

HOW COVID-19 HAS CHANGED OUR LIFE SECURITIES

By Edoardo Romano Malavolta

Political Philosophy

Sebastiano Maffettone

LUISS Guido Carli

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For approximately two years now, the world has been fighting the most devastating event of the 21<sup>st</sup> century so far. The COVID-19 was first reported in Wuhan, China, in December of 2019 and was declared a pandemic in 2020. A pandemic is a disease that has traversed a country's borders and spread to most parts of the world. Today, almost all countries in the world have reported a case and death caused by the Coronavirus. More than 86 million people have been infected with the virus, where more than 61 million have recovered, while 1.8 million people have died across the world. Although there has been some breakthrough in searching for a vaccine, scientists are confident that the virus's threats will remain for several years to come. At the beginning of the year, very little information was available about the Coronavirus despite the rapid spread across the world. The rapid spread forced governments to enforce strict measures to stop the spread of the virus. While many of the decisions such as lockdown, social distancing, curfews, and restrictions on movements were necessary, many feel that they were an abuse of human rights and a threat to human security. After the COVID-19 pandemic threat has been neutralized, people will start to evaluate and question the morality of the decisions taken to stop the virus's spread. While strict restrictions such as lockdowns and curfews are necessary, they might have caused more harm to some populations. Essentially, the COVID-19 containment measures have increased the abuse of basic human rights and therefore increased the threats against human security.

Since COVID-19 was announced as a global pandemic, politicians and policymakers have been grappling with the necessary measures to prevent the virus's spread. By following the scientists' advice, governments across the world have had to strive to make the right decision amid the Pandemic, but on most occasions, the decisions made have an opposite and negative impact on the population. There have been many dilemmas when making COVID-19 decisions. For instance, governments have to decide between denying people their rights

or not, deciding on behalf of the people how they are to live or not, and whether to save life or protect the failing economies, among many others. On most occasions, governments have made decisions that limit liberty and freedom of choice and have sacrificed the economic systems to save lives. The world is struggling to answer between what is the right decision and what is the wrong decision amid the Pandemic. Philosophical considerations have now become part of political debate due to the ethical dilemmas the decision-makers face all over the world.

However, during an emergency, it is allowed for the government to suspend some of the freedoms and rights for the whole society's benefit. Therefore, in most cases, libertarianism's political philosophies were on suspension, and utilitarianism's political philosophy was applied. Utilitarianism focuses on decisions that will benefit the whole society, while libertarianism prioritizes personal freedoms and liberties over any other issues, even if limiting personal freedom would prevent some grave risk.

The COVID-19 containment measures suggested by the scientists and the World Health Organization (WHO) have been applied universally regardless of the repercussions. However, the measures have proved to work differently, with some parts being affected more than others despite the implementation of strict measures. For instance, Serbia is among the countries that implemented strict and almost draconian containment measures while Belarus took no measures, and most COVID-19 patients were initially treated with Vodka. Interestingly, Serbia had more cases of infections and fatalities compared to Belarus (Bjelajac and Filipović, 2020 p.395). This shows that, to some extent, the strict containment measures were not effective and were only an infringement of human rights. Therefore, the measures implemented to contain the Coronavirus had a negative impact on human rights and democracy. The containment measures had a significant effect on fundamental human rights, the vulnerable groups, among other systemic impacts such as loss of financial security.

## Impacts of COVID-19 on Human Security

Human security refers to all aspects that guarantee the survival of human beings. Human security is the freedom from fear and freedom from lacking basic needs. Factors that determine human security include economic security, health security, food security, and personal security. Without any of the human security components, human beings feel threatened, and their survival is limited. Some of the risk factors to human security are health pandemics, wars, and changes in environmental and climate factors. COVID-19 Pandemic has directly and indirectly impacted the human security of all populations across the world. The limitations on hospital visits and focusing all health resources on controlling the Pandemic have increased death threats from other diseases like cancer. The lockdown and quarantine have forced an economic shutdown, which has increased financial and food insecurity. In some countries, the implementation of COVID-19 containment measures is done forcefully and has led to increased abuse of human rights and freedoms. In general, the COVID-19 Pandemic has negatively impacted the various elements of human security. Consequently, many questions whether governments' decisions to control the Pandemic is ethically and morally right or wrong. While the decisions have helped contain the spread of the Pandemic, to a large extent, the measures have increased the risks on human life and therefore impacted human security.

### *Health Security*

Health security is guaranteed when the state has enough medical resources and the citizens do not lack any of the health services. The population should have access to health facilities and services whenever they require them. Lack of access to health facilities increases the levels of insecurity among the population. This is because quality health is a requirement for survival, and, therefore, with no quality health or access to quality healthcare,

the life of an individual is at risk. The demand for health facilities and services has always been increasing due to changes in lifestyles that induce health complications such as diabetes.

Consequently, with the emergence of COVID-19, the health facilities and resources have been overstretched, revealing the loopholes of many health systems in the world. First, the risk of contracting the COVID-19 while in the hospital has forced the health facilities to stop new patients' admission apart from those affected by COVID-19. For instance, there have been many reports of sickly patients being turned down at hospitals due to a lack of facilities and resources. The healthcare professionals in the healthcare facilities have been pushed to the edge and are working beyond their means to ensure that the Pandemic is controlled, which has limited the number of practitioners available to take care of other patients.

The doctors and the health care professionals have to make a tough decision between what is right and what is wrong. Many political decisions amid the COVID-19 are made based on science, but the doctors and health professionals have to make their decisions based on what is ethical and morally right. The ethical dilemma amid the Pandemic is making choices between which lives to save between those with COVID-19 and those with other endemic diseases such as cancer and TB. Philosophers and doctors argue that the other conditions such as cancer and TB are endemic and may never end, but the COVID-19 can be neutralized or ultimately defeated if the necessary precautions are taken. Therefore many people have justified the decision of not admitting other patients besides those with COVID-19 during the Pandemic. What was clear is that with the emergence of COVID-19, other diseases and infections were not going to stop, and tough decisions had to be made.

