



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

CHEST X-RAY IN COVID-19 PANDEMIC RALE SCORING

¹Aasif Majeed Lone , ²Arshad Alam Khan , ³Ashita Jain

¹Assistant Professor, ²Assistant Professor, ³Assistant Professor¹ Department of Radiology,
¹Centurion University of Technology and Management , Vizianagaram, Andhra Pradesh, INDIA

Abstract:

Background In this study we could find that during the COVID-19 Pandemic the Radiologists were able to differentiate between chest radiograph's with and without symptoms of pneumonia but have found it more challenging to differentiate coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pneumonia from non-COVID-19 pneumonia on the radiograph's.

Method : This is the retrospective comparative study in which we included thirty articles in medicine using PUBS, BMJ, AJR and google scholar , out of thirty studies 23 were prospective and 7 studies were retrospective , In these studies we have found that the RT-PCR test results were considered as the reference standard and RALE scoring was done using chest radiographs and gravimetric measurements of lung oedema.

Result : The outbreak of a pneumonia of unknown cause in the city of Wuhan in Hubei , province of China .The pneumonia was later confirmed to be a virus this virus was originally called 2019 Novel coronavirus, the identification of the virus via-nucleic acid detection through RT-PCR and throat swabs were considered as desired standard and formative assessment for the diagnosis of COVID-19, The pathologies that were observed on the chest radiographs after progressive stage were opacities and consolidations , In early stages of the disease chest radiographs were least sensitive for detecting any abnormalities , The ground glass opacities and densities which were observed on CT scan of chest had an correlate which was extremely difficult to detect on a chest radiograph (CXR).

Conclusion : CXR scoring was considered to be less sensitive than CT Scan , COVID-19 generally manifested a spectrum of pure ground glass , mixed ground glass opacities to consolidations in bilateral peripheral , best practice , Parameters for communication of diagnostic imaging findings.

Keywords : COVID-19,X-Ray,CT scan,Pneumonia,Ground Glass Opacities & Consolidation

INTRODUCTION

A disease in 2019 known as COVID-19 emerged from China and spread to the whole world¹. Patient diagnosis : COVID-19 infection was confirmed by RT-PCR ,Reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction , on nasopharyngeal and throat swabs². The scoring : lung involvement scoring was done by giving a score from 0-4 to the lung on the basis of the involvements the score was considered to be 0,1,2,3 and 4 and the score was distributed as 0= least or no involvements , 1= more than 25 involvements , 2= in between 25-50, 3= in between 50-75, 4= more than 75% involvement³. RALE classification : In march 2020 the system was introduced to radiology , which was used to identify the severity of the findings in the covid-19 patients ,. Scoring on the CXR : The method was introduced to assess the involvements and pathologies in covid-19 patients .

CRX : it was considered to have least sensitivity in early stage of covid-19 to detect the abnormalities , but was found active in progressive stage covid-19 patients to find the abnormalities . **CT scans** were found effective in detecting the abnormalities in the lungs during COVID-19 , and CT was considered to be effective in early stage detection as well ⁴ . As it was believed that CXR is least active in detecting abnormalities in early stages of COVID-19 so for that a follow-up was needed for the patients of covid-19 ⁵ .

