



## COVID-19: A Blessing or Curse on Affected Countries and its Citizens



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### Abstract

The emergence of COVID-19, the deadly global virus brought in its wake, both positive and negative results on the general lives of citizens in the affected countries. While many countries, families and global health organizations strive in their quest daily to completely remove this pandemic, others on the other hand, though scared of the deadly virus, see it as an avenue to make gains. This paper seeks to examine the fortunes and misfortunes of COVID-19 in the general life of citizens in affected countries around the world and the impact of this supposed blessing or curse on the economy. Currently, implementation of policies and frameworks that tackle digital production and dissemination of misinformation about disease outbreaks is imperative. Governments that participate in truth-telling are moving faster off hazards than those that distort or hesitate the communication of the message of the disease. Corona virus has differed widely in the capital, capacities, and management / mitigation strategies needed. Good preparedness and responsiveness are also important prerequisites. The most risk-effective strategies for raising pandemic readiness, particularly in resource-constrained environments, comprise of investment in strengthening core global health systems, especially water and sewage systems; growing awareness; and immediately extinguishing pandemic-causing sparks.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, pandemic effects, pathogens



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**Public Interest Statement**

This paper is an analysis of the emergent challenges to the individuals, organizations and states. The paper further highlighted the few advantages to the few entrepreneurs in the economy. The paper highlights the various effects and mitigation strategies of the virus.

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**Introduction**

Pandemics are massive-scale communicable disease outbreaks that can dramatically increase morbidity and mortality over a broad geographic region, and cause substantial economic, social, and political instability. Research indicates that the risk of pandemics has risen over the past century due to the increased global travel and migration, industrialization, land use shifts, and increased natural environment degradation (Jones and others 2008; Morse 1995). These patterns are likely to continue and escalate. Significant policy attention has been centered on detecting and restricting emerging diseases that could lead to pandemics and increasing and maintaining investment to develop readiness and capacity for health (Smolinsky, Hamburg, and Lederberg 2003). Urgent concerns occur during crises and disasters, which require urgent response. The concern is that officials don't regularly have the exact information that's very quickly needed. A post-truth community is one in which political views and unverified assertions in their public power outweigh objective scientific and biomedical evidence. The need for facts to support rational claims gets underestimated, while at the same time undermining the societal standard on how and why people should be held responsible for what they claim. As complicated situations occur, elected officials are reluctant to make premature pronouncements, rather than carefully drafting comments to ensure precision and minimize the risks of misinterpretation and exaggeration. This cautious approach can also somewhat ironically lead to the creation of a knowledge vacuum that is too quick to fill with rumors and falsehoods. The time required for researching, assessing and sharing knowledge in the modern era cannot cope with the rapid dissemination of misinformation on social media sites. Instead of confirmation bias, the propensity to embrace statements that affirm our existing views, and to downplay statements that contradict these beliefs, the effect of social media disinformation can be even more pronounced.

In comparison, as the epidemic intensifies, with the large-scale introduction of social distancing, quarantine steps and lockdowns in majorly affected cities, social media has taken on new and increased significance. Social networking connections have become a way to allow homebound individuals to survive loneliness and seek support, organize donations, entertain and socialize with one another. For people around the

world in a virtual shutdown in the nations around the world, a ripple effect is likely all over the economy. Specific industries of course bear the burden of the impact. Shops and restaurants are beginning to clear out, if not completely shutting their doors. Non-essential transport slows down, curtailing revenues not only for airlines and cruise ship operators but also for small businesses that depend on revenue from tourism. The list continues. Manufacturers, for example, — especially those outside the medicinal field— may see decreased orders as purchasing slows. Banks may have to accept further defaults on loans when a portion of their customer base loses jobs. And oil firms see prices drop as investors' sense lower demand. The paranoia can only worsen certain impacts on the economy. Which means that even families and individuals with relatively secure jobs can begin to restrict purchases if it is not possible to contain the fiscal aftershock.