Patients requiring acute care have been adversely affected since they can no longer access emergency hospital services. In the UK, health facilities started to create more space

for COVID-19 patients in March of 2020 by discharging patients affected by other infections (Tinson, Kraindler, and Thorlby, 2020). Families were forced to go on lockdown with sick family members. The only means of accessing healthcare was remotely through telemedicine. Concerns were raised about a drop in the number of emergency services that were being offered. For instance, emergency heart surgeries declined by more than 38% in London hospitals, which could contribute to more deaths in the country (Tinson, Kraindler, and Thorlby, 2020).

Besides acute care services, there are also concerns about general care practices, which are now available remotely through online services. Countries with advanced health technologies can provide care remotely. However, countries with limited technological infrastructure have no alternative means besides visiting the hospital physically. Furthermore, developing countries have very few and underequipped health facilities that cannot handle COVID-19 patients alone. The implication of this will be an increased number of deaths caused by other diseases other than COVID-19. Therefore, the morality of the hospitals and other health facilities' decision to limit the treatment of other diseases will be questioned since deaths due to minor illnesses will increase. While the decision to prioritize COVID-19 patients was meant to save lives, the decisions may have ended up endangering more people and increasing the population's health insecurity.

In many cases amid the Pandemic, decisions have been influenced by utilitarianism philosophies. Utilitarianism is one of the most powerful among the normative ethical theories (Barrow, 2015). The theory argues that the morally right choices are those that produce or promote the most benefit for society. The theory is based on consequentialism in that the morality of the decision is based on its impacts or consequences (Delanty, 2020, p.1). When making their decisions during the Pandemic, the doctors and all policymakers have to make decisions that will produce the most positive results for the society as a whole and not for

individuals. Since COVID-19 is a global pandemic that scientists have little information about, it presents the most risks to society compared to other endemic infections, and the scientists have more information about them. Therefore, the decision that will maximally benefit society and is for the doctors and health practitioners to contain the Pandemic before everyone is infected. If an individual is infected with the virus, they can easily pass the virus to more than a hundred people within a week, depending on their interactions. However, and individuals with cancer will not infect anyone with cancer since it is not infectious. Therefore, the decision to only admit patients affected by COVID-19 is justifiable since it protects more people from contracting the virus.

Although many would agree that the treatment of COVID-19 is more urgent and requires more resources and time, differences will still occur on whether the decision to limit the treatment of other diseases was ethically justifiable. People will come to different conclusions when evaluating the decisions made by doctors and other health practitioners since they will be arguing from different ethical theories. For instance, the decision to discharge admitted patients to create space for COVID-19 patients can be justified by some, while others will consider it ethically wrong. A doctor or practitioner may argue that the decisions are wrong based on the duty of beneficence, which requires the practitioner to act for their patients' benefit by removing them from harm. By being discharged untimely, the patient may develop complications and succumb to them; hence, the practitioner will argue that early discharge was wrong. On the flip side, another practitioner may defend the decision on the same duty of beneficence by arguing that through the early discharge, the patient will be protected from contracting COVID-19 from the hospital, and hence it is the right decision. The conflict in making such decisions arises from disagreements on which factors should be considered more. While a utilitarian will want to know which decision will increase the total welfare, a principlist will want to know which decision provides justice to the patient or

protects them from harm (Smith and Silva, 2015). Regardless, the choice of not admitting other patients besides those with COVID-19 will lead to negative implications on society since patients suffering from other diseases will have to die, which increases the sense of insecurity among the population.

The other impact of COVID-19 on health security is the lack of drugs and other medical supplies. The COVID-19 Pandemic has led to the closure of border entry points, and cross-country movement has been restricted. This has consequently led to the disruption of the medical supply chain globally. More than 60% of the world drug supply is from China and India, which have also been adversely affected by the COVID-19, consequently leading to a decline in the production of drugs for exports. The same case applies to medical equipment such as hospital ventilators, testing reagents, among other diagnostic equipment that are now rare to find. The disruption has either blocked access to these supplies or increased the costs to the extent that some countries cannot afford the equipment. The availability of health and medical supplies now greatly depends on the manufacturing ability of a nation. However, very few countries have the production capacity to meet the increased demand, and therefore many countries have no equipment to contain the spread of the virus. The lack of medical equipment and supplies increases the threat to health security in society. Accordingly, due to the lack of supplies, many people have died.

Many individuals are currently afraid of engaging in economic activities out of fear that they may contract the virus. This is a result of a decline in health security. Health security guarantees citizens of having good health amid the Pandemic, which then enables them to continue engaging in economic activities. Countries that have superior manufacturing ability will find it easy to fight the decline in health security by increasing their production capacities of medical equipment. However, countries with low production capacities will



have to grapple with the health insecurity for a prolonged period until the COVID-19 becomes completely neutralized.

### *Economic Security*

The major source of security for human beings is the ability to meet their daily needs with dignity and sustainably. The need for quality health comes second after meeting the economic needs of an individual. Economic security in the modern world is guaranteed when one can manage to get meaningful employment or a sustainable income source such as a business or farming activities. Therefore, lack of employment or lack of a sustainable source of income will lead to economic insecurity. Lack of financial security is a catalyst for many other problems such as food insecurity, increased crimes, and personal health deterioration. The COVID-19 Pandemic has negatively affected the economic security of populations across the globe. The pandemic containment measures such as lockdowns and restrictions on movement have limited the ability to engage in income-generating activities. Economic shutdown and border restrictions have also impacted the tourism and hospitality sector and the manufacturing sector. With no sustainable sources of income besides savings, many households' financial security has been negatively impacted.

Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic, many individuals' economic security continues to worsen due to loss of employment, closure of businesses, and loss of other income sources. Quarantine and lockdowns that have been implemented to contain the spread of the virus have restricted individuals' movement and interaction. Many economies, especially the developing economies in Africa and Asian countries, depend on people's interaction to generate income. Activities such as open markets and informal employment opportunities such as construction sites have been stopped amid the COVID-19. In many developing countries, more than 70% of the employment opportunities are informal, which exposes the

employees to a fragile living condition. Besides, informal jobs cannot be performed remotely, and consequently, many low-income earners have lost their chances of generating income. Many have now resorted to selling their assets to survive, which makes the post-COVID-19 recovery more challenging.