Differential Disease finding : findings on Ct images were found similar to other findings or viral diseases which were responsible for the cause of pneumonia in patients , because of the similar origin or coronaviridae virus family⁶ . The literature was focused on CT computed tomography findings as CT has been believed to be more sensitive than chest x-ray radiographs , CT was considered to be the primary imaging modality in the COVID-19 outbreak but the chest x-ray remained the first line imaging investigation for evaluating the acute respiratory illness in some patients , it was believed that considering CT as the first line modality would lead to a burden on radiology departments and challenges in posing , pertaining to sterilization of CT suite and infection control⁷ . The coronaviruses identified are six , out of which four cause symptoms like common cold due the (SARS) virus and the (MERS) virus which are two strains⁸ . The epidemiological suspects of COVID-19 infection found on the CXR of the patients, performed at emergency department of that hospital were reviewed respectively. The most effected patients were found to be of age group 60-79 years old The RALE score was found to be slightly higher in Male patients than in female patients⁹ . The chest x-rays of the in-hospital (376) patients and had gone through RTPCR were included in the study . Then the radiologist of experience greater than 10 years, categorised the radiographs into covid-19 negative or positive on the basis of image patterns¹⁰ . The severity of abnormalities on the radiographs was outputted by a trained convolutional Siamese neural network-based algorithm , used the weakly supervised pre training on large number of anterior-posterior images from CheXpert¹¹ . For clinical variables the radiographs data of a month was taken to review which were examined by the radiologists to identify the abnormalities and involvements and on the basis of that a score of severity was given¹² . The study identified the abnormalities and findings on the Computed tomography scans of Covid-19 patients, The change in the (GGO) into consolidation and subsequent resolution of the airspace changes were demonstrated¹³ . The serial and baseline chest radiographs with RT-PCR were reviewed and if available the correlation with concurrent CT examination was performed¹⁴ . The patient presented to the Emergency department of that hospital with confirmation of COVID-19 on RT-PCR were identified by the abnormalities and lung involvements found in the quadrants on the CXR which were studied by the radiologists¹⁵ .

Abbreviations

AP	Anterior posterior	CO	Consolidation
AUC	Area under the curve	COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
AI	Artificial intelligence	ED	Emergency department
BMI	Body mass index	EC	Ethics committee
CDC	Centers for disease control and prevention	GGO	Ground glass opacity
CXR	Chest radiography	HR	Hazard ratio
CR	Chest radiography	mRALE	Modified radiographic assessment of lung edema
CT	Computed tomography	NPV	Negative predictive value
CC	Complete concordance	PPV	Positive predictive value
PXS	Pulmonary x-ray severity	RT-PCR	Real time reverse transcriptase polymerase chain reaction
RALE	Radiographic assessment of lung edema		

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is the retrospective comparative study in which we included thirty articles in medicine using PUBS, BMJ, AJR and Google scholar , out of thirty studies 23 were prospective and 7 studies were Retrospective , In these studies we have found that RT-PCR test results were considered as the reference standard and RALE scoring is evaluated on CXR's of patients who were positive for corona virus and have lung abnormalities and pathologies , The imaging technique have a big role in the diagnosis of the corona virus disease , Computed Tomography is considered to be most effective method for early lung abnormality detection while as the CXR is found to be least sensitive in the diagnosis or detection of pulmonary abnormalities and other pneumonias caused by the virus ,scoring system was used to determine the intensity of the disease.

Method: reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction test is considered to be an important diagnostic tool for detecting the corona virus disease , the results of reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction test were considered to be medium for correlation with chest x-ray findings , the chest x-ray that were taken of the patients from the initial time to discharge time of the patient who were having the respiratory syndrome a scoring was done on the basis of the lung involvements and the abnormalities and pathologies found .

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In December 2019 the outbreak of a pneumonia of unknown cause started from the city of Wuhan in Hubei , province of China, it was later confirmed to be a virus which was originally called 2019 Novel coronavirus and on Feb , 11, 2020 the disease was named COVID-19 by WHO, it was considered that corona virus has a different origin and it was it was also believed that the virus was found in the sea food and the virus is extremely contagious and spreads easily from one to another person

Imaging features

According to many studies the latest diagnostic criteria or the identification of the virus via-nucleic acid detection through RT-PCR and throat swabs were considered as desired technique for locating the lung involvements of the corona positive patients , False negative results after virus detection were there which were there because of some issues with the settings , which include the least availability of the kits , which were used as the initial test tool for the diagnosis of the corona virus disease and happened also because of the technical problems in sampling and because of any issues with the laboratory and due to the non-proper technique used for the testing of the nucleic acid out of the clinical material .

Radiography of chest

In many studies we have found that chest radiography was not practiced on routinely basis as it was found that chest radiography is not sensitive for detecting COVID-19 in the early stage, the chest radiography was considered to be sensitive only after the disease had progressed from early stage .