### **Positive Effects**

Heavy reliance on smartphones can become positive or negative as technological advanced nations attempt to control outbreak of COVID-19. Online food ordering help support residents in locked-down areas, even though the millions of couriers that deliver meals and groceries pose a possible risk of spreading the virus as well. Delivery drivers were still working on different city streets, with some working longer shifts to satisfy demands. Some sectors in the medical field have further allowed the recruiting of more personnel to the work fields to counter the fast spread of the virus. In some case, virtual learning and its financial demands have yielded great benefits to service providers during this moment. The outbreak of COVID-19 has awakened the technological zeal in many, especially educational institutions to adopt virtual learning as opposed to the former traditional face-to-face learning. Couples who never had time for each other are now locked up completely with their partners. Children who barely see their parents within the day are now enjoying their presence daily. In short, families that were at the verge of collapsing have seen a form of reunion over the weeks in the name of COVID-19 imprisonment.

Long before the emergence of Corona virus, some people either ignored news items/WhatsApp texts from friends and relatives. In recent times, almost everyone is seen glued to their phones reading texts and listening to news to get updates regularly on the virus. In many cities and towns across the world, there are scenes of people into the production and sale of protective items like face masks, hand sanitizers, Veronica buckets and the like to make profit out of the pandemic. In like manner, a lot of pastors have also used this pandemic as a great relief from standing long hours during church services to preach the word of God. Most pastors have taken advantage of the situation

to update themselves with technology in order to reach out to their members in their homes, and use same medium to receive their tithes and collections.

### **Negative Effects**

Influenza has been the biggest hazard of all recognized pandemic pathogens since at least the 16th century due to its possible intensity and semi-regular occurrence (Morens and others 2010). An estimated 20 million to 100 million people worldwide died from the deadly influenza pandemic of 1918, with few countries spared (Johnson and Mueller 2002). Its severity represents part of the period's restricted health technology as there were no antibiotics, antivirals or vaccines available to prevent infection or death (Murray et al 2006). Pandemics have happened across history and seem to be growing in frequency, especially due to the increasing occurrence of animals with viral disease. Pandemic threat is determined by the cumulative effects of spark threat (where an outbreak is likely to occur) and risk-spreading (how probable it is to spread far and wide across people). Pandemics may cause major, extensive morbidity and mortality changes, and have significantly higher effects on mortality. Pandemics can trigger economic harm to socioeconomic growth across multiple channels, particularly short-term fiscal disruptions and long-term, adverse shocks.

Personal changes in behavior, such as fear-induced reluctance to workplaces and other locations of social gathering, are a major cause of adverse shocks during pandemic economic development. Some people have also taken advantage of the pandemic to misuse social media to spread false information leading to fear and panic globally. Some measures to prevent a pandemic can cause major social and economic disruption. Pandemics can exacerbate political pressures and tensions in nations with weak structures and legacies of political instability. Outbreak intervention measures such as quarantines have ignited conflict and animosity between States and people in these contexts. Whenever pandemics cause significant increases in morbidity and mortality, they are often more liable to overpower health systems. Overburdened health systems and other negative impacts may lead to a 2.3-fold rise in the all-cause mortality amid pandemics even though it is difficult to determine the causative factor (Simonsen et al., 2013).

This outbreak has savagely exposed our labor markets to deep faultiness. Companies of all types have already suspended operations, shortened working hours and laid off employees. Most are teetering at the verge of bankruptcy as restaurants and shops shut, flights and hotel reservations are scrapped, and companies are shifting to remote jobs. The first to lose their jobs are always those whose careers were already insecure-sales clerks, waiters, kitchen staff, baggage attendants and cleaners. Several

nations have also introduced unparalleled stimulus programs to safeguard their populations and economies, and to keep cash flowing to jobs and companies. To optimize the efficacy of these steps, it is important that governments collaborate with associations of employers and labor unions to come up with realistic strategies that will keep people safe and protect jobs. These initiatives include income support, salary incentives and momentary layoff grants for those in more structured jobs, self-employed tax credits and corporate financial support.

