

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE COVID-19: A SOUTH AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE ON ITS IMPACT ON THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC, INEQUALITY, SECURITY, AND FOOD SYSTEMS

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ABSTRACT

The objects of this research are: first, to highlight some of the socio-economic impact, arising out of the government's strict lockdown rules due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Second, to explore the psychological effects of the new normal on citizens, arising out of the lockdown.

The author investigated the following problems: social problems, caused by restricted movements, increase interpersonal violence crimes, and economic problems due to job losses, emanating from several businesses closures.

The main results of the research are: very high number of death rates with over (78,000), succumbing to coronavirus in South Africa, high unemployment, threats of food scarcity, educational setbacks due to schools closure, economic inequality gap, more widely pronounced, and hospitals, put under severe pressure due high patients needs.

The area of practical use of the research is for all citizens, directly affected by the global pandemic. The research highlights the significance of the use of technology to inform and support lifelong learning using more e-learning platforms as an alternative for the old pedagogic delivery of lectures.

The innovative technological products, arising out of the lockdown, were several e-learning softwares introduced. Apps like 'uber eats; Vromo; Open Table; and ChatFood were all introduced and made delivery of fast food to our homes relatively easy. Several e-learning products were made popular: Microsoft teams; Zoom; Skype; Canvas; Articulate 360; 7 taps; Spayee and teachable.

The Scope of the innovative technology products were more pronounced in both the hospitality, catering industries, and educational institutions.

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1. Introduction

South Africa is a country on the southernmost tip of the African continent, marked by different ecosystems. South Africa has a population of about 59.3 million people with a life expectancy rate of 64.9 years [1]. South Africa is bordered by Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Swaziland (Eswatini), and Mozambique. South Africa occupies an area of 1,221,000 km. The country's administrative capital is Pretoria, the legislative capital is Bloemfontein and the largest city is Johannesburg [2].

It can be argued, that Covid-19 is not the only determinant factor responsible for potential food scarcity in South Africa. With 11 % (6.5 million people) of the total population, a high number of citizens were already facing hunger due to first, both environmental factors (continuous long term drought), making it difficult for farmers to plant or harvest their crops. Farmer attacks have closed several lives in South Africa, with white farmers been the highest number of victims. The issue of land redistribution remains unresolved by the government [3].

1.1. Objectives of the research

This research has two objectives. First, the object of the research is to highlight the impact of both human and financial losses, resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic. Second, explore the devastating consequences of the pandemic and the possibility of facing a food crisis in South Africa.

1. 2. Research Problem

Before the outbreak of the Corona Virus, South Africa was facing a major economic downgrade into junk status by Moody in the last quarter of 2019. The unemployment rate was over 29 percent, crime and HIV AIDS continue to plague the country. Agriculture declined due to drought in some provinces like the Western Cape and Gauteng. Today, with over 4.2 million deaths in the world, South Africa has recorded 75,000 Corona Virus related deaths. The highest number of deaths on the African continent [4].

South Africa's jobless rate recorded a sharp decline of 6.8 % in the second quarter of 2020, according to data from Statistics South Africa. The official unemployment rate fell from 30.1 % in Q1 2020 to 23.3 % in Q2 2020. Statistics South Africa argues that this is not a reflection of an improvement in the labour market but rather an effect of the national lockdown since the official definition of unemployment in South Africa requires that people look for work and are available for work. South Africa currently has an over 5.2 million unemployment rate [5, 6].

During the first strict lockdown period, commencing March 2020, South Africa's GDP was down by 34 per cent, income decline due to job losses. Total wages were down about 30 per cent. The gross operating surplus was down by 40 per cent [7].

It is estimated, that about 2.2 million jobs were lost since the lockdown in South Africa. More families went to bed hungry, 27 percent of the children population have stunted growth, facing an undernutrition situation that affects both their cognitive and physical development [8]. South Africa faced a confluence of economic difficulties that compound the impact of the public health emergency. Economic growth slowed down dramatically in 2019 before the lockdown to just 0.2 per cent [9].

Across the developing world, countries have imposed restrictions on movement and economic activity in response to the coronavirus pandemic. These domestic measures to curb the spread of the virus, coupled with reduced global demand for goods and services and declining international investment, have had severe negative consequences for business sustainability and livelihoods. With a Gini Coefficient of 63, South Africa is ranked by the World Bank as one of the most unequal countries in the world... The richest 20 % of the people in South Africa still control almost 70 % of the country's resources [10].

1. 3. Suggested solution to the problem

Few studies have been carried in South Africa relating to the Covid-19 pandemic because the Covid-19 experience is a fairly new phenomenon. This study covers a wide range of issues related to the Covid-19 experience in South Africa. It is difficult to find particular studies in South Africa that have dealt with the Covid-19 related topic from a multi-dimensional approach of social, economic, political, gender-based violence, grand scale corruption, police abuse of power. The absence of this kind of comprehensive study creates an academic lacuna for this study to fill. It is hoped, that the reader will broaden their horizon, looking at the impact of Covid-19 from multi-dimensional contexts.

