



A study into the economic, social and health impact of COVID-19 and related circumstances on the BAME community in Oldham

Survey Report

September 2020



About OAK Community Development

OAK Community Development (OAK CD) provides a range of high quality personal and social development solutions which help BAME communities thrive and reach their full potential. It's origins are from a local grassroots community organization established in 1998 called the 'Oldham Adults and Kids' Project. In 2007 it was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee to provide a more focused and specialist service to improve the learning, skills and capacity within the BAME and faith communities.

Our mission

"To empower BAME individuals, families and disadvantaged communities with the skills, confidence, networks and resources they need to tackle problems, grasp opportunities and achieve; thereby creating a better, stronger and inclusive society".

What we do

Our work is focused under three key areas:

Changing lives for Children and Young people

We work with children and young people to facilitate their personal, social and educational development by providing mentoring and tailored interventions to help them realise their potential, build resilience and move them towards positive futures.

Changing lives for Families

We provide early intervention and prevention support to families that are vulnerable and at risk of social exclusion using a holistic approach to improve the skills, health and wellbeing of families and children.

Changing lives for Communities

Working with BAME communities and faith organisations by providing capacity building support, training, and consultancy.

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Executive Summary

During times of economic decline and societal challenges the Black, Asian and Ethnic Minorities (BAME) community have always faced the blunt of the negative impacts. The last recession in 2008 is a case in point, where we saw existing disparities and inequalities further exacerbated with higher unemployment, lower wages, a widening skills gap and greater health inequalities.

Once again, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought out the stark reality of inequalities that disproportionately affect people from BAME backgrounds. All of the sources reviewed, unanimously agreed that there is clear evidence that COVID-19 does not affect all population groups equally. Sources indicate that due to a mix of various racial, sexual, economic and cultural factors the minority communities and BAME in particular are disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and its fallout.

OAK CD decided to conduct a study into the economic, social and health impact that the COVID-19 and related circumstances have had on our service users and the BAME community of Oldham in general during the period of June 2020 to July 2020. This was done to gain a better understanding of the difficulties our clients are facing so that we and other service providers are able to better tailor the support and service delivery.

In order to allow for the largest reach in the target audience, an online questionnaire was chosen as the most effective, safe and feasible data collection tool during the lockdown. The questionnaire was created with the use of Microsoft Forms and included a number of open, closed, quantitative and qualitative questions.

When looking at the findings of the study it becomes clear that the findings paint a bleak picture of the current situation that the BAME and faith community of Oldham find themselves in. It can be evidenced as a result of this study that they have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 in areas of economic, social, health and educational outcomes.

Some of the key finds of this study have revealed:

- A significantly higher rate of diagnosis was prevalent in households from deprived areas than the borough and national average. 68% of respondents could be considered within a high risk category.
- Covid-19 has had a considerable economic impact on the BAME community with 46% of respondents reporting a worsening of economic activity within their households.
- residents have been more anxious, lonely, isolated, angrier or depressed as a result of COVID-19.
- Most parents were of the view that the lockdown had a negative impact on their children's education and potentially academic achievement.
- Covid-19 had a worsening effect on children's mental wellbeing, self-esteem/confidence, resilience, social skills and diet.
- The majority of respondents turned to family/friends and local Mosques, charities, and community groups for help and support.

Based on the findings of the report we strongly recommend to local and national government to use the Covid-19 pandemic as an opportunity to take a fresh look and re-evaluate the strategies and programs in education, health, employment and social areas and make them better aligned to address the deep seated structural inequalities that exist within BAME communities.

1. Introduction

From March 2020 with the appearance of COVID-19 and the disruptions that it brought to the communities worldwide, our organisation as well as thousands of others had to make unparalleled changes and adapt the way in which we deliver our service and interact with the stakeholders and the wider community.

The organisation decided to conduct a study into the economic, social and health impact that the COVID-19 pandemic and related circumstances have had on our service users and the BAME community of Oldham in general. This was done to gain a better understanding of the difficulties our clients are facing so that we and other service providers can better tailor the support and service delivery.

1.1 Aims and Objectives

The main aim of this research is to understand the economic, social and health impact that the COVID19 pandemic and related circumstances have had on the BAME community of Oldham.

This is to be achieved through a number of SMART objectives listed below:

- Conduct a Literature Review to identify themes and areas that the research questionnaire will ask about.
- Design a questionnaire and distribute it within the community.
- In the questionnaire identify the research demographic to ensure the focus on the BAME groups and their answers to the questions.
- In the questionnaire provide a number of closed and open-ended questions to ask about the economic, social and health impact that the COVID19 and related circumstances have had.
- Promote the questionnaire by incentivizing respondents with rewards for participating.

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- Analyse the answers and provide quantifiable and qualifiable insight into the opinions of the BAME community of Oldham.
 - Summarise the findings and provide an explanation of what they mean to the community and in the wider context, provide recommendations where appropriate.

“It was difficult and lonely not being able to see my family. I felt very anxious about the health of myself and my wife, even more after finding out about friends who had passed away after catching coronavirus. Feel the government did not act fast enough in protecting us from the virus”

2. Background & Context

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought out the stark reality of inequalities that disproportionately affect people from Black, Asian and other Ethnic backgrounds. All of the sources reviewed, unanimously agreed that there is clear evidence that COVID-19 does not affect all population groups equally. Sources indicate that due to a mix of various racial, sexual, economic and cultural factors the minority communities and BAME in particular are disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and its fallout.

The Oldham experience is no different, a large town with contrasting landscapes and socio-economic backgrounds. It comprises of inner deprived wards that are in the top 10% of the most deprived areas in England where the level of life expectancy is 11.1 years less for men and 9.8 years less for women than the more affluent suburbs of Saddleworth and nationally. Oldham’s population currently stands at 230,823 with a

higher proportion of BAME residents (22.5%) than the rest of the North West (9.8%) and England (14.6%). These communities live primarily in the wards surrounding the town centre – typically the most deprived in Oldham. Pakistani communities are concentrated in Werneth and St Mary’s and have more recently spread into Alexandra, Medlock Vale and Waterhead. The Bangladeshi community is centred upon Coldhurst but has similarly expanded into neighbouring Chadderton North and Werneth.

In terms of skill levels & employment, unfortunately Oldham has traditionally had a weak skills base, which is a legacy of generations of manual employment. This has resulted in residents finding it difficult to enter new growth sectors over recent years. Its employment rate is negatively impacted by a high proportion of economically inactive residents. Adult skill levels still remain a concern. There is a higher proportion of residents with no qualifications and fewer residents holding degree level qualifications compared to GM and national averages. The wards of Coldhurst, Alexandra, St Marys, Werneth have a degree level qualification ranging from 10% to 13%.

There is also an attainment gap for children and young people. In 2016, Oldham had the lowest average total points score across all learning areas of all Local Authorities in England, and also the highest attainment gap in England between the average score for all pupils and the average score of the lowest 20% attaining children.

2.1 Covid-19 Pandemic

Literature Review has been conducted into the topic of COVID-19 effect on minority communities. From the very beginning it was clear that due to the relatively new, rapidly changing situation and a lack of reliable data, only a very limited volume of study has been conducted into the area.

“Beyond the Data: Understanding the Impact of COVID-19 on BAME Communities” by

Public Health England (June, 2020) is the most detailed and comprehensive report on the topic up to date, below is the summary of the findings which are reiterated in different forms in all of the other sources.

“There is clear evidence that COVID-19 does not affect all population groups equally. Many analyses have shown that older age, ethnicity, male sex and geographical area, for example, are associated with the risk of getting the infection, experiencing more severe symptoms and higher rates of death. This work has been commissioned by the Chief Medical Officer for England to understand the extent that ethnicity impacts upon risk and outcomes. The PHE review of disparities in the risk and outcomes of COVID-19 shows that there is an association between belonging to some ethnic groups and the likelihood of testing positive and dying with COVID-19. Genetics were not included in the scope of the review. This review found that the highest age standardised diagnosis rates of COVID-19 per 100,000 population were in people of Black ethnic groups (486 in females and 649 in males) and the lowest were in people of White ethnic groups (220 in females and 224 in males)”.

“An analysis of survival among confirmed COVID-19 cases showed that, after accounting for the effect of sex, age, deprivation and region, people of Bangladeshi ethnicity had around twice the risk of death when compared to people of White British ethnicity. People of Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, Other Asian, Caribbean and Other Black ethnicity had between 10 and 50% higher risk of death when compared to White British. Death rates from COVID-19 were higher for Black and Asian ethnic groups when compared to White ethnic groups. This is the opposite of what is seen in previous years, when the all-cause mortality rates are lower in Asian and Black ethnic groups. Comparing to previous years, all-cause mortality was almost 4 times higher than expected among Black males for this period, almost 3 times higher in Asian males and almost 2 times higher in White males. Among females, deaths were almost 3 times higher in this period in Black, Mixed and Other females, and 2.4 times higher in Asian females compared with 1.6 times in White females. These analyses did not account for the effect of occupation, comorbidities or obesity. These are important factors because they are associated with the risk of acquiring COVID-19, the risk of dying, or both. Other evidence has shown that when comorbidities are included, the difference in risk of death between ethnic groups among hospitalised patients is greatly reduced.”

Public Health England (June, 2020)

All of the available research sources were primarily focusing on the health implication and gave very limited mention to the social, economic impact on the individuals, family and community. One of the key areas of concern was the equality of outcomes in

BAME children, who might be disadvantaged in the long run compared to their white counterparts. This is due to a fall in educational attainment and school interaction as a way for societal integration.

