The Global Effects Of The COVID-19 Pandemic

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Human, Economic, and Social Costs of COVID-19

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic resonated across the globe like a seismic tear, upheaving normalcy and paralyzing the whole world with the fear of uncertainty. While the privileged adapted to working from the space of their homes, ordering food online, and taking up the responsibility of homeschooling their kids, a whole other segment of the world's population had no choice but to be exposed and vulnerable to the full-blown impact of this virus.

Among the wide-ranging negative impacts of COVID-19, the greatest one by far is the loss of human life and the unparalleled challenge and pressure it has placed on our healthcare system. It has resulted in a complete devastation of life as we know it and has jolted the world economy, risking millions of people to become victims of extreme poverty due to loss of livelihood. Restrictions on trade, border closures and extreme preventive measures have impacted businesses locally as well as internationally. With the lockdown limitations and social distancing becoming the new norm, the social lives of people have been adversely impacted, too. Quarantines, school closures, travel restrictions, and the closure of public spaces like shopping malls, restaurants, theatres, and stadiums have taken the fun out of our lives, forcing us to distance ourselves from our friends and extended families.

The psychological aspects of this pandemic are wide-ranging, and just like me, people all over the world have experienced an extreme fear of contracting the virus; the fear is not just limited to our own lives but the lives of our loved ones as well. A general feeling of stress, increased anxiety, depression and uncertainty – all have been experienced at one time or another during this pandemic. In my opinion, the part played by the media coverage has resulted in creating mass hysteria as the level of anxiety elevates every time one hears the mortality numbers escalating. Post-traumatic stress disorder is another psychological condition that is becoming prevalent among the masses.

Despite these negative impacts, many people highlight the positive influences of this pandemic as well. The deceleration of our life pace has blessed us with an opportunity to spend ample time indoors with our loved ones and has helped many of us realize the importance of these relationships. With more people spending time at home and with travel restrictions imposed, reports have indicated an improvement in air quality as well as the overall environment. Moreover, better hygiene practices have become a personal preference as well. The pandemic has also helped us not only envision but give life to a digitalized world.

Despite facing these difficult times, I feel highly optimistic that this virus and all that it has brought will finally pass, and we will persevere. I am hopeful that once this pandemic is over, we will not forget the valuable lessons we learned from it and continue being supportive and mindful of each other, valuing the one thing that matters the most – human life.

COVID 19 – Sustainability in Hospitality, Recreation and Tourism

With the pandemic impacting people all over the world and new strains of the virus emerging in various countries, travel restrictions have been imposed, rendering tourism one of the hardest-hit sectors. This passage reflects the early-pandemic situation in 2020–2021, when international tourism collapsed and vaccine rollouts created initial hopes of recovery. It should be read as a historical account rather than a description of current travel conditions. The blow to the tourism industry is considerably softened by the restoration of domestic tourism, and governments are coming up with plans to sustain and recover this sector (OECD, 2021).

It is highly important to rethink tourism in order to create a sustainable industry in the upcoming future. The key priority areas for governments in this regard are firstly to restore the confidence among masses about travelling and secondly to support the survival and adaptation of this industry in today's world. With the sanctions of social distancing becoming more prevalent, the hospitality industry, such as hotels and restaurants, have modified their services from dining in to take away to ensure non-face-to-face services, although, in the longer run, this can not be the sole solution to be relied upon. Still, the masses are becoming accustomed to this new norm, and with COVID-19, it is expected that both face-to-face and non-face-to-face services will remain available (Jeon, Choi, & Sung, 2021).

With a change in consumer behaviour, the tourism and hospitality industry must rethink sustainable management strategies and reduce uncertainty by the provision of clear information, strengthing customer support to overcome gaps within this sector. The future success of this industry is not the responsibility of an individual. Rather, strengthened cooperation within and between countries, as well as public and private sectors, would result in the flourishing of domestic as well as international tourism. Although medium-term solutions can be provided through flexible policies, it is imperative to learn from these crises and identify the shortcomings and preparedness issues faced in order to better prepare for the future. Governments should focus on long-term solutions that capitalise on the benefits of digitalization (OECD, 2021).

In order to ensure sustainability in the hospitality, recreation and tourism industry, the three important steps highlighted are firstly, to induce confidence among travellers through safe travel guidelines; secondly, to keep track of the new trends and factors that influence consumer demand to remain better equipped; and thirdly, remain committed to the process of sustainability by the provision of a more inclusive experience by leveraging this newfound interest in longevity (Pangestu,

2021). At the time the essay was written, the sector's recovery remained uncertain; the statement should therefore be read in its 2021 context.

References

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