



**41st Annual Conference of IASP on
Demographic and Health Aspects of COVID 19 Pandemic**

Organised jointly with

**National Institute of Health and Family Welfare
(NIHFW), New Delhi**

Using online platform

Dates: November 28-30, 2020

Conference Report

The 41st Annual Conference of IASP was held during 28-30 November 2020 using the virtual platform for the first time due to the COVID19 Pandemic. The schedule of the conference was announced in May 2020. NIHFW was the co-host of the conference. The abstract submission and review process was carried out through easychair.org platform. The theme of the conference was 'Demographic, and Health Aspects of COVID19' and abstracts were invited under nine subthemes with 8 of them related to COVID19. A total of 124 abstracts were received, and senior demographers reviewed the abstracts through blind review. About 70 papers were accepted for oral and 29 were for poster presentation. A professional agency named ICS Global, Pvt Ltd was hired to host the conference in the virtual platform.

Inaugural session

The conference was inaugurated on 28th November 2020 at 10:00 AM by Prof. Harshad Thakur, Director, NIHFW. Dr KVR Subrahmanyam, Treasurer, IASP (IPC) welcomed the guests. Prof. Harshad Thakur delivered the inaugural address. In his inaugural address, Prof. Thakur highlighted the impact of Covid-19 on various sectors, including health. He suggested that more research on implications of Covid by demographers and public health professionals is required. The IASP Presidential address was delivered by Dr U V Somayajulu. He talked about the importance of meeting the unmet needs of the health system in India and the need for good quality data on demographic and health aspects

like public health infrastructure, migrants etc. Ms Argentine Matavel Piccin, Representative India and Country Director Bhutan, UNFPA was the Guest of Honour who delivered the Keynote address. In her keynote address, she emphasised the need for restoring services related to maternal and child health and family planning, which are affected by COVID19. She has also highlighted the efforts of UN agencies, including UNFPA in restoring these services in India and other countries. Prof. Thakur released the Conference E Souvenir. Dr Argentine released the redesigned website of IASP. Announcement of Prof. Srinivasan Award and Prof. KB Pathak award was made by Dr V K Tiwari, General Secretary, IASP. Dr Abhishek Gautam and Dr Kamalesh Kumar Patel received Prof. Srinivasan Award for best technical and substantive papers published in Demography India. Dr Priyanka Dixit received Prof. Pathak Award. Prof. Suresh Sharma, Treasurer IASP proposed the vote of thanks. He thanked UNFPA, and IHAT for the financial support. He also thanked NIHFW for collaborating with IASP. IIPS was thanked for their support to IASP.

Sessions- Day 1

The inaugural session was followed by technical and plenary sessions. In all, there were two plenary sessions, 14 technical sessions and one e-poster session during the three days of the conference.

On Day 1 (Nov 28, 2020), the first plenary session on research related to Covid19 was organised by IIPS. It was chaired by Prof. Arvind Pandey and Prof. KS James. Prof. Sayeed Unisa was the coordinator of the session. There were five presentations on covid related issues in this session.. In the opening remarks, Prof Arvind Pandey appreciated the research carried out by IIPS on the Covid Pandemic. Prof Syeed Unisa mentioned that Director IIPS has guided and encouraged the faculty to take up studies on Covid-19. She informed that 22 papers had been prepared by various faculty of IIPS on Covid related issues and they are available on IIPS website.

Dr Laxmi Kant Dwivedi's presentation was on Assessing the Impact of Complete Lockdown on COVID-19 Infections in India. He concluded that the estimation of serial interval for COVID-19 is 5.19 days which is lower than the other similar infectious diseases. The estimation of the serial interval is essential for policy, particularly for formulating control strategies in the new areas. The objective of lockdown was to keep the reproduction below 1, that is on an average each case infecting less than one person. The authors found that the reproduction number is 1.56 during the effective lockdown.

