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## COVID-19 Outbreak: Its Difficulties and Convenience on Human Culture

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### Abstract:

The year 2020 is facing lots of obstacles because of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic situation. COVID outbreaks affect every single aspect of human life. It deeply affects Human Culture. There is a mixed impact of COVID-19 on the cultural aspect. As it is seen the normal flow of cultural events and practices are very much affected and delayed because of lockdown and COVID-19, in many cases online platforms proved beneficial for some cultural practices. The present study is going to discuss the challenges and benefits of the COVID outbreak on human culture. The objectives of the study are 1) To find out the difficulties of COVID outbreak on human culture and 2) To study the convenience and positive aspects of COVID outbreak on human culture.

*The present study is review-based research. The related data has been taken from secondary sources like various related articles, newspapers, and internet sources. The study reveals that at the time of the lockdown though in some specific cases, there are several problems and challenges to live a normal life and to fulfil cultural practices, the online platform gives a wide space to connect globally and to express innovative thoughts with others. In this pandemic situation, human cultural practices are mostly flourished through online mode and it continued its eternal heritage.*

**Keywords:** COVID-19, Convenience, Difficulties, Human culture, Online Platform

### 1. Introduction:

The word 'culture' was firstly used by Edward B. Tylor in his book "Primitive Culture" in 1871. According to Tylor culture is "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society (E. B. Tylor 1871)."<sup>1</sup> Culture is an essential element of living a delightful life within the community. For having a continuous changing process, it might get lost because of its only existence in our mind. The materialistic things are the product of the culture, it is not the culture itself. Culture is a belief that belongs to human thoughts. Art, music, dance, performing arts, creative writings are some key elements of human culture. At the time of COVID-19 and lockdown period all cultural sectors like cinema hall, museum, theatre, art galleries, bookstores,

<sup>1</sup> Tylor, E. B. (1871) Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art and Custom, London, J. Murray.

heritage places are closed. Because of the sudden change of the normal lifestyle, peoples are suffering from stress and loneliness. It is a belief that always there are some ways to overcome any tough condition. The present paper shows how the COVID outbreak affects human culture negatively as well as positively.

## 2. Literature Review:

Previous researches show that there is a deep connection between creative, innovative work with stressful life. According to Bräuninger, I. (2012)<sup>2</sup>, dance therapy proved to be more effective in reducing stress. Art therapy factors like Aesthetics, including beauty and authentic expression, proved to be good for a healthy life (Koch, S.C., 2017)<sup>3</sup>. Creative Arts Therapies (CATs) and art interventions are some of the innovative remedies for reducing stress (Martin. et. al., 2018)<sup>4</sup>. According to Kassymova. et. al (2019)<sup>5</sup>, a person's creative abilities can reduce stress and can develop the skills of stress management. At the time of the COVID outbreak, peoples are disconnected not only from the cultural world but also from their joyful own life. "The impact of the COVID-19 on the cultural sector is being felt around the world. This impact is social, economic and political – it affects the fundamental right of access to culture, the social rights of artists and creative professionals"<sup>6</sup>. When physical activities outside the home proved impossible at the time of the lockdown, peoples choose and smartly use the online platform through the internet to express innovative and creative thinking in various art forms. Peoples reduces their stressful bounded life by doing cultural practices<sup>7</sup> in different ways at the online platform. So, though COVID-19 has a negative impact on the human culture, it also has some positive impact to help the people to think innovatively for being connected culturally.

## 3. The Rationale of the Study:

The study discussed both the negative and positive impacts of COVID on human culture. Negative impacts show the stressful situation of people where positive impacts of COVID shows how the people overcome those worst situation through their creative cultural thoughts. The

<sup>2</sup> Bräuninger, I. (2012). Dance movement therapy group intervention in stress treatment: A randomized controlled trial (RCT). *Arts Psychother.* 2012, 39, 443–450.

<sup>3</sup> Koch, S.C. (2017). Arts and Health. Active factors and a theory framework of embodied aesthetics. *Arts Psychother.* 2017, 54, 88–98.

<sup>4</sup> Martin. et. al., (2018). Creative Arts Interventions for Stress Management and Prevention—A Systematic Review. *Behavioral Sciences.* Behav. Sci. 2018, 8, 28.

<sup>5</sup> Kassymova. et. al (2019). Impact of stress on creative human resources and psychological counselling in crises. *International Journal of Education and Information Technologies.* Volume 13, ISSN: 2074-1316.