Access to services, information, employment discrimination and difficulties in attaining support due to language barriers and social stigma have been highlighted as key reasons behind BAME communities finding the pandemic more challenging. All of the research papers available were based on the national situation and did not address local communities or conduct primary research in or around the Oldham Area.

3. Methodology

In order to allow for the largest reach in the target audience, an online questionnaire was chosen as the most effective, safe and feasible data collection tool during the lockdown. The questionnaire was created with the use of Microsoft Forms and included a number of open, closed, quantitative and qualitative questions outlined below. Our staff and volunteers provided telephone support to complete the survey for those with language and IT skills barriers.

The questionnaire starts with a number of questions covering the personal, demographic, geographical information or respondents. This will allow for a clear picture of the target audience.

Based on the findings of the Literature Review a number of key areas have been identified for the questions to address:

- Family circumstances
- Employment
- Health
- Children

A number of open questions relating to what people think and what they would like to happen were included to gather opinions.

Three questions at the end have been allocated for clients requesting further information from OAK or wishing to participate in the prize draw.

***A copy of the questionnaire can be found in the Appendix at the bottom of the report.**

3.1 Ethics and Compliance

The study has been conducted with the full compliance of GDPR and the DPA during all stages.

All participants have been informed about the purpose of the study, how it is being carried out, how the data will be used and provided informed consent. Every participant had the option to remain anonymous and still take part.

Data collected was stored in a secure Microsoft Cloud format on Microsoft Forms and was only accessible to the questionnaire creator and the data analyst. After the completion of the study, records will be anonymised by removing any personal information and stored in the same location for a period of seven years as low risk.

“Found out about the BAME Connect team and a few others who are amazing and do incredible things”

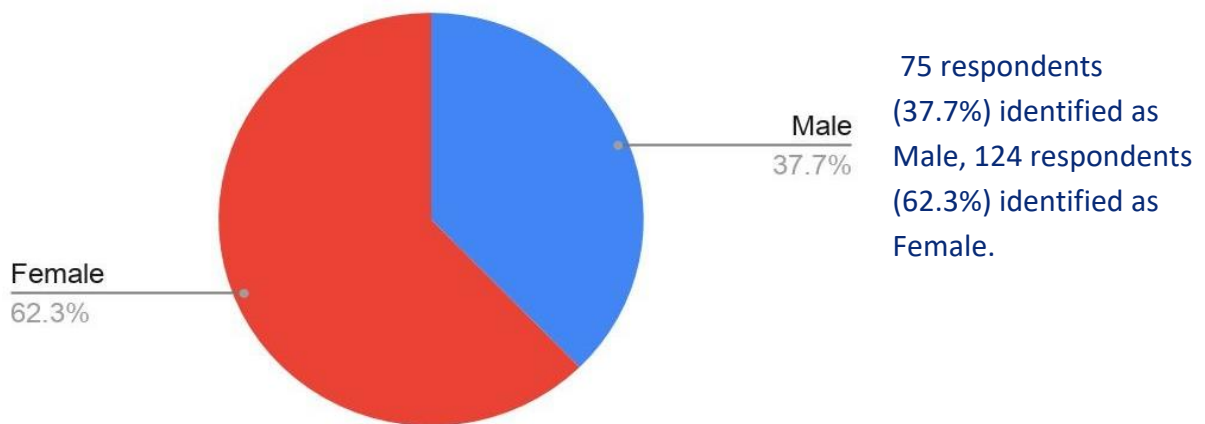
“The frequent contact on FaceTime, Zoom, telephone has been helpful”

4. Findings

The findings below present the answers of the respondents to the questions, answer visualisation and a description of the answers. A further explanation of the results are given in the analysis section.

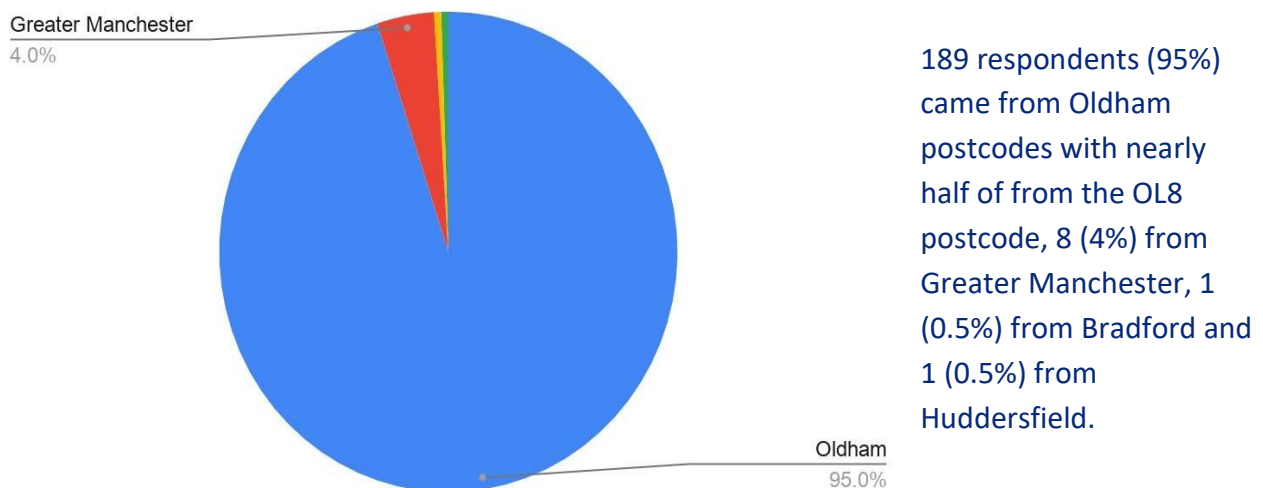
1. What gender are you?

Respondents Gender



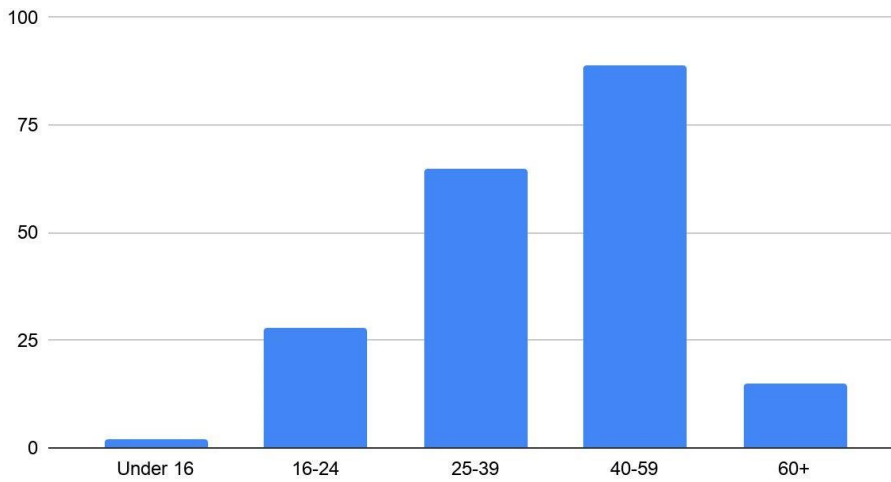
2. Where do you live? (please put the first part of your postcode e.g OL8)

Respondents Area



3. What age range do you fall under?

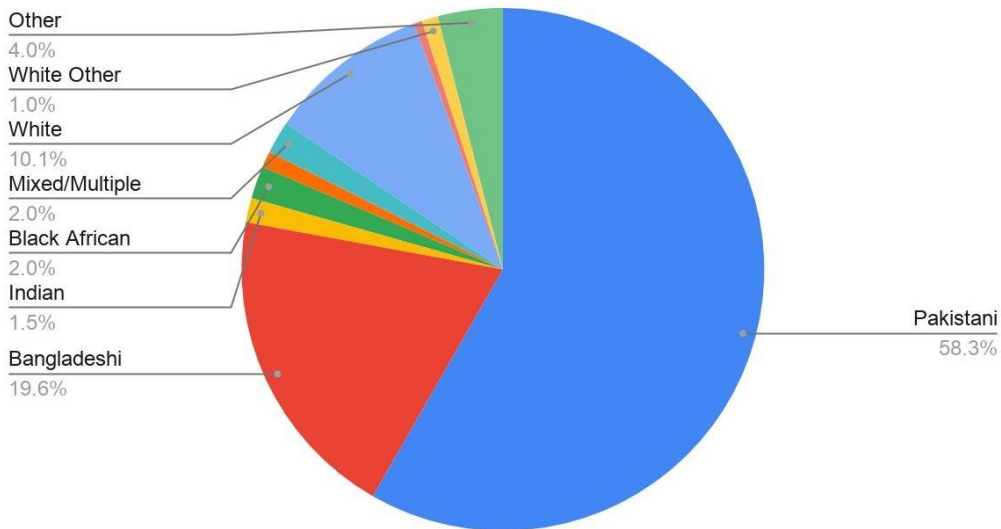
Respondents Age groups



2 respondents were under the age of 16, 28 were between 16 and 24, 65 were between 25 and 39, 89 were between 40 and 59 and 15 were 60 years or older.

