

nCOVID-19: Social and Economic Impacts

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Abstract—The Novel Coronavirus Disease (nCOVID) has grabbed the whole world recently since its origin in Wuhan city of China. There is very dire consequences the whole world is going through because of nCOVID. The unprecedented nCOVID and associated consequences pushed the public health system in the crisis. Undoubtedly, it has affected almost all countries of the world. Nevertheless, hardly a few country it has spared from its dire consequences in terms social and economical losses. However, it is worth of observing that some of the positive consequences are also results of this pandemic. Consequently, this paper discusses the pros and cons of the pandemic from various perspective such as social and economical impacts on human lives and livelihoods.

Keywords—nCOVID-19, pandemic, impacts of Coronavirus

nCOVID-19: A GLOBAL CRISIS

Originated from the Wuhan city of China in December 2019, the novel Coronavirus Disease (nCOVID-19) or novel coronavirus (nCoV) or Coronavirus Disease (COVID) has now spread to almost all the countries of the World [1-2]. The

novel coronavirus has been found in some people with pneumonia-like symptoms [3]. Having Pneumonia like symptoms, a cluster of such symptoms was identified in Wuhan city which was later recognized as coronavirus disease on 31st December 2019 [4]. The news regarding the outbreak of coronavirus was published by the World Health Organization (WHO) for the first time on 5th January 2020. The biggest shock to the world was given on 22nd January 2020 through the report of the WHO which confirms the human-to-human transmission of COVID [5]. Looking at the exponential growth rate of the spread, intensity of severity, and inaction, the COVID-19 was declared as a global pandemic by WHO on 11th March 2020 [6]. The statistics depicting the growth rate in the total number of cases based on the WHO region is as shown in Fig.1 [7]. This pandemic has put the global health system into a crisis within a span of about three months [8]. It has been investigated that the human-to-human transmissions of nCOVID-19 are mostly occurred due to personal contact, droplet, contaminated things (fomites) [9]. Further, having no proper vaccination and proved the efficacy of drugs so far, the only solution to contain the virus was social distancing. Thus, most of the countries have started to follow the principle of lockdown to stop the spread as well as to contain the coronavirus.

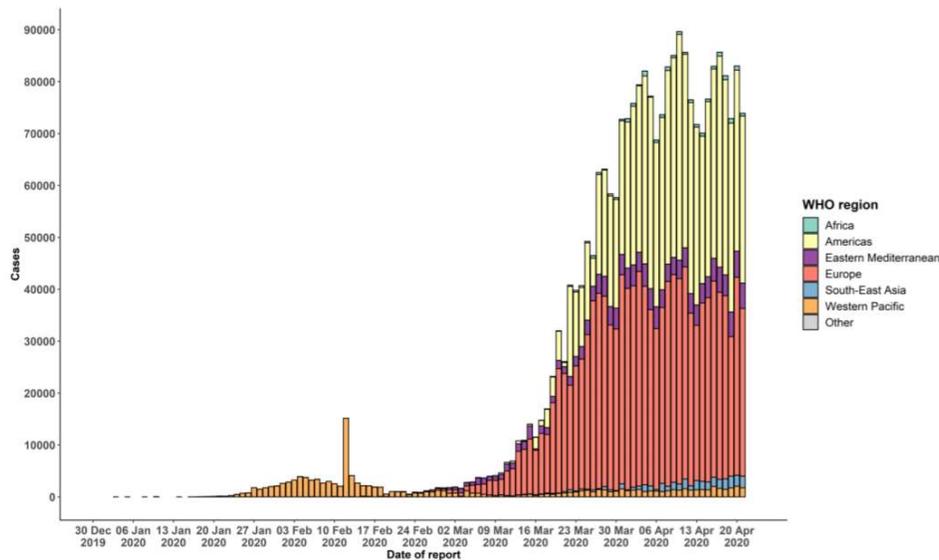


Fig.1. Statistics depicting the exponential growth rate on nCOVID-19 [1].

Like most of the countries in the world, India has also adopted social distancing through the lockdown in order to save the country from the dire consequences of the novel coronavirus. The first case of nCOVID-19 was detected in India on 30th January 2020 and the number of cases rose to 45 by March 22, 2020 [10]. Looking at the severity of the coronavirus and learning the lessons from the mistakes of the other countries in the world, India has immediately implemented a 21 days of national lockdown on 24th March followed by a voluntary public curfew of 14 hours on 22nd March 2020. With still increasing in the number of cases across several states of the country, India has decided to extend the lockdown up to 3rd May 2020 (by 19 days) with conditional relaxation after 20th April 2020 on 14th April 2020. This was indeed the world's longest lockdown so far. India's step for containment of this pandemic was applauded by the world community including WHO. For example, WHO's chief executive director praised India by recognizing its tremendous capacity to deal with such viruses [11]. However, some intellectuals are worried about the consequences of the unprecedented lockdown which has affected micro and small enterprises, informal workers, farmers, and the self-employed [12-13], etc. Moreover, the lockdown has also brought many positive changes such as giving people the opportunity to spend time with family, directly contribute to the lives of poor by providing food, giving people an opportunity to work voluntarily for social services. Not only this but also, the lockdown has immensely contributed

in improving the environmental condition. In this article, a state-of-the-art social and economical impacts have been presented.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT

