

Children, Young People and Families

Essay



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Contents

Introduction.....	3
1. Covid-19 Pandemic.....	4
Fig.1 COVID-19	4
2. Poverty	5
2.1. Effects of Poverty	5
Fig.3 Statistic Poverty in UK.....	6
(Francis Devine, 2021).....	6
3. The effects of COVID 19 on Children and Families Living in Poverty in the UK 7	
Fig.4 UK Poverty Rates	7
3.1. Impact of Isolation.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.2. Impact on mental health issues and wellbeing	8
3.3. Demand in family relationships	9
3.4. Sexual Abuse	9
3.5. Loneliness	9
4. The negative effect of COVID-19	10
Fig. 5 Covid-19 Lookdown measures	10
Conclusion	11
Reference:	12

Introduction

The purpose of this assignment is to discuss how COVID 19 affected children and families in the UK who are living in poverty.

First, I will provide a basic analysis of COVID-19 by simply and clearly defining some contents:

- How families in the UK were impacted by this pandemic.
- Poverty
- Related to Domestic Violence, Abuse, and Mental Health.
- Effects of COVID-19 negatively

Internet research and online libraries will be used to complete the current work. After that, I'll draught a brief conclusion to finish this task.



1. Covid-19 Pandemic

The SARS-CoV-2 virus, also known as COVID-19, is a contagious illness that started as a pneumonia outbreak in the Chinese city of Wuhan in December 2019 (Ciotti et al., 2020)

However, the World Health Organization declared a pandemic crisis in March 2020 as a result of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), which has been responsible to thousands of mortality.

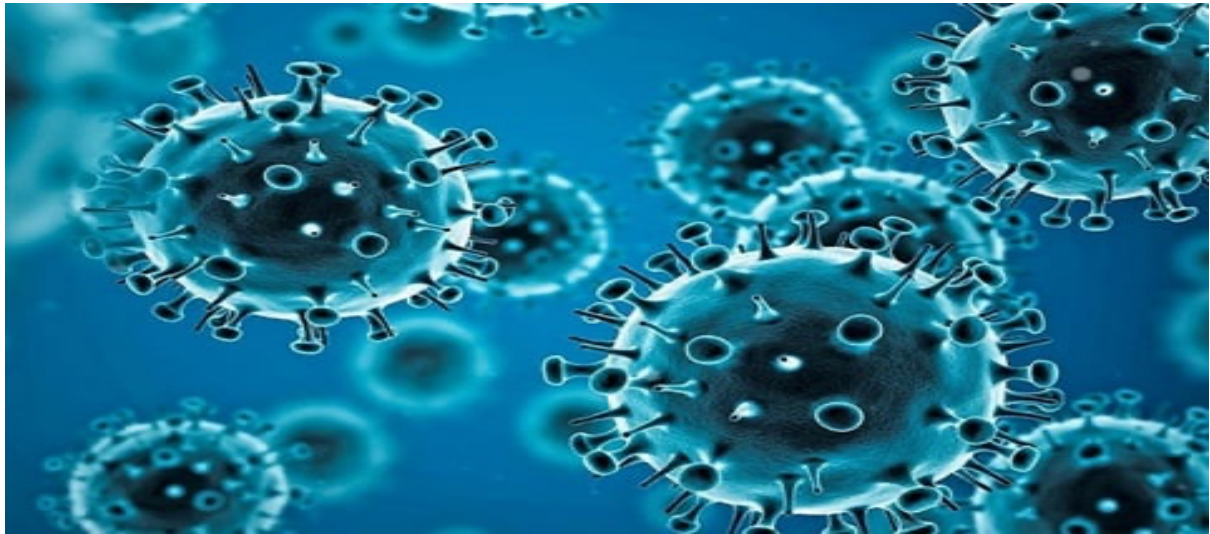


Fig.1 COVID-19
(World Health Organization, 2020)

Since the pandemic has cost the country significantly in terms of lost human lives, economies, and increased poverty, we continue to work hard to combat the causes of this illness that has devastated many poor families in the UK.