In the UK, under tier 3 lockdown restrictions, GDP fell by 11.3 %; unemployment reaching 7.5 %. The sectors most affected by the March lockdown and subsequent tiering restrictions are those dependent on social consumption, particularly hospitality and leisure. Reflecting this, the accommodation and food sector and the arts, entertainment, and recreation sector were some of the hardest hit by the restrictions in place in March–July 2020; 314,000 redundancies were recorded between July and September 2020; a drastic drop in employees with 782,000 between March and October 2020 [11]. It was reported, that the UK government introduced a tiered lockdown process in an attempt to reduce deaths, resulting from the pandemic. Some elements of the tier introduced were as follows:

- in tier 1, the Government will reinforce the importance of working from home wherever possible;
- in tier 2, pubs and bars must close unless they are serving substantial meals (like a full breakfast, main lunchtime, or evening meal), along with accompanying drinks;
- in tier 3, all hospitality will close except for delivery, takeaway, and drive through; hotels and other accommodation providers must close (except for specific exemptions, including people

staying for work purposes or where they cannot return home); and indoor entertainment venues must also close [11].

In the United States, some economists have predicted it could take about three years (around the first quarter of 2023) before the US economy starts to show signs of positive economic growth [12]. The country has lost over 20.6 million jobs since mid-March, resulting in an unemployment rate of 14.7 %, a level not seen since the Great Depression in the 1930s. The number of jobs lost more than doubles the number seen in the 2007–2009 Great Recession when 8.7 million Americans lost jobs. In order to alleviate the economic hardship, associated with job losses, the US government implemented several support policies. For example, the Homeowner Assistance Fund provides:

- a minimum of \$50 million for each state, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico;
- \$498 million for Tribes or Tribally designated housing entities and the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands;
- \$30 million for the territories of Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The author argues that although the UK, USA, South Africa, and most countries of the world have put in place several economic stimulus packages, the death toll, arising out of the Covid-19 pandemic, continues to be on a higher trajectory. As of today, the current death toll in the UK stands at (131,487); USA (644,281); and South Africa (78,983) out of the total number of 4.431.976 million recorded Covid-19 reported related deaths globally [13]. The author argues that the pandemic creates an atmosphere of anxiety, fear, and moral panic. The Covid-19 is a dreadful pandemic that makes people live in perpetual fear for their lives. It highlights the vulnerability of the human race because it kills the victims and it is sometimes too rapid to cope with it. Hence, globally there is a very high number of recorded deaths, even being vaccinated does not mean we are fully protected from the coronavirus. The wearing of the mask continues to be one of the newest essential part of our daily clothing and defence to the coronavirus.

The research aims to highlight the impact of both human and financial losses, resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic. Second, explore the devastating consequences of the pandemic and the possibility of facing a food crisis in South Africa.

2. Materials and Methods

This article is qualitative research on the social-economic impact of the Covid-19 on South Africa. The author relies on secondary data, official reports, and previous studies, conducted relating to the research topic. In the first part of the article, the author presents a demographical background of South Africa to the reader and explains the Routine Activity Theory as the theory informing the study. In the second part of the article, the author looks at how the Covid-19 pandemic impacted South Africa's economy since March 27 2020 when the South African government declared an official national lockdown due to the threats of Covid-19. COVID-19 was reportedly originated from the Wuhan Province in China. Both tourism and Food agriculture had a serious economic setback during the Covid-19. In the third part of the article, the author looks at the social impact of the lockdown, explaining all five levels of the lockdown restriction, announced by the government to combat Covid-19.

The impact of the ban on both alcohol and cigarette sales, restrictions on attending funerals, the imposition of curfew, police involvement in crime, increased rate of Gender-Based Violence, and corruption. The author also looks at the impact of the Covid-19 on our health services and officials in South Africa. In the final part of the article, the author discusses the economic losses, resulting from the national lockdown and whether the lockdown was a good or a bad idea.

The author relied on two theoretical frameworks informing the study as follows the Routine Activity Theory (RAT) and the Social Control Theory. The author relied on these two theories first, because both theories address some of the issues, relating to the research topic. Second, it looks into the security of citizens by looking at the role, played by police officers in enforcing lockdown restrictions on behalf of the South Africa government. Third, both theories explain the following: human social behaviour, explaining the reason for deviant behaviour, social-economic relationships, and citizen's reactions to lockdown psychologically. It provides an insight as to how citizens adopted a coping mechanism to survive during these stressful conditions when curfews were imposed and freedom of movement of all citizens was limited.

3. Result

3. 1. Routine Activity Theory(RAT)

The Routine Activity Theory (RAT) provides us with a macro perspective on crime in that it often predicts how changes in social-economic conditions influence the overall crime and victimization rate. Routine Activity theory was propounded by Cohen and Felson [14], which argues that crime only occurs where three elements are present namely:

- a) motivational offenders: they do all they can to break existing societal laws to commit a crime;
- b) suitable target: victims of crime;
- c) the absence of a capable guardian: the absence of an authority/police to enforce the rule of law and to prevent crime from happening. It can also be seen from the use of technology like the Closed Circuit Television (CCTV), and Body-