The pathologies that were observed on the chest radiographs after progressive stage were opacities and consolidations , in some of the studies we have observed that no obvious abnormalities were found on the chest radiographs after showing positive symptoms . In early stages of the disease chest radiographs were least sensitive for detecting any abnormalities like increased area left basilar opacity which was possibly seen atleast after 9th or 10th day of the disease progress .

Computed tomography of chest

In several studies we have found that COVID-19 typically presents with Ground glass opacities (GGO) and consolidations in a peripheral , posterior lower lung distribution or diffuse, The ground glass opacities and densities which were observed on CT scan of chest had an correlate which was extremely difficult to detect on a chest radiograph (CXR) . The CT scans were performed in supine position , The scans included the upper and the inferior portions of lungs or the thoracic portion and then the taken images were reconstructed with (1.5 - 1mm ST) as found in most of the studies. CT computed tomography scan is recommended because it is very sensitive for detecting the lung involvements at early stages in COVID-19 positive patients .

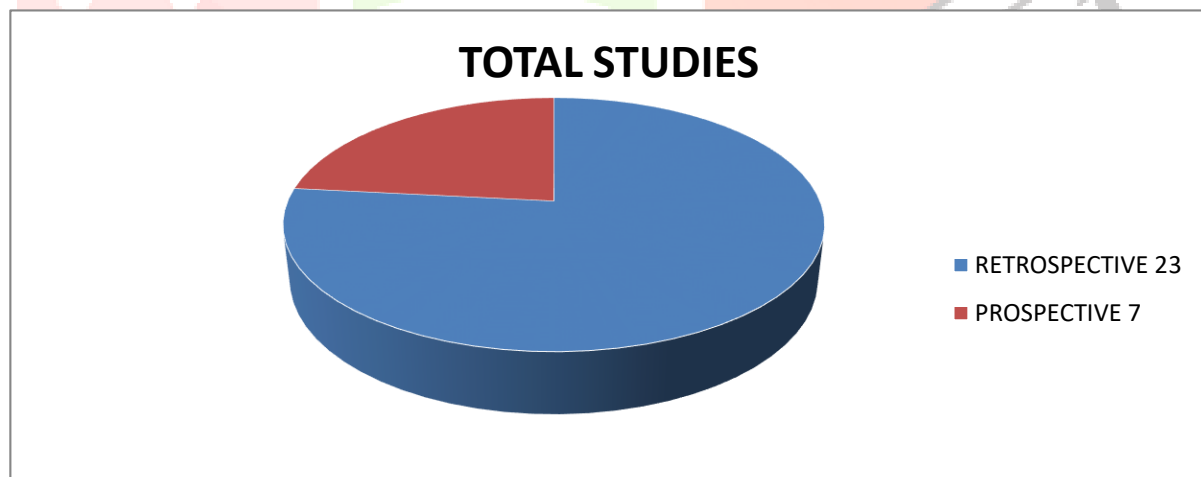
In one of the study, according to an association of the radiology branch the computed tomography scans of the corona positive patients were divided , into the different stages which include ,the Early stage ,the advance stage , the severe stage , on the basis of involvement of lungs or pathologies found .

In early stage the computed tomography has shown single of multiple scattered patchy , conglomerate ground glass opacities(GGO) , The ground glass lesions were also found in peripheral and sub peripheral areas of lung . The crazy paving pattern was given due to the intra and interlobular septal thickening which was present in ground glass opacities (GGO)