<sup>6</sup> UNESCO (2020, April 15). Culture and COVID-19. Retrieved from <https://en.unesco.org/news/culture-covid-19-impact-and-response-tracker>

<sup>7</sup> C. Chang, (2010). "Psychotherapy and culture. Morita therapy: An illustration". *World Cultural Psychiatry Research Review.* 2010. December, pp. 135-145.

rationale of the study is that it discusses how creative and innovative art forms can reduce stress at the time of COVID-19 and as well as can move forwards the cultural heritage in its unique ways.

#### 4. Objectives of the study:

The main aims and objectives of the present study are-

- i) To find out and know the negative impacts of the COVID outbreak on human culture.
- ii) To find out the positive impacts of the COVID outbreak on human culture.

#### 5. Methodology of the Study:

The present research is a review-based study. The related data has been taken from secondary sources like various related articles, newspapers, WHO's report, UNESCO report and internet sources. The trustworthiness of the secondary data is tested by external and internal criticism.

#### 6. Analysis of Secondary data and Findings of the Study:

From the secondary data sources, it is found that there are two kinds of impacts such as positive and negative on the human culture during COVID-19. People face lots of obstacles during the lockdown. There are three restrictions mentioned by the govt. for the lockdown period: need to stay at home and going outside is strictly prohibited, when outside the home people need to maintain social distancing and accessibility of most of the public services are restricted while only essential services are available during the lockdown period. For the sudden change in the daily routine, people feel embarrassed, lonely, and depressed. Even cultural activities and social relations affected mostly by the announcement of the lockdown.

##### 6.1 Some negative impacts and difficulties of the COVID outbreak on human culture are discussed below:

- i) The scheduled dates of various musical programmes are delayed and even cancelled at the time of lockdown<sup>8</sup>. Singers are facing trouble economically because no musical events are happening in this pandemic situation. The Eurovision Song Contest 2020 was cancelled entirely.

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<sup>8</sup> Hall, S. (2020, May 27). This is how COVID-19 is affecting the music industry. *WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM*. Retrieved from <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/05/this-is-how-covid-19-is-affecting-the-music-industry/>

- ii) Various art forms like drama, dance, yatra are in danger<sup>9</sup>. Many economical backward peoples of the rural area depend on it and make a living. At the time of COVID-19, they are facing real challenges.
- iii) Generally, in the field of art and craft, a wide range of exhibition is needed because there have popularity and the economic issue of the artists. At the time of COVID-19, all art exhibition and programmes are uncertainly postponed<sup>10</sup>. Artists are facing difficulties economically.
- iv) The entertaining world of television postponed their regular acting schedules. Peoples are unable to see new episodes of serials and reality shows regularly at the time of lockdown. As financially it has a deeply negative impact, also it creates stress in the minds of everyone who are attached to the entertainment world of television.
- v) Film Industry is also affected deeply at the time of COVID-19<sup>11</sup>. No new films released at the cinema hall as it is the time of lockdown. Only a few are uploaded at online sites. So, financially cinema halls are deeply affected and the labours of the film industry including various parts of this industry faced a negative impact of the lockdown. Financially and mentally, they feel stressed and depressed for the present situation.
- vi) Creative writings are one of the major aspects of human culture<sup>12</sup>. Writings are the real picture of our society. Writers collect the themes, elements, characters of the writing from real experience and society. At the time of lockdown book-fairs and publications are postponed. Many small publishers are struggling financially.
- vii) Different cultural programs and fairs of villages are postponed<sup>13</sup>. Small traders whose earnings depend on village fair are affected badly. Not only there are issues related to finances, but also people are culturally not able to united and cannot spread their thoughts, ethical values with others.
- viii) Everyone needs entertaining work to do in their leisure time. One likes to spend their leisure time going to shopping malls, watching movies, eating foods in restaurants and so many things. At the time of lockdown, everybody locked themselves in their house for survival from coronavirus. The entertaining life of the peoples is stopped and it badly affects the human mind and human culture.

