

COVID-19 - A blessing in disguise for humanity

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ABSTRACT

The world was shaken by an unknown dreaded enemy of the entire mankind by a virus known as COVID-19 which first surfaced in December 2019 in Wuhan's wet market- a place in China. In February 2020 World health organization crowned this virus with the name COVID- 19. The full name of this virus is Novel corona virus. The name corona came from Latin word corona meaning crown. The virus was named corona virus as the shape of the virus is like a crown. The dreaded virus spread in the form of pandemic engulfing the entire world. More than 180 countries including China are affected with this dreaded virus. The pandemic is like a nightmare for the entire world. Roads, streets, malls, school, colleges, offices, theatres, restaurants and all entertainment zones are deserted. Hospitals are overcrowded with patients. Dead bodies are not being claimed by relatives as people are afraid of being infected by the virus from the dead bodies. These kinds of scenes send a shiver down the spine of every individual. There is no cure but scientists are relentlessly working to find a cure for this virus. The only cure is staying at home and observing social distancing from each other. The world is following lockdown religiously and trying to control the pandemic. It seems as if the world has come to a standstill. In these dark times there is a silver lining. No doubt the world is totally shattered but there are many positive incidents which COVID- 19 has brought along with its presence. This case study discusses on the positive aspects of COVID -19 which will definitely prove this saying that COVID-19 is actually a blessing in disguise which will start a new era in the entire world and for the humanity as a whole.

Key words: COVID-19, World Health Organization, pandemic, humanity, blessing

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Introduction

The COVID- 19 virus which caused the world-wide pandemic made its presence first felt in December 2019. The intensity of COVID- 19 was predominant from February 2020 which engulfed the entire world. This virus is otherwise known as SARS-CoV-2 which is instrumental in causing corona virus or COVID- 19

This virus originated from Wuhan, China's open air wet market. Wet market is a place where fresh meat and fish are available for on-the-spot slaughter. The floors are continuously wet due to washing of blood stains from slaughter on the floor. The virus is transmitted from animals to humans. SARS-CoV-2 originated in bats. SARS-CoV-2 jumped to the humans in one of these wet markets in Wuhan, China. Since the market is always crowded and sells different banned wild animals like cobras, wild boars and raccoon dogs, virus easily jumps from animals to animals and swapping of genes takes place and when humans are infected by this virus the intensity of infection is very high.

During the outbreak of COVID -19 global pandemic bats were not sold in the Wuhan market. It is suspected that during the outbreak instead of bats pangolins were sold. Pangolins are scaly anteaters, which are illegally sold in some Wuhan markets, hence, it is suspected that the virus might have jumped from pangolin as the corona virus that infect pangolins are same as SARS-CoV-2.

Now the virus has spread within and outside China and is affecting people who have no contact with animals it is proved from the fact that the virus can also spread from human to human. The no of COVID-19 cases worldwide is increasing daily and according to statistics **Active cases worldwide are:5,503,459, Deaths346,774, Recovered: 2,303,631. More than 180 countries are affected.** From the data it is clear how deadly this virus is and it is the need of the hour to control the spread of the virus. The greatest challenge in this situation is that there is no treatment for COVID-19, only treatment is social distancing because of which

most of the countries are in a lockdown situation and life has come to a standstill.

Picture of Corona Virus



Symptoms of COVID- 19

COVID-19 affects different people in different ways. Most infected people will develop mild to moderate illness and recover without hospitalization (WHO coronavirus pages. <https://www.who.int/covid-19>)

Common symptoms:

- Fever
- Dry cough
- Tiredness

Not so common symptoms:

- Body aches
- Sore throat
- Diarrhoea
- Conjunctivitis
- Headache
- Loss of taste or smell
- Skin rash, or discolouration of fingers or toes

Critical symptoms:

- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain or pressure
- Loss of speech or movement
- It is always recommended to seek medical help in case of serious symptoms.
- Healthy people having mild symptoms should manage at home.
- On an average 5-6 days are required for an infected person to show symptoms of Covid-19 but it can also take 14 days for the COVID-19 symptom to show up.

