

Editorial Article

Was the world ready to face a crisis like COVID-19?

Saad Ahmed Ali Jadoo^{1*}**Background**

Many early warnings predicted a deadly viral pandemic, some of which were issued by responsible authorities having a global impact [1,2]. However, many of those who have heard and read these warnings did not care. Now there is a general feeling that these warnings have been deliberately ignored.

Novel coronavirus infection was first officially announced in China in late December 2019 and has later abbreviated as COVID-19. The city of Wuhan, China's central Hubei province, is known as the first place where the virus has emerged; however, the exact date of diagnosis of the first infection with the virus remains ambiguous [3].

Here we are not researching the reality of what happened and where the virus came from, but we are trying to discuss whether the world was ready to face a global pandemic like Corona. First of all, we must know that COVID-19 is not the first pandemic and will not last. However, in the current crisis, the world was fragmented, rivaled, and unprepared to face crises collectively.

The global health situation was living in turmoil for many reasons including the lack of human health resources in many countries (brain drain push and pull factors), the significant increase in the total population especially the elderly group, the change of social behaviors towards unhealthy foods, lack of physical activity and the financial burden to cover the growing demand for health due to chronic diseases. Moreover, many developing and developed countries suffer from a weak health system due to unbalanced capitalist policies in considering people as goods.

One of the most prominent flaws in the world revealed by COVID-19 is the lack of prior preparation to collectively face international crises. Even at the national level, preparation was meager, as demonstrated by reading the size of the budget approved for health and education versus the budget approved for armament and military actions [4]. It seems that the world was busy preparing for wars and forgot to promote the individual, community, and global health.

Crisis Management

Crisis management means all pre-planned strategies to deal with and to minimize the damage caused by any sudden and significant adverse event. However, crisis management differs from responding to it, and the latter means starting to implement the plan. China's first response to COVID-19 was the quarantine of more than eleven million people in the most massive operation of quarantine in modern times and sending a clear message that the risk is higher than the world sees or hears. However, the absence of transparency and credibility about the prevalence rate of the virus and the accurate statistics of infected patients with COVID-19 led to an underestimation of the risk, undermining the confidence in scientific research, and significantly contributed to making the situation worse worldwide. Many countries followed the Chinese policy to contain the crisis with local, unplanned action and intentionally concealed the real morbidity and mortality rates.

What has to be done?

According to the International Health Regulations (IHR) of 2005 [5], the alert system for epidemic and pandemic diseases should have activated early, regardless of economic and political consequences. There were thousands of foreign residents from different countries in Wuhan city, and all of them are vulnerable to infection. The correct procedure was either inhibiting everyone from leaving the Wuhan city or was to take international-led action to evacuate them to a safe area (s) for assessment and treatment before being sent to their home countries. There was an absolute necessity to hold an international scientific conference to discuss the crisis since the first cases emerged away from the intervention of politicians.

What is to be done?

The COVID-19 pandemic is, to some extent, related to socio-cultural behavior, and more precisely, personal hygiene and the tradition of preparing and eating food. Therefore, raising the level of awareness and involving the public as individuals and groups in taking responsibility for their health will be necessary for the success of any plan intended to manage control of pandemic. Moreover, adherence to the standards of scientific research enhances people's confidence and commitment to the direction of health and scientific institutions [6].

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Who is the big winner?

We can say that the biggest winners are the planet and the human being despite the massive loss of life and the global economic meltdown caused by the outbreak of the Corona virus. Technology and ideas of emancipation have created a major rift at the personal, family, and community levels. Almost everyone has his world without caring about what is going on around him except for his interests. The emergence of a global crisis like COVID-19 affected every home. COVID-19 generated a sense of fear and responsibility towards the individual, society, and even the World. There is an opportunity to restore the family and community ties and a call for international cooperation away from political and economic interests.

The COVID-19 has succeeded in improving the climate in a few months, compared to outcomes of several pollution control and environmental conferences held over the last fourth decades. Pollution rate has decreased significantly, with decreased greenhouse gas emissions, and increased air quality. It is a valuable opportunity that must be invested effectively through a more sustainable economic system that serves humans and the planet [7]. Briefly, like it or not, the planet has decided to renew itself without asking for our help.

In conclusion, many reasons such as the blackout of crisis, political and economic issues, and the failure to accurately assessing the problem with an apparent absence of international coordination at the beginning of the crisis made floundering and blurry a prominent feature of COVID-19 crisis management.

Abbreviations

COVID-19: Novel Corona Virus-December 2019

Declarations

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Authors' contributions

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Ethics approval and consent to participate

We conducted the research following the Declaration of Helsinki; however, Editorial Article needs no ethics committee approval.

Consent for publication

Not applicable

Competing interest

The author declares that he has no competing interests.

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