4. What is your ethnic origin?

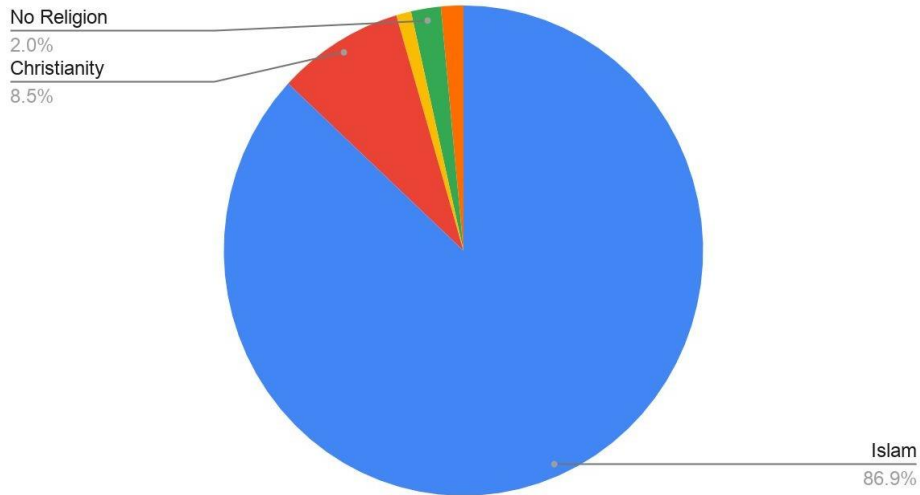
Respondents Ethnic Background



The number of Respondents who identified as Pakistani was 116, Bangladeshi 39, Indian 3, Black African 4, Arab 2, Mixed/Multiple 4, White English/Scottish/Irish/Welsh 20, Gypsy/Irish Traveller 1, White Other 2, Other 8.

5. Which religion best describes your faith

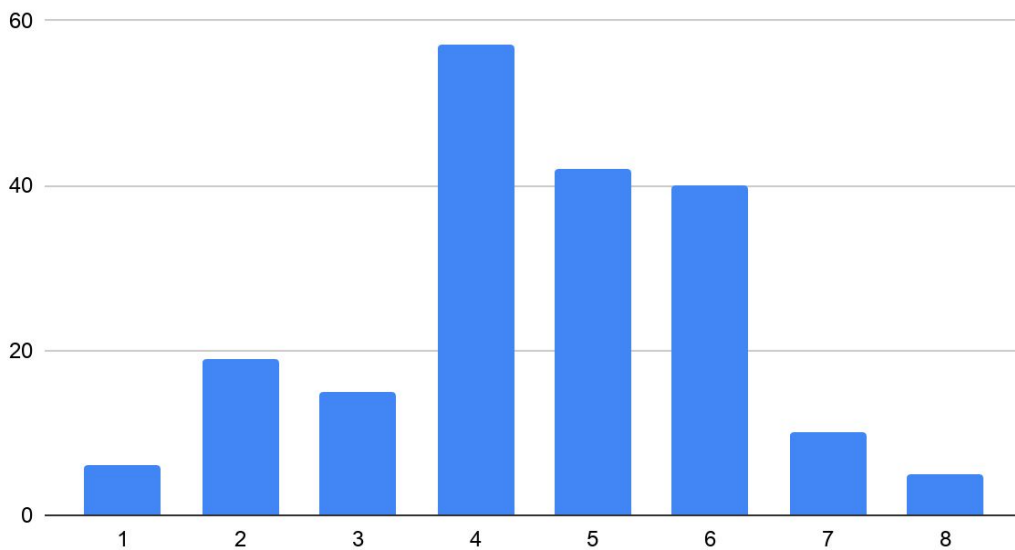
Respondents Religious Background



The number of Respondents who identified with Islam is 173, Christianity 17, Atheism 2, No Religion 4, Prefer not to Answer 3.

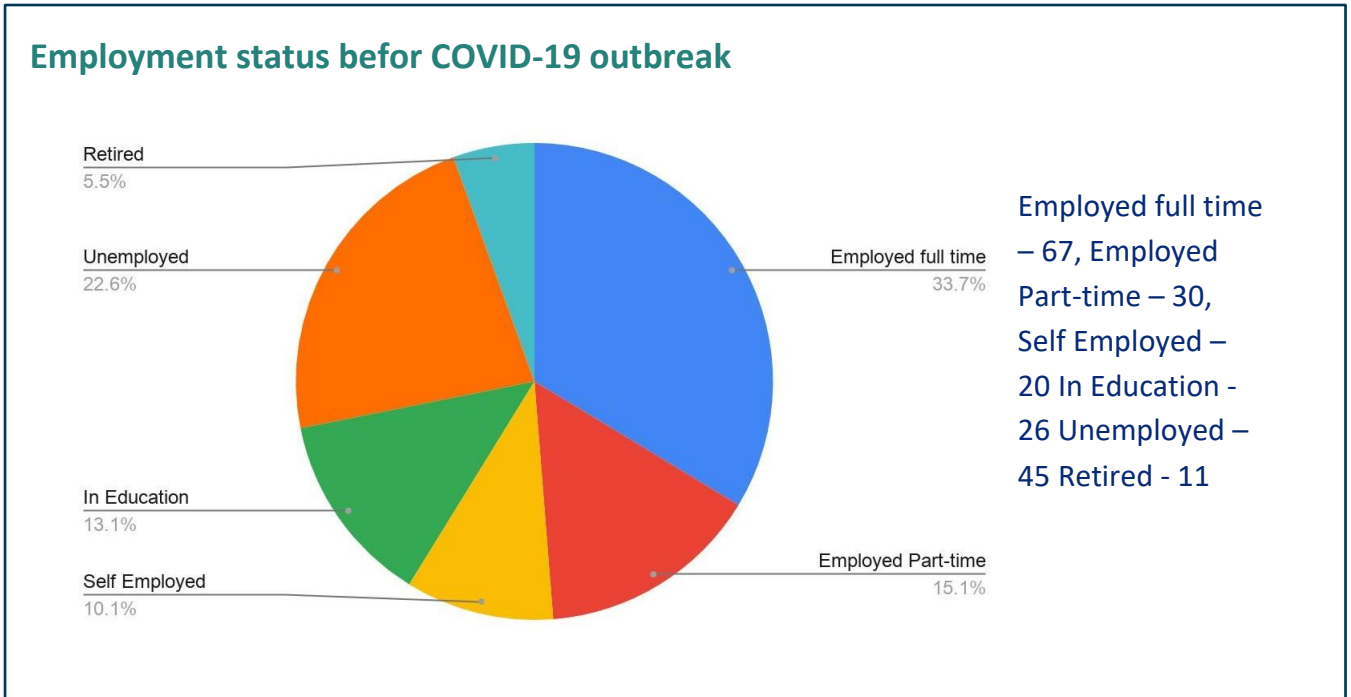
6. How many members in your household (including yourself)

People in Respondents Household

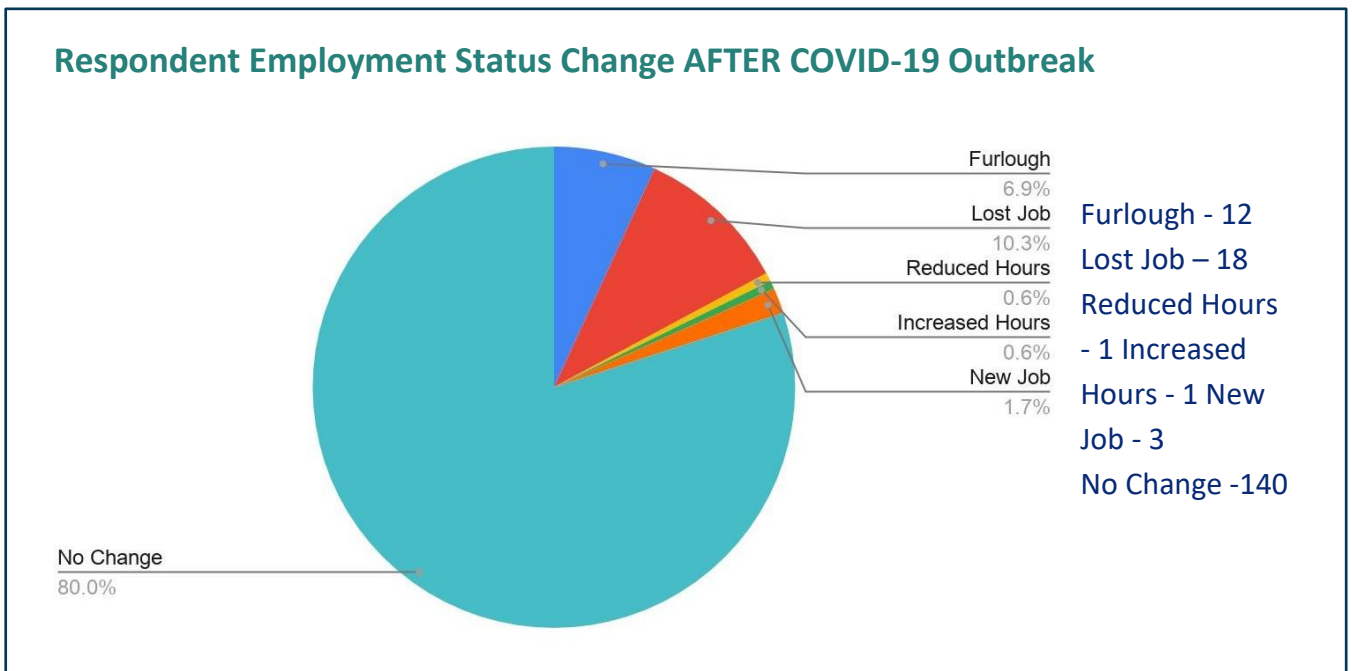


Number of respondents who had one person living in their household - 6, two people - 19, three people - 15, four people - 57, five people - 42, six people - 40, seven people - 10, eight people - 5.