Background

From the day of the outbreak of COVID-19- 19 worldwide pandemic every human being is affected in a bad way. People are scared, frustrated, sad, bored and are always in an unknown fear of what will happen now? Can we be COVID-19 free? If I go out will I be safe? Will I be infected? Can we ever go back to our normal life? What will happen to our job? What will be the effect on the

country's economy? What will be our future? All these questions are being asked by everyone to every person they know. No one is able to give a proper answer for the same. These unanswered questions are creating a lot of confusion in the minds of people and people are searching the net for the answers and are trying to follow each and every step to save them from COVID-19- 19 infection.

It seems as if the world is engulfed in the darkest of night where every individual is waiting with breathed breath for the day this ordeal will come to an end. In this situation there is a silver lining where irrespective of the fact that **"COVID-19- 19 being a villain"** has shattered every human being and also has taken toll on lakhs of people and has pushed them to death but has also done something good for the entire Humanity. Because of some good things done by **Covid-19 virus it can be also praised as a "Hero" and can also be acknowledged as a "Blessing in disguise for the entire humanity."**

Positive aspects of Covid-19

- **Building genuine relationship:** COVID-19- 19 has taught us a valuable lesson in our everyday life. Due to our busy schedule and job profile, we had forgotten to enjoy our life with our loved ones. Gone are the days where every member of the family used to sit around the dining table and have food with their loved ones, used to discuss each and every problem, used to crack jokes and smile a lot. In the midst of all these ladies used to pamper each member with piping hot food and used to be very happy by seeing the satisfied look on the face of their loved ones. This used to create a lovely and strong bond among the family members which used to sustain throughout the life. This bonding used to give every family member a sense of strength to overcome any problem. During holidays people used to visit relatives and parents and spend some quality time with them. During festivals also people used to spend time together with family. Due to our busy schedule, we are hardly spending quality time with each other. Hardly now a days we are visiting relatives and also days together we don't get time to call our near and dear ones like our parents. During the 3 months of lockdown where

the world came to a standstill, we have now started spending quality time with each other, have started calling our relatives and friends, are also taking care of our creative aspect. All these experiences are making our life much more meaningful and has inculcated within us a sense of satisfaction and we are slowing forgetting the sense of insecurity and are becoming such happier than before.