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<sup>9</sup> Future learn. (2020, March 18). COVID-19: The cultural impact of coronavirus. Retrieved from <https://www.futurelearn.com/info/blog/cultural-impact-of-coronavirus>

<sup>10</sup> NATIONAL HERALD (2020, April 26). Art in the times of the Coronavirus pandemic. Retrieved from- <https://www.nationalheraldindia.com/national/art-in-the-times-of-the-coronavirus-pandemic>

<sup>11</sup> NATIONAL HERALD (2020, April 26). Art in the times of the Coronavirus pandemic. Retrieved from <https://www.nationalheraldindia.com/national/art-in-the-times-of-the-coronavirus-pandemic>

<sup>12</sup> Future learn. (2020, March 18). COVID-19: The cultural impact of coronavirus. Retrieved from- <https://www.futurelearn.com/info/blog/cultural-impact-of-coronavirus>

<sup>13</sup> Future learn. (2020, March 18). COVID-19: The cultural impact of coronavirus. Retrieved from- <https://www.futurelearn.com/info/blog/cultural-impact-of-coronavirus>

- ix) The world of the play, different kinds of sports and events, the national and international competition related to sports<sup>14</sup> are temporarily postponed due to COVID-19. The most prominent events to be affected were the 2020 Summer Olympics, Expo 2020, UEFA 2020 and Copa America 2020 which had been postponed to 2021.
- x) Tourism sector is highly affected because of lockdown<sup>15</sup>. Every tourist spot, hotels, tourism office, the business closed because of the pandemic situation. It deeply affects the economical balance of the whole country.
- xi) Human culture mostly depends on the physical, mental attachment and bonding of the peoples. At the time of lockdown, peoples are not able to go outside and cannot join any cultural events physically. It creates a stressful situation for all.
- xii) Peoples are habituated to offline service in any field. In the cultural world, people like to gather physically in any cultural event. It connects each other mentally and physically. But at the time of lockdown, the offline platform is closed. Any kind of cultural events and cultural practices are going through online mode. People those are not technology-friendly are facing many obstacles to use social media and online platform<sup>16</sup>.
- xiii) Cultural classes like singing class, painting class, dance class and so many are going through the online mode<sup>17</sup> in some online platform like Google meet, Zoom, Cisco Webex, etc. The main problem that is facing by the teachers and students is the lack of technical knowledge. To control and look after the individual needs of a huge number of students in an online class is also difficult for a teacher.
- xiv) Small business-like handicrafts business, pottery, cottage industry, home-craft<sup>18</sup>, etc. are in danger. The people whose earnings depend on those businesses are facing an economical problem because of the lockdown and closing situation of the business market.

At last, it can be said that people are social animal. They like to spend time socially, culturally. Human culture has a broad area. Not only it stays in our society but also it exists in our mind. The nature of the mind of a human being is always changing according to the circumstances. One of

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<sup>14</sup> The Indian Express (2021, April 24). From cricket to athletics, how Covid-19 hit the sporting world and will change it. Retrieved from- <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/from-cricket-to-athletics-how-covid-19-has-hit-the-sporting-world-and-will-change-it-6388573/>

<sup>15</sup> World Economy (2020, May 5). 5 charts show which travel sectors were worst hit by the coronavirus. Retrieved from <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/05/06/coronavirus-pandemics-impact-on-travel-tourism-in-5-charts.html>

<sup>16</sup> India Today (2020, November 5). 5 problem you can face in online learning and how to deal with them. Retrieved from <https://www.indiatoday.in/education-today/featurephilia/story/5-problems-you-can-face-in-online-learning-and-how-to-deal-with-them-1738361-2020-11-05>

<sup>17</sup> India Today (2020, November 5). 5 problem you can face in online learning and how to deal with them. Retrieved from <https://www.indiatoday.in/education-today/featurephilia/story/5-problems-you-can-face-in-online-learning-and-how-to-deal-with-them-1738361-2020-11-05>

<sup>18</sup> Future learn. (2020, March 18). COVID-19: The cultural impact of coronavirus. Retrieved from <https://www.futurelearn.com/info/blog/cultural-impact-of-coronavirus>

the nature of the human mind is it is like free wings. It wants to wander everywhere according to its choice. People deeply depend on the wish and desire of their inner soul and peace of mind. So, at the time of COVID-19, the cultural mind and the inner world of every individual negatively affected and everybody feels depressed, lonely and stressed.

## 6.2. Now, some positive impacts and convenience of the COVID outbreak on human culture are discussed below:

Though there are lots of difficulties faced by every citizen of every country at the starting few months of the lockdown, people gradually used to the practices of the online platform. In the beginning, the most commonly faced problem is the technical problem and lack of technical knowledge of users. We are generally accustomed to the traditional face-to-face culture by the offline platform where people can meet each other physically and share their cultural thoughts in front of a huge audience. At the time of lockdown, every offline cultural event and practice closed uncertainly. Online connectivity by using some online meeting applications proves to be the only way to share and to connect culturally with each other. Gradually, it seems that the online platform for cultural exchange has various benefits towards developing the level of creativity of the people. Some benefits of online practices of human culture at the time of lockdown are-