Some people also experience increased poverty and severe illnesses, necessitating continuous medical care. Well, many seniors with serious illnesses were far more impacted. (World Health Organization, 2020).

Note that, it should be mentioned that anyone can contract COVID-19, get extremely unwell, and pass away at any age.

2. Poverty

It refers to a group of poor individuals who are lacking in fundamental necessities including food, clean water, sanitary facilities, health care, shelter, education, and information.

In other words, these populations lack the means to live in the manner, with the facilities, and to eat in the manner that is accepted as customary, or at least commonly supported, in the civilizations to which they belong (Townsend, 1979)

Chart 1: Average real terms incomes in 2013/14 prices, 1998/99 to 2013/14, GB/UK

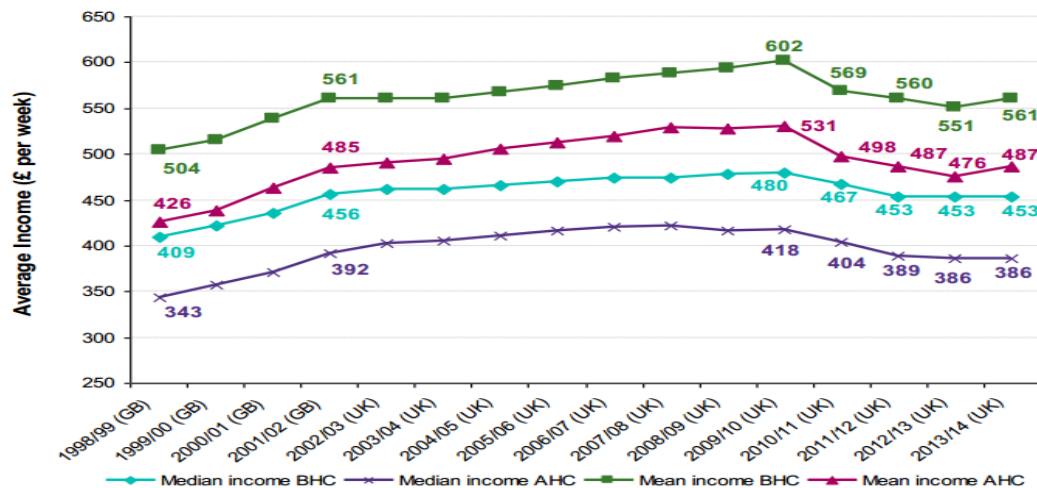


Fig. 2 UK Poverty

2.1. Effects of Poverty

- **Health** At this time, a higher risk of sickness and early mortality is linked to poverty.
- **Education** Some young people are unable to complete university because poverty has an impact on educational outcomes.
- Risk of Diversity Access Increasing
- Inadequate resources
- Inadequate resilience



According to poverty, these are some of the primary topics of concern mentioned by children:

- **Material and financial poverty**
- **Social ill-health School**
- **Neighbourhoods, homeless people, and inadequate housing**
- **Bullying and prejudice**