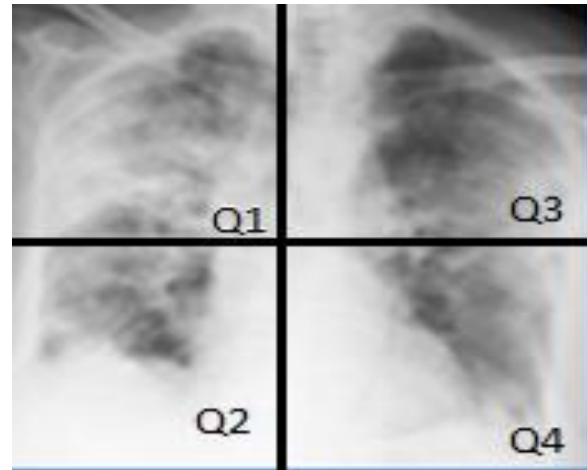
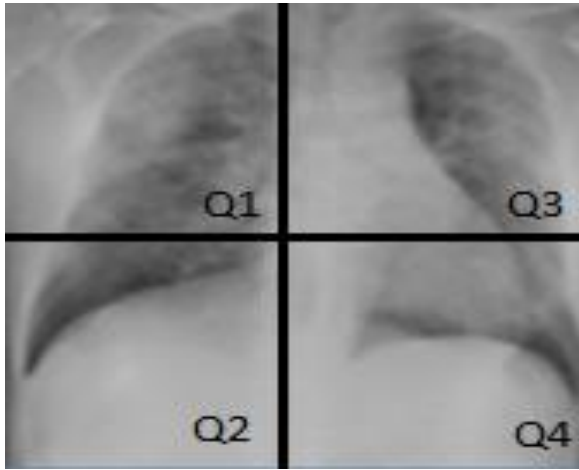
In Advance stage , new lesions similar to the earlier lesions were found in dense and extent state .

Severe stage , in disease progressive state , consolidation of lungs of varying density is seen , the patchy ground glass opacity were considered as Non-Consolidated areas of the lungs , with thickened plura . The “white out lung” appearance was considered as the major lung involvement .

This Retrospective study was conducted to evaluate the severity of Chest X-Ray at the time of COVID-19 and to compare the RALE score with RT-PCR . In this study we Reviewed at least Thirty articles on the basis of data provided in the articles in medicine using RSNA, AJR , BMJ , PUBS and PubMed out of thirty studies twenty three were retrospective and seven studies were prospective, In this retrospective study we have found that the only patients were included who were adult and were presented to the emergency department with corona virus disease.



QUADRANTS FOR RALE SCORING OF RADIOGRAPHS



Consolidation and density scoring in the Radiographic Assessment of Lung Oedema (RALE)

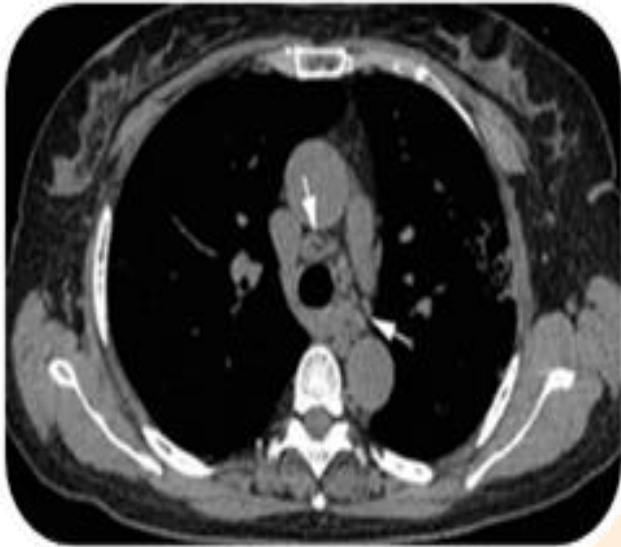
Consolidation	
Consolidation score	Extent of alveolar opacities
0	None
1	≤25%
2	25%-50%
3	50%-75%
4	≥75%
Density	
Density score	Density of alveolar opacities
1	Hazy
2	Moderate
3	Dense
Final RALE score	
Upper Quadrant	Upper Quadrant
Cons x Den=Q 1 Score	Cons x Den=Q 3 Score
Lower Quadrant	Lower Quadrant
Cons x Den=Q 2 Score	Cons x Den=Q 4 Score
Total RALE =Q1+Q2+Q3+Q4	

