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Impact of Covid-19 pandemic on of the world

Wpływ pandemii Covid-19 na świat

Keywords: Covid-19, coronavirus, pandemic

Słowa kluczowe: Covid-19, koronawirus, pandemia

Abstract

The author analyzes a number of issues regarding the impact of Covid-19 on societies in Africa, Asia, the USA and Europe. Author describes the expanded of the coronavirus and the effects of the pandemic. Particular attention is paid to analyzes economic, political, social and psychosocial problems of selected countries.

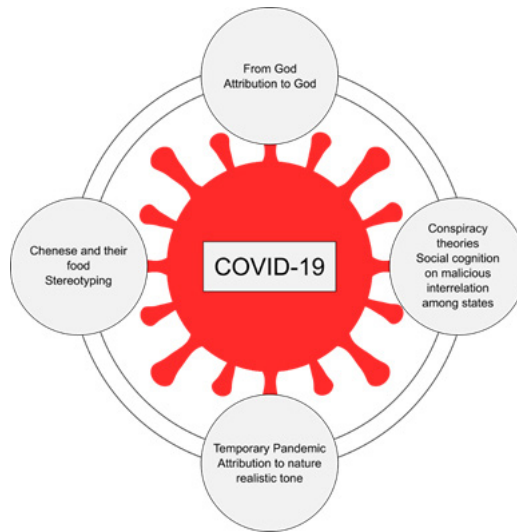
Streszczenie

Autor analizuje szereg problemów dotyczących wpływu Covid-19 na społeczeństwa w Afryce, Azji, USA i Europie. Opisuje rozprzestrzenianie się koronawirusa i skutki pandemii. Szczególną uwagę zwraca na analizę problemów ekonomicznych, politycznych, społecznych, a także psychospołecznych wybranych państw.

Disinformation and psycho-social effects of COVID-19

Figure 1

Main themes about the Community Perception on COVID-19¹.



Dünya Doktorları Derneği, *Psycho-social effects of covid-19 – situation analysis report of MHPSS needs of Syrian refugees in Turkey*, „Situation Analysis Report”, Istanbul 2020, p. 11.

Upon the announcement of the unprecedented Covid-19 pandemic, everyone perceived it in different ways until they made different comments on the pandemic. The figure above shows the outcome of an experiment conducted by Dünya Doktorları.

The experiment was conducted on Syrian refugees in Turkey. Then, it was confirmed that there are four main themes that participants used as the explanatory model of the perception of Covid-19 in their communities. As a result of the experiment, 43% proved that coronavirus is the effect of the Chinese and their food. As an explanation, the tech subjects confirmed that China is known to eat dirty food hence causing the virus².

¹ D. Doktorları Derneği, *Psycho-social effects of covid-19 – situation analysis report of MHPSS needs of Syrian refugees in Turkey*, „Situation Analysis Report”, Istanbul 2020, p. 11.

² Ibidem, p. 18–31.

To illustrate, one of the tech subjects by the name of Istanbul said that coronavirus came from the dirty streets of China and Chinese people. He added that they generated the virus. Normally, the world is made of more than two billion followers who possess a strong belief in the doctrines of a religion. It is in that perspective that up to 33% of the tech subjects from the same experiment proved coronavirus is the attribution to God and supernaturality. They specified that this is the effect of daily sins that we, people, commit. Generally, individuals have their own perceptions in regards to a certain situation depending on their beliefs. It is indeed based on the faith of so many human beings that 33% out of 98 people that participated in the very experiment said the coronavirus is an attribution from God or supernaturality³.

Another identified theme made 26%, a less mentioned theme compared to others clarified caused by machination theories. The tech subjects specified the pandemic was a plan for political interest. „This is not a natural thing; America did this. This is a game of the United States”⁴. Referring to that response to how the pandemic came, it is specified that people believe the pandemic was made. Another fact regarding this was mentioned by Izmir where he mentioned that the virus was made by European countries, China, Russia, and America. He added that he believed this was a plan for their interests. The fourth theme revealed that coronavirus was a temporary crisis that appeared as a pandemic⁵.