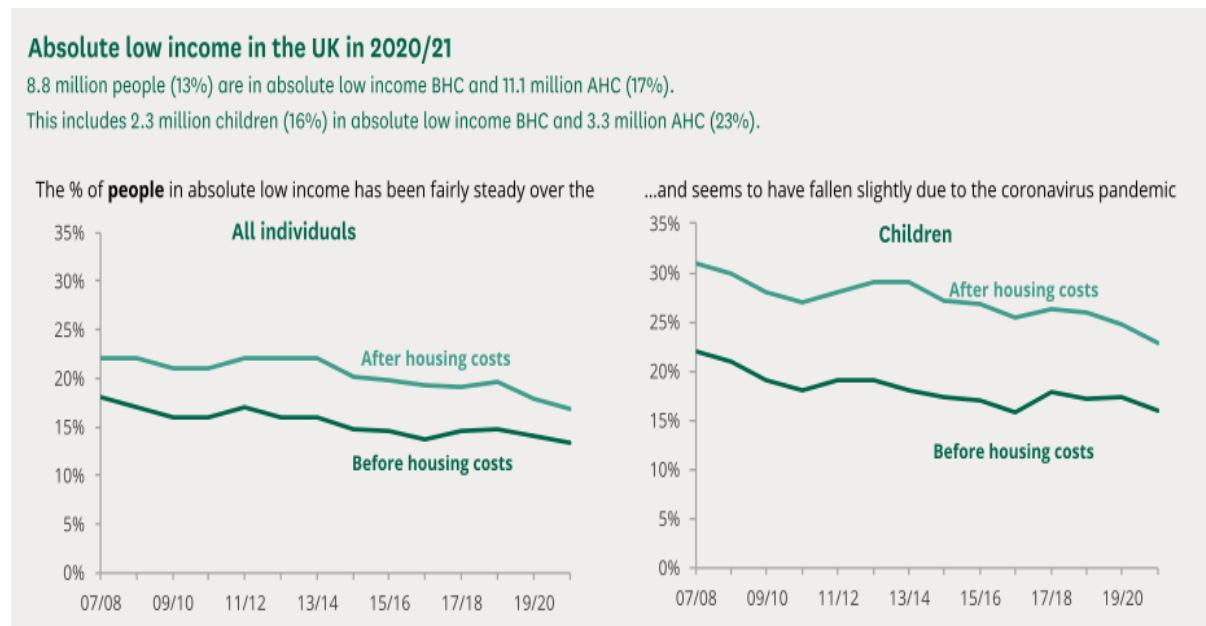


Fig.3 Statistic Poverty in UK
 (Francis Devine, 2021)

According to Equality Trust (2014), the poorest third of the population roughly 19 million individuals have more wealth than 100 persons in the UK.

However, UK spends more than £39 billion a year on issues brought on by inequality, compared to nations with a more balanced distribution of wealth.

But inequality represents:

- ◆ Reduced healthy life expectancy due to disease
- ◆ STRESS: deteriorated mental state
- ◆ CRIME: more people are locked up
- ◆ Cost of being evicted or losing a home



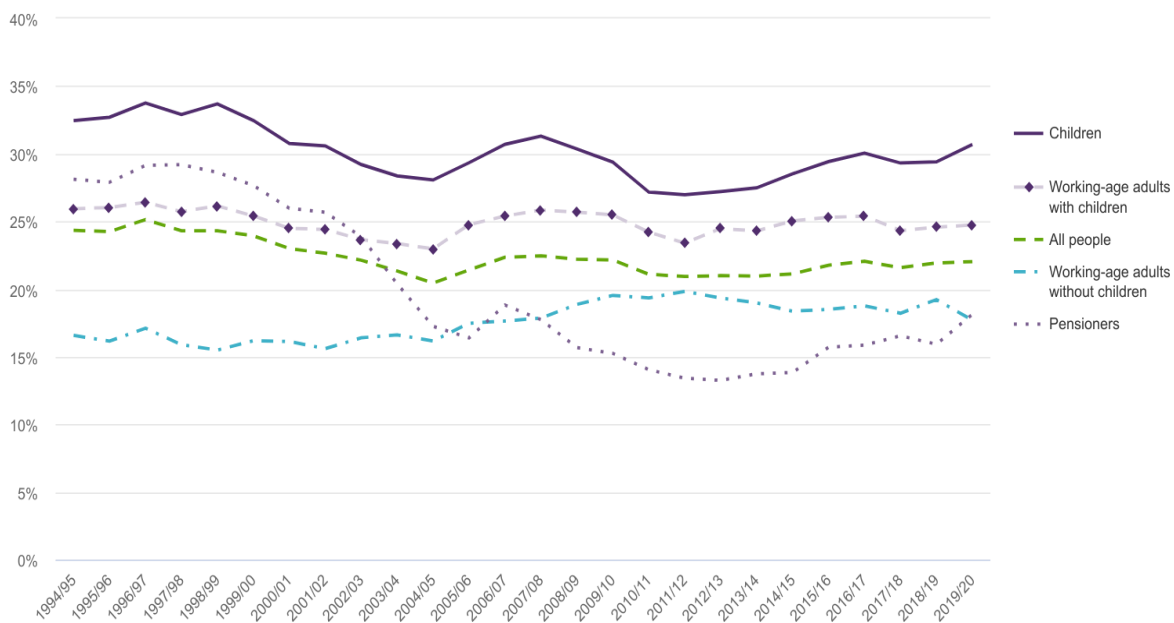
3. The effects of COVID 19 on Children and Families Living in Poverty in the UK

