



# IMPACTS AND OPPORTUNITIES DUE TO LOCKDOWN-COVID19

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**Abstract:** We all are going through a tough time because of COVID-19. Hardly any nation and nation's sector left untouched by the impact of COVID-19. Clearly, harmful impacts are visible to all but there are some opportunities available too. This article will review the impacts of COVID-19 on the psychological well being of humans and on some other important sectors of India. It will also put emphasis on opportunities provided by the lockdown due to COVID-19 which was earlier a thing to be forgotten.

**Index Terms - COVID-19, Pandemic, Impacts, Opportunities**

## I. INTRODUCTION

The whole world is facing severe impact of corona virus (COVID-19). It was originated in China in December 2019 and spread so rapidly that it covered almost all countries around the world within few months. It has already been declared a pandemic on 11 March 2020 by the World Health Organization (WHO). It has 30.7 lakhs active cases all around the world and caused 2.13 lakhs deaths by 28 April 2020. In India, first case of the disease was found on 30 Jan 2020 and had 21,632 active cases and deaths by 28 April 2020. The way India responses to COVID-19, is not only noteworthy but getting praise from all around the world too. India took a game changing step by declaring 21 days lockdown on 24 March 2020. This word "LOCKDOWN", we all have heard in fictional novels and movies but now we are living this as a reality. We have entered in the second phase of lockdown which is expected to be going to end on 03 May 2020 (if situation get under control in the infected areas). During this lockdown period all non-essential services such as educational institutions, retail and industries other than pharmaceuticals & FMCG products, worshiping places and most of the government offices were stay closed. All major means of transportation was also closed. Till date following states/UTs, Goa, Arunachal Pradesh, Daman & diu, Sikkim, Nagaland, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Lakshadweep are either COVID-19 free or did not report any positive case. Lockdown, in fact was an essential step to stop the spread of virus, have mixed repercussion for the country. So, in this article, an analysis will be done to provide an insight on the following two important questions- Due to lockdown, what are the major challenges India is going to face? And is there any opportunity provided by this lockdown which we Indian never had before? A no. of research article, blogs and newspaper will be used to conduct this analysis.

## II. IMPACTS OF COVID-19

Singhal & Vijayaraghavan (2020) made a descriptive study of Indian general public's psychological responses during COVID-19 lockdown in India. They estimated these psychological responses in terms of anxiety and their coping behavior adapted during that time period of quarantine. After analyzing the data collected it was found that respondents who were in the age group of 18-24 are more prone to anxiety issues in comparison of those who are 69 and above age. While finding the coping strategies, it was found that usage of social media, connectivity with old friends and colleagues and very few doing yoga and practicing meditation are reported. However, 84% respondents were found eager to learn something new during this lockdown period and 74% were feeling happy because they are getting enough time to spend with their family.

Another study in the context of India was conducted by Ranjith & Verma (2020) About the possible challenges and reviving strategies during lockdown period. In their study, maintain hygiene and social distancing, stopping movement of migrant workers, availability of goods, services and medicines were the major challenges among all the visible. They also put an emphasis on impact of lockdown on business activities and alleged that present situation will create more sufferings for the unorganized sector and migrant labor.

Dev & Sengupta (2020) studied the impact of lockdown due to COVID-19 on the Indian economy. They said that the magnitude of the economic impact will depend upon the duration and severity of the health crisis, the duration of lockdown and the manner in which the situation unfolds once the lockdown is lifted.

Hiremath, Kowshik, Manjunath & Shetlar (2020) conducted a study on the impact of lockdown on mental health and also provide tips to overcome boredom or stress. They said that various psychological problems like depression, anxiety and panic disorders can be visible impact of lockdown. To deal with these psychological problems they also suggested few techniques which are-

- To connect with family, friends and relatives more regularly
- To develop new skills or hobby
- To focus on living a healthy lifestyle by eating healthy, doing yoga and meditation
- By making a “To-do-list” on daily basis
- Avoid watching news related to COVID-19 or COVID-statistics
- By getting involve in healthy discussion with others through phone/other mode of communication

Tasnim, Hossain & Mazumder (2020) studied the impact of rumors or misinformation on COVID-19 available on social media. They said that various mis-happening have taken place due to miscommunication or misinformation. It was also found that misinformation lead to various psychological stress, adverse health outcomes which may result in several other disease.