Prof. S.K Mohanty's presentation was on the Impact of COVID-19 Epidemic on Longevity and Premature mortality in India. The objective of this work was to examine the impact of COVID-19 infection on life

expectancy and premature mortality in India. Dr Mohanty concluded that with 1.36 additional deaths, Covid has reduced life expectancy by 0.2 years and is likely to reduce the same by one year by March 2021. He also found that there is an increase in premature mortality, and it largely affected the working age in 45-65 years of age.

The presentation by Prof.R.B.Bhagat was on Temporary Labour Migration: the Context of COVID-19 Pandemic in India. Prof Bhagat felt that Covid-19 brought migration and migrants into the limelight. He contended that there should be a policy for migrants and not a migration policy in view of the many forms of exclusion of migrants in India.

Prof. S.K.Singh's presentation was on Multidimensional Vulnerability to COVID-19 Epidemic in India: Issues and Challenges across States. He reflected on case fatality ratio and observed that by May 1st, only 148 out of 640 districts have reported covid attributed deaths. However, by 23rd November, only 20 districts have not reported any casualties. He noted that Rupnagar district of Punjab reported the highest CFR of 5.

The presentation by Prof Aparajita Chattopadhyay was on Air Pollution in India and its Association with Respiratory Ailments with Special Reference to COVID-19. Dr Aparajita established that every pollutant has its unique growth curve and thus need pollutant specific strategies to curb pollution. In India, people exposed to pollution are 75 per cent more likely to suffer from any respiratory ill health. High association of population exposed to specific pollutants and presence of COVID-19 in certain wards of eastern, central and western suburbs of Mumbai. Further, Dr Aparajita noted that significant association was observed with increase in NO₂ and COVID-19 fatality in Mumbai.

Technical session 1 was chaired by Sri A R Nanda and Co-chaired by Prof Manish Chaturvedi, NIHFV. There were five presentations in the session. Technical session 2 on COVID models and analysis was chaired by Prof VK Tiwari. There were five presentations in this session. Technical session 2A (Elderly Issues) was chaired by Dr Devender Singh, UNFPA, Prof Pushpanjali Swain, NIHFV and Co-Chair was Dr Dharmendra Yadav, NIHFV.

The George Simmons Memorial Lecture was delivered by Dr Vinod Mishra, Chief of Migration and Urbanization, UN Population Division, New York at 5:30 PM on Nov 28, 2020. Dr Somayajulu, President IASP chaired the session. Dr Mishra talked about the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on International Migration and Migrants. He pointed out the effect of COVID-19 on the international migrants, refugees and displaced population. The impact of the Pandemic on vulnerable population groups such as women and children among the migrants.

Sessions- Day 2

There was one plenary session, and eight technical sessions on Day 2 (Nov 29, 2020). The plenary session was on the status of Covid-19 in the neighbouring countries. This session was chaired by Dr Shireen Jejeebhoy and Co-Chaired by Dr K V R Subrahmanyam.

Three presentations were there in the session. The first presentation was by Dr Tapan Kumar Roy on 'the Covid-19 Pandemic Situation in Bangladesh: Demographic Events Observed From March to November 2020'. Dr Lal Ratnaweera and Dr Kanthi Kulatunga made the second presentation on Present Situation of Covid 19 in Sri Lanka. The third presentation was on Prevalence of COVID-19 and Its Management in Nepal by Dr Ram Prasad Aryal.

Technical session 3 on Day 2 was on the theme 'Covid management, teaching and work' and was chaired by Prof Sanjay Gupta, NIHFWS and Co-Chair was Dr LK Dwivedi. There were 7 presentations in the session.

The technical session 3A on migration was chaired by Prof. R B Bhagat and Co-Chair was Prof. Bhaswati Das. There were six papers in the session. Technical session 4 on Gender Issues was chaired by Prof Muralidhar Vemuri, and Co-Chair was Dr Jitendra Yadav with four papers presented in the session. Prof Poonam Khattar, NIHFWS was the chair, and Dr Ankur Yadav was Co-Chair in the technical session on Covid and Mental Health, wherein four papers were presented.