Symptoms of Covid-19

Most commonly, fever, dry cough, and tiredness are known to be the symptoms of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, a study made by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention proved that other symptoms mostly appear 2–14 days after exposure to the virus. This includes, but is not limited to, shortness of breath (or difficulty breathing), fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea. Apart from these symptoms, researchers also highlighted some of the signs that require emergent medical attention in case of any notice to a patient. The signs include trouble breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, inability to wake or stay awake as well bluish lips or face⁶.

³ Ibidem.

⁴ Ibidem.

⁵ Ibidem.

⁶ R. Rabadan, *Understanding Coronavirus*, Cambridge 2020, pp. 1–30.

Covid-19 symptoms are similar to the ones of flu. Thus, this makes it hard to tell what a person is suffering from alone until a patient goes for a test to confirm a diagnosis. As a matter of fact, new symptoms were proved to be of Covid-19 from the study of more than 1 million people in England between June 2020⁷. Researchers highlighted that chills, loss of appetite are additional symptoms of a patient living with Covid-19. Up to 7% (that is 7 out of 98 tech subjects) mentioned those symptoms were due to Covid-19. Differently, researchers found that Covid-19 seems to spread easily and cause more serious symptoms and signs than flu did.

The Unbelievable Spread of Coronavirus Trembled the Scientists Around the Globe

On the 31st of December 2019, the world got the bad news that a cluster of cases of pneumonia outbreak in Wuhan, which is located in Hubei Province, and it was reported by the Municipal Health Commission of China. People could not know the tyranny of this virus to the extent that this pandemic attacked a great number of people that the government and other health institutions did not expect before. The World Health Organization set up a team to investigate this virus on 1st January 2020 where they published their first news about the outbreak of Coronavirus on 5th January 2020⁸. At that time, the World Health Organization did not report any death cases. People kept on doing their daily routines because the government together with scientists had not yet warned them about the contamination of coronavirus. WHO and china health scientists got the results from their investigation that this virus is in the large family of ailments that are known to engender the illness aligned with cold to more dreadful diseases acting as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome. Coronavirus shocked the world with its beyond belief circulation from one individual to another, and from one village to another.

Due to many new coronavirus cases found in Wuhan day by day, China announced the first coronavirus lockdown on 23 January 2020 in Wuhan, the city that people believed coronavirus had started in. This lockdown has done nothing to prevent the spread of coronavirus as this measure was not effective to stop the

⁷ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/condition-sanddiseases/bulletins/coronaviruscovid19infectionsurveyypilot/9april2021> [access: 28.03.2020].

⁸ <https://www.who.int/news/item/29-06-2020-covidtimeline> [access: 28.03.2020].

virus which was circulating in other neighboring cities⁹. According to BBC News, the government of China mandated all citizens to wear masks and respect social distancing in all public places after coronavirus became severe in all states¹⁰. Due to the fear of information that could awaken the world about this virus, China tried to avoid the spread of information where they ordered the doctors to keep silent and never dare warning people about it. China has determined to combat coronavirus to the end even though the number of coronavirus cases increased by 89,736, and the death cases escalated to 4,636. This number has not disheartened the government of China to cope with the challenges caused by Covid-19 and finding a sustainable solution for this inconsistent problem.

A study conducted by Associate Professor of Biology at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth has divulged that Covid-19 microbes can proliferate within 5 minutes to 50 minutes. It is this secret about Covid-19 that the world did not know before engaging themselves in the process of taking the preventive measure of putting the world into lockdown before the citizens got infected. In France like in other countries, schools and other public places have been temporarily closed from March 2020 until December 2020. This pandemic didn't shake the economy of France only but of the whole world.

How Coronavirus Traveled the World

The preventive measures of Covid-19, in China, were not effective enough to immobilize this pandemic in one country. Thereafter, China was accused of letting Covid-19 spread in other countries. This caused segregation between the western countries and China. According to BBC News, the first new positive case of Covid-19 was a French, a native of the central city of Tours who appeared on 19 December. On 16 March 2020, Emmanuel Macron declared the compulsory home lockdown for fifteen days to start from the next day¹¹. This preventive measure was taken after 949 confirmed occurrences in a whole country. France implemented the measures of putting the whole nation into a lockdown, mandatory face-mask, and social distancing to slow down the spread of the virus which gave positive results. In addition to that, the French Premier Minister announced

⁹ *China's response to COVID-19: a chance for collaboration*, „The Lancet”, 10.04.2021, Vol. 397, p. 1325.