Every child in the UK has been impacted by this virus, but COVID-19 has been especially detrimental for the four million children and young people in the UK who are already living in poverty.

Additionally, it expects that 2.1 million children of the same age live in households where bills are difficult to pay. Then, 1.7 million children between the ages of 10 and 17 reside in families with debt problems. Financial instability intensified because of the COVID-19 crisis, and low-income households were the most severely affected because they lacked the resources to cover these unforeseen costs (The Children Society, 2021).

However, except for children of important professionals and the most vulnerable kids who have social workers, the UK government has implemented measures to address the major public health situation, including closing schools.

Overall UK poverty rates



Source: Households Below Average Income, 2019/20, DWP

Fig.4 UK Poverty Rates

(Rowntree, 2022)



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But it's crucial to acknowledge the effects it has had on young teenagers, especially those from low-income or impoverished households, who suffer greatly because of being forced to stay indoors and find it challenging to attend online classes.

Despite being a crucial step in stopping the development of COVID-19, closing schools led to a rise in young people's social isolation because they were unable to attend presential classes and socialise between colleagues.

Even though there are many schools that offer schooling, children whose families cannot afford computers, phones, or decent internet or phone connections missed out on a crucial learning curve, and today many parents have children at home who have trouble reading a book. There was also an added risk of embarrassment for kids who couldn't attend any of the available online schools.

Nonetheless, as we all know, a child's eligibility for assistance paid for by the government depends on the condition of their parents.

A study by the London Mayor's Office estimates that some 215,000 undocumented children reside in the UK are unable to get public assistance because impact of COVID-19 affected their parents' immigration status.

3.1. Separation Impact

Many children were absent from their social workers, doctors, or teachers, soon this increased rate of mental health issues of children and families. Also, children who immigrated to the UK a year or months before the pandemic, for instance, experienced literacy or linguistic challenges.

The kids and their families lacked close friendships, partnerships, and outside-the-home assistance from peers and responsible adults. For instance, a lot of grandkids stayed to visit with their grandparents (BBC Children IN NEED, 2021).

3.2. Impact on mental health issues and wellbeing

Since these families were already struggling from poverty, pandemic had a significant influence in mental health. As a result, children and parents began to experience anxiety, fear, and worry (Charity England, Wales, and Scotland, 2020).

As the prevalence of obesity in families increased, physical wellbeing was put at risk due to decreasing diet and exercise.



3.3. Demand in family relationships

Families struggled to manage tension and worry while living under stress. Conflict and crisis were prevalent, numerous marriages within families have broken up because of domestic abuse.

On the other hand, because their homes are small and have less room for parents and kids, poor families found it difficult to take a good rest.

3.4. Sexual Abuse

The coronavirus pandemic has created situations in many UK homes that have made children, young people more susceptible to specific types of abuse, such as internet manipulation, violence at home, criminal exploitation, and child sexual exploitation.

However, Children and teenagers were spending a lot more time online, therefore some were lured to social media to maintain or forge relationships with others. This led to more children and young people being exposed to sexual abuse risk (R Eleni and B Emma, 2020).

3.5. Loneliness

Children and young people felt more alone because of government recommendations that promoted social isolation for individuals who are unwell. For impoverished families, loneliness was already a problem because many did not have to eat or take part in certain activities, which had a negative impact on their wellbeing.