The most devastating impact of COVID-19 is the shutdown of economies across the world. To begin with, countries have placed border restrictions and limited passenger air travel in and out of the countries. Consequently, economies that were heavily dependent on air travel, such as hospitality and tourism, have been adversely affected. Countries that were heavily reliant on tourism have experienced a substantial decline in GDP, which trickles down to the population in the form of reduced incomes (Nicola et al., 2020). With no tourist activities going on, the hotels and hospitality industries that were significant employers have been closed, forcing employees to unpaid leaves while others have been suspended indefinitely. The United Nations predicts that more than \$1.2 trillion in the tourism industry will be lost due to the COVID-19 situation (UNCTAD, 2020). People who depend on the tourism sector for income have lost their income source and become financially insecure. The manufacturing sector was also not spared by the COVID-19 Pandemic. Many manufacturing industries either produce for exports or depend on imported raw materials. Therefore, with the COVID-19 Pandemic, the level of production is limited since the supply chains have been broken, hence no importing and no exporting (Nicola et al., 2020). Besides, due to lockdown and social distancing requirements, there are no employees to work in the industries. Employees of tourism and the manufacturing industries cannot work remotely; hence they completely lost their economic and financial security.

Developing countries have been forced to reluctantly enforce lockdown measures despite the dire consequences of such a move. In some countries, the lockdown has only been implemented in the major cities to avoid spreading to the rural areas. The main employer in

some of these cities is the transport sector. With movement restricted and most economic activities prohibited, there are no people using public transport. Consequently, many who work in the industry have lost their jobs and sources of income. Since many of these jobs earn a daily wage, the employees have no savings and therefore have nothing to survive.

Furthermore, developing countries do not have a relief program for the unemployed, which exposes people to much more immense suffering. The implication is that the rates of crime might be on the rise in the informal settlement as people seek alternative means of survival. Also, people living under low incomes in the informal settlements are likely to be more exposed to diseases due to poor hygienic conditions and the shortage of social amenities such as enough water and lavatories. With no sustainable income source, these people cannot afford masks and other protective materials such as hand sanitizers required to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Therefore, due to the loss of economic and financial security, the people in the urban centers are more exposed to the risk of infection with COVID-19. Also, the crime rate is likely to increase as people have no alternative income sources, have no savings, and there are no government relief programs to help them. Therefore, the loss of financial security threatens the general state of personal and community security and increases the informal sector population's health insecurities.

Some of the business owners managed to reopen their shops early after following the government's guidelines, while others found it difficult to reopen. Those that reopened got a chance to restore their incomes and sources of economic security. Some of the businesses found some innovative means to continue their operations by providing goods and services through online channels. In the case of parents, the issue of insecurity is worse. For parents who can work and those who cannot work, they are both affected since the children have to be taken care of. The parents have to work from home or quit working for some time to take care of their children since the childcare facilities are not operational. For parents that have

both lost their sources of income, the burden is much more significant. In developing countries, the dependency ratio is very high, while those working in the family are very few. With the economic shutdown, many families are struggling to put food on the table. Families with children have to face more insecurities since their children are likely to engage in criminal activities now that schools have been closed in most parts of the world. Parents can no longer provide for their children and families, leading to more problems for society.

In essence, amid the COVID-19 Pandemic, almost every sector has been affected, and individuals have lost their income sources. In the US, the unemployment rates increased from 4% to 16% in June but have improved to 11% in November as more industries resume operation. More than ten million had applied for unemployment in the US and lined up for a government unemployment relief program. This has been the case in many other countries where triple impacts of the Pandemic are negatively affecting citizens' economic security.

The main question, in this case, still remains the same as that of the health sector. The policymakers have to decide which decision is more moral based on the circumstances. Policymakers have to make a choice between salvaging the economy and containing the spread of the COVID-19. In making their decisions, many of the policymakers are basing their decisions on the philosophy of communitarianism. Communitarianism is a theory of ethical philosophy that argues that since human beings live in communities, the morality of their decisions should be based on what ensures the continuity or progress of society. Consequently, the rights of an individual cannot be isolated from the welfare of society. Therefore, communitarians advocate political decisions that prioritize the interest of the public and not the private liberties. The main dilemma with the COVID-19 is whether lockdowns and economic shutdowns are right or wrong. Based on the Communitarian theory, the economic shutdown will slow down the spread of the virus, which could do more harm to society. Therefore, many argue that the private liberties of making incomes freely should be

restricted for society's sake. Some members of the community can adequately protect themselves from the virus, while others have no ability to do so. Therefore allowing people to continue with their economic activities will be discriminatory.

Countries that have based their systems of governance on communitarianism have gained more success in the fight against the COVID-19 and its impacts. Communitarianism is mostly associated with Asian countries, most of which have handled the Pandemic with much ease. On the flip side, the western countries have very high rates of individualism, and the governments have had it rough trying to enforce the COVID-19 containment measures. Japan is an example of a country that has successfully dealt with the spread of COVID-19 due to its communitarianism system. The people of Japan are self-disciplined, and they believe that their actions should benefit society as a whole and that they cannot act independently of society. Although some research shows that Japan has high individualism levels, the people there have very strong values. The Japanese are known to have courtesy, obligation, and shame, which motivates their obedience to government policies that protect the collective good.

Consequently, the government of Japan had no hard time enforcing control measures. Also, the government did not close the businesses since people adhered to government policies. Japan's government aimed to reduce the interaction rates by 70%, which it achieved without much intervention (Etzioni, 2020). Businesses and individuals who did not follow the COVID-19 protocols were shamed publicly through publications. The rates of infection in Japan have been declining significantly, not because of strict government policies but because of the Japanese daily habits and behaviors that ensure or preserve the public good. With people self-regulating themselves, businesses and other activities such as open markets continued to operate; hence the financial insecurities were less significant compared to other

countries in the west. Also, wealth is equally distributed in Japan, which means no families were disproportionately affected by the virus more than others.