¹⁰ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-52015486> [access: 12.02.2020].

¹¹ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-55449528> [access: 26.12.2020].

that France already ordered many rapid test kits to increase the screening capacity by 30,000 tests per day in April, 60,000 in May, and 100,000 in June¹². Though France is known as a developed country, citizens experienced a shortage of masks as French could produce eight million masks per week whereas the consumers needed 40 million masks. „Some people thought that lockdown had nothing to do with the pandemic only increasing the problem of poverty and health-related, the new infections are lower than when the government ordered the last lockdown,” said Health Minister Olivier Veran¹³. All countries around the world including France put their focus on protecting people with special situations, such as homeless individuals, migrants, and unaccompanied people because they are exceptionally vulnerable to the virus.

The pandemic of Coronavirus did not stop in France but kept spreading all over other countries of Europe, especially Italy which still has the footprint of the pandemic. According to the study of the Italian National Cancer Institute, Covid-19 reached Italy in September 2019 despite that the first official test of Covid-19 was revealed on February 21. Based on those results revealed by the Italian Scientists, Covid-19 might have been circulating in the country even before it was found in China. The World Health Organization announced the unknown pneumonia illness before the first news of the Covid-19 outbreak was reported in Wuhan. Other shreds of evidence confirm that Italy knew of coronavirus before China with a number of patients whereby 11,6% of 959 who voluntarily got screening trials of cancer developed coronavirus antiserum. According to Worldmeters, Italy had 2,721,879 coronavirus cases with 93,577 deaths and 2,225,519 recovered as of February 15, 2020¹⁴.

Though the government of China was criticized for lacking the commitment to slowing the spread of coronavirus down, it intervened in Italy where thousands of people died every day. China sent a team of 300 Chinese doctors to provide support to Italians in responding to healthcare needs. The number of new coronavirus cases exceeded the capacity of Italian doctors whereby the hospital of Milan needed 500 doctors, more than 1,400 doctors' assistants, and 400 queen-size beds. The Chinese initiative was spooked by some important materials, such as coronavirus test kits and protective garments. China did not support Italy

¹² <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/french-premier-outlines-strategy-to-combat-coronavirus/1783511> [access: 28.03.2020].

¹³ <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/french-premier-outlines-strategy-to-combat-coronavirus/1783511> [access: 28.03.2020].

¹⁴ <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/> [access: 15.02.2020].

only, but also other countries that were in need of support like Spain, Poland, and Greece.

In response to the mysterious spread of Coronavirus, many of the public places, schools, and airports, and other places that allow the communication of people shut their doors to slow the proliferation of Coronavirus in Europe in the early spring of 2020. The scientists around the world joined hands together and focused on discovering Covid-19 vaccines yet the results of their efforts were still unpredictable at the moment. The coronavirus frightened the whole world in general but developing and undeveloped countries had to fall into total despair¹⁵.

The Covid-19 Invaded the United States of America in the Same Month as Wuhan in 2019.

The U.S.A.'s Centers for Disease Control and Prevention revealed that the coronavirus arrived in the U.S. earlier than 2020. This U.S. health Institute examined 7,389 samples of blood donors from the blood collection of the American Red Cross which manifested 106 coronavirus antibodies out of 7,389 from 13 December 2019 to January 2020. However, the first coronavirus case in the U.S. was formally delineated tardier January. From January 2020, the U.S. experienced 27.3 millions of coronavirus cases and 471 thousands of deaths. The United States of America respected the measures of commending the citizens into a lockdown like other countries around the globe. This measure seems to be one of the effective ways governments believed to minimize the rush spread of Covid-19¹⁶.