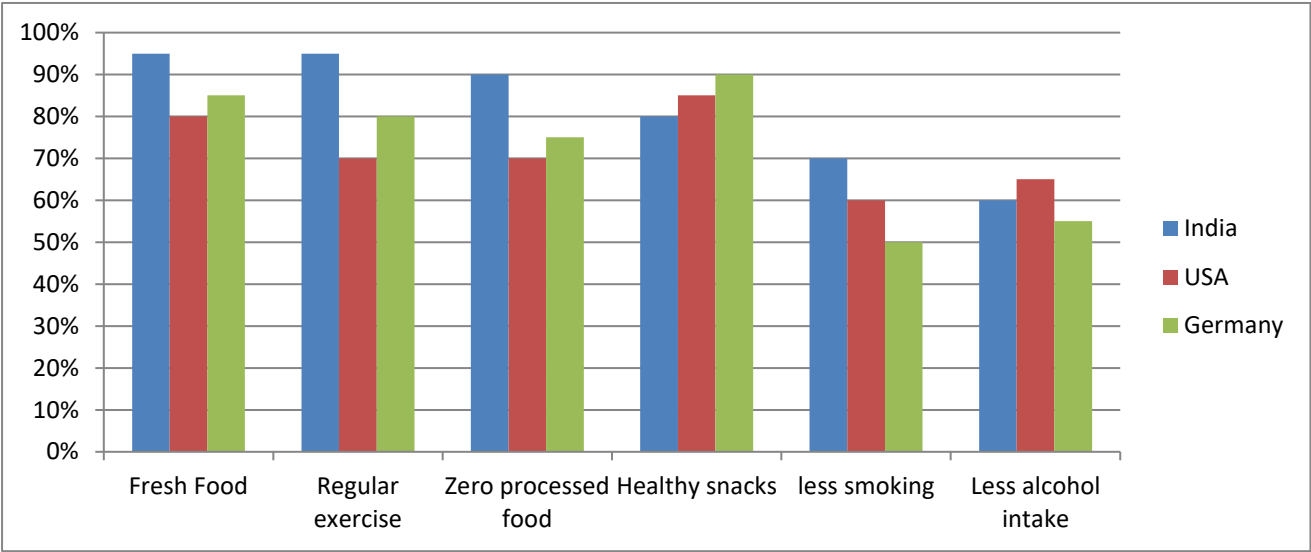
- **Practice better hygiene:** Every human used to practice hygiene pre Covid-19. They used to take bath every day, used to wash hand before eating, used to wash hands before cooking and also take a bath after coming back from work. During COVID- 19 pandemic we human are practicing hygiene as a necessity rather than thinking as a routine. We have now understood the importance of hygiene in a much better way. Previously we used to wash hands without counting the seconds but now we are keeping a track of 20 seconds for hand washing. We are making it a point that every vegetable and food items including packaged foods are washed properly and then stacked. We are wearing mask while stepping out and have increased use of sanitizers which previously were not taken seriously. We have also now understood the value of Namaste rather than handshake and also cover our mouth during sneezing and coughing. COVID-19 has helped in inculcating the good habits within human beings who would become a part of our lifestyle and also would increase our immunity and would safely guard us from many unwanted diseases.
- **Innovations to keep human being connected:** During the lockdown every individual and companies have started inventing new technology, new hobbies like cooking, baking, painting, music, taking lectures, meetings, seminars, online classes, online certificate courses and videos to keep connected with each other so that the work is not affected and also pursuing of hobbies makes one stress free. Online studies are also helping students to be in touch with their studies, and at the free time they are pursuing other value-added courses so that personal up gradation is done.

- **A New Wave of Tools & Software:** Due to COVID-19 lockdown since work cannot suffer so new technologies has been invented so that using the technology people sitting at home can work and there won't be any loss for the company. Through Apps like Zoom, Zoho, touch less biometrics, upgraded chat bots job markets are changing drastically so that it is not mandatory to come to office and work. Now similar quality of work can be done from home and in this respect, companies are saving lots of money which can be used for other uses. These systems are able to address the lingering problem of de- motivation in employees and even the output is much better than physically attending office. At home office politics is missing and people are able to dedicate themselves for quality work.
- **Affordable Real estate:** COVID-19 pandemic has changed peoples wants and desires. Now people are not thinking about luxuries but are thinking about survival. Human being is happy with minimum wants. There is no craze for luxurious flats. Now people are not investing money on flats or property but are saving money judiciously. This has helped in real estate price dropping. Flats and property are now cheaper where everyone can afford.
- **Cheaper fuel:** Due to COVID-19 lockdown vehicles are not used and hence hardly any need for fuel. The fuel market has been badly hit. Oil prices throughout the world is less. According to data available in US the price of I barrel of crude oil in 2020 is \$43 in comparison to \$63 in 2019. This is the condition in other parts of the World as well.
- **Less crime:** Due to strong police vigilance and the fear of COVID-19 and people in lockdown has reduced the crime rates in the world drastically.
- **Cleaner Air:** No vehicle on the road, factories being shut and no greenhouse emission has contributed to the healing of the ozone layer, no pollution and air becoming purer. This pollution was affecting the entire world. Governments were spending so much money on pollution control and awareness program but were not able to do anything but our hero COVID- 19 has done the impossible within three months of lockdown.
- **Wildlife rejuvenating:** Due COVID-19 lockdown less interference from human being has increased wildlife number; more rare birds are being seen chirping on the branches, happy animals in the jungle, more trees and nature in its full bloom.
- **Cleaner oceans:** COVID-19 is helpful in improving water pollution with less human interference. The oceans have become cleaner, no oil spills, marine life have increased, more fishes and no deaths of marine lives. The entire world was trying to achieve this but was not successful but within 3 months we are able to achieve the impossible.
- **Healthy lifestyle:** COVID- 19 lockdown is instrumental in healthy lifestyle where people are not ordering food from outside but preparing fresh food at home. Human being has started taking exercise seriously and has started exercising at home regularly with new techniques which can increase their immunity. Everyone is doing their own job so dependency on others is almost nil. This transition in people's lifestyle is making them healthier and happier.