The ongoing nCOVID-19 has exacerbated the health crisis in almost all countries across the world. In response to this pandemic, the lockdown has been implemented in many countries to follow the strict rule of social distancing. The countries are trying very hard to flatten the curve. However, as shown in Fig.1, one can infer that many countries have failed to achieve this.

The nCOVID-19 has put the health system across the globe into a crisis. However, it is much more than merely a health crisis. In fact, it includes both social and economical crisis. Therefore, to answer the relevance of the lockdown in response to contain nCOVID-19, we need to analyze the lockdown from following two perspectives:

- Social impact and
- Economical impact

A. Social impact

The social impact is regarded as the impact on the society or community or region at large resulting due to deliberated action.

To understand the social impact of lockdown imposed to contain the spread of nCOVID-19, we need to analyze the social impact of nCOVID-19 through the pros and cons as discussed below [14-

16]. For easily understanding, it has also been graphically represented in Fig.2.

1) Pro: The following positive impacts can be extracted from the lockdown imposed to contain nCOVID-19.

- People can spend time with their family, friends, and relatives.
- People can utilize this free time to follow their hobbies for which they might not be having time during their regular professional lives.
- Restrictions on public and private transportation have resulted in less death due to road accidents.
- Environmental pollution has been significantly decreased due to restrictions imposed on transportation, manufacturing, and other polluting sectors.

- Animals are less afraid as seen to roam freely on road.

2) Cons: The current ongoing crisis and its measures have impacted society negatively in the following manner:

- Increased domestic violence
- Resulted in gender inequality
- Causing difficulty due to restricted transportation for people with urgent needs such as medical needs.
- Hitting farmers hard due to lack of agricultural produce management
- Causing insufficiency of foods available for stray animals.
- The threat to the life of the marginalized people.

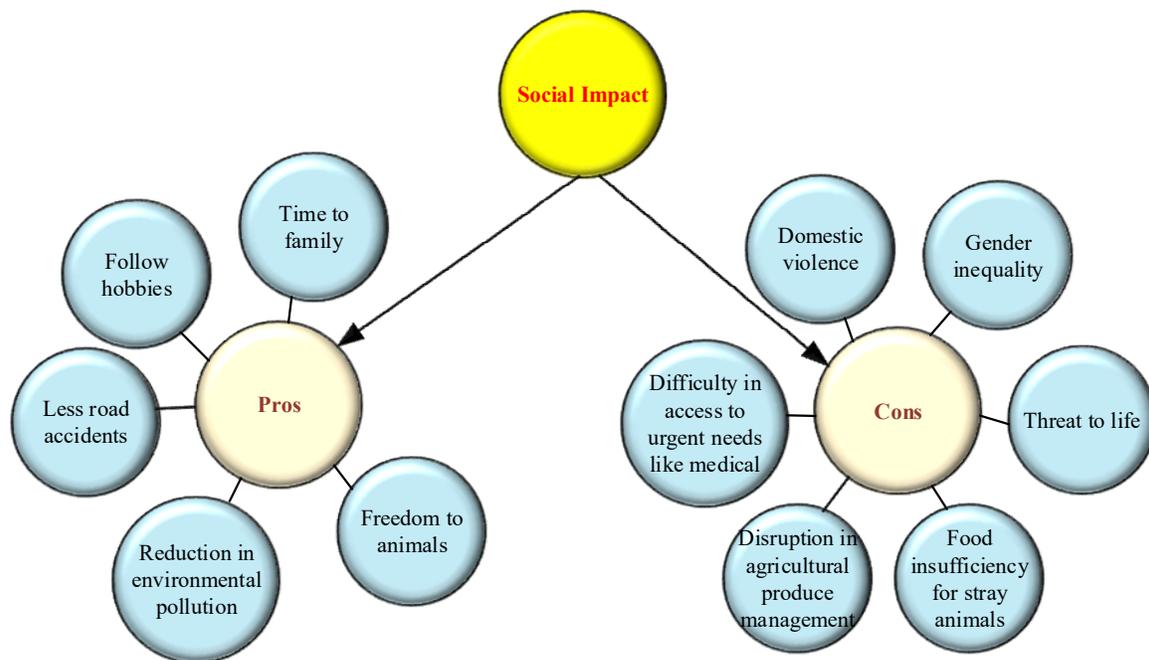


Fig.2. Social impact of lockdown imposed due to nCOVID-19.