### **Response to COVID-19**

After a pandemic has occurred, a systematic approach would be enforced that focuses on ensuring situational awareness, public health communications, mitigating spread, and caring for and managing the disease. Successful risk assessment and response involve surge capacity — the capacity to optimize health services delivery in relation to the severity of the incident, the virus, and the at-risk community. Overcrowding capacity would likely be provided by international relief agencies for several poorly equipped countries. For regional outbreaks, this is a viable tactic, but global surge capability has limits that are likely to be hit for a global full-scale pandemic as higher-power states concentrate on their own populations. Risk transfer schemes, such as risk pooling and catastrophe insurance at the sovereign level, offer a viable alternative for the management of pandemic risk. COVID-19 has differed widely in the capital, capacities, and management/mitigation strategies needed. Good preparedness and responsiveness are also important prerequisites. The most risk-effective strategies for raising pandemic readiness, particularly in resource-constrained environments, comprise of investment in strengthening core global health systems, especially water and sewage systems; growing awareness; and immediately extinguishing pandemic-causing sparks.

### **Risk of COVID-19 Spread**

High population density levels, particularly in urban centers that host congested informal settlements, may act as a focal point for disease transmission and speed up the spreading of pathogens, which in our case in corona virus (Neiderud, 2015). In addition, social disparity, poverty and their associations with the environment can substantially increase person vulnerability to infection (Farmer, 1996). Comorbidity, malnutrition, and nutrient deficits weaken the immune system of a person while environmental conditions such as lack of clean water and proper sanitation exacerbate transmission levels and increase rates of morbidity and mortality (Toole and Waldman 1990).

## **Findings**

The incidence of disease outbreaks such as the one that we are seeing at the moment will increase, despite the forms in which interactions between humans and nature continue to increase. Pandemics may need organized strategies for the global response. Such approaches should and must be at the core of digital companies and social media outlets, as their reactions and ability to work with policymakers and public health authorities can decide whether social media is seen as a beneficial or harmful source of pandemic response. Currently, implementation of policies and frameworks that tackle digital production and dissemination of misinformation about disease outbreaks is imperative. To achieve so, it will involve complementing biomedical information regarding pandemics with expertise on their financial, political, and cultural underpinnings. What we are finding is that constructive countries, cultures and individuals seems to respond much better than reactive ones. Governments that participate in truth-telling are moving faster off hazards than those that distort or hesitate the communication of the message of the disease. Many working in apparently different sectors, however, can still experience the side effects of social distancing.

Cooperatively, all of these variables indicate that vulnerable communities, especially refugees and inhabitants of urban slums and informal settlements, are likely to experience high morbidity and mortality threats during the pandemic of corona virus. A readiness index designed by Oppenheim et al (2017) can be used to convey the anticipated capacity of a country to mitigate pandemic spread. The index reflects global variability in institutional readiness to identify and respond to an emergence of highly infectious disease on a wide scale. The index consists of measure measures of; (i)Public health systems capable of detecting, monitoring, handling and coping with cases ii) Effective physical and communications infrastructure sufficient to channeling knowledge and resources iii) Essential bureaucratic and public administration capability iii) Capability to leverage financial resources to pay for disease treatment and the economic impact of the outbreak.

## **Conclusion**

Well-prepared economies have strong public systems, stable markets and sufficient health sector investment. They have developed unique competencies that are important for the identification and control of disease outbreaks, including monitoring, mass vaccination, and interactions with risk. Poorly prepared countries can experience political uncertainty, poor public policy, insufficient public health services, and gaps in fundamental structures for detecting and reacting to outbreaks. The impact of the virus

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however remains to be more burdensome in the world economies despite the strength and preparedness of the nations against the virus.

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