (SES)



Money



Education

Which could explain why parents who had to work onsite faced greater financial impacts

Parents of lower SES were likely to be...



Employed in jobs that were more impacted by the pandemic (E.g. Service staff, Manual jobs)



Lack the resources to buffer the impacts (E.g. Savings, insurance)

and these parents were also more likely to face financial issues such as:



Loss in income



Unemployment

The presence of these differences suggest that parenting experiences can be diverse during a pandemic. More attention should be paid to the nature of both existing and new challenges faced by parents to provide prompt intervention and support for these parents.





CONDUCTING ONLINE SURVEYS

It is a safe and efficient way to collect quantitative data, especially during the pandemic when face-to-face meet-ups are less preferred. This method was adopted by the two studies that were shared in this issue. You may wish to read more about quantitative research and surveys in [Volume 2!](#)

WHAT SHOULD I CONSIDER BEFORE CONDUCTING A SURVEY?



WHO DO YOU WANT TO ASK?

Consider if the language used, length of the questionnaire and type of questions are suitable for your audience.

To avoid low response rate and ensure better data quality, keep your survey short!

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO FIND OUT?

- What is the purpose of your research?
- What are you investigating in your study?
- Is it possible to get your answers through quantitative methods?

This will help you in setting your research objective(s).

TIPS!

You can conduct a pilot study and gather feedback on clarity of the questions, duration of the survey and if your research objectives are met. This will help you to refine your survey further before the actual roll out.

HOW DO YOU WANT TO ASK?

Multiple choice?

Take a stand?

It is not advisable to have too many open-ended questions as it is taxing on the respondent and require more effort to analyse.

Open-ended questions?

Elaborate his/her choice?

Now, you're ready to start creating your survey! Here are some sites where you can create your own surveys for free!



Click on it and start exploring!



YAY!

The pros of conducting an online survey are numerous - efficiency, convenience etc. However, in order to reap the benefits of this method, we should also understand the disadvantages of conducting online survey. Thereafter you can consider if the online survey method would be suitable for the purpose of your research.

PROS & CONS OF ONLINE SURVEY



- ✓ Participants can complete the survey on their electronic devices anywhere, anytime
- ✓ No physical contact / mailing of surveys - Less time-consuming
- ✓ Data is collected and stored immediately, hence no data entry is required

VS



- ✗ Might not be the best choice for population who are less IT-savvy (e.g. elderly) or people with limited internet access
- ✗ As it is often self-administered, investigators are not present to answer doubts / queries on the survey
- ✗ Concerns over data protection issues since data is stored and collected on an online platform

EDITORS - RESEARCH TEAM

Lim Kai Yun
+65 6229 3732
lim.kaiyun@ccf.org.sg

Zach Lee
+65 6229 3733
zach.lee@ccf.org.sg

Khoo Chai Wee
+65 6229 3731
khoo.chaiwee@ccf.org.sg

Ng Hwee Chin
+65 6229 3730
ng.hweechine@ccf.org.sg

THANK YOU!

We hope that you've enjoyed reading the fourth issue of The Scope. The Scope is published bi-annually, providing you with exclusive insights into our latest research studies in a digestible format. Through sharing these bite-sized research findings, we hope that we can make research relating to childhood cancer more accessible to everyone.

If you are interested to read about our studies in greater detail, the reports are located in the shared drive. Alternatively, contact anyone from the research team for reports, inquiries or feedback.

Stay safe!