

## COVID-19 pandemic upshots and where will it lead us?

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### Past

The world was functioning nicely until we heard about the spread of COVID-19, which was later declared a pandemic by the WHO. It tipped the globe upside down, causing chaos, confusion, and tension. Initially, there was a great deal of uncertainty concerning its distribution, infectious nature, and treatment. Its deadly contagiousness horrified the world. The globe was confronted with an unprecedented situation. Since the outbreak of COVID-19 in Wuhan, China, in December 2019, there have been 525,796,638 cases and 6,277,818 deaths documented. COVID-19 has affected every aspect of our lives, from health and education to the economy<sup>[1]</sup>. However, several varieties of the virus with varying transmissibility have created more chaos. Research is also being conducted to investigate new viral strains and why some are more transmissible than others. Ironically, this virus has targeted one of modern civilization's most valuable assets, human liberty<sup>[2]</sup>.

### Present

This pandemic is far more than a medical emergency; it's a human, social, and economic disaster. Nevertheless, COVID-19 is not the first or final global calamity mankind has experienced. COVID-19 has resulted in catastrophic disasters<sup>[3]</sup>. Even though the COVID-19 pandemic was devastating to the world economy, it served as a catalyst in hastening the speed of digital change, with increased e-commerce and faster use of telemedicine, online education, videoconferencing, and financial technology. The incidence of COVID-19 is on decreasing trend. This is attributed to increased awareness, positive attitudes<sup>[4]</sup>, adequate preparedness<sup>[5]</sup>, development of effective vaccination and mass immunization against this disease. Thanks to the scientists that they rapidly invented the COVID-19 vaccine. However, there is a lot of controversy and misconceptions regarding the administration of the vaccine<sup>[6]</sup>. Despite this, a large population has been vaccinated globally (11,445,077,393 vaccine doses administered), and the outcomes have been extremely successful and exceeded expectations. According to published literature, vaccinated people are less likely to get the severe disease, be hospitalized, or die due to COVID-19. As a reason, immunizations are the most efficient method of combating this deadly disease.

COVID-19 apprehension and tension have subsided with time, and people have accepted it as part and parcel of their lives. Nobody knows how long it will take to entirely eradicate the Coronavirus from the earth, or will it make a seasonal reemergence? WHO authorities have stated that there is a possibility that "this coronavirus may become just another endemic virus in our communities, and this virus may never go away." After vaccine invention against COVID-19, initially, two doses were suggested; later on, health authorities worldwide decided to give a third booster dose to all. Now CDC has recommended a second booster dose for people aged 50 and above and immunocompromised people<sup>[7]</sup>.

It is due to the Coronavirus that, during the pandemic, we revisited our curriculum, identified non-essential components, and utilized online technologies for teaching, learning, and assessment activities. All educational institutions recognized their shortcomings in facilitating online teaching, learning, and assessing activities, and they then improved. It exposed flaws in the healthcare systems of both developed and developing countries. Now is the time to build long-term, sustainable healthcare policies.

## **Future**

The consequences of this pandemic's unparalleled spread will be felt for many years. However, one thing is evident even after Coronavirus's complete elimination; we will not be able to return to 2019's world. The world after the Coronavirus will be different in many ways, including economic, social, and health implications. Nobody will emerge from this disaster unscathed [2].

Virus screening is expected to become a routine part of our lives. However, it seems that, like the flu, its outbreak will be sporadic throughout the year, and its booster dose will be administered annually to all people, or at least those aged 50 and above, and healthcare workers.

COVID-19 will have a long-term impact on the global economy, generating enduring changes and teaching crucial lessons. It seems that the developed countries will construct a new world order in the post-COVID-19 era, and sluggish GDP growth, huge debt, and no technological advancement will make it difficult for developing countries to sustain sovereign foreign policies [8]. The impact of information technology will be tremendous across all spheres of human endeavor, including trade, education, e-government, health care, and artificial intelligence. Human rights would be violated if tracking devices were used to keep tabs on the public for their safety [8]. We will continue to use face masks and hand sanitizers indefinitely, as well as the sneezing and coughing protocols. The tourism industry will continue to thrive, but visa requirements will become more stringent [8].

Right now, the most important thing is to learn from this pandemic and move forward to make our societies more robust and fairer. This is something that the world has not paid attention to in recent decades. This might be a wake-up call for humanity [3].

Coronavirus will stay in towns, cities, and countries, but commercial activity will continue with precautions. This pandemic has taught us how to combat and survive with this virus and any subsequent epidemic. Scientific advancement gives us hope to battle future pandemics despite mortality, economic loss, anxiety, and stress in the current pandemic.

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