Other countries that embrace communitarianism have also successfully lowered the COVID-19 infections without impacting the people's income-generating activities. Countries such as Taiwan and South Korea are among the countries that have reported the highest declines in infections. Some countries in the western world have attempted to implement the same communitarianism policies by allowing people to continue with their daily activities with the belief that people will self-regulate themselves. This was the case in Sweden, which chose not to force people into a lockdown. However, Sweden has very high individualism and liberal values, and the people have no values that would help them adhere to the COVID-19 protocols. Consequently, the infection levels continued to rise instead of declining, forcing the government to force a lockdown. However, Uruguay took the same move and chose not to implement lockdowns and instead believed that the people would self-regulate themselves by social distancing, wearing masks, and limiting interactions voluntarily (Etzioni, 2020). The move has worked well for the country. Therefore, Uruguay people did not lose their incomes, and hence their financial and economic security was not negatively impacted.

Communitarianism countries chose to protect their people's welfare by allowing them to continue with their activities with minimal government interactions. While this move was successful in some countries, it has failed in others, which highlights the importance of community values over individualistic values. Liberal countries such as the US are still struggling to contain the Pandemic while others such as Japan have it under control with limited government intervention. However, Uruguay's success shows that communitarianism values can be a foundation for liberal systems of governance. Countries with collective values, besides being individualistic, have proved to be better in handling the Pandemic than countries with pure individualistic values. The decisions made by the communitarianism

societies and countries ensured that the economic wellbeing and financial security of the people take precedence, while western liberal countries have ignored the economic plight of the people to fight the Pandemic.

However, two forms of communitarianism have been in play. For instance, China has been using authoritarian communitarianism because they were enforcing the lockdown by force. For many western countries, the lockdown and economic shutdown had to align with society's liberal values. For these reasons, undemocratic countries such as China have managed to control the Pandemic compared to Western countries that are more tolerant to those who break the laws.

According to Slavoj Zizek, a Slovenian philosopher and thinker, the COVID-19 has taught us a lesson on why some form of capitalism is not suitable for society and the need to reinvent some form of communism (Zabala, 2020). Zizek argues that the way people and countries deal with Pandemic depends on how they value human life. The COVID-19

Pandemic has, to an extent, revealed things that were raging beneath the surface for a long time, such as inequality and disregard of the environment. The Pandemic has shown that we are not equal in a completely capitalist society. Millions of people across the world are in refugee camps and others in the slums, but to an extent, COVID-19 is a minor issue to them. On the other side, the wealthy western countries that have all resources to their disposal view the Pandemic as a major issue. The two groups of populations have also been affected differently, with the wealthy western countries experiencing more casualties compared to those in refugee camps. The same can be said about those who cannot work remotely against those who can work remotely. In short, Zizek argues that COVID-19 has revealed the weaknesses of capitalism and how it leads to an increase in inequality in society. According to Zizek, the Pandemic offers a chance for the world to reorganize the global market to be less reliant on the market mechanism.

Bruno Latour, a renowned French thinker support Zizek's sentiments that the Pandemic should be a dress rehearsal for the many challenges facing the world, including the environmental and ecological challenges (Zabala, 2020). According to Latour, the Pandemic is not a stand-alone event, and it is part of a larger ecological problem. Consequently, he argues that the world should treat society or define society differently to include other factors and actors that do not have a human form, such as the internet, climate, and organization of hospitals, among many others. Over the lockdown and quarantine, manufacturing activities have declined which and yet people have survived. Accordingly, Latour argues that the lockdowns were a perfect lesson to show that the world can exist without the many manufacturing activities that have adversely affected the world. Therefore, post COVID-19 recovery measures should focus on reducing human activities that have a negative impact on the environment. While Latour asks for the world's reorganization to include more concerns for the ecology, Zizek's is requesting a change in the global economic organization. However, unrealistic these sentiments may appear; they mark the beginning of a conversation that should change how the world approaches issues going to the future.

### *Food Security*

Food security can be described as the ability to afford daily meals. Without enough food, people become completely insecure since it is the only means of survival. Due to COVID-19, many people have lost their incomes and can no longer afford to buy food for their families. In many developing countries, people live on hand to mouth, meaning they have no savings to take them through these difficult times. Besides, many of them work in the informal sector for a daily wage. However, due to COVID, these jobs are not on offer since they require human interaction, which is prohibited or limited due to the social distancing containment measures. Even before the COVID-19 Pandemic, more than 135 million people were faced with the problem of food security in the world. With the COVID situation, the



United Nations predicted that more than 265 million people worldwide could be under the threat of food shortage and hunger (World Bank, 2020).

However, according to the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), there is plenty of food produced in 2019 and 2020, but the problem is how the food is to be supplied (CSIS, 2020). With the borders closed, the entry of imported food products is limited, and also many countries are worried that the impacts of COVID-19 might be long-lasting and are reluctant to release their food supplies for export. Some countries that export staple food products such as grains and cereals imposed bans on all food exports due to uncertainties. This move limited the global food supplies leading to increased food prices compared to others. Some countries that are highly dependent on food imports will experience more food insecurities. Although some of the export bans have been lifted, it is likely that they will be imposed again depending on whether the COVID-19 infections will spike again.

Global food supply chains have been interrupted by the Pandemic leading to increased transport costs, which are then transferred to consumers through price increases. The little food that is imported to the impoverished countries then ends up being highly-priced. With the economic shutdown, people are not earning an income, and therefore increased food prices put their lives in danger of hunger and starvation. According to the World Bank, more than 70 million people are likely to experience extreme poverty levels due to the COVID-19 Pandemic by the end of the year 2020 (FAO, 2020). Extreme levels of poverty mean that people will not manage to afford food. Consequently, more people will be exposed to food insecurities, such as hunger and starvation.

Lack of enough food supplies will lead to an increase in inequality. The economic shutdown across the globe has disproportionately affected communities, with those employed and eligible for some relief from the government being well-off compared to those that

survive on casual and informal employment. The increase in inequalities impacts people's rights and limits access to health services and basic needs such as food and water. Also, due to increased inequalities, there will be increased levels of crime. Those adversely affected by the virus may engage in criminal activities and may raid those who are believed to be well-off in society.

The Pandemic has disrupted major food supply chains in the world due to the lockdowns, which have limited food availability, pricing, and quality. After the implementation of lockdown measures, many restaurants and fast food stores were closed due to a decline in demand for perishable foods. Due to a decline in demand, some perishable foods that were ready for the market was dumped. Farmers of fresh products that have no enough storage facilities have experienced huge losses since they cannot consume all their products, and at the same time, they have no access to the market. This increased loss of food due to lack of markets will negatively impact farmers who might not have the capacity to plant or replace harvested crops due to huge losses incurred. Accordingly, food production will decline in the future, which means that more people will be exposed to the threat of hunger and starvation.