Findings:

1. COVID-19 instrumental in healthy lifestyle

Figure 1.



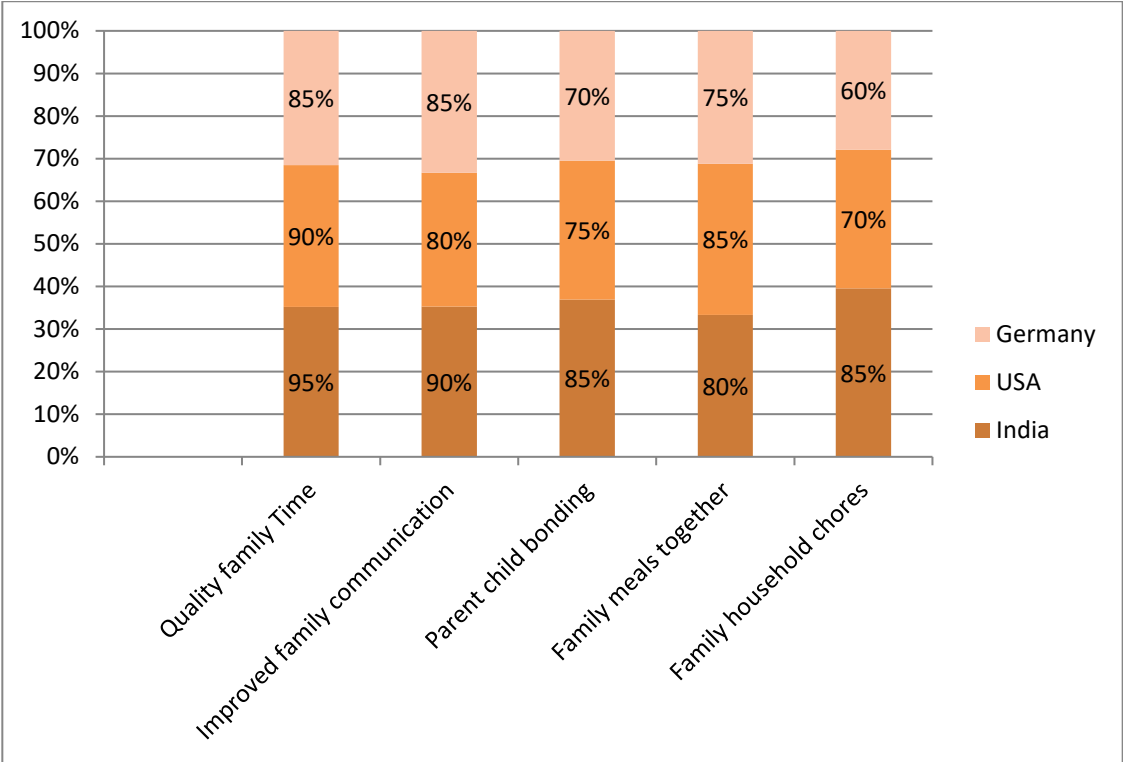
- Responses to the finding” **COVID-19 is instrumental in healthy lifestyle**” consists of 3 sample countries- India, USA and Germany
- Sample size: **N=150, N=50 for India, N=50 for USA and N=50 for Germany**
- Figure 1. shows that 95% Indians, 80% Americans and 85% people from Germans agree to the fact that COVID-19 is instrumental in intake of more fresh food.
- Figure 1. shows that 95% Indians, 70% Americans and 80% Germans agree that COVID-19 pandemic has increased regular exercise amongst people.
- Figure 1. shows that 90% Indians, 70% Americans and 75% Germans agree that COVID-19 has helped in decreased processed food intake.