7. Which of the following categories best describes your employment status BEFORE the covid-19 outbreak?

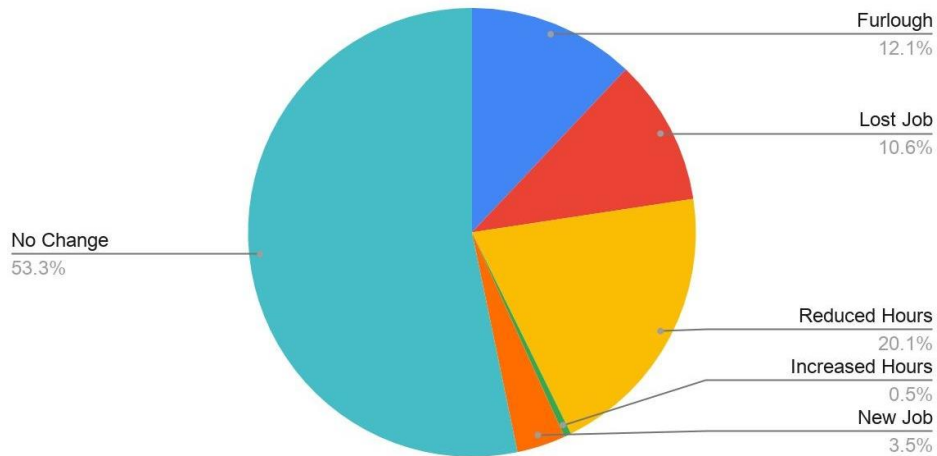


8. Has your employment status changed since the outbreak to any of the following?



9. Has anyone in your household (other than you) changed their employment status since the outbreak? If so, how?

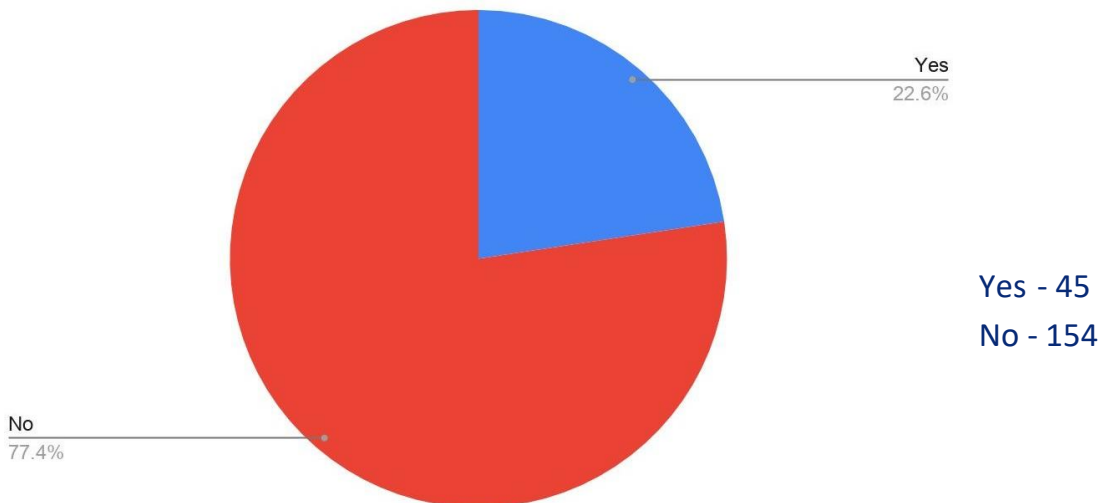
Household members Status Change AFTER COVID-19 Outbreak



Furlough - 24 Lost Job – 21 Reduced Hours - 40 Increased Hours - 1 New Job - 7
No Change - 106

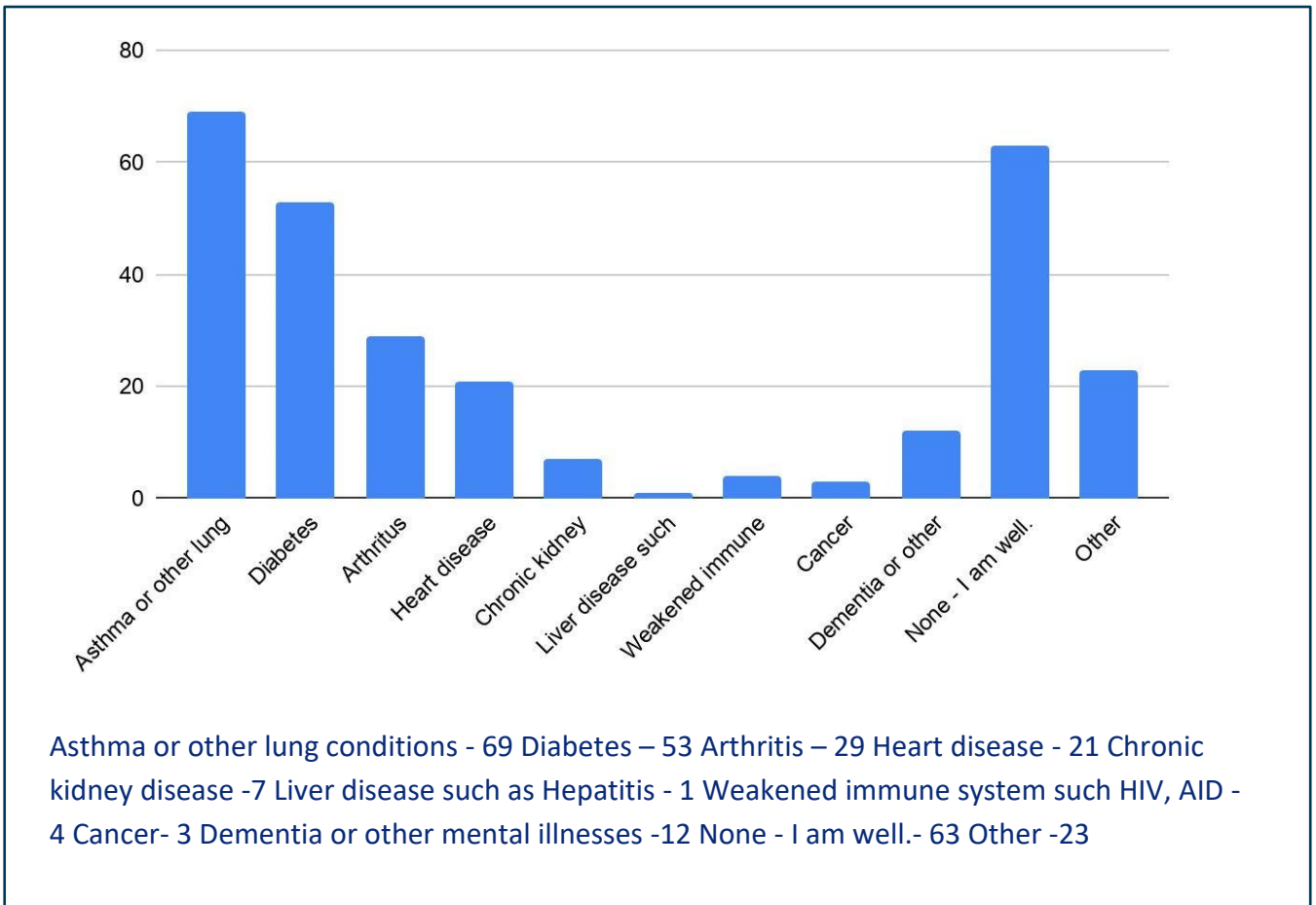
10. Have you or anyone in your household has or had Coronavirus?

Had COVID-19 in household



Yes - 45
No - 154

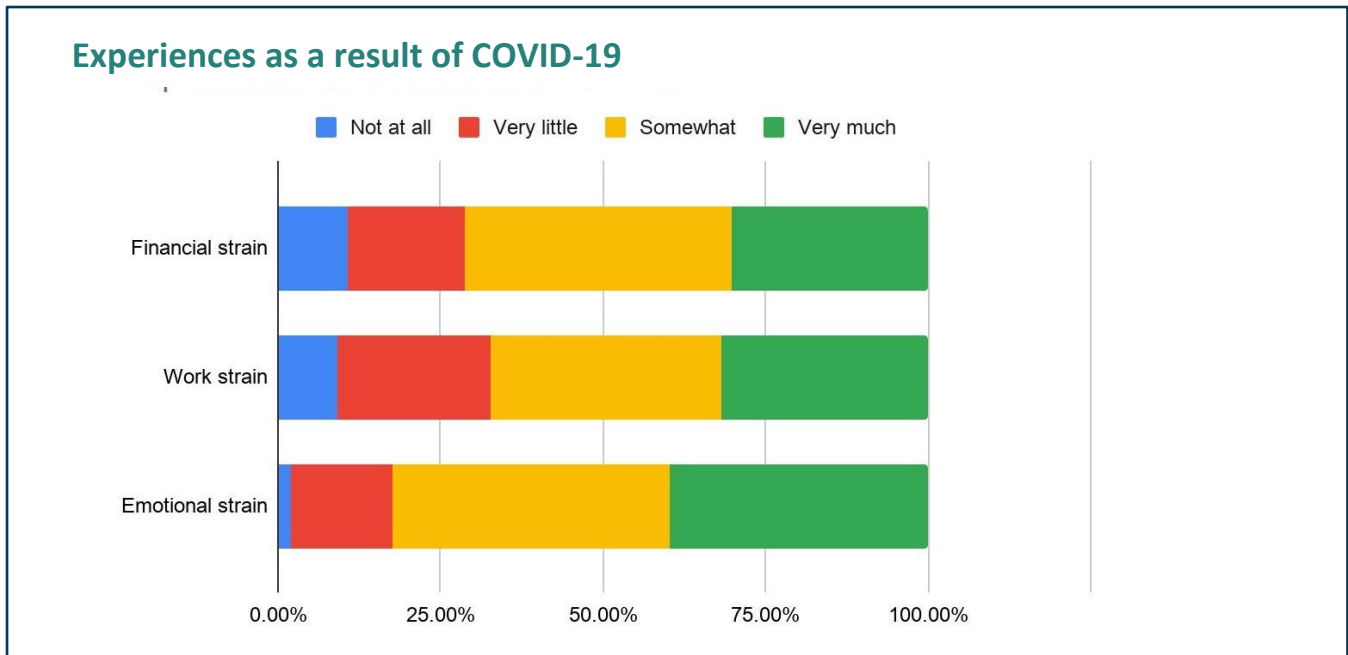
11. Do you or anyone else in your household suffer from any of the following conditions? (select all that apply)