The threat of food insecurity will remain for a prolonged period due to the decline in purchasing power and production capacities. With the loss of employment and income sources, the disposable incomes of households have diminished, and therefore they cannot manage to buy more food products like before. The economic recovery in most countries will take more than a year since the risks of further spikes in infections are possible. Accordingly, if the economic recovery takes more than a year or two, then the individual households' purchasing powers will remain low, and food insecurity will also remain high. On the other hand, food production activities have been disrupted by the lockdown and social distancing measures. The number of workers in the farms has substantially declined, leading to low

agricultural output. While the agricultural outputs decline, the demand for farm products will continue to rise. Consequently, the prices will increase, and the low-income earners will continue to suffer from food insecurity. The improvement of food security will take place once the purchasing powers of households improve.

### Impacts of COVID-19 on Human Rights

#### *Freedom of Expression and Speech*

Human rights are fundamental and universal and are essential for the life of every individual. They are the core values of most societies, and they also define human dignity. However, COVID-19 has directly or indirectly limited the exercise of some human rights. COVID-19 has directly limited access to health services such as the treatment and prevention of other diseases, including mental health, access to information, and other essential services. Also, the measures implemented to contain the virus have also limited freedom of movement, association, and assembly, freedom of expression, access to jobs and incomes, among many others that are fundamental human rights.

International human rights law provides that it is the obligation of governments to ensure and safeguard the freedom of speech and expression among all citizens. Every individual has the right to access, receive, and seek information from relevant government authorities. Every government must collect accurate information and pass it to the citizens, especially if it touches on public health. The correct or right response to COVID-19 is one that provides information on how the virus is spread and how it can be prevented and provides up-to-date information about the spread of the virus. Also, a response that upholds the rights to information should provide regular updates on where the citizens can access services, when restrictions such as curfews are in place, among other containment measures.

In several countries worldwide, governments have limited the freedom of expression and restricted media coverage of some events that inform the public about the COVID-19.

The first cases of infection were reported in Wuhan, China, and later spread to other parts of the world. The government of China withheld crucial information about the Coronavirus and misreported the country's number of infections. They also initially denied that the disease could spread from person to person. Government authorities were arresting journalists who were reporting about the Pandemic and those spreading information through social media. In Thailand, online reporters and whistleblowers on corruption in the public health sector were slapped with lawsuits for criticizing the government on how they responded to the COVID-19 crisis with reports of rampant corruption and profiteering of COVID-19 supplies. Medical practitioners were also threatened for providing information to the media about the shortage of equipment in public hospitals. Lack of information among the public might have been the main cause of the spread of the virus from China since they initially limited the spread of information about the virus, therefore putting citizens' lives in danger. The limited information in some countries has made it difficult for people to move on with life even after the COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted. For instance, in Iran, the government has been historically suppressing the freedom of expression and has also been providing inconsistent data during the COVID-19. Consequently, the citizens have lost trust in government authorities, and many are feeling afraid of resuming normal life. Therefore suppressing and limiting the freedom of expression and the rights to access information has deprived some citizens of the feeling of being secure in their own countries. In contrast, some countries that were efficient in the dissemination of information to the public have successfully reduced the infection rates and given the public confidence to get back to work. An example is Taiwan, which has been holding daily briefings to inform the public about the COVID-19.

Many governments across the world are using the COVID-19 Pandemic as an opportunity to impose more restrictions on free access to information. Some countries have passed and enacted laws and legislation regulating freedom of speech. Some countries have resorted to keeping the populations in the dark by imposing internet shutdowns and deleting websites that report correct but alarming statistics about the COVID-19. An analysis by freedom house reports that more than 13 countries have imposed internet shutdowns, which is the most basic form of access to information amid the Pandemic. Even countries with a good track record of preserving freedom of speech and expression, such as South Africa, have also implemented laws limiting freedom of speech and expression. While many laws restricting the freedom of speech and expression are meant to be temporary, they are most likely to remain even after the COVID-19 situation is neutralized.

Access to the internet and the freedom to express ideas and opinions is a right provided in international human rights law. However, one of the significant effects of COVID-19 has been a derogation of these rights and freedoms. According to English philosopher John Stuart Mills, even if an opinion might be wrong, it should be freely expressed so that the truth can be found by refuting the wrong message. Therefore, personal opinion through social media and mass media should not be limited by the government, but the governments should instead provide accurate information to refute the false claims.

### *Freedom of Movement*

During emergencies such as wars, international laws allow the derogation of human rights and freedom. The COVID-19 presents such a situation where the government and its agents were met unaware and did not have much information on how they would respond to the situation. As the experts suggested, countries resorted to quarantine, isolation, and lockdown, measures that tramped on human rights of movement, assembly, and association.

While it is allowed for governments to implement tough laws, they are to ensure that the laws are lawful and necessary depending on the situation. The lockdowns and isolation measures are only permitted when targeting a specific solution that is reasonable and based on scientific evidence.

However, broad quarantines and lockdowns lasting more than a month have been witnessed during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The quarantine and lockdown measures are only allowed when they are proportionate. When the restrictions exceed a specific limit, then they become an abuse of human rights. This has been witnessed in some countries such as France, UK, and Italy, where citizens were subjected to extended lockdowns and quarantine measures. Also, most lockdowns have been enforced differently in different areas, which propagates inequality. The quarantine and lockdown forced children to remain indoors for days without play, which is also an abuse of child rights.

In China, the government forced more than a million people to quarantine for more than two days in an effort to contain the spread of the COVID-19 Pandemic. While under quarantine, many people lacked access to basic necessities such as medical supplies, food, and many other life supplies. Some incidents have emerged of how the quarantine in China surprised human rights and deaths and illness among innocent citizens. For instance, on one occasion, a woman is reported to have died of Leukaemia after she was denied admission to a hospital out of fear of cross-infection. Such decisions were made to save the woman and other lives from infections and death, but it led to the woman's death. Ethically, the decision to deny the woman entry into the hospital did not achieve its aim of saving a life, and instead, it costs another life. Another case was reported in China, where a sickly boy with a rare disease died after being left alone in the house after his father was taken to a forced quarantine and isolation center. A man is also reported to have jumped from a balcony of his house after he could not access dialysis services for his kidney problems. Ideally, although

the government has the right to waive or derogate its citizens' freedom and rights, it should not exceed or be to a point where they cost other lives.