Figure 2.

- Figure 1. shows that 80% Indians, 85% Americans and 90% Germans agree that there is an increase in healthy snacking due to COVID-19 pandemic.
- Figure1. shows that 70% Indians, 60% Americans and 50% Germans agree that COVID-19 is instrumental in less smoking
- Figure 1. shows that 60% Indians, 65% Americans and 55% Germans has agreed that COVID-19 has helped in alcohol intake.

From the above findings it can be safely concluded that COVID-19 has indeed influenced people to switch to a healthier life style.

2. Strong improved Family bonding due to Covid-19 pandemic

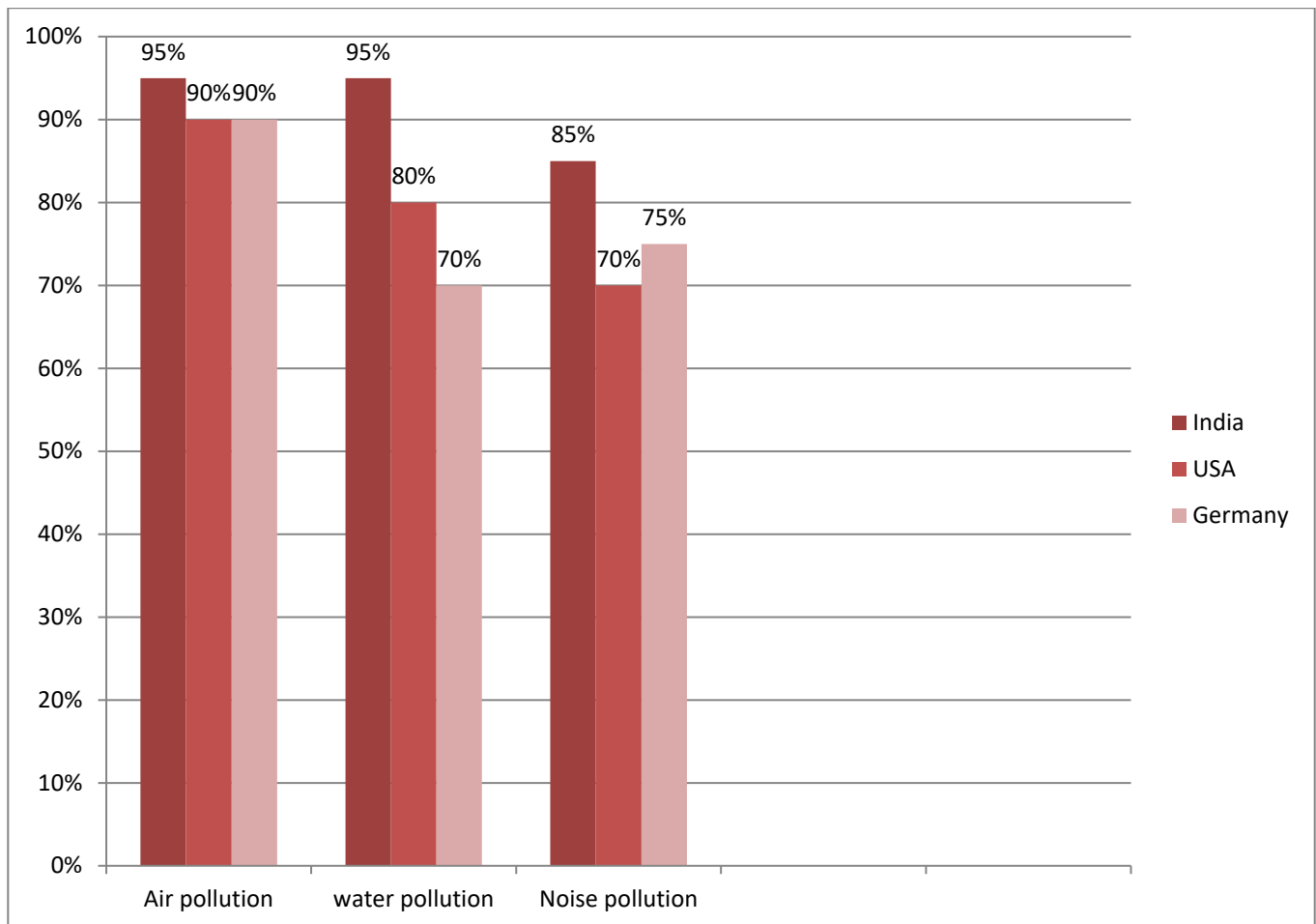


- Responses to the finding” **Strong improved Family bonding due to COVID-19 pandemic**
Consists of 3 sample countries- India, USA and Germany
- **Sample size: N=150, N=50 for India, N=50 for USA and N=50 for Germany**
- Figure 2. shows that 95% Indians, 90% Americans and 85% Germans agree that COVID-19- 19 has helped in increased quality family time.
- Figure 2 shows that 90% of Indians, 80% of Americans and 85% of Germans agree that COVID-19- 19 pandemic has improved family communication

- Figure 2 shows that 85% Indians, 75% Americans and 70% Germans agree that COVID-19- 19 is instrumental in improved parent children bonding
- Figure 2 shows that 80% of Indians, 85% of Americans and 75% Germans agree that COVID-19 has increased family meals together
- Figure 2 shows that 85% Indians, 70% Americans and 60% Germans agree that COVID-19 has helped in sharing of family household chores together.

3. Role of COVID-19 in checking environmental pollution

Figure 3.



- Responses to the finding” **Role of COVID-19 in checking environmental pollution**
Consists of 3 sample countries- India, USA and Germany
- **Sample size: N=150, N=50 for India, N=50 for USA and N=50 for Germany**
- Figure 3 shows that 95% Indians, 90% Americans and 90% Americans agree that COVID-19 helped in controlling air pollution
- Figure 3 shows that 95% Indians, 80% Americans and 70% Germans agree that COVID-19 helped in controlling water pollution
- Figure 3 shows that 85% Indians, 70% Americans and 75% Germans agree that COVID-19 has contributed in controlling noise pollution

The above finding proves that COVID-19 has helped the entire world in pollution control which the entire world was trying to control for many years.

Conclusion