B. Economical Impact

According to World Economic Outlook (WEO) published by IMF recently in April 2020, the world has entered into the worst economic recession so far, even more worse than the recession of 2008-09 [17]. The unemployment rate has increased to the highest since the last 50 years according to [18]. The impact of lockdown imposed in response to nCOVID-19 is digramatically shown in Fig.3.

1) Pro: It is very difficult for us to find out the pros of lockdown on economic. However, the following positive impacts can be extracted from the lockdown imposed to contain nCOVID-19.

- Due to restricted transportation, saving in energy which is rapidly depleting.

2) *Cons*: This year, the world economy has seen the slowest growth since the recession 2008-09 according to IMF. One of the major reasons for the slowest growth is the lockdown that is imposed due to nCOVID-19. The lockdown has drastically affected the economy resulting in a financial crisis. Some of the major causes of financial plunging resulting from a lockdown are summarized as follows.

- Disruption in the demand-supply chain system.
- Restriction on all industries including manufacturing, telecommunication, aerospace, construction, etc.
- Travel restriction.
- Restriction on transportation.
- Restriction on retail trade, businesses, and the hospitality sector

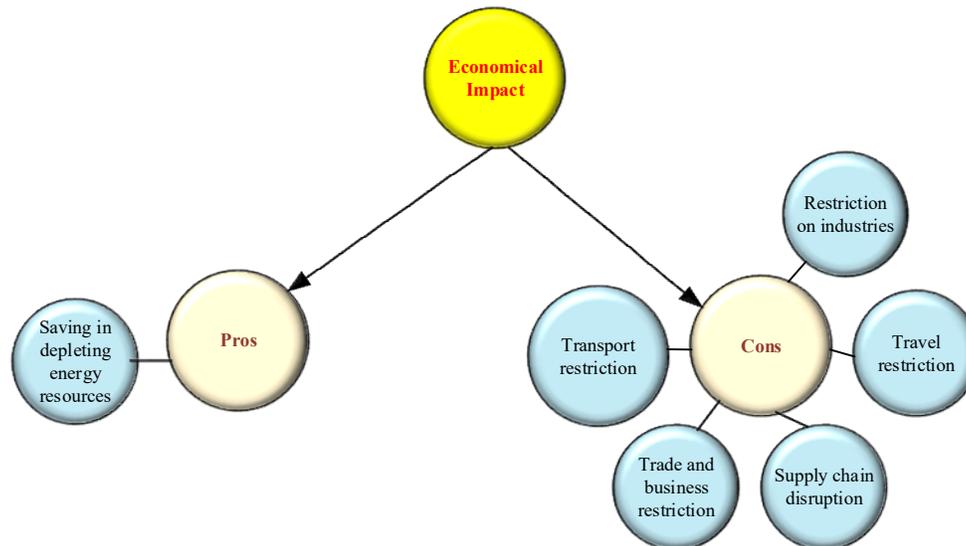


Fig.3. Economic impact of lockdown imposed due to nCOVID-19.

The hardest impact of the lockdown will be on daily wage workers, medium and small enterprises, and self-employed. Particularly, the social and economical impact of the coronavirus is more on poor people because:

- Unavailability of basic needs such as shelter and foods.
- Insufficient sanitization facility.
- More chances of spread as densely populated families.
- Less immunity system due to improper nutrition.
- Rare access to basic medical facilities.
- Least attention of the governments towards them as compared to the rich class of the society.
- They largely work on informal sectors which are hit hard by the impact of lockdown due to nCOVID-19.

In a nutshell, we can comment that the social and economical impacts are indispensable, and must be

viewed as interrelated to decrease the negative impact of lockdown due to nCOVID-19 as minimum as possible.

The active cases of coronavirus has crossed the mark of 2.6 millions, and has taken the lives of more than 1.86 lakhs people across the globe as reported by the WHO as on 23rd April 2020. Furthermore, it has affected more than billions of lives directly or indirectly socially and economically. It seems that most of the countries have completely failed in saving lives and economics from this pandemic.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSS

Finally, one questions come to our mind. Was lockdown necessary? And if so, was it necessary to have the longest nationwide lockdown in India? Both questions will lead to many arguable answers. In this article, we have given the best possible efforts to discuss the impact of the lockdown which was taken in response to contain the spread of deadly disease i.e., novel coronavirus-19. The readers are encouraged to systematically analyze the impact from the social and economical perspective in terms of pros and cons that are

presented in this paper in order to answer both of the questions.

By looking at the trend of active cases of coronavirus in India, one can infer that India has not even successful in flattening the curve of coronavirus active cases so far. Hence, a few more question can intrigue the readers in this context. Will the nationwide lockdown end? If so, will nCOVID-19 be contained forever? The time will only tell the answers to these questions precisely.

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