When Quarantines are imposed, it is the government's role to ensure that there are proper structures that will ensure that people have access to food, health services, and other basic amenities. However, this has not been the case in many countries where quarantine, isolation, and lockdowns have been implemented randomly without proper preparations. Consequently, the vulnerable such as the aged, the disabled, women, and children have suffered more abuse during the COVID-19. The extended quarantines have exposed women and children to domestic violence, and in some instances, men have also been victims of violence. The disabled and the elderly require regular medical attention and require continued community services during the quarantine and lockdowns, which has not been the case (Lourdes, 2020). Therefore, despite their necessities, the lockdowns and quarantine have caused an increased abuse of basic human rights either directly or indirectly.

Quarantine and lockdown also pose a significant danger to people living in close proximity, such as the prisoners and those living in the slums. Imposing quarantine in areas where people live in a congested manner will amount to an abuse of human rights. In the slums and other informal settlements, people survive on shared facilities such as toilets and water sources, and therefore imposing a quarantine and a lockdown will be denying them the right to access these basic amenities. The same case will apply to prisons, where it has been difficult to retain inmates amid the Pandemic. Some countries have been forced to pardon some prisoners to decongest the prisons and lower the risk of spread of the virus within the prisons. The elderly also live in community homes where they have to be visited from time to time. However, with the lockdown measures still in place, they are not allowed to be visited. The elderly require constant connection with their family members and relatives.

People in prisons and immigration detention are always exposed to wanting conditions and environments. However, with the pandemic threat, these groups of individuals have been further exposed to deplorable conditions under which the risks of infections are very high. International laws require that the rights of every individual, including immigrants and prisoners, be guaranteed by the state. Although the state has the right to suspend some of those rights for society's benefit, it should not be at the cost of other members of society's lives. Governments that are holding immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers should ensure that they provide a COVID-19 response that ensures the protection of these vulnerable individuals by ensuring that they are living in decongested areas where contact is minimized. However, some countries have ignored the plight of this member of the society, which amounts to an abuse of human rights.

The security of the health workers has also been put at risk amid the COVID-19. The doctors and health practitioners are the most vulnerable people since they are exposed to COVID-19 patients on a daily basis. Therefore, the provisions of the necessary equipment, such as protective gear, is one of their rights. However, many hospitals worldwide have been deserted by doctors due to deplorable conditions and lack of essential protective equipment. An investigation by the human rights watch in Hungary revealed that the health facilities are underfunded and understaffed such that they cannot provide adequate care to COVID-19 patients. The same situation was reported in Venezuela, where half of the hospitals are in operation. While access to health is one of the most fundamental rights and freedoms that should be enjoyed by the citizens, amid the COVID-19, access to healthcare has become more difficult. This is especially because many health facilities have refused to treat other diseases apart from COVID due to the fear of infections in hospitals. This means that the cancer patients that require regular therapy have no means of accessing healthcare, which exposes them to higher risks. The Quarantine and lockdown measure shave also led to the



rise of mental health conditions among the population who have been abandoned and not taken care of. The focus on the treatment of Coronavirus at the expense of other diseases is a serious human rights issue. While by suspending other medical services, the governments are saving lives, they are also risking other lives. Therefore, the lockdown and quarantines have increased the health insecurities among the public.

### Conclusion

Since the announcement of COVID-19 as a global pandemic early in 2020, many things in the world have changed. The novice COVID-19 has led to many good and bad decisions globally. However, many governments implemented the containment measures in haste due to a lack of information about the severity of the virus and how to prevent it. The WHO recommended a number of containment measures that have been applied universally across all the countries. Lockdown, quarantine, and the closure of borders and air travel have all been implemented in all countries. While some of the containment measures have worked well in some countries, they have not been very efficient in others. This has been majorly because of how the countries implemented the various containment measures. While some countries respected human rights when enforcing the containment measures, others used authoritative means, which lead to the loss of more life and an abuse of human rights. However, all countries have made decisions that some people may argue are not ethical since they have, in one way or the other, increased the fatality rates and diminished the exercise of human rights. Essentially, the COVID-19 containment measures have increased the abuse of basic human rights and therefore increased the threats against human security.

Human rights are factors necessary for the survival of human beings. They are factors that ensure the longevity of human beings. As a result of COVID-19, these factors that ensure human beings' longevity have directly or indirectly been under threat, therefore diminishing

human security globally. The most fundamental risk to human security brought about by the COVID-19 has been health insecurity. Due to the virus's unknown nature, all health facilities have now been focused on treating the virus. Based on the utilitarian theory, the policymakers argue that since other diseases are not infectious and endemic, they are not a priority compared to COVID-19, which is more contagious and can be controlled. Consequently, there has been an increase in health insecurity for individuals suffering from other diseases. Based on the theory of communitarianism, governments have also sacrificed their citizens' economic security through economic shutdowns to contain the spread of the virus. Consequently, people have lost their sources of income, which has reduced their purchasing power. As a result, there is a rise in food insecurity across the world.

Some governments have also taken advantage of the Pandemic to deny the citizens their rights to access information about the virus. Many countries have implemented laws that curtail freedom of speech and expression and therefore put millions of people in the dark. Lack of necessary information increases insecurity since individuals are not aware of how the virus is spreading and cannot take adequate precautions.

The COVID-19 Pandemic and the containment measures have negatively impacted the human rights and freedoms of speech and expression and increased economic, food, and health insecurity.

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### Abstract

This thesis is based on the consequences that human life is facing after the outbreak of the Coronavirus. Everyone knows that this deadly virus has impacted millions of lives and has negatively impacted everyday activities. The paper has briefly discussed the impact of COVID on human security and living. As a result of COVID-19, health facilities and resources have been stretched, revealing the flaws in many health systems worldwide. Across the globe, the COVID-19 Pandemic has negatively affected economic security. These jobs have not been available since they require human interaction, which is prohibited or strictly limited because of COVID's containment measures. The impacts of COVID on human rights have also been discussed in this paper, along with human security. There have been both good and bad decisions resulting from the novice COVID-19. Although many governments implemented containment measures too quickly, they could not understand the extent of the virus or how to prevent it. This paper has covered all the aspects of human life that have been impacted by COVID-19 and the implications of serious matters requiring attention.

