

# Social Impact of Post-Covid-19 Lockdown in Thiruvananthapuram District

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**Abstract** - COVID-19 has heightened human suffering, undermined the economy, turned the lives of billions of people around the globe upside down, and significantly affected the health, economic, environmental and social domains. The current novel coronavirus pandemic started as a simple outbreak in December 2019 from Wuhan, China, and it has now become a global threat. The governments from most of the countries including India have already taken strict precautionary measures to reduce the coronavirus spread such as social distancing, closure of schools, colleges, airports, restaurants, shopping malls, and other places where the people might gather. An increase in the levels of anxiety, aggression, depression, forgetfulness, and hallucinations are possible psychological effects of isolation. Too little is understood of the social impact of the pandemic. To study the social impact of post-COVID-19 lockdown in Kerala from a community perspective. This cross-sectional survey was conducted among 200 families from Thiruvananthapuram districts of Kerala. The present study highlights the positive social changes brought about as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown. Further studies need to be conducted on a larger scale to assess the psycho-behavioral impact of COVID-19 on the wider population.

This study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on the ecological domain, the energy sector, society and the economy and investigate the global preventive measures taken to reduce the transmission of COVID-19. This analysis unpacks the key responses to COVID-19, the efficacy of current initiatives, and summarizes the lessons learnt as an update on the information available to authorities, business and industry. This review found that a 72-hour delay in the collection and disposal of waste from infected households and quarantine facilities is crucial to controlling the spread of the virus. Broad sector by sector plans for socio-economic growth as well as a robust entrepreneurship-friendly economy is needed for the business to be sustainable at the peak of the pandemic. The socio-economic crisis has reshaped investment in energy and affected the energy sector significantly with most investment activity facing disruption due to mobility restrictions. Delays in energy projects are

expected to create uncertainty in the years ahead. This report will benefit governments, leaders, energy firms and customers in addressing a pandemic-like situation in the future.

## INTRODUCTION

The World has been gripped by a pandemic over the first half of 2020. It was identified as a new coronavirus (severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2, or SARS-CoV-2), and later named as Coronavirus Disease-19 or COVID-19 (Qiu et al., 2020). While COVID-19 originated in the city of Wuhan in the Hubei province of China, it has spread rapidly across the world, resulting in a human tragedy and tremendous economic damage. By mid-June, there had been over 8 million cases of COVID-19 globally, with over 436,000 deaths.

Given the rapid spread of COVID-19, countries across the World have adopted several public health measures intended to prevent its spread, including social distancing (Fong et al. (2020). As part of social distancing, businesses, schools, community centers, and non-governmental organization (NGOs) have been required to close down, mass gatherings have been prohibited, and lockdown measures have been imposed in many countries, allowing travel only for essential needs. The goal is that through social distancing, countries will be able to “flatten the curve”, i.e., reduce the number of new cases related to COVID-19 from one day to the next in order to halt exponential growth and hence reduce pressure on medical services (John Hopkins University, 2020a).

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the people might gather. An increase in the levels of anxiety, aggression, depression, forgetfulness, and hallucinations are possible psychological effects of isolation. Too little is understood of the social impact of the pandemic.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19), which has been characterized as a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO), is attacking societies at their core. The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) is a pioneer of sustainable development and the home of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), where each goal finds its space and where all stakeholders can do their part to leave no one behind. UN DESA through the Division for Inclusive Social Development (DISD), monitors national and global socio-economic trends, identifies emerging issues, and assesses their implications for social policy at the national and international levels. To this end, we are a leading analytical voice for promoting social inclusion, reducing inequalities and eradicating poverty.

The COVID-19 outbreak affects all segments of the population and is particularly detrimental to members of those social groups in the most vulnerable situations, continues to affect populations, including people living in poverty situations, older persons, persons with disabilities, youth, and indigenous peoples. Early evidence indicates that the health and economic impacts of the virus are being borne disproportionately by poor people.

If not properly addressed through policy the social crisis created by the COVID-19 pandemic may also increase inequality, exclusion, discrimination and global unemployment in the medium and long term. Comprehensive, universal social protection systems, when in place, play a much durable role in protecting workers and in reducing the prevalence of poverty, since they act as automatic stabilizers. That is, they provide basic income security at all times, thereby enhancing people's capacity to manage and overcome shocks.