- i) The online platform reduces geographical barriers and distance barriers for any kind of live events. People can join in a cultural event from anywhere in the world and at any time<sup>19</sup>.
- ii) Online mode helps to maintain time according to the need of the users. A person can join multiple events at the same time from their home.
- iii) At the time of lockdown, the people who are not professional writer, also feel the interest to share their thoughts innovatively and creatively<sup>20</sup>. They easily share their writings on online social media like Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, etc. It also helps to minimize the mental stress and depression of the people at the time of lockdown.
- iv) It can be seen that the number of cultural live events<sup>21</sup> increased at the time of lockdown. Students of the schools and colleges have participated in various cultural events by making the video collage and uploaded it on social media for a public audience.

<sup>19</sup> India Today (2020, November 5). 5 problem you can face in online learning and how to deal with them. Retrieved from <https://www.indiatoday.in/education-today/featurephilis/story/5-problems-you-can-face-in-online-learning-and-how-to-deal-with-them-1738361-2020-11-05>

<sup>20</sup> Hindustan Times (2020, July 29). Creativity in the times of coronavirus: Here's how creative outlets helped Shakespeare, Newton and now, you, amid pandemic. Retrieved from <https://www.hindustantimes.com/more-lifestyle/creativity-in-the-times-of-coronavirus-here-s-how-creative-outlets-helped-shakespeare-newton-and-now-you-amid-pandemic/story-E1sbEQq8qDI3Ma8LsdYuUL.htm>.

<sup>21</sup> Business Standard (2020, April 8). Lockdown: Many organisations holding online cultural events & competitions. Retrieved from [https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/lockdown-many-organisations-holding-online-cultural-events-competitions-120040800777\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/lockdown-many-organisations-holding-online-cultural-events-competitions-120040800777_1.html)

- v) Online mode helps to increase the market of handicrafts and other kinds of shopping online<sup>22</sup>.
- vi) Though all kinds of exhibitions are not possible to arrange physically, the online platform helps the organizers to arrange it virtually<sup>23</sup>.
- vii) The compulsory dependency on the online system helps to develop the technical knowledge<sup>24</sup> of the citizen. Though in the village area many people cannot get sufficient access to the internet connection at the time of lockdown, they unable to utilize the technology for their betterment of life. But overall, most of the people develop their lifestyle and increased their technical knowledge.
- viii) Human values<sup>25</sup> are the most important aspects of human culture. In the beginning, though most of the people were getting impatient, after a few months gradually moral values like patience, restraint, tolerance, attentiveness, empathy, compassion, unity, an attitude of collaboration is developed.

## 7. Research Gaps:

There are some gaps on which future researchers may work. Such as:

- 1) Researchers may collect primary data by using a questionnaire or taking interviews to know the real experiences of people.
- 2) Researchers may study the effect of the COVID outbreak on human culture not only in the context of India but also in the context of other countries.

## 8. Conclusion:

So, at the time of the COVID outbreak, negative and positive effects are there. It is true that if one has a positive attitude towards any difficult situation, one can overcome any complications and can cope up with the new normal situation. COVID-19 taught how to fight against the worst situation and how can new ideas and intelligent thoughts of the human being can change the world culture. Researches show that creative cultural thoughts also reduce the mental stress and depression level of the human being. Culture cannot lose its existence because it is flowing continuously from one generation to another. The essence of culture always stays in our mind. COVID-19 creates a pandemic situation all over the world and it shakes the economic, social,

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<sup>22</sup> UNCTAD (2020, October 8). COVID -19 has changed online shopping forever, survey shows. Retrieved from <https://unctad.org/news/covid-19-has-changed-online-shopping-forever-survey-shows>

<sup>23</sup> Business Standard (2020, April 8). Lockdown: Many organisations holding online cultural events & competitions. Retrieved from [https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/lockdown-many-organisations-holding-online-cultural-events-competitions-120040800777\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/lockdown-many-organisations-holding-online-cultural-events-competitions-120040800777_1.html)

<sup>24</sup> World Economy Forum (2020, April 29). The COVID-19 pandemic has changed education forever. This is how. Retrieved from - <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/04/coronavirus-education-global-covid19-online-digital-learning/>

<sup>25</sup> Verywell mind (2020, March 30). How to Practice Empathy during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Retrieved from- <https://www.verywellmind.com/how-to-practice-empathy-during-the-covid-19-pandemic-4800924>



cultural, political and even mental foundation of every country and its countrymen. People overcome all the boundaries through their innovative minds and carrying the traditional extract of human culture in the new normal environment.

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