The entire world is affected by COVID-19 pandemic. It is such a dreaded virus that people in their wildest dream would never think of being affected by the virus. Every human being is scared and each one is trying to save themselves from being affected. The entire world has come to a standstill but out of so many negative aspects of Covid-19 there are so many positive aspects that people are now realising. It actually needed a Covid-19 pandemic to make everyone realise what life is all about. We have now realised the actual value of life, relations, nature, saving money, spending family quality time, treat everyone respectfully, taking care of oneself, healthy life style to name a few. There are so many positive aspects of Covid-19 pandemic that instead of labelling Covid-19 virus as a villain we can actually label COVID-19 as a Hero. This proves that “**COVID-19 is actually a blessing in disguise for humanity**”.

Recommendations:

It has taken 12 months for COVID-19 virus to make us realise the value of life and we have started inculcating

many good habits like, hygiene, exercising, family bonding, smart technology, fresh food, less processed food, empathetic to others feelings, helping the needy people, taking care of nature to name a few. We should follow these habits throughout our life to keep ourselves strong and healthy so that in future we can fight with such dredged virus in a much better way.

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Authors Profile



Dr. Reena (Mahapatra) Lenka is the Founder/Director of RL Consultancy and Training Institute, Pune, India. This Institute is an ISO-9001-2015 certified institute. It is operational from August 2020. The Institute provides qualitative Online Certified HR courses in HR Analytics, HR Generalist, Holistic HR, Employee relationship management, Performance management and statutory and legal compliances.

Dr. Reena has 10 years of teaching experience as an HR faculty in different MBA institutes like Symbiosis Institute of Management, Pune, India, Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune, India and MITADT University, Pune, India.

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Dr. Reena Lenka is presently working as an Assistant professor HR at Neville Wadia Institute of Management Studies and Research, Pune, India.

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