Technical session 5 on Nutrition and Service Delivery Issues in the context of Covid 19 was chaired Dr Vishnu Rao, and five papers were presented in this session. Technical session 5A was on migration due to Covid-19 and International Migration, and the Chair was Prof D P Singh, and Co-Chair was Dr Niyati Joshi with four paper presentations. Technical session 6 (Health, morbidity and mortality) was chaired by Prof N Audinarayana, and Co-Chair was Dr Harihar Sahoo. Four papers were presented in this session. Prof SC Gulati chaired the technical session 6A on Socio-Economic Linkages and Demography, and Co-Chair was Prof Suresh Sharma.

Sessions – Day 3

On the last day of the conference (Nov 30, 2020) there were three technical sessions on Child health and nutrition, Covid and mortality and Family Planning and Reproductive Health Issues. Technical session 7 on Child health and nutrition was chaired by Prof S N Dwivedi, with Prof Brijesh Singh being the co-chair. The Technical session 7A on Covid and mortality was chaired by Prof KK Singh, and Co-Chair was Dr AG Khan. The technical session 8 on Family Planning and Reproductive Health

Issues was chaired by Dr Venkatesh Srinivasan, UNFPA and Co-Chair was Dr Anil Chandran. Four papers were presented in the session.

A special invited talk by Prof K. Srinivasan on Utilising Covid Pandemic to revamp the health system and improve the registration of deaths and cause of death took place after the technical session. Dr Somayajulu, President IASP chaired the session. Prof Srinivasan highlighted the need for imparting training on cause of death registration for all the health professionals.

Valedictory session

The Valedictory session of the conference was held at 12 noon on Nov 30, 2020. Prof V K Tiwari welcomed the guests and the participants of the session. Opening remarks were given by Dr U V Somayajulu, IASP President. He thanked all those involved in organising the first ever virtual conference of IASP. He mentioned about the idea of bringing out a special issue of Demography India with selected papers presented at this conference. He also mentioned about the IPC 2021 that would happen at Hyderabad during Dec 5-10, 2021 using hybrid (in person + virtual) mode. Pre conference workshops, Inaugural session and India sessions would be held in person for the Indian delegates. He also added that to mark the Golden Jubilee celebrations of IASP, 3 day conference of IASP is also planned during Dec 2-4, 2021. He requested the members and wellwishers of IASP to support IASP in organising these events. He requested UNFPA, IHAT, and STPI to support IASP. Prof Harshad Thakur, Director, NIHFWS addressed the gathering. Dr S Anil Chandran presented a brief report of the conference. The Chief Guest, Dr Omkar Rai, DG, STPI delivered the valedictory address. He mentioned the importance of IASP as an organisation in providing practical solutions to many of the problems faced by the country, including COVID19. Prof V K Tiwari announced the poster awards. The e-poster presented by Dharma Raj and Rajnarayan R. Tiwari entitled 'Perception and Practice of Community Regarding Ncovid-19 Prevention and Opportunities for making Social and Environmental Changes in India' and by Jeetendra Yadav entitled 'Households Financial Burden due to Mental Illness in India' were chosen as best posters for Prof. SN Singh Award. In the end, Prof Suresh Sharma proposed Vote of Thanks. He thanked all the abstract reviewers, session chairs/co chairs, speakers, oral and e poster presenters, session coordinators, office bearers, EC members, BoT members and members of IASP, NIHFWS staff, NIMS staff, IEG staff, and Sigma staff. IASP thanked UNFPA and IHAT for the financial support. IASP acknowledged the support provided by Dr Niyati Joshi, Dr Surender, Sigma Research and STAR foundation for the e souvenir. Special thanks were expressed to Dr Vinod K Pal, member NITI Aayog, Prof Thomas LeGrand, President, IUSSP, Dr Shiren Jeebhoy, Vice President, IUSSP for their valuable messages for the e souvenir of the IASP conference

Some of the take-home messages from IASP2020 conference include :

- Covid-19 affected people unequally across the world
- Covid affects all aspects, and it is not just a public health issue
- Need to strengthen public health systems to meet any public health challenges
- Policy attention on migrants for strategy making with more research to provide evidence
- IASP should prepare a policy brief

The end