Radiographic Findings on Chest Radiographs

RADIOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTIC	
NORMAL CHEST RADIOGRAPHS	LUNG ABNORMALITY FEATURES ON CHEST X-RAY
UPPER ZONE PREDOMINANT	RETICULAR -NODULAR OPACITIES
MIDDLE ZONE PREDOMINANT	PATCHY OPACITIES
LOWER ZONE PREDOMINANT	CONSOLIDATION
PERIPHERAL PREDOMINANT	PLEURAL EFFUSION
Perihilar predominant	

CT IMAGES FINDINGS AND PATHOLOGIES IN PATIENTS WITH COVID-19 PNEUMONIA

The lymph node is enlarge in this computed tomography image



Lung computed tomography view , showing multi-focal crazy-paving pattern and



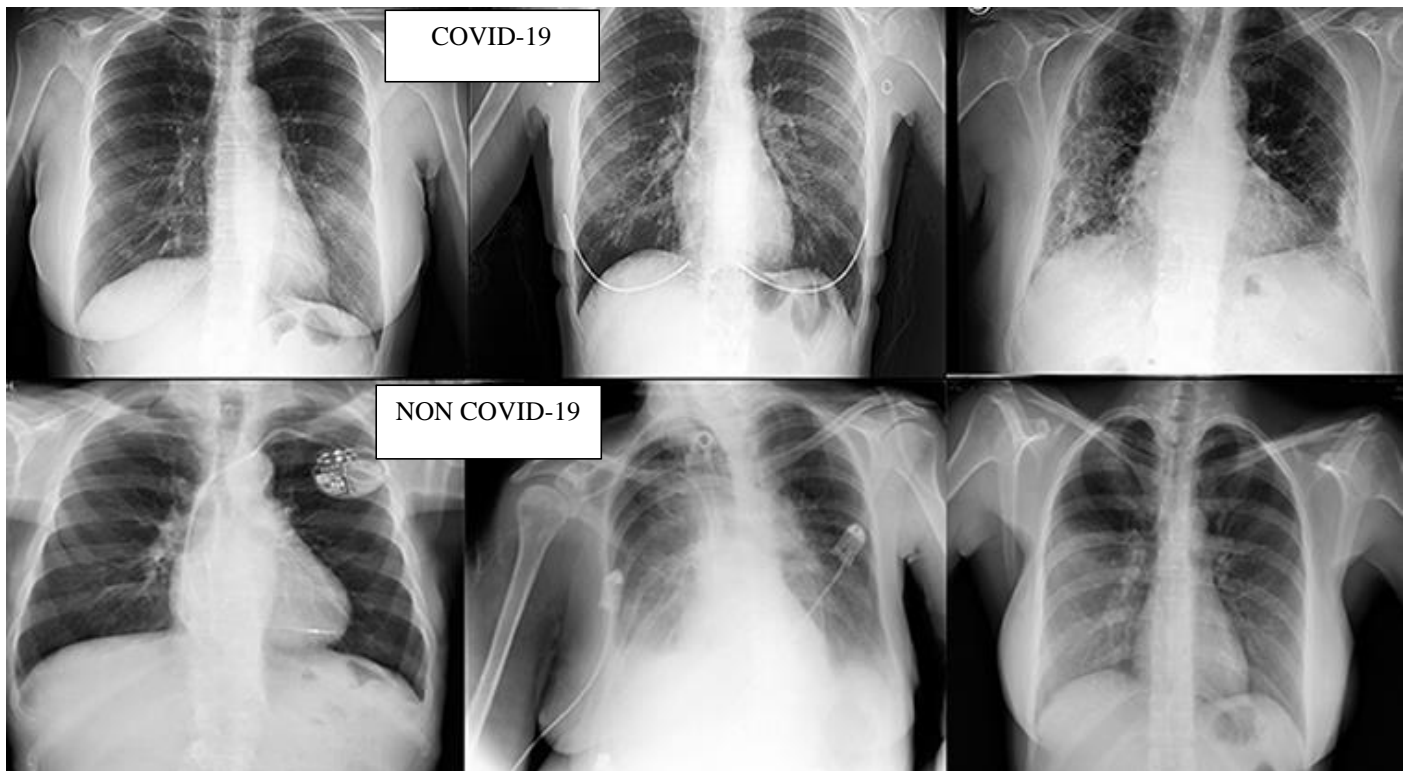
Computed tomography showing the Parenchyma of Lung



