

## THE DEADLY VIRUS THAT HAS CHANGED THE WAYS OF THE WORLD

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### ABSTRACT

The deadly virus in this paper refers to coronavirus. The virus has caused coronavirus disease or COVID-19 which has already taken more than three million human lives, and there has been over fourteen million confirmed infected cases world over. It doesn't discriminate powerful and weak, rich and poor. COVID-19 has affected the ways of our lives, economy, education, tourism, transportation, sports, entertainment, mental and physical health of people, and many other sectors to a large extent. Hopefully, there are now several vaccines that are being administered. The COVID-19 vaccines produce protection against the disease, as a result of developing an immune response to the virus.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, virus, vaccines.

### INTRODUCTION

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared that COVID-19 was a global pandemic. China had been the first country with a widespread outbreak in January, and South Korea, Iran and Italy following in February with their own outbreaks. As of now, the United States has the highest number of confirmed cases and, sadly, the most deaths. The virus was extremely contagious and led to death in the most vulnerable, particularly those older than 60 and those with underlying conditions. (Fouad, Online, 2020) Until 16 April 2021, there have been nearly 3,012,128 deaths worldwide, with over 140,523,017 confirmed cases. The human toll is staggering, and the third wave of the virus has already started in many countries. (UNDP, Online, 2021)

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The effects and consequences of coronavirus pandemic in different countries and societies are remarkably diverse. The COVID-19 pandemic is the defining global health crisis of our time and the greatest challenge we have faced since World War Two. Since its emergence in Asia in 2019, the virus has spread to every continent except Antarctica. But the pandemic is much more than a health crisis, it is also an unprecedented socio-economic crisis. Every day, people are losing jobs and income, with no way of knowing when normality will return. Small island nations, heavily dependent on tourism, have empty hotels and deserted beaches. (Wikipedia, Online, n.d.) While some try to adapt to working online, homeschooling their children and ordering food online, others have no choice but to be exposed to the virus while keeping society functioning.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The pandemic has resulted in many people adapting to massive changes of life, from increased internet commerce activity to the job market. Social distancing has caused increased sales from e-commerce giants. The trend of home delivery orders have increased due to the pandemic, with indoor dining restaurants shutting down due to lockdown orders and/or low sales. Education worldwide has increasingly shifted from physical attendance to video conferencing apps such as zoom as lockdown measures have resulted in schools being forced to shut down. Due to the pandemic, mass layoffs have occurred in the airline, travel, hospitality, and some other industries.

The outbreak is a major destabilizing threat to the global economy. One estimate from an expert at Washington University in St. Louis gave a \$300+ billion impact on the world's supply chain that could last up to two years. Global stock markets fell on 24 February 2020 due to a significant rise in the number of COVID-19 cases outside China. The International Labor Organization stated on 07 April that it predicted a 6.7% loss of job hours globally in the second quarter of 2020, equivalent to 195 million full-time jobs. They also estimated that 30 million jobs were lost in the first quarter alone, compared to 25 million during the 2008 financial crisis.

The pandemic has severely impacted educational systems globally. Most governments have temporarily closed educational institutions, with many switching to online education. Education institute closures impact not only students, teachers, and families but have far-reaching economic and societal consequences. As a result of the pandemic, many countries and regions imposed quarantines, entry bans, or other restrictions, either for citizens, recent travelers to affected areas, or for all travelers. Together with a decreased willingness to travel, this had a negative economic

and social impact on the travel sector. The pandemic has had a significant impact on the aviation industry due to the resulting travel restrictions as well as a slump in demand among travelers. Significant reductions in passenger numbers have resulted in planes flying empty between airports and the cancellation of flights. Several rail operators had to receive state aid and/or reduced their scheduled services.

Most major sporting events were cancelled or postponed, including the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo, which were postponed on 24 March 2020 until 2021. The pandemic has caused the cancellation or postponement of major events around the world. The pandemic has impacted the film industry. Across the world and to varying degrees, cinemas have been closed, festivals have been cancelled or postponed, and film releases have been moved to future dates. Massive losses in the industry have been predicted.

The global health crisis and the uncertainty resulting from it profoundly affected organizations' operations as well as individuals – both employed and independent - across the sector. The COVID-19 pandemic is having a significant impact on people with obesity as they struggle to manage their weight and mental health. (Henderson, Online, 2020) The pandemic has had many impacts on global health beyond those caused by the COVID-19 disease itself.