12. If you answered by selecting any of the conditions above; then please tell us if you believe the condition has been impacted as a result of Covid-19 in any way - please state how?

78 Respondents believe that their conditions have been affected. Answers range from worsening mental health, difficulties accessing support, lack of health professionals appointments and unacceptable waiting times.

13. As a result of Covid-19, how much have you or your family experienced:

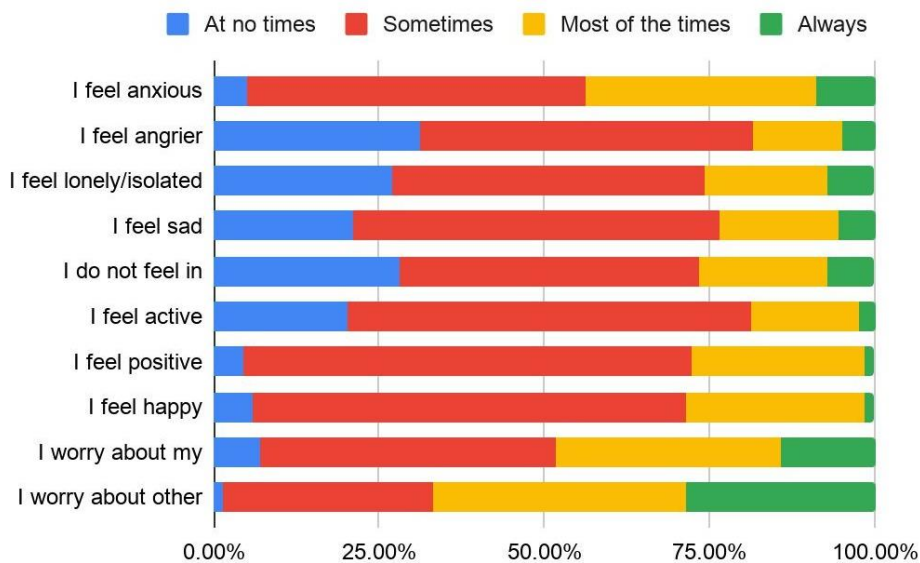


| | Not at all | Very little | Somewhat | Very much |
|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Financial strain | 10.60% | 18.10% | 41.20% | 30.20% |
| Work strain | 9.00% | 23.60% | 35.70% | 31.70% |
| Emotional strain | 2.00% | 15.60% | 42.70% | 39.70% |

“It has been a tough and emotionally draining time, we wish the government acted faster in controlling the spread of the virus. Disappointed that the government is not making it compulsory to wear masks in public and introduce sanctions for those that do not..”

14. How has Covid-19 affected your mental and wellbeing

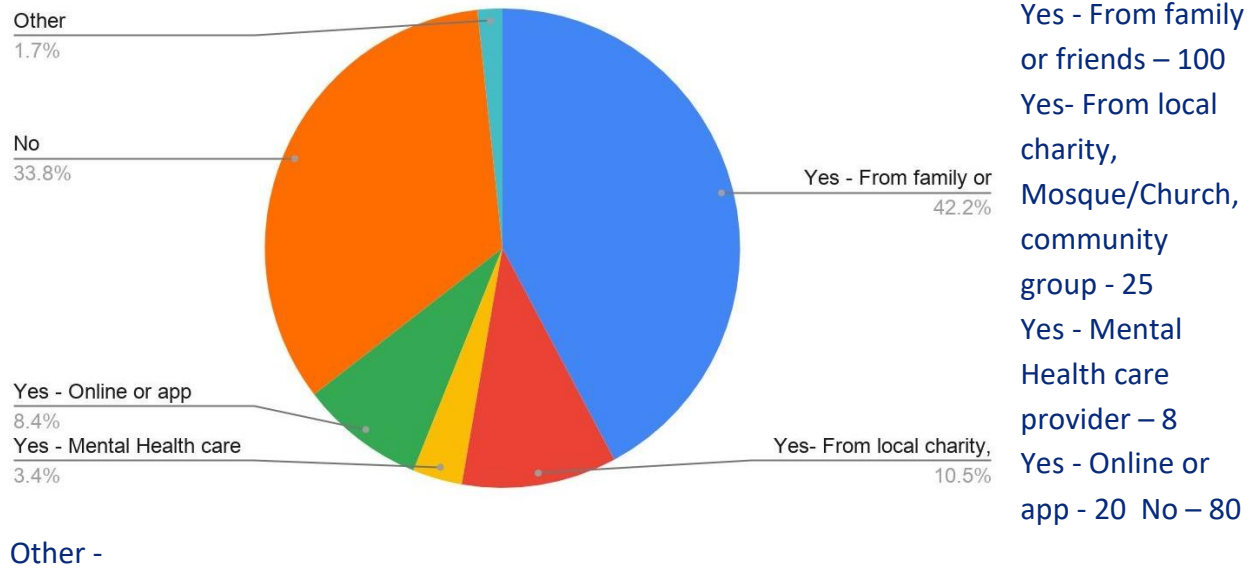
Effects of COVID-19 on Mental Health & Wellbeing



| | At no times | Sometimes | Most of the times | Always |
|--|---------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|
| I feel anxious | 5.00% | 51.30% | 34.70% | 9.00% |
| I feel angrier | 31.20% | 50.30% | 13.60% | 5.00% |
| I feel lonely/isolated | 27.10% | 47.20% | 18.60% | 7.00% |
| I feel sad | 21.10% | 55.30% | 18.10% | 5.50% |
| I do not feel in control | 28.10% | 45.20% | 19.60% | 7.00% |
| I feel active | 20.10% | 61.30% | 16.10% | 2.50% |
| I feel positive | 4.50% | 67.80% | 26.10% | 1.50% |
| I feel happy | 6.00% | 65.30% | 27.10% | 1.50% |
| I worry about my health | 7.00% | 44.70% | 34.20% | 14.10% |
| I worry about other family members health | 1.50% | 31.70% | 38.20% | 28.60% |

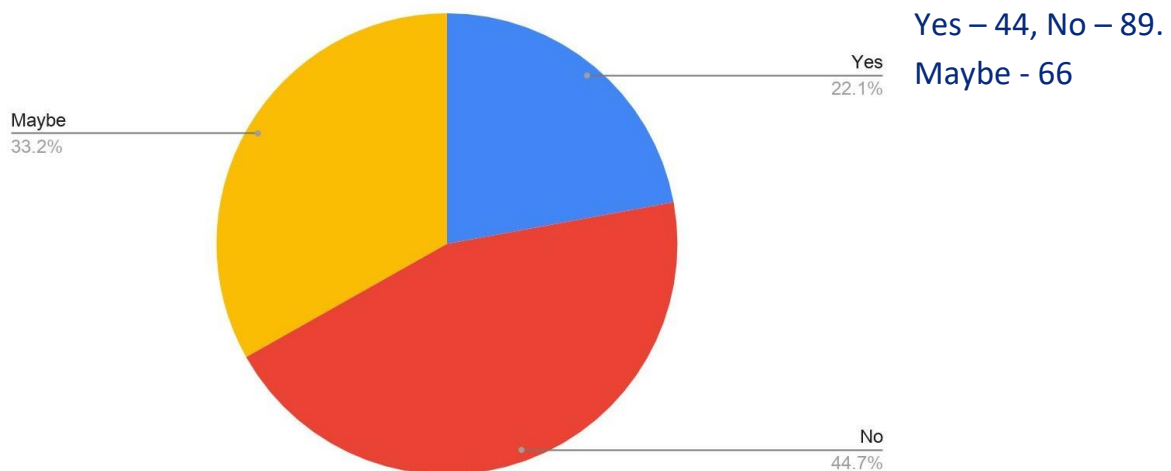
15. Have you been able to access the mental wellbeing support that you need during this time?