„However, the United States of America started lockdown at a different time. The state of California and New York went into lockdown on 19 March and 22 March 2020 while Georgia embellished one of the last states to implement the measure of lockdown,” reported BBC news¹⁷. Former President Donald Trump declared to the citizens of the U.S. to limit the movement on 16 March 2020, so the chain of contamination be cut, and new cases should decrease. After 5 days, the World Health Organization talked about the coronavirus upsurge and the coronavirus becoming pervasive.

People threw a lot of criticisms on Donald Trump's administration delay to proclaim the lockdown to all states of the U.S. According to BBC News, Former

¹⁵ J.L. Excler, L. Privor-Dumm, J.H. Kim, *Supply and delivery of vaccines for global health*, „Current Opinion in Immunology”, August 2021, Vol. 71, pp. 13–20.

¹⁶ <https://www.npr.org/sections/coronavirus-live-updates/2020/12/01/940395651/coronavirus-was-in-u-s-weeks-earlier-than-previously-known-study-says?t=1618131621576> [access: 1.12.2020].

¹⁷ <https://www.bbc.com/news/live/world-53399539> [access: 24.02.2020].

President Donald Trump asked for the research conducted on Thursday before looking in on Michigan. He said, „It was so early—It was earlier than anybody thought.” Donald Trump avowed that research conducted was a political pounce on him¹⁸. Again, this research accused the politicians of lacking interest in reinforcing the stay-at-home sequence. The New York town schools shut on the 15th March 2020, one week before the whole city was put in total lockdown. New York became a center of the pandemic where 28,000 people died of coronavirus and 360,000 Covid-19 cases were confirmed. The dreadful increase of coronavirus cases and a large number of coronavirus deaths created a bad relationship between the administration of the United States of America and China where people thought it was the first country to spread coronavirus around the globe.

It Did Not Take Long for Africa to Hear Covid-19 Knocking on Its Gates

On 17 February 2020, Algeria announced the first case of Covid-19 as it was reported by health authorities when an Italian adult was tested positive for coronavirus disease. The second case of Covid-19, in Africa, was reported by the Ministry of Health from Brazzaville, the largest city of Congo on 25 February. It was not surprising for Algeria to be the first country in Africa to test positive Covid-19 because this country has an endless line from China to Algeria¹⁹.

On 13 March 2020, Rwanda announced the first case of Covid-19, an Indian citizen, male. The patient arrived from Mumbai on 08 March 2020, tested positive for coronavirus, and reported himself to a health facility on 13 March 2020. Then, the health facility confirmed the coronavirus case. On 14th March, President Paul Kagame of the Republic of Rwanda advised the citizens of Rwanda to be strong, undisturbed, and remain focused on the most effective measures of keeping themselves safe. President advised the citizens to demonstrate discipline and solidarity as the best way of manifesting the strengths for winning and overcoming difficult challenges²⁰.

¹⁸ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-52757150> [access:22.02.2020].

¹⁹ <https://www.osac.gov/Content/Report/33a2c8a4-3d36-47f9-b076-182272fc424a> [access: 1.06.2020].

²⁰ *IOM East and horn of Africa. Regional strategic preparedness and response plan COVID-19*, Report International Organization for Migration (IOM), 6 April 2020, pp. 31–33; *Protect and Promote Human Capital in a Post-COVID-19 World*, „Rwanda Economic Update”, January 2021, No. 16, pp. 1–17.

On 14th March 2020, all schools and other public places in Rwanda were closed intentionally for the sake of implementing the measures of preventing the spread of coronavirus. Students were encouraged to keep on following online courses or programs which may help them to maintain healthy intellect. Then, some universities continued to provide academic support and programs remotely²¹.

The Rwanda government, together with the participation of citizens, contributed to the prevention of the rush spread of Covid-19. After the first cases of coronavirus, Rwanda did not immediately close the international airports, but all passengers were instructed to test negative for Covid-19 within 120 hours before departure to Kigali. From the beginning of the outbreak of Covid-19, Rwanda has been determined to have a zero-tolerance blueprint for spreading Covid-19 in any way. If you test positive for Covid-19 upon entrance or in the course of your stay in Rwanda, you had to be isolated in a government-run treatment center until you test negative for Covid-19.