## MAIN SECTION

In a little more than a year since the virus emerged, the Covid-19 has upended day-to-day lives across the globe. The pandemic has changed how we work, learn and interact as social distancing guidelines have led to a more virtual existence, both personally and professionally. (Infectious Disease, Online, 2020)

Probably, we have never thought we will able to see the blue sky from our city buildings, or get that much time to spend with our family and making food with the whole family. Maybe, we have never thought we will care that much for our personal hygiene; sanitizing hands every hour, maintaining distance from other persons and wearing masks for hours. The person who doesn't even wash his hands after coming back to home now takes a bath before even touching anything of the house.

Students who were always busy in their day to day schedule; the school then tuitions, sports club, and after the day full of tensions and exhaustion, the nights with eyes on mobile phones. Now they are getting time to search for themselves, creating new interests and hobbies. Also, our

parents who were busy in their whole day and sleep without having a conversation at night. They are now getting time to spend with each other exploring love.

Now meeting with handshake and hugs is no more in fashion. Some hands turned to be very intelligent that they are now making the tastiest coffee on this planet. Some learn to cook for themselves. Some learn to make fast food and some even turned out to be a chef. Many turn out to work from home, and they even work while they are on their bed. Yes, this is true that work from home is not that easy but every change requires a time to be adapted. (Chandwani, Online, 2020)

The COVID-19 pandemic has had far-reaching economic consequences beyond the spread of the disease itself and efforts to quarantine it. As the virus has spread around the globe, concerns have shifted from supply-side manufacturing issues to decreased business in the services sector. The pandemic caused the largest global recession in history, with more than a third of the global population at the time being placed on lockdown.

The coronavirus pandemic has reached almost every country in the world. Its spread has left national economies and businesses counting the costs, as governments struggle with new lockdown measures to tackle the spread of the virus. (Jones, Palumbo & Brown, Online, 2021) While there is no way to tell exactly what the economic damage from the global COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic will be, there is widespread agreement among economists that it will have severe negative impacts on the global economy. Early estimates predicated that, should the virus become a global pandemic, most major economies will lose at least 2.9 percent of their gross domestic product (GDP) over 2020. This forecast was already restated to a GDP loss of 4.5 percent. To put this number in perspective, global GDP was estimated at around 87.55 trillion U.S. dollars in 2019 - meaning that a 4.5 percent drop in economic growth amounts to almost 3.94 trillion U.S. dollars in lost economic output. (Szmigiera, Online, 2021)

Many people have lost their jobs or seen their incomes cut. Unemployment rates have increased across major economies. Millions of workers have also been put on government-supported job retention schemes as parts of the economy, such as tourism and hospitality, have come to a near standstill. The numbers of new job opportunities is still very low in many countries. Some experts have warned it could be years before levels of employment return to those seen before the pandemic. Most of countries are now in recession. The IMF estimates that the global economy shrunk by 4.4% in 2020. (Jones et al., Online, 2021)

The near-total closures of schools, universities, and colleges worldwide has reshaped nearly every aspect of normal life. More than a billion students were thrown into very uncertain waters as the pandemic put a halt to in-person classes and courses. From primary schools to PhD programs, students across the globe are experiencing the altering effects of coronavirus as classrooms move online. Both students and teachers have been burdened with the task of adapting to an online learning environment seemingly overnight. As well, many parents have been forced to take on the role of IT technician, teacher, and babysitter as kids remain stuck at home. (Christie, Online, 2020) Neither colleges nor students were prepared for prolonged campus closures. Both face a variety of challenges going forward. Due to subsequent coronavirus outbreaks, some institutions have already been forced to close a second time. (Dennon, Online, 2021)

Travel is still far from taking off. The travel industry has been badly damaged, with airlines cutting flights and customers cancelling business trips and holidays. New variants of the virus - discovered only in recent months - have forced many countries to introduce tighter travel restrictions. (Jones et al., Online, 2021)

Globally, the tourism industry contributed to \$8.9 trillion to the global GDP in 2019 equalling a contribution of 10.3%. It is also to note that 1 in 10 jobs around the world is in tourism, equalling 330 million jobs. However, the strong historical growth has been halted in 2020 amid the global Covid-19 pandemic. With airplanes on the ground, hotels closed and travel restrictions implemented, travel and tourism became one of the most affected sectors since the very start of the virus spread.