The enlarged lymph node shown in computed tomographic scan



Comparison of different chest X-ray of normal & COVID-19 patient's lungs



DISCUSSION

According to many studies we have found that a disease was emerged among the people in china and other parts of the world , which lead the patients suffer from a kind of pneumonia with several other respiratory abnormalities which lead the patients having breathlessness and coughing , the virus responsible for this pneumonia and other chest related abnormalities was considered to be corona virus which was of the different origin and later subsequently named as the (COVID19 virus) by the WHO and the lower portions of the respiratory system were found to be involved the most and it was considered a tough task to find differences between the CXR taken , to differentiate in symptomatic and non symptomatic corona virus patients , the study defines that an algorithm from (AI) can be used on CXR for finding the differences between the corona and the non corona abnormalities in lungs or simply the pneumonia in lungs , this data set testing and differentiating system showed good results in the (AUC). In this study we found that the outcome of the patients who were found corona virus positive , was done by artificial intelligence data set system .

The excellent results out of the artificial intelligence data set system and the score which was given by the radiologists to get known to the outcome of the diagnosis , played a vital role for the resource , constrained data set setting , at the time when corona was at its peak , the artificial intelligence also helped by getting the severity score and the clinical data of the corona positive patients for the identification of the patients who were considered to be at a rik of progression in severity and with this we can use the limited equipments and the sources accordingly .

The identification of key image findings in corona virus disease and the improvement of the effective patient management and the treatment , the findings in CXR was considered important , the patients who were severe , their findings on chest computed tomography were the bilateral , multilobar , involvements , sub segmental consolidation opacities, and the most commonly found indication was find to be ARDS , which gave the actual reason for shifting the patient to (ICU) and the same was find to be the

mortality among patients in (ICU)²⁰, It was found that RALE scoring can predict the death of the patients having corona virus and AI Scores derived from Chest x-rays, although most of the literature had focused on the use of chest CT in patients with COVID-19 infection for assessing the severity, complications and outcome of, but according to the study the use of Chest x-ray was considered of low radiations as the radiations in computed tomography were higher, the CXR was considered easy to handle and easily to be sterilized, severity score out of AI algorithm is as robust a predictor of adverse patient outcome in patients with COVID-19 pneumonia as subjective RALE Score²¹

In this study we have reasoned the detection of a form of pneumonia of unknown origin and the causative agent was considered to be a Novel Virus of the family coronaviridae and the disease associated with this virus was termed as COVID-19, for this an algorithm system was used on chest radiographs, The AI system proved to be a game changer in predicting adverse outcomes, for resource-constrained settings especially for the countries with a shortage of radiological expertise and also helped in identifying the patients at higher risk of an adverse outcome so the limited resources can be allocated accordingly. The desired standard for the diagnostic criteria of the virus were RT-PCR and throat swabs via Nucleic acid detection, The chest radiographs were considered to be least sensitive for detecting COVID-19 in early stages, The correlate of Ground Glass Opacities and Densities was very difficult to be detected on a chest x-ray so Computed Tomography scan was recommended as it was found to be sensitive for early stage lung involvement detection in COVID-19 patients.

CONCLUSION

CXR was suggested as the initial tool for the diagnosis of the severity of the corona virus, which was possible only due to the scoring systems including the RALE scoring system and the CXR scoring system, Although CXR scoring may be less sensitive than CT Scan, It is acknowledged that for patients with unexpected finding that could be attributed to COVID-19, The radiologists should follow the best practice, Parameters for communication of diagnostic imaging findings, The staff for examining should be notified to initiate (SOP's) for potential exposure.

Acknowledgment

I thank almighty Allah, for all his blessings, I would like to thank my supervisor **Mr. Arshad Alam** Khan for his valuable help, I would also like to thank my co-supervisor **Ms. Ashita Jain** whose support, guidance, help and views helped me a lot throughout my study period.

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