Rwanda implemented many measures to cope with the spread of Covid-19 mainly the mandatory stay-at-home in all cities of the nation, compulsory face-masks in every public place, social distancing, washing hands as many times as possible, isolating the tested positive for coronavirus and desensitizing them. Finally, the Rwandan government invested all available resources to keep citizens healthy during the hard time of lockdown where most of the citizens had nothing to do for enhancing their livelihood²².

Rwanda employed several youth volunteers to mobilize all citizens about wearing masks, washing hands, and respecting social dancing, especially in public spaces. In addition to that, Rwanda National Police has used many tactics to prevent the spread of coronavirus whereby arresting and fining all people who fail to comply with the Covid-19 measures. All these means gave the results of reducing the number of deaths caused by Covid-19.

After 7 months in lockdown and schools closed, Rwanda re-examined the situation and decided to allow all the primary and secondary schools to resume their studies in the whole country on November 2, 2020. The Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and Teacher Training Colleges reopened on the

²¹ F. Ndiaye, *The Socio-Economic impact of Covid-19 in Rwanda*, United Nations Rwanda, June 2020, pp. 1–129.

²² D. Ngamije, *Rwanda Health Sector Performance Report 2019–2020*, „Republic of Rwanda. Ministry of Health”, Kigali 2020, pp. 1–20. See: https://www.moh.gov.rw/fileadmin/user_upload/Moh/Publications/Reports/Health_sector_performance_Report_FY_2019-2020.pdf [access: 14.12.2020].

same day. The capital of Rwanda Kigali went back to the second lockdown on 18 January 2021, and this measure was set to slow down the transmission rate of Covid-19. Dr. Mpunga Tharcisse, the Rwandan Minister of State in charge of Primary Healthcare explained that more than 105 cases had passed away following the surge in Covid-19 infections. Within that second lockdown, all gatherings were suspended apart from schools that stayed open in other regions than Kigali. The government restricted the night curfew from 8:00 pm up to 4:00 am. Kigali lockdown prolonged until 8 February 2021, but schools, in the capital, remained closed until further communique. Despite the challenges of COVID-29, Rwanda is determined to combat the virus of Covid-19 until the end²³.

How Rwanda Is Cooperating with the Rest of the World to Provide the Covid-19 Vaccine to Citizens

It was bad news throughout 2020 to avow to the world that scientists were not able to get the Covid-19 vaccine before 18 months. Fortunately, this year, some of the countries invested in the shipments of the Covid-19 vaccine, and it has given the first heavy pounce to reduce the risk and many deaths of coronavirus. The UK has become the first country in the world to provide the Covid-19 vaccine to its citizens. A citizen grandmother, Margaret Keenan, was given the first dose of the vaccine at the University Hospital in Coventry. While officials of different countries want to bring the vaccine in their countries, the United Arab Emirates, Israel, and Bahrain are identified to be the first three countries in the world taking a lead in distributing the Covid-19 vaccines to the citizens. Those were some of the findings of research conducted by Global Data Lab, the British non-profit research organization at the University of Oxford. They found out that the three countries had provided their citizens with the Covid-19 vaccine at a higher rate than the rest of the world²⁴.

As communicated by Dr. Ngamije Daniel, the Minister of Health, Rwanda expects to receive the coronavirus vaccine in the first quarter of 2020. On December 13, Dr. Ngamije marked down that Rwanda had already advanced all requirements to the COVAX framework, accelerating fair and equitable access to Covid-19 vaccines for every country. Then, Rwanda aims to vaccinate 8 million

²³ F. Ndiaye, *The Socio-Economic impact...*, pp. 1–129.

²⁴ D. Ngamije, *Rwanda Health Sector Performance...*, pp. 1–20.

people in two years, according to the Health Minister. In the meantime, be informed that Rwanda is still mobilizing the citizens to respect the preventive measures of coronavirus so that the coronavirus cases remain down²⁵.

