EFFECTS OF COVID 19 IN OUR SOCIETY

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**INTRODUCTION**

The Covid-19 pandemic is a social and economic crisis with its severe repercussions was being felt across the globe. Many individuals across all works of life have experienced major disruptions to their daily routines. It caused a lot of stress in the world and with all the catastrophes in the real world, scholars and even sociologists looked back on COVID-19 as a true test of humanity.

Many businesses, small and large were closed too, leading to an equivalent of over 255 million full-time jobs lost in 2020 across the world, in terms of working hours, with those worst hit being workers in the informal sector, youth and women

The COVID 19 pandemic gave a rare glimpse at how the healthcare industry, politics, and the economy all interact with one another. It also highlights the severity of existing problems like income disparity, public health concerns, and others that may soon become more widespread. It is therefore crucial to start working out the details of the relevant mitigations strategy so that people can be ready to deal with the consequences of such a severe pandemic in future.

According to Abraham Maslow’s theory, society comprises of many interdependent parts that work harmoniously to achieve a stable environment. Several pillars of society have been mentioned by scholars; however for the purposes of this article only 3 major pillars will be discussed: Economy, education and healthcare. Other pillars that make up a society are the justice system, religion, politics and law, government and culture/arts. Each of these pillars provides essential services required for a well-functioning society and in this case they were hit hard during the pandemic.

**THE ECONOMIC EFFECT OF COVID 19**

When COVID-19 pandemic struck and it sent shocking waves through the world economy and triggered the largest global economic crisis in more than a century. This led to a dramatic increase in inequality within and across countries.

The economic impacts of the pandemic were more severe in emerging economies where income losses caused by the pandemic shows that there were preexisting economic instabilities. Many households and firms were never prepared to withstand an income shock of that magnitude and duration. Statistic shows that, more than 50 percent of households in emerging and advanced economies were not able to sustain basic consumption for more than three months in the event of income losses. On the other hand, small business could not cover more than 55 days of expenses with cash reserves.

The pandemic also cause the closure of millions of small and medium-sized businesses leading to rise in unemployment. This has a multiplier effects as it is estimated that over half of the world's working population could lose their jobs resulting to starvation and malnutrition, as many people were unable to meet their basic needs as food.

Covid-19 also affected international affairs. It is believed that COVID-19 originated in China, and China is also responsible for over 12.2% of the world's total exports; therefore, many countries immediately lost access to vital goods when the Chinese government implemented a mandatory quarantine. Poor and developing countries have relied heavily on China for many of their societal needs, and this dependence was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Global poverty arose for the first time in a generation, and disproportionate income losses among disadvantaged populations led to sharp rise in variation across countries. According to survey data, in 2020 temporary unemployment was higher in 70 percent of all countries for workers who had completed only basic education.

Consequently, the recovery from the crisis will be as uneven as its initial economic impacts, with emerging economies and economically disadvantaged groups needing much more time to recover pandemic-induced losses of income and livelihoods.

**IMPACT OF COVID 19 ON EDUCATION**

Covid-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on the world's educational system. There is a strong belief that education is the greatest equalizer and is one of the ways human beings can get out of poverty. However, since 2020, COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on people’s lives, behavior, ecosystem and symbiotic relations that exist from various perspectives. Ricardo (2020) noted while the Covid-19 crisis has exposed the fragility of Australia’s higher education sector, it has also delivered positive outcomes that will endure long after shcools reopen. Aseey A (2020) stated that in Africa, most activities from social, political and economic stalled due to coronavirus outbreak. In education sector, the situation may never be the same with over 72% of learners were out of their institutions in over 177 countries in April 2020. Given such an abruptness of the situation, students, teachers and administrations were unprepared for this transition and were forced to build emergency remote learning systems almost immediately.

Emergency remote learning came with a lot of limitations. One that was evident is the lack of personal interaction between teacher and student; something that was never practiced in many institutions across the globe. It became simply not possible. However, several countries quickly showed initiative to adopt and improve the remote educational experience by use of but not limited to social media, email, and telephone, post office, broadcasting video lessons via television and using online distance learning platforms.

As much as this was embraced across many countries, statistics show that there were a learning losses and increases in inequality. Disturbingly, these losses were more adversely found to be much higher among students from poor families and whose parents have less education while their counterparts from socioeconomically advantaged families received more parental support with their studies during the school closure period.

This inequality resulting from learning losses has been seen to create even greater long-term challenges such as future declines in employment. In the absence of any intervention, the learning losses arising from the pandemic are likely to have a long-term compounding negative effect on children’s future well-being, limiting access to higher education translating to lower labor market participation, and subsequently lower future earnings.

**IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON HEALTHCARE FACILITIES AND ITS SYSTEM**

In the year March, 2020 over 7.5 billion people on the Earth would not have imagined or predicted the enormous impact of COVID-19. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the first identifiable case of COVID-19 was discovered in December 2019 in the Wuhan province of China, and the disease was declared a global emergency on January 30, 2020.

A Haileamlak (2021) stated that COVID-19 pandemic has affected nearly all sectors directly or indirectly, but the worse crisis is on the already overloaded health systems in many countries across the globe. Health service delivery in many health facilities was impacted owing to the fact that there was a steady spread of the virus across all settings. Therefore, it posed a major challenge on health human resource management, facility utilization and medical supply management.

The disruptions in health service delivery both preventative and curative services pressurized the health system and stretched its beyond limits. This therefore exposed significant gaps in the health system. Essential services were delayed posing a significant risk of indirect morbidity and mortality rates. The general public was no longer able to make follow-ups and care visits due to the fear and anxiety they experienced during the pandemic waves.

The COVID-19 challenge has since passed a strong message to the world on the need of building resilient and sustainable health system. This will be achieved through:

* Strong investment to strengthen the health systems,
* Health workforce development,
* Creating a decent working conditions,
* Providing training and equipment, especially the personal protective equipment and occupational safety.

Iyengar (2020) concluded that human crisis like COVID-19 pandemic has offered many opportunities for the healthcare sector. Rationalizing and optimizing the available resources during a crisis such as this are some of the most import lessons learnt from this crisis. Although, there has been severe disruption in the healthcare delivery it has also come with several advantages such as; the effective use of telemedicine, importance of personal hygiene, and the importance of infection control.

**POSITIVE IMPACT OF COVID- 19 0N THE SOCIETY**

As much as the impact of COVID-19 on human life and the economy is horrifying because of the rising rates of illness, mortality, and unemployment, there are positive consequences that came with it that impacted the society and humanity at large.

1. **Peace**

Statistics shows that majority of people across the world are hopeful that war and armed conflicts will reduce. This is because the world is now facing a common enemy in COVID 19.

1. **Corporate Responsibility**

Many companies were now more commitment to corporate social responsibility (CSR) and their engagement with communities, employees, consumers, and the environment have been put to the test by the global epidemic. They were helping to contribute money, food and even medical supplies. It is also interesting to note that parents were learning more about their children's interests, skills, and knowledge as home-schooling becomes the norm.

1. **Connectedness**

People now feel more connected to each other and their community. Individuals across all works of life have developed innovative solutions to the problem of isolation for example residents would come together to make music on their balconies using a variety of instruments and voices and participating in selected street dance parties.

1. **Innovation**

Majority of people lifestyle were disrupted because of the lockdown and enforcing minimal movements in some parts of the world. This resulted to unprecedented levels of innovation. Many companies adopted innovating ways to be in business during that time. For example providing products and services online.

Social media too registered hundreds of new entries as people explored ways of connecting to each other during the lockdown.

1. **The Environment**

The environmental impact is adversely recovering from the surge of COVID-19. Decrease carbon emissions and the minimal to no air travel gave the Earth a golden chance to recover. Statistics show that percentage of healthy air quality rose by 85.0% across 337 cities across the world and wildlife may be making a comeback after tourist left in other large cities.

1. **Reimagined Education**

As learning throughout the world was disrupted, many educators responded by embracing technology to provide students access to online courses, interactive learning materials, and opportunities for independent study.

1. **Gratitude**

COVID-19's has given the world a fresh look at the things we've always taken for granted: our independence, spare time, social media, transportation, job, and friends and family. No one has ever questioned how their current way of life may be ripped from them without warning.

Therefore we must not lose sight of the gifts that may emerge out of this crisis, as painful and terrifying it may be.

**CONCLUSION**

The COVID 19 pandemic presents challenges unprecedented in the history of the multilateral trading system and African countries are more hit as they are more vulnerable to the effects of the pandemic than others resulting from a weaker health and social safety. There is an also unprecedented difficulty in mobilizing the resources necessary to fight such a pandemic.

The ease to maintain an open flow of trade and investment can be advantageous to boost a strong economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore working together to bring a strong, sustained and socially inclusive recovery will be required since it is critical to spur the renewed investment that is needed for a swift recovery to happen.

The consequences of the coronavirus can be narrowed for individuals and societies by the provision of material aid, psychological assistance, and the development of self-discipline.

As much as countries are grappling with an uncertain future, international cooperation, a multilaterally coordinated response to the crisis and a revived multilateral trading system has the potential to lessen the effects of the COVID-19 crisis.

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