Countries all over the world applied travel restrictions to limit the coronavirus spread. In 2020, and with the severe impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic, international tourism went down by 22% in Q1 and by 65% in the first half of 2020 when compared with 2019 figures. The lockdown due to the pandemic has affected the tourism industry across the globe, and the hotel sector is among the hardest hit. (Aref, Online, 2020)

The COVID-19 pandemic has upended all areas of life - and sports is no exception. Social distancing measures, brought in to limit the spread of coronavirus, have had a significant effect on sporting fixtures. Every aspect of sport has been affected, from the athletes themselves to media coverage. COVID-19 has also upended the sporting calendar, with professional leagues everywhere suspending their activities to limit the spread of the virus. Even the Summer Olympics, typically one the world's most-watched sporting broadcasts, has been pushed back a year. The cancellation

and postponement of major sporting events was a direct blow to the scores of athletes. (Hall, Online, 2020)

The film industry is vulnerable due to the pandemic. The global entertainment industry includes various entertainment venues such as online video streaming, amusement parks, theatrical productions, sports, live events, and trade shows. (Media and Entertainment, Online, 2020) With the temporary closure of film and television production around the world, the pandemic presents the issue of having a finite amount of new creative projects available to be released. Though streaming platforms like Netflix continue to release content that had previously been scheduled to air before COVID-19 was classified as a global pandemic, the indefinite postponement of new and ongoing film productions posits the possibility of exhausting new content before reopened sets can catch up. (McMackon, Online, 2020)

Unsurprisingly, the pandemic has triggered a wave of mental health issues. Whether it's managing addiction, depression, social isolation or just the general stress that's resulted from COVID-19, we're all feeling it. And there's certainly been added stress for families who have had to deal with remote learning situations for school-aged children. (Infectious Disease, Online, 2020)

The abrupt closures of fitness clubs, restaurants, and places of employment alter eating and physical activity habits. The fear of developing COVID-19, in addition to stay-at-home orders, may provoke added feelings of loneliness and isolation, further exacerbating stress and anxiety. COVID-19 stay-at-home orders resulted in a dramatic increase in unhealthful lifestyle changes. There were significant increases in sedentary leisure behaviors, declines in physical activity, and increases in anxiety and weight gain, especially in people with obesity. (Uildriks, Online, 2020)

## CONCLUSION

Over one year into this pandemic, we have gained a lot of experience. We know what works to slow or stop the spread of the virus. Wearing masks, frequent hand washing, and physical distancing stops transmission, and saves lives. We also know that targeted social measures such as lockdowns and stay-at-home orders are effective in stopping transmission, especially if there is community support, though they do have significant economic and social impacts. There is no easy way out of this pandemic and unfortunately, it is far from over. Yet, as we move into our second year of living with COVID-19, additional tools for fighting the virus bring hope. We are now optimistic about the development of new, safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines. (Kasai, Online, 2021)

More than 841 million vaccine doses have been administered worldwide, equal to 11 doses for every 100 people. There is already a stark gap between vaccination programs in different countries, with many yet to report a single dose. While vaccine doses remain relatively scarce globally, most countries have focused their early vaccination efforts on priority groups like the clinically vulnerable; people in their 60s, 70s and older; and front-line workers, like doctors and nurses. Less wealthy countries are relying on a vaccine-sharing arrangement called Covax, which aims to provide two billion doses by the end of the year. 83 percent of shots that have gone into arms worldwide have been administered in high- and upper-middle-income countries. Only 0.1 percent of doses have been administered in low-income countries. (Holder, Online, 2021)

Current evidence shows that the existing COVID-19 vaccines are effective at stopping disease, especially severe disease, but we still don't know if they prevent people from becoming infected with the virus. This means that being vaccinated will stop us getting very sick, but it may not prevent us from passing the virus onto others. It is also the case that while these new vaccines are very promising, no vaccine is 100% effective.

In countries with outbreaks and ongoing community transmission, maintaining physical distance, hand hygiene, staying home when sick, avoiding crowded spaces – all the behaviors we have been promoting for the last one year – must be continued. In countries that have managed to suppress or even contain COVID-19 transmission, there is still always a risk of future outbreaks. We must continue to prepare for this scenario, and be ready to activate a targeted response whenever necessary.

And even as the number of people vaccinated increases, we must not let down our guard. We know that everyone, everywhere is tired of the pandemic. But no country is safe until every country is safe. Until the vast majority of every country's population has been vaccinated, we must use or be ready to use the measures we know are effective at slowing or stopping the spread of COVID-19. (Kasai, Online, 2021) US science officials such as Anthony Fauci have suggested it will take 70 per cent to 85 per cent coverage of the population for things to return to normal. (Randall, Online, 2021)

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