Rwanda Takes a Lead to Respond to Covid-19

Since the communication of the Covid-19 outbreak to the world, all countries have tried to actively fight against this pandemic. From Asia to Europe to America to Oceania to Africa, people united themselves to set and comply with preventive measures. A record made by the World Economic Forum highlighted 7 countries that are taking a lead in the prevention of the spread of Covid-19. According to the World Health Organization's analysis, those countries are Thailand, Italy, Mongolia, Mauritius, Uruguay, and Pakistan. „We need to be better prepared for the next pandemic and learn lessons from coronavirus,” said the head of the WHO, Dr. Tedros²⁶. He added that those mentioned countries should offer lessons to the rest of the world.

At the same level as the countries listed above, Rwanda is recognized as the country that has been effectively responding to this pandemic. A study made by Pharmaceutical Technology highlighted that Rwanda has emerged as a clear winner in the fight against Covid-19. Steve Keen, an economist and author, shared a Project Syndicate article, written by Agnes Binagwaho, asserting that Rwanda has been an example of how to deal with the pandemic and safeguard public health.

Nomination of a national crisis of key ministries involved in the response to Covid-19 played a significant role in fighting coronavirus. The nominated committee established a Covid-19 Joint Task Force (JTF) on 9th March 2020 to assure the coordination of the implementation of the preparedness and response plan. In addition to that, close to 2000 members from various sectors work in different areas of interventions to deal with surveillance, contact tracing, lab testing, and case management. The same plan reached all 30 districts of the country under the honor of Mayors. With the support of Germany, two mobile PCR platforms (Thermo Cycler) from Bio-Rad were donated to help Rwanda deal with the pandemic.

²⁵ Ibidem.

²⁶ <https://in.news.yahoo.com/director-general-7-countries-list-080556866.html> [access: 13.10.2020].

Effects of Covid-19 on the World – analysis

Economic Effects Yes, some industries (telecommunication and technology industry) continued operating under this Covid-19 pandemic, but so many people and firms still experience negative impacts of this pandemic in general. Researchers show that the covid-19 crisis materialized by the time the world was experiencing a financial crisis that happened in 2008–2009. The abrupt spread of this pandemic plus the preventive measures that governments took left the development of so many countries down.

Since the pandemic was announced, many income-generating activities shut their doors. Moreover, all governments forced the closure of borders so that infected travelers could not enter a safe country easily. As a result, unemployment rose and was followed by a significant reduction in the demand for goods and services. Lockdowns were announced, and most of the businesses were not able to run their daily operations, thus leading to an economic plummet. A report made by the World Bank showed that the Covid-19 pandemic has spread at a quick speed, infected millions, and brought economic activities to a near-stand-still as countries incorporated tough restrictions on movements to reduce the spread of the virus. This left so many people confused and started thinking if the outburst should go on, if preventive measures including restrictions of movements would be a good act or if the prolific activities that lead to the economy's growth would be stopped temporarily. All of this came in because the whole world is afraid of the high increase of the pandemic.

Social and Psychological Effects

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the social and psychological well-being of the population. For instance, schools were closed and students had worries about the progress of their studies. Family members spent the totality of their time together, and they worried about their future as long as the advancement of the disease remained uncertain. The most exposed groups of people like health workers were more likely to manifest symptoms of distress. In few words, the pandemic has been particularly detrimental to those in the most vulnerable situations like poor people, older people, people with disabilities, youths, and indigenous people.

Normally, sport and entertainment activities contribute to economic and social development. With the Covid-19 outbreak, people could not participate in

their favorite sports activities which required gatherings or spectators as they had to follow strict social distancing. Then, schools had to close as well as the places of worship and stadiums. Every time, there was hope to reopen those places and resume after few weeks, but things did not come as expected. As a result of this, people could not meet and share ideas as usual, hence leading to loneliness and isolation.

Political Effects

As noticed in other domains, Covid-19 caused significant effects on the political domain as well. There came an unexpected crisis, and governments were obliged to set up new plans to fight against the pandemic. Globally, all countries tried to do their best to look for medicines to reduce the pain of people at a high risk of coronavirus yet it was not planned. Additionally, the existence of coronavirus caused negative political relations as one country could blame another to bring the pandemic. Additionally, infrastructures were built and healthcare workers were hired to help teach people how to comply with the Covid-19 preventive measures. All of these activities were not foreseen in 2019-fall and the forecasted budget had to go beyond the limit regardless of the shrinking scope of economic activities.

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