If respondents were able to access Mental Health Support and where from



16. Do you intend on learning or practising any skills while you're on lockdown?

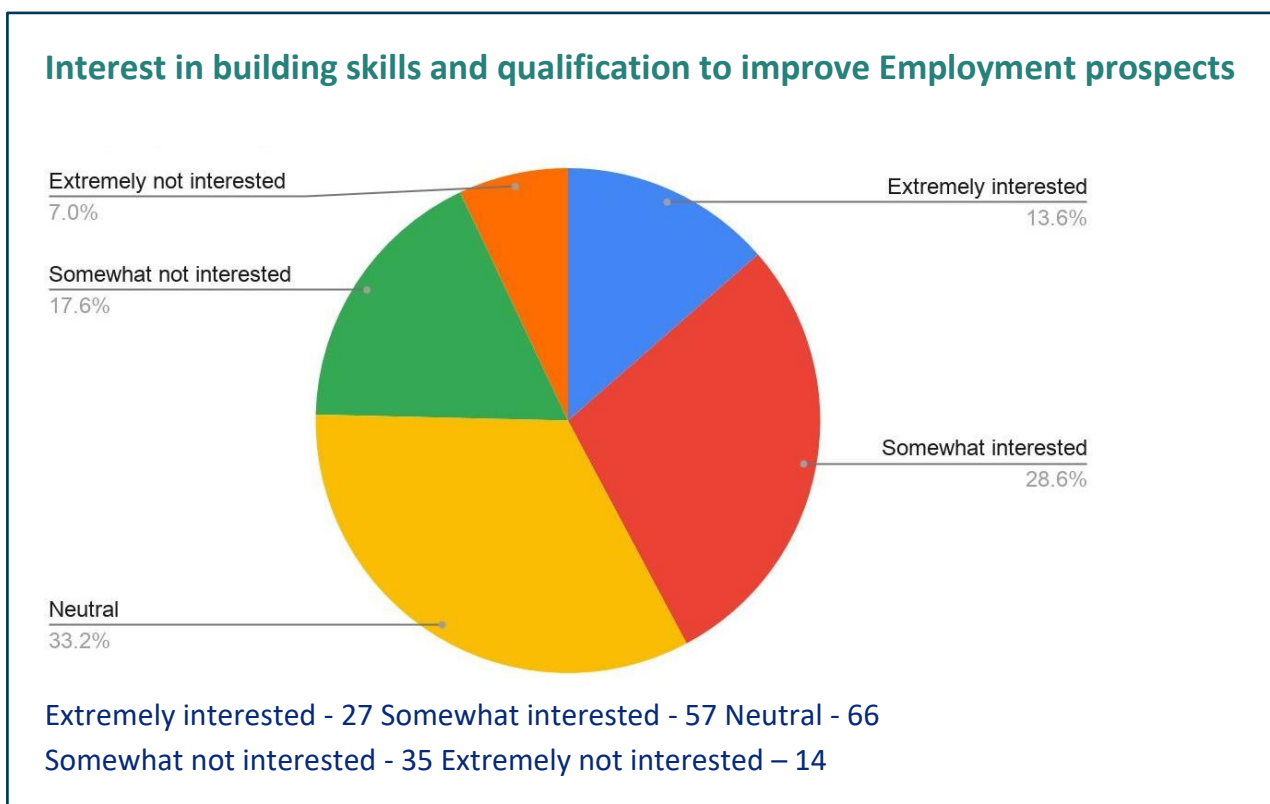
Intention to learn or practice new skills during the Lockdown



17. If Yes - Please state what?

60 people provided a response. These ranged from refining existing skills in cooking, fitness, languages, business related activities and IT or learning new skills in similar areas. Some mentioned that they will focus on their family and health.

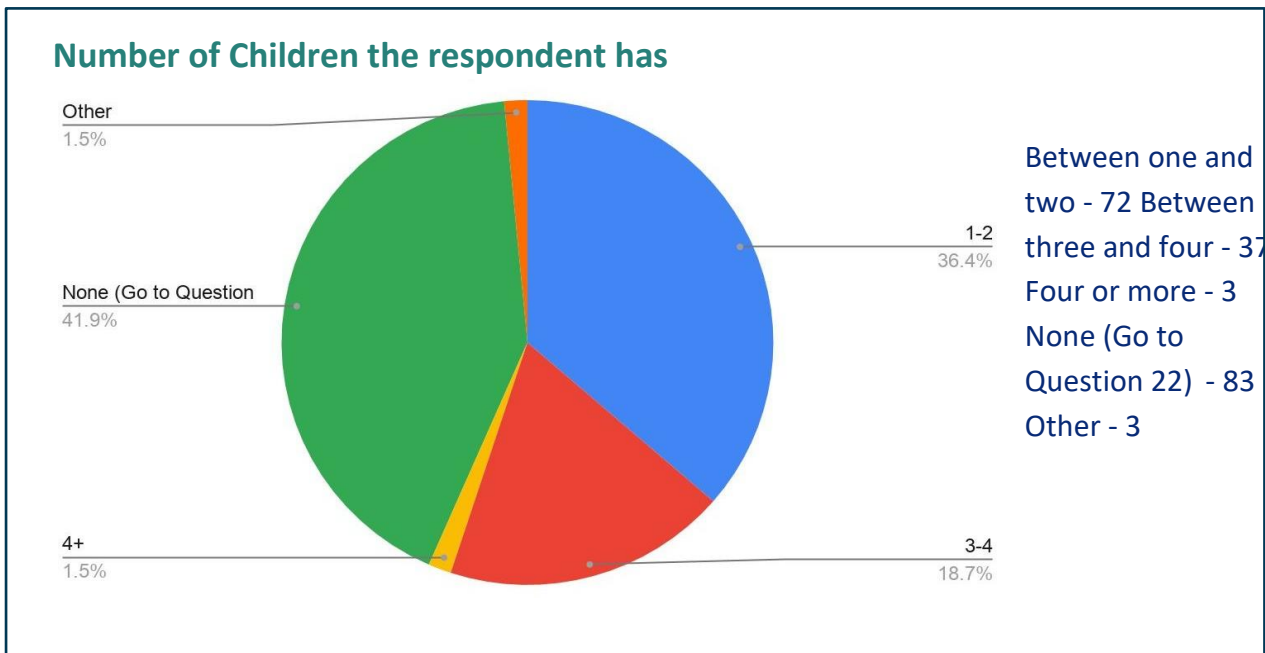
18. How interested would you be in spending some of your quarantine time for building your skills and qualifications, if it meant improving your job prospects or career



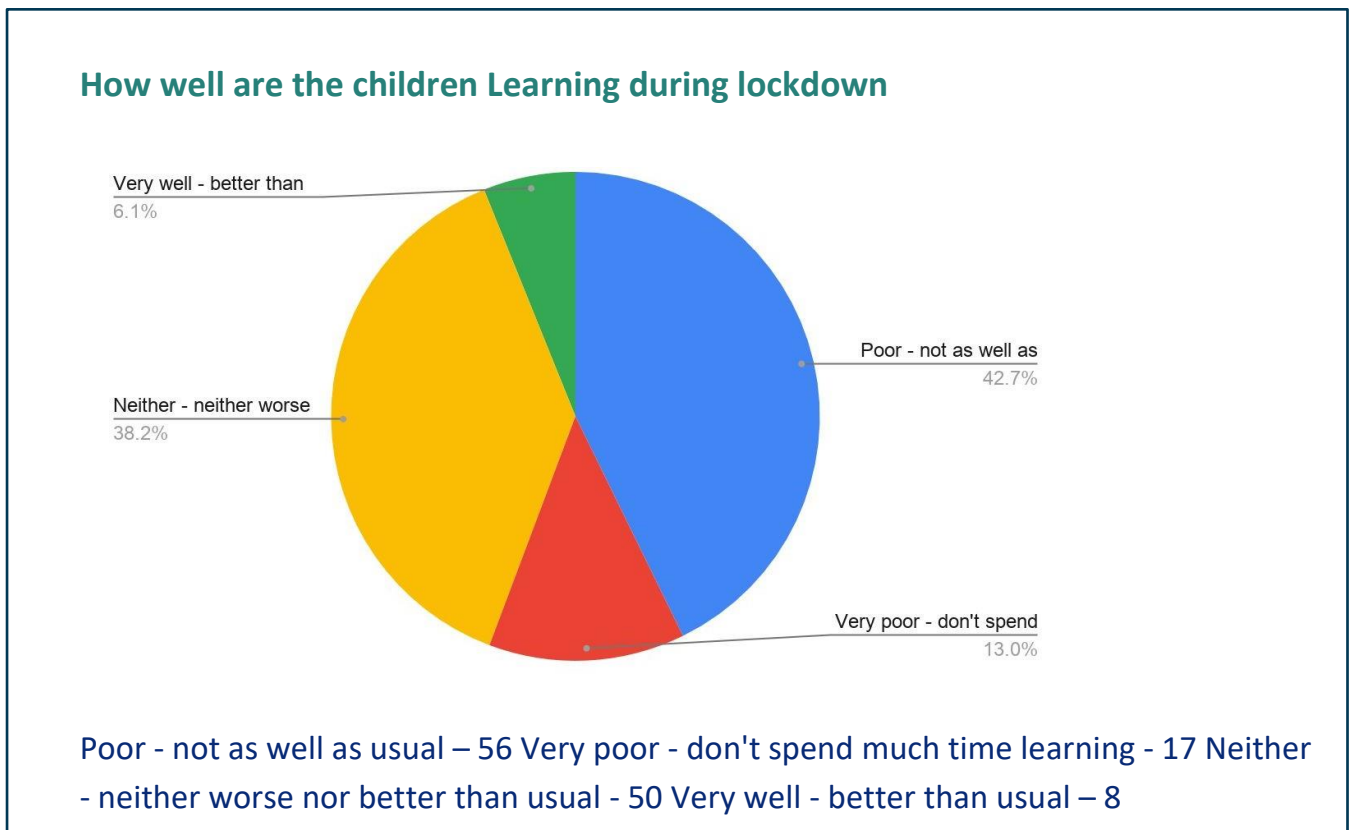
“It has been devastating for the local community”