Nine areas of long-term societal impact

- Increased importance of local communities
- Low and unstable levels of trust in governance
- Widening geographic inequalities
- Exacerbated structural inequalities

- Worsened health outcomes and growing health inequalities
- Greater awareness of the importance of mental health
- Pressure on revenue streams across of the economy Rising unemployment and changing labour market.
- Renewed awareness of education and skills. Rising unemployment and changing labour market.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Zhu et al. (2020), the first pneumonia case was discovered on December 8, 2019 in a wet market in Wuhan, the capital city of Hubei Province of China. Afterwards, several clusters of patients with such pneumonia were reported throughout late December 2019.

Barro et al. (2020) estimate that, holding everything else constant, the 2.1 percent death rate during the Spanish Influenza pandemic in 1918-1920 would translate to roughly 150 million deaths worldwide (compared to the World's population of 7.5 billion in 2020) during COVID-19 pandemic. The authors also find that, on average, the 2.1 percent death rate corresponds to 6 percent decline in GDP and 8 percent fall in private consumption.

Boissay and Rungcharoenkitkul, 2020. Compared to previous pandemics, COVID-19 has a disproportionate impact on the elderly from a health perspective. The lockdown measures, however, are more global in scope and scale than their predecessors, and they have disrupted international supply chains as well as aggregate demand and consumption patterns. This in turn has led to heightened financial market turbulence and amplified the economic shock. Moreover, greater borrowing and higher debt levels among firms and households during this time make the short-term shocks more potent compared to previous pandemics).

(Lomas, 2020) Telecom operator data are deemed to be more representative compared to location data, as telecom data are not limited to people with smartphones, GPS locator, and history of travel using GPS location.

Studies of pandemics faced over time, such as SARS, Ebola, H1N1, Equine Flu, and the current COVID-19,

show that the psychological effects of contagion and quarantine is not limited on the fear of contracting the virus (Barbisch et al., 2015).

There are some elements related to the pandemic that affect more the population, such as separation from loved ones, loss of freedom, uncertainty about the advancement of the disease, and the feeling of helplessness (Li and Wang, 2020; Cao et al., 2020).

On this line, a significant example is the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) which proposed PhDs in telepsychology, with the aim of training future psychologists in managing the psychological effects of the pandemic through an online psychology service (Baylor et al., 2019)

#### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Social distancing seems to be hitting people even more than the scare of the deadly virus. Humans have evolved to be social creatures and are wired to live in interactive groups. Being isolated from family, friends, and colleagues can be unbalancing and traumatic for most people and can result in short or even long-term psychological and physical health problems. An increase in the levels of anxiety, aggression, depression, forgetfulness, and hallucinations is a possible psychological effect of isolation. People are getting highly restive and agitated in spite of social media connectivity. During the lockdown, more than 300 deaths were reported by the media, with reasons ranging from starvation, suicides, exhaustion, road and rail accidents, police brutality, and denial of timely medical care. Positive changes have also been brought about as a result of Lockdown, in the day-to-day activities of the community. Lockdown has given a golden opportunity for people who hardly got time to spend with their families. The lockdown led to people working from home and spending more time with their parents, spouse, and children. In this research article, we aimed to study the social impact of post-COVID-19 lockdown in Kerala from a community perspective.

#### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the social impact of post-COVID-19 lockdown in Thiruvananthapuram from a community perspective.

#### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

##### Type of Research

This research takes a quantitative approach in identifying the various factors in social impact of post-COVID-19 lockdown.

##### Sources Of Data

###### Primary Data

The research was primarily based on primary data which was collected from 200 respondents from Thiruvananthapuram district.

###### Secondary Data

The information that are relevant for the study is collected from various websites, magazines and articles

##### Sampling techniques

Random sampling techniques was used for this study

##### Sample size

The study information was collected from 200 families in total from the Thiruvananthapuram districts of Kerala

##### Tools for data analysis

The results are presented as percentages analysis method.

#### DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

##### Socio Demographic data of the study population

This study was conducted among 200 respondents in Thiruvananthapuram district, India, to assess the social impact of lockdown. Of the total study participants, there were 100 females (50%) and 100 (50%) males. Nuclear families consisted of 59% (118) of the total study population and joint families consisted of 41% (82). The families under study were divided into four based on the color of the ration cards owned by them. Ration cards are an official document issued by state governments in India to households that are eligible to purchase subsidized food grain from the Public Distribution System (under the National Food Security Act). Ration cards offer identification as well as entitle the holder to a ration of food, fuel, or other goods issued by the Government of India. Of 200 families, 86 families were Above

Poverty line (APL) ration card holders and 112 families were Below Poverty Line (BPL) ration card holders, followed by 65 families holding subsidized card and 19 Antyodaya Anna Yojana cardholders.

Difficulties experienced during the lockdown period  
Social stress resulting from travelling restrictions and social distancing with friends and family has led to anxiety (44%) and fear (46%) being reported by many of the study participants. Overburdening of the public healthcare facilities may have resulted in interruption of the regular immunizations and provision of follow-up care to the patients suffering from other diseases (22.7%). Due to the closure of places of entertainment and leisure, the most common difficulty experienced was boredom (72.9%). Unplanned closure of schools and colleges affected both students and parents due to the loss of academic time in schools and colleges (70.9%). The survey also picked up an increase in the prevalence of domestic violence (13.7%) during the period.

#### Positive social change

Every coin has two faces. With bad comes the good, and positive social changes have been brought about as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown. It has led to an improvement of human and social conditions in the society. With offices and academic institutions locked down, an obligatory shift had to be made towards a realm of online education and working from home (55.4%). People became aware of how important it is to maintain personal hygiene. Right from covering our nose and mouth when we cough and sneeze (75.16%), to sanitizing our hands after touching anything else, we all have had a lifestyle change for the good (90.21%).

#### Positive impact of lockdown life

Although the lockdown has kept people sealed indoors due to the spiraling fear and mass confusion, it seems to have certain positive social effects as well. We all have been so busy in life that many of us may have lost those real, genuine moments we have with our loved ones. The COVID-19 situation has given us a chance to spend time with family (82%). As life has slowed down, we have found ways to stay connected with friends and family, even if it is virtually. Majority of the study participants reported to have spent time with their family indulging in cooking, gardening, and

doing household chores. A good percentage of the study participants also helped as a volunteer for the COVID-19 pandemic response

#### FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The present study was conducted to study the social impact of post-COVID-19 lockdown in the Thiruvananthapuram district, Kerala. The study recorded that 44% of the study participants in Kerala experienced fear and anxiety in the prevailing lockdown conditions. The present study found that 53.7% of the study participants considered media misinformation to be the cause of anxiety. The current study conducted in Thiruvananthapuram revealed the prevalence of domestic violence during the lockdown period to be 13.7%. According to the report of the National Commission for Women India, there has been a two-fold rise in gender-based violence during the lockdown in India. The social confinement, financial worries due to the lockdown, and lack of access to alcohol are some of the factors compounding the situation. However, the actual scenario may be more alarming, as many women from rural areas are too scared to complain due to various sociocultural factors involved. In the present study, the most common positive social change brought about by the lockdown was an improvement in the hygiene practices among the study population (95%).

#### CONCLUSION

This report draws together evidence across a wide range of areas on the societal impact of the pandemic. It shows that COVID-19 has generated a series of social, economic and cultural effects which will have long-term impacts. In particular, the pandemic has exposed, exacerbated and solidified existing inequalities in society. It has also made some individuals and groups living in particular places and communities even more vulnerable than before. However, it is not just a case of the pandemic making existing problems worse. It has also exposed areas of strength, resilience, creativity and innovation. We hope this rich evidence base will prove a useful resource for policymakers, civil society, media and others who are trying to make sense of the changing landscape.

In view of the rapid spread of COVID-19 epidemic, containment of spread and treatment of the infected individuals are the priority concerns at present. Little attention has been given to the social impact of this disease which was evident by the fewer number of studies in this regard. Our study exposes the rising prevalence of domestic violence during the lockdown. The present study also highlights the positive social changes brought about as a result of COVID-19 lockdown. Further studies need to be conducted on a larger scale to assess the psycho-behavioral impact of COVID-19 on the wider population.

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