The COVID-19 virus has continued to spread since then. The outbreak originated in China, with cases being reported either in China or by travelers from China. Iran, Italy, Japan, and South Korea have all been identified as epicenters as of March 2020. Although the number of cases reported from China is expected to have peaked and is now declining, cases have recently increased in countries previously thought to be resilient due to more substantial medical standards and practices. Some countries have been able to treat the reported cases effectively, but it is unclear whether or not more cases will be reported. The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared COVID-19 an emergency of international concern due to the significant public health risk it poses. COVID-19 may have the potential to escalate into a pandemic, though it is disputed today.

Influential infectious diseases have many channels through which they influence the economy. The economic burden of disease studies is usually concerned with the direct and indirect economic costs of illness. Using Mortality/Morbidity information, the conventional approach estimates future income due to death and disability (mortality) and illness (morbidity). An estimate of economic costs associated with the disease is derived by adding the income and time lost by caregivers and direct medical expenditures and support services. The actual economic costs of highly transmissible infectious diseases, which have no vaccines (e.g., HIV/AIDS, SARS, and influenza pandemic), are underestimated by applying this conventional approach. In thinking about the implications of COVID-19, we can draw valuable lessons from previous outbreaks of disease.

There are several reasons why the economic events that occurred during the Pandemic provide excellent teaching and learning opportunities. In the first place, these events take place in a tangible and relevant way. The events can be felt by anyone and are relatable to everyday life. Students' engagement and motivation are directly related to relevancy in the teaching and learning process. The second reason is that everyone hears and talks about these events during the global COVID-19 Pandemic. Whether directly or indirectly, everyone is affected by these events. Immersion in the arts can enhance education because it allows multiple perspectives, situated learning, and transfer.

Furthermore, these are extreme and rare events. It has been documented that rare events tend to attract more attention, are scrutinized more carefully, and are perceived as more significant. Thus, economics can be taught through such rare and extreme events with long-term effects.

The Covid-19 reshapes our understanding of life's course fundamentally. We demonstrate that life-course perspectives can make essential contributions to understanding

how the Covid-19 Pandemic impacts individuals, families, and communities. Rather than focusing on predictability, we must consider how this Pandemic impacts transitions and practices across and within life's major domains. Covid-19 deals with a viral pandemic, so we begin our discussion with its effects on health and then discuss personal responsibility and planning, family relationships and education, work and career development, and migration and mobility. Based on some programmatic observations, we want to spur life course research, ask questions, formulate hypotheses, and guide data collection as the impact of the Pandemic unfolds. The life course lens can identify risks, vulnerabilities, and inequalities that may affect individuals and groups. This has the effect of addressing some emerging policy considerations and informing intervention strategies.

To anchor the paper, we briefly summarize the most important aspects of a life course perspective. Online resources provide more information. When analyzing Covid-19 from a life course perspective, it is crucial to pay attention to time and its effects. Ages and stages of life represent the time at the level of an individual. Throughout the generations of families and societies, time is evident. Transitions in life and turning points, and cumulative life courses are examples of time-related phenomena. Furthermore, these dynamics must be understood from subjective standpoints, i.e., how people anticipate, interpret, and evaluate the future of their lives and how they analyze, interpret, and evaluate the past.

On the one hand, a variety of social contexts play substantial roles in shaping the life course. On the other hand, human agency is also essential for analyzing life courses. Human actions create inequalities and shared experiences; on the other hand, individuals and communities can exercise decision-making powers that determine their lives and how they are impacted. The emphasis of interdependencies must be applied across a wide range of levels of analysis (from the individual to the macro level), across multiple life domains (e.g.,

education, work, family), and across multiple interconnected persons (family, friends, and acquaintances).

A communitarian system of governance has more effectively combated COVID-19. Since the Pandemic has been handled very well by Asian countries, they are generally more communitarian. In contrast, western governments are very individualistic and have a difficult time enforcing COVID-19 containment measures. In Japan, the communitarian system has made it possible for the country to eradicate COVID-19. People in Japan are disciplined and proud to contribute to the community as a whole by their actions. Societal independence is not something they believe in. Japanese people hold extreme values, although research suggests that individualism is high in Japan.

In this way, the government of Japan was able to enforce control measures with ease. Moreover, since people abided by government policies, businesses were not closed. Japan achieved a 70% reduction in interaction rates, which is achieved without much intervention (Etzioni, 2020). Some publications were written to shame businesses and individuals who failed to follow the COVID-19 protocol. Not due to the government's strict policies but due to the Japanese daily practices that ensure or preserve the public good, the rates of infection in Japan have decreased significantly. As people regulated themselves, businesses and other activities such as open markets operated; therefore, financial insecurities were less critical than other countries in the west. Japan also has an equal distribution of wealth, so no family was disproportionately impacted by the virus.

In part, this is because additional testing and tracing systems have resulted in different estimates of the Covid-19 virus's prevalence. Even though most people become infected, only a smaller percentage develops severe illness, needs hospitalization, intensive treatment, and dies. Infections and their short-term course and effective treatments are becoming better



understood, but long-term health effects remain poorly understood. In turn, the risk of the virus increases with age and is more remarkable for migrant and ethnic groups, which have a significant impact on social disadvantage. In societies without universal healthcare, exposure to infection and healthcare quality is, directly and indirectly, related to occupations and living conditions. The virus is more likely to affect workers in some fields, such as health, food, and transportation services. In addition, people who live in favelas, poor neighborhoods, or tight quarters, such as labor migrants and refugees, are also at risk. Additionally, high-stress jobs, such as "gig economy" workers, may also be at risk indirectly, as their immune systems may weaken.