“More help needed for community groups to provide support”

18. How many children under 18 do you have?

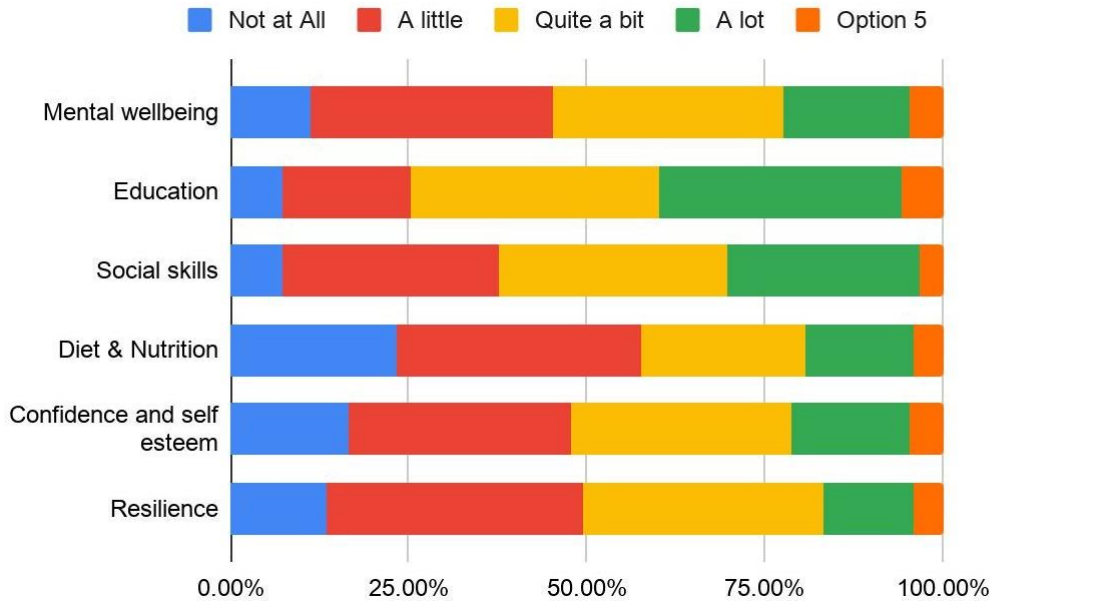


19. How well do you believe your child/children are learning during the lockdown?



20. Do you believe Covid-19/lockdown is affecting your child/children's

How is COVID-19 Affecting Respondents Children



| | Not at All | A little | Quite a bit | A lot | Very much |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| Mental wellbeing | 11.10% | 34.10% | 32.50% | 17.50% | 4.80% |
| Education | 7.30% | 17.90% | 35.00% | 34.10% | 5.70% |
| Social skills | 7.20% | 30.40% | 32.00% | 27.20% | 3.20% |
| Diet & Nutrition | 23.20% | 34.40% | 23.20% | 15.20% | 4.00% |
| Confidence and self esteem | 16.70% | 31.00% | 31.00% | 16.70% | 4.80% |
| Resilience | 13.60% | 36.00% | 33.60% | 12.80% | 4.00% |

“Everybody is really demotivated”

“..Although I myself have not been affected, I have seen the effect of social isolation and the lack of normal routine has had on people”

21. Is there any type of support that you have received or any programmes which you have found to be helpful during the Covid-19 pandemic/lockdown.

198 responses were provided with a near unanimous opinion that there was little help available. Some respondents mentioned local charities, groups, benefits, mosques or friends and family.

22. Is there anything you would like to say about the impact of coronavirus/COVID-19 or government policies or actions on you and your family

129 responses were provided, most of which were of the opinion that the Government policies and actions were confusing, inconsistent and had a negative impact on all areas of family and personal life. Not enough support or information was provided. Many decisions do not make common sense.

“The government wasn’t very clear about rules and policies which caused lots of disagreements in the family”.

23. Is there anything you would find helpful that is not currently being done by anyone else?

105 responses were provided. Most people stated that they do not need anything. A number of requests like lifting the lockdown, activities for children, women, elderly, mental health support and better communication and information as well as financial support were provided.

Questions 25 to 27 have not been analysed for the purposes of this report as they contain personal information which may be used to identify some of the participants. 76 respondents requested further assistance or information from OAK and 79 requested to be entered into the prize draw.

5. Analysis

5.1 Demographics

The study was able to collect 199 responses. Of those 75 or 37.7% were male respondents and 124 or 62.3% were female respondents. 189 respondents (95%) came from Oldham postcodes, 8 (4%) from Greater Manchester, 1 (0.5%) from Bradford and 1 (0.5%) from Huddersfield. Over 90% of respondents were of working age. 176 (88.5%) in total can be considered as BAME, with Pakistani and Bangladeshi being the biggest groups 77.9%. In terms of faith background 98% of respondents identified as religious, with Islam and Christianity being the biggest two affiliations on 86.9% and 8.5% respectively. Respondents live in households of between 1 and 8 people with roughly 80% living in households containing between 4 and 6 people. This also provides a strong indication that the study was able to reach a good sample size from the target demographic of BAME and faith communities who are based in and around Oldham.

5.2 Economic

According to the study 22.6% of the respondents were unemployed before COVID-19, this is over 5 times higher than the Oldham average unemployment rate of 4.6% or the national rate of 3.9% at the beginning of February 2020. A further 15.1% reported that they were only employed part time, this is better than the 29% average figure for Oldham. Others were in full time self/employment/education or retirement. 80% of respondents indicated that COVID-19 had no impact on their employment, 19.4% reported a worsening of employment situation furlough/reduced hours/redundancy/change of job and only a single person received more hours at work. When asked the same question in relation to their household 53.3% stated that there was no change, 46.1% reported a worsening of employment situation furlough/reduced hours/redundancy/change of job and only a single person received more

hours at work. This indicates a very strong impact of COVID-19 on the community as well as a very grim situation in relation to the employment prospects of BAME and the faith community in Oldham.

“The self employed government grant has been invaluable”
“The support package was very welcomed otherwise we would not have been able to survive”

5.3 Health & Wellbeing

When asked if someone in their household has or had COVID-19 22.6% of respondents provided an affirmative answer, this indicated a stark contrast with the national estimate of less than 1% of the population being diagnosed with the pandemic in the UK. It is not clear if these figures rely on official testing or opinions but would indicate a community wide pandemic if the numbers are correct.

When asked if they or someone in the household suffers from any conditions that might make them vulnerable to the virus, only 63 people did not indicate any type of condition. This would indicate that 68% of the BAME and faith community can be considered to be in the high risk group. The two most cited illnesses were Asthma & Lung conditions (34.6%) and Diabetes (26.6%) Further to this almost all respondents expressed that it has become harder to manage their condition due to lack of support, professional help, continuously changing policy and lack of communication in the community.

When asked if they or their family are facing Financial strain only 10.60% stated that they are not facing it at all, an overwhelming 89.4% stated that they are facing varying

degrees of difficulty. When asked if they or their family are facing Work strain only 9.00% stated that they are not facing it at all, an overwhelming 91% stated that they are facing varying degrees of difficulty. When asked if they or their family are facing Emotional strain only 2.00% stated that they are not facing it at all, an overwhelming 97% stated that they are facing varying degrees of difficulty. This provides a strong indication into the overwhelming pressure and difficulties that the BAME and faith community of Oldham is currently facing.

The findings also provided a strong indication that respondents in their majority feel anxious, angrier, lonely/isolated, sad, do not feel in control, worry about their health, worry about other family members' health to varying degrees from at no times to always. Only sometimes did a minority of them feel active, positive or happy between most of the times and always.

“Physiotherapy stopped which led to reduced mobility”

“We need more tailored cultural and faith mental wellbeing support”

When asked if they were able to get mental health support, 80 respondents (40%) stated that they were not. 100 stated that they received it from family or friends, 25 From local charity, Mosque/Church, community group, 20 from Online or app, 8 from Mental Health care providers and 4 from Other . This indicated a lack of availability or awareness of professional support and services in place because nearly a half of respondents did not get help and those that did, received it from the community and people in their lives. Only 8 (4%) received it from professionals. Local Mosques, charities, community projects/ groups were cited in the comments section that respondents turned to for help.

5.4 Education & Skills

When asked if the respondents intend to use the lockdown to learn new skills 44 said yes, 89 said no and 66 said maybe. It is not clear what this lack of interest is a result of, but the roughly 25% presumed participation rate is much lower than the national 60%+ rates identified by One Poll research. When asked if they would learn new skills to improve employability during the lockdown the rate increases to 42.2% showing different levels of interest. Those that do intend to learn say that they will be refining existing skills in cooking, fitness, languages, business related activities and IT or learning new skills in similar areas. Some mentioned that they will focus on their family and health.