There is no area which remains untouched by the impact of COVID-19. Another important study on the impact of lockdown on agricultural sector was conducted by Sahoo & Rath (2020). They said that agriculture being the backbone of the country and has been impacted in a negavtive way with huge disruption in the supply chain and cropping decision for upcoming agricultural seasons. This suggest that agriculture is going to face heavy financial and mental lose.

Sen (2020) studied the impact of lockdown due to the pandemic on India’s energy sector. She added that economic slowdown which whole world is going to face will impact India’s energy consumption in different ways. As, there may be a sharp drop in the demand for aviation fuel, gasoline, diesel and significant increase can be seen in demand of LPG and piped gas. She suggested that this impact on energy consumption can lessen by creating a balance between three factors-

- Government’s fiscal and monetary support to manage the shock (in short term)
- The level of international oil prices
- The impact of the pandemic on global economic activity

Chopra (2020) conducted another study to study the impact of lockdown on India’s real estate sector. India’s real estate sector is a major contributor in the country’s GDP but facing adverse effect of COVID-19. He elaborated that economic slowdown which whole world is going to face, will be having a major impact on the demand for the residential and commercial buildings. There will be lots of factors which will also contribute like salary pay cut may lead in delayed payments will affect demand and supply.

Bhagat, R.S, Sahoo, Roy & Govil (2020) conducted a study to find out the impact of lockdown due to COVID-19 on migrant workers. Due to this lockdown migrants working in tourism industry, employees of parking contractors, cleaner, waiters, suppliers of vegetables and flowers to the hotels and many more lead to a loss of livelihood. He pointed a list of challenges related to stranded migrants which include challenges like-

- How to provide food and basic amenities at camp/shelter?
- How to maintain hygiene and sanitation?
- How to maintain the social distancing to avoid infection?
- How to provide counseling and psychological support to them (Major challenge)?

### III.OPPORTUNITIES DURING LOCKDOWN

1. “You never let a serious crisis go to waste. And what I mean by that it’s an opportunity to do things you think you could not do before” said by American politician Rahm Emanuel. Same thing is happening while lockdown period in India. As we all know due to COVID-19, we are experiencing biggest ever lockdown in the history of mankind. It has imposed lots of negative effects but also provide an opportunity to do things which we have not done before.
2. Many major cities of India are experiencing lower level of harmful microscopic particulate matter known as PM 2.5. PM 2.5 is most dangerous as it is smaller than 2.5 micrometer in diameter and it can lodge deep into our lungs. It can also pass into other organs and blood stream which may result in serious health issues. A drastic fall in the level of Nitrogen Di Oxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) was also found during lockdown. Only in the initial three weeks of lockdown of March, the average level of NO<sub>2</sub> was decreased by 40-50%. The nationwide lockdown also resulted on lower or not at all traffic pollution on record which resulted in the reduction of fossil fuel emission.
3. From last so many years, various plans and schemes were propose and implemented by different political parties to make water of holy rivers clean. But, none of them make any visible impact on the quality of water. In few weeks after the first lockdown was implemented, it was found that there is improvement in water quality. Due to lockdown industrial activities are not taking place which is considered as major source of dumping polluted water into rivers.
4. Due to lockdown, a new trend in the working culture has emerged which is “Work from Home” in India. A no. of companies is trying a remote work practice by working from home because of lockdown. It has been expected that this is going to replace the world of office work completely. Companies are happily grabbing this opportunity which they never encountered before. Work from home will encourage more women to join the workplace. If it is implemented it may result in cost saving, convenience and productivity gains too.
5. This period of lockdown provide an opportunity to spend quality time with our loved ones. It makes us realize the importance of family. In today’s environment, work is everything; even though it has governed our daily life still most of the people cannot imagine their world without work. By making our self so busy, we have almost forgotten our social life and relations. We hardly get time to spend with family and enjoying food together. A big thanks to lockdown, people are revising memories, playing games which were forgotten long back, cooking and eating together, sharing knowledge and experiences, indulging in gardening, reconnecting with old friends and colleagues, exploring their artistic side etc. Even phrases like “I care for you”, “I am always there for you”, “I am sorry” and expressing “love” towards nature, neighbors’ and elders has become a daily practice.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Hence, this article addresses challenges faced by various industrial sectors and impact of lockdown on human's psychological behavior. There are few opportunities also among which some are created by human beings and rest by nature itself. To arrive on any conclusion may not be appropriate as we still in the middle of this storm, more challenges are yet to face and many opportunities are yet to grab.

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