The strong link between aging and Covid-19 is the increased risk of dying from a severe form of the disease. Unlike the Spanish flu pandemic, where most victims were younger individuals, the current Pandemic is much more dangerous for older individuals. Still, public health or epidemiological perspective on the life course reminds us that focusing too much on mortality and older people can be problematic. Individuals and populations of all ages can suffer long-term consequences from infections that do not result in death. A component of infection and post-infection risks is that they are not evenly distributed among the population, and they are likely to exacerbate existing social inequalities in health.

Covid-19 health effects are dependent on prior (and cumulative) biological, psychological, and social exposures. A number of the known risk factors associated with severe responses to the virus, such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and cancer, occur over a long time due to pollutants, toxins, unhealthy diet, and inactivity. Major health problems and diseases, starting even in infancy, are frequently rooted in early developmental processes in epidemiology and other areas. Even though the underlying risks for developing a severe reaction to Covid-19 can vary widely for individuals of the same age, life course analysis

should rely on lifetime exposure to the specific risk factors under consideration, rather than just chronological age.

In identifying interventions to mitigate the impact of the virus, such evidence needs to be taken into account. It is crucial to understand how lifetime exposure to relevant pathogens, including previous Coronaviruses and environmental pollution, can affect individual and cohort susceptibility to Covid-19. When an infection occurs, it may interfere with the lifetime trajectory of immune function, including the adaptive immunity developed early in life and immunosenescence (declining defenses with normal aging) in older adults - which may increase susceptibility to newly emerging pathogens. Risk factors and "immune age" are indeed associated, altering vulnerability to Covid-19, depending on the individual's background.

A global "macro" environmental event such as the Covid-19 Pandemic could have a lasting effect on a cohort, or a subgroup of that cohort, across their lives. The impact of health on the economy can be caused by exposure and susceptibility to the virus and immediate or delayed responses to infection, as well as by government response to control the virus, as well as by health systems that prioritize economic growth or stability over public health. Viruses may cause long-term health damage or be beneficial to the health of individuals in different ways. The growth and maintenance of physical and mental capacities and the onset and progression of chronic diseases and their preclinical intermediate stages should be tracked.

The severe Covid-19 infection has already been associated with prolonged recovery times or even permanent health problems in some survivors. Those with severe and more moderate reactions to the virus will be monitored closely to provide health care and epidemiology information. To examine whether the infection induces functional changes,

either a dip and recovery in functional trajectory or a permanent reduction in function, cohorts whose pre-infection capacities and diseases are known are ideal. The research should also consider the psychological effects of the virus, such as fear and anxiety caused by it and the uncertainty of living with it, both now and in the future, for oneself and loved ones.

Pandemic shock shook the fragile relations between people. As a result of physical distancing measures, people have suddenly realized how dependent they are on others' wellbeing and how many times they take it for granted. People's ability to cope with the Pandemic is likely to differ based on social integration, but distancing measures also reveal and alter their quality of relationships. This also creates a problem: loneliness affects the immune system while connecting with the general public might result in infectious disease. People's capacity to be in close physical face-to-face relationship with other humans has been significantly harmed by the Pandemic, which has prevented the great human need for touch, preventing embracing.

There is no certainty what the Pandemic's "being alone together" means for maintaining and deepening relationships despite the explosion of electronically-mediated communication over the past decades. Under the Pandemic, social life has been regulated, so that life transitions have been profoundly affected. Covid-19 has eliminated the opportunity for people to share life's most important moments such as births, birthdays, graduations, engagements, marriages, new jobs, retirements, and deaths. Innovative ways of including others in these passages have been developed, including video-calling, drive-ins, drive-bys, or re-designing spaces to meet physical distance requirements. The effects of reducing, denying, or altering the communal experience of life-course transitions need to be examined both in the short and long term.

Pandemic measures have been particularly detrimental to a parent's transition to parenthood. During labor, delivery, and recovery, mothers cannot be accompanied by others in hospitals or clinics. Family and friends have been unable to provide postpartum assistance due to travel restrictions and older parents' at-risk status (including their own). As a result, you may feel isolated and discouraged. On the other hand, some new parents might appreciate the fact that the social world is kept at bay to spend more time bonding and spending private time together. Parents can similarly appreciate a family's extra time together with children. Families without paternal leave might have more involved fathers, especially when there is no paternity leave.

We may begin to observe changes in the timing, or anticipated timing, of family transitions during the pandemic era, such as postponing marriages, cohabitations, fertility, or accelerated separations and divorces - due to resources, markets, and uncertainty. Should such changes occur, it will be crucial to examine whether they affect the schedule for family transitions on a more temporary basis or whether they radically alter it in the long run. Population structure and dynamics will be affected by these changes, and larger societal effects may include many young adults delaying entering adulthood and an increased number of singles and childless adults.

Children's attachments are likely to be negatively affected both immediately and long-term by the Pandemic and physical distancing. The environment of an infant, toddler, and preschooler causes them to become extremely sensitive, but they cannot understand changes. Families faced difficulties expressing physical affection as the virus began to spread and people were anxious about it entering their homes. Lockdowns are less stressful for families because they limit contact with the outside world, except vital service workers and those with family members in poor health. When the school reopens, parents again wonder what viruses may enter their homes.

Many adults had to collaborate remotely and maintain connections far from their workplaces in response to the Pandemic. Colonizing family life with work can be devastating. In addition to the fact that employers benefit most from employees taking advantage of their private time and space and other personal and relational resources, this problem has several dimensions. In addition to reinforcing or increasing inequality, working remotely is made more or less challenging by differences in employees' resources and home situations. Stress can also be exacerbated by remote work due to instant availability, high demands, the pressure of caring for children and infirm relatives, and the blurring of work and non-work boundaries.

In addition to their health risks, older people are more vulnerable socially because they are not permitted to be with others and face fears of getting ill and dying in their networks, creating loss dynamics. Isolation is the most significant risk for people who live alone. Especially vulnerable widows, as older men are typically less connected to family and friends, tend to have fewer long-standing relationships. The loss of independence may be tremendous for older people who are forced to live in shelters. If you have an illness at home or in a type of care environment, you may not receive the support you need, and especially if you are older, you may not be able to provide support to others, like grandchildren or sick relatives. In many cases, older people are dying alone, saying goodbye via plastic partitions, glass windows, telephones, and computers.

*Keywords:* COVID-19, Human security, Human Rights, Economic security, & Human living.