4. The negative effect of COVID-19

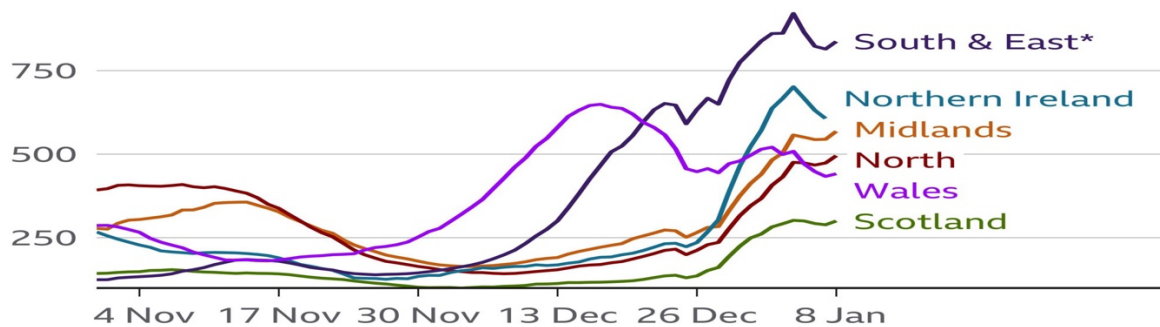
Lockdown has been the primary impact of COVID-19, with the UK being one of the countries most impacted in terms of illness, death rates, and a serious economic crisis. Children were negatively and unfairly affected by this lockdown, which meant that many kids missed six months of school and regular recreational activities (Holt and Murray, 2021).

Contrarily, residents of low-income areas and members of racial or ethnic minorities had the highest prevalence of almost all clinical risk factors known to worsen COVID-19, including high blood pressure, diabetes, asthma, emotion, cancer, cardiovascular disease, and obesity.

The poorest population was affected, and as a result, many of these families were forced to leave their houses in looking for food for their kids. If we thoroughly examine the mortality rates and the number of people who got this virus, it was the poorest community and without defence.

Cases still high in many areas

Weekly confirmed cases per 100,000 people



* Includes London, East and South East regions

Source: Gov.uk dashboard, 12 Jan

BBC

Fig. 5 Covid-19 Lockdown measures

Office for National Statistics (2020) said that due the poverty and lack of protection, residents of England and Wales most deprived districts had an approximately twofold higher risk of dying after catching COVID-19.

Data on mortality rates, which were age-standardized for COVID-19 deaths in England's most impoverished districts, were revealed in August 2020. In July 2020, the rate was 3.1 deaths per 100,000 individuals. In contrast, there were 1.4 fatalities for every 100,000 people in less impoverished areas. (EclinicalMedicine, 2021).



Conclusion

To summarise up, Covid-19 does not randomly attack. But old people, poorer groups, and ethnic minorities experienced the highest mortality rates, and the population was affected by its economic effects.

On the other hand, considering that we are already experiencing these consequences, we must keep in mind that the economic effects will probably last for years. Without coordinated preventative action, poorer families and communities continued to suffer disproportionately, which widened health disparities in the UK and around the world.

Eventually, there is no question that the 2019 coronavirus (COVID-19) disease has significant economic repercussions, as mentioned, but there are also a plethora of direct and indirect effects that are important to consider in terms of health, society, and education for children and families who live without a roof over their heads or in unstable housing, such as staying with friends or family, sleeping on couches, or renting an apartment. Due to their need to live in fear of infection, many of them were impacted by this.

Additionally, it was determined that the COVID-19 initial lockdown data had a detrimental effect on diet, exercise, sleep, some families' programmes.

Finally, spending per person in Northeast England has decreased by 30%, compared to decreases of 15% in the Southwest. Regressive cuts to public services also have an adverse effect on the communities with the greatest poverty. These pervasive inequities have been made worse by COVID-19.

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