“There should have been some kind of support for teenagers in education, my son would have benefited by an organisation supporting those who’ve lost our vital months of education due to this pandemic “

When the respondents were asked if they have children under the age of 16, 83 did not, 72 had between one and two, 37 had between three and four, three had four or more, 3 had other. When those with children were asked how well their children were learning during the lockdown 55.7% stated that they don't do as well, 38.2% saw no difference and only 6.1% thought their children were learning better at home. This provides an indication that in most parents' opinion the lockdown had a negative impact on their children's education and potentially academic achievement.

When asked if COVID-19 and related circumstances affected their children's mental wellbeing 11.10% stated that it did not, 34.1% thought it had a little effect, 32.5% thought it had quite a bit of an effect and 17.5% believe that it had a lot of effect.

When asked if COVID-19 and related circumstances affected their children's education 7.3% stated that it did not, 17.9% thought it had a little effect, 35% thought it had quite

a bit of an effect and 34.1% believe that it had a lot of effect. When asked if COVID-19 and related circumstances affected their children's social skills 7.2% stated that it did not, 30.4% thought it had a little effect, 32% thought it had quite a bit of an effect and 27.2% believe that it had a lot of effect. When asked if COVID-19 and related circumstances affected their children's diet and nutrition 23.2% stated that it did not, 34.4% thought it had a little effect, 23.2% thought it had quite a bit of an effect and 15.2% believe that it had a lot of effect. When asked if COVID-19 and related circumstances affected their children's confidence and self esteem wellbeing 16.7% stated that it did not, 31% thought it had a little effect, 31% thought it had quite a bit of an effect and 16.7% believed that it had a lot of effect. When asked if COVID-19 and related circumstances affected their children's resilience 13.60% stated that it did not, 36% thought it had a little effect, 33.6% thought it had quite a bit of an effect and 12.8% believed that it had a lot of effect. These show a strong belief of the respondents that the COVID-19 and related processes are having a real negative impact on all of their children's life aspects not only right now but potentially long into the future.

The respondents had a near unanimous opinion that there was little help available. Some respondents mentioned local charities, groups, benefits, mosques or friends and family. Most people stated that they do not need anything. A number of requests like lifting the lockdown, activities for children, women, elderly, mental health support and better communication and information as well as financial support were provided.

“More activities and support for children and young people, job and apprentice schemes, mental health which is faith and culturally available”

“Safe place for girls to meet and enjoy activities eg tennis, girls only clubs”

6. Conclusion

When looking at the findings of the study it becomes clear that the findings paint a bleak picture of the current situation that the BAME and faith community of Oldham find themselves in. It can be evidenced as a result of this study that they have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 in areas of economic, social, health and educational outcomes.

However, the question remains whether COVID-19 will further entrench the inequalities for another decade and limit the opportunities of a new generation or if this presents an opportunity to take a fresh look at addressing the deep and structural inequalities that exist within the borough. We believe in the latter, especially if key decision makers embrace this as a sense of urgency to work collaboratively and transparently with all key stakeholders including working in partnership with the BAME community and organisations, prioritising jobs, healthcare and education.

“Yes, I think if we had a clear policy and not the “herd” discussion at the beginning we would have felt less anxious. Initially it felt like government didn’t know what they were doing. The actions meant members of the household had to make decisions in order to protect other family members in advance of the restrictions being imposed”.

7. Recommendations

Due to the continuously changing situation and an ongoing COVID-19 issue, coupled with a lack of other primary research on the topic it is not possible to consider these findings final. However, the following suggestions are put forth both in terms of this research and the findings of this study.

7.1 Research recommendations:

It would be advisable to repeat the study in the future with the following suggestions:

- Expand the sample size and geographic reach to allow for a bigger picture.
- Complete the study after the pandemic has passed to assess the final outcomes.
- Compare the BAME and faith community with white demographics to reflect any potential contrasts.
- Compare the results with a BAME and faith community from a different area to see if the conclusions are relevant to this geographic area or can be attributed to demographic factors.

7.2 Findings Recommendations

The findings in this report and the impact of COVID-19 more generally should lead to a reevaluating of the strategies and programs by local and national government so they are better aligned to address the deep-seated inequalities that exist within the BAME communities. We would suggest the following:

- Going further and more speedily to improve the long-term health conditions of the BAME community in Oldham.

-
- Targeted programs which provide educational support and develop skills for BAME children and young people.
 - Improve employment opportunities and access to good jobs with better support for progression for BAME employees.
 - To work more closely and collaboratively with BAME & Faith based community organisations providing adequate investment and support to deliver local solutions.
 - Tailored and culturally sensitive mental health wellbeing support with more awareness of professional services and available help.
 - Better and more support for older age members of the BAME community.

“I haven’t stopped working because my school was a hub for keyworker children and it was mixed messages- stay home, stay safe but those who work in school you’re ok to have contact with children whose parents are at the frontline of this disease. It’s been an extremely traumatic time for everyone, I’m very annoyed as to how it’s all been handled”.

“Test & trace system could be better– no system in place in schools”

“There should be community based programs available to engage everyone and not just on a one to one basis”.

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Appendix

Questionnaire copy:



This short survey aims to find out what impact Covid-19 has had or having on you and your family. The results will help us to gain a better understanding so that we and other service providers are able to better tailor support. Please note all responses will be treated anonymously and we will not be able to identify you in anyway unless you choose to give your details at the end of the survey.

Win £50 of shopping vouchers

Those who complete the survey will have a chance to enter the free prize draw and win £50 of Love2shop vouchers. (3x winners)

1. What gender are you? Male

Female Non-binary

Prefer not to say

2. Where do you live? (please put the first part of your postcode e.g OL8)

3. What age range do you fall under? Under 16

16-24

25-39

40-59

60+

4. What is your ethnic origin? Pakistani

Bangladeshi Indian Chinese Black African

Black Caribbean Arab

Mixed/Multiple other

White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Irish Gypsy/Irish Traveller

White other

-
5. Which religion best describes your faith Atheism
Buddhism Christianity Hinduism Islam Judaisim Sikh
No religion Other
Prefer not to say
6. How many members in your household (including yourself)
7. Which of the following categories best describes your employment status BEFORE the covid-19 outbreak?
Employed full time Employed Part-time Self Employed
In education Unemployed Retired
8. Has your employment status changed since the outbreak to any of the following?
Furloughed
Lost Job
Reduced hours Increase hours Redundancy New Job
No change
9. Has anyone in your household (other than you) changed their employment status since the outbreak? If so, how?
Furloughed Lost Job Reduced Hours Increase hours New Job
No change
10. Have you or anyone in your household has or had Coronavirus? Yes /No
11. Do you or anyone else in your household suffer from any of the following conditions?
(select all that apply)
Asthma or other lung conditions Diabetes
Arthritis
Heart disease
Chronic kidney disease
Liver disease such as Hepatitis
Weakened immune system such HIV, AIDS Cancer
Dementia or other mental illness None - I am well.
12. If you answered by selecting any of the conditions above; then please tell us if you believe the condition has been impacted as a result of Covid-19 in any way - please state how?

13. As a result of Covid-19, how much have you or your family experienced:
Not at all Very little somewhat Very much

Financial strain Work Strain Emotional strain

14. How has Covid-19 affected your mental and wellbeing

At no times Sometimes Most of the times Always

I feel anxious

I feel angrier I feel

lonely/isolated I feel sad

I do not feel incontrol

I feel active

I feel positive I feel happy

I worry about my health

I worry about other family members health

15. Have you been able to access the mental wellbeing support that you need during this time? (select all that apply)

Yes - From family or friends

Yes- From local charity, Mosque/Church, community group Yes - Mental Health care provider

Yes - Online or app No

16. Do you intend on learning or practising any skills while you're on lockdown? Yes
No Maybe

17. If Yes - Please state what?

18. How interested would you be in spending some of your quarantine time for building your skills and qualifications, if it meant improving your job prospects or career?

Extremely interested Somewhat interested Neutral

Somewhat not interested Extremely not interested

19. How many children under 18 do you have? Select your answer

20. How well do you believe your child/children are learning during the lockdown? Very poor - don't spend much time learning

Poor - not as well as usual Very well - better than usual

Neither - neither worse nor better than usual

21. Do you believe Covid-19/lockdown is affecting your child/children's

Not at All A little Quite a bit A lot Option 5

Mental wellbeing

Education Social skills

Diet & Nutrition

Confidence and self esteem

Resilience

22. Is there any type of support that you have received or any programmes which you have found to be helpful during the Covid-19 pandemic/lockdown

23. Is there anything you would like to say about the impact of coronavirus/COVID-19 or government policies or actions on you and your family?

24. Is there anything you would find helpful that is not currently being done by anyone else?

25. Thank you for taking time to complete this survey. If you have any further queries about the survey or would like to know more about how OAK Community Development can help you during the Covid-19 pandemic please leave your name and contact details below, alternatively you can email us separately on info@oakcd.org.uk - Text/whatsapp 07434 442786 - www.oakcd.org.uk

Name & Contact Number or email:

26. As a thank you for taking the time to complete the survey we would like to offer you the chance of winning £50 love2shop vouchers If you wish to be entered into the prize draw we'll need you to provide some contact details (these details will be kept completely separate to the responses you give and used purely for the prize draw). To be eligible for the prize draw you must be a resident of Oldham and above 16 years old. Only one entry per person or household. Closing date for entries is 5pm Fri 31st July 2020 (full T&C available on website)

Yes

No

27. If yes - please provide your name and a contact telephone number or email address in the space provided



Creating better, stronger, inclusive communities

w: www.oakcd.org.uk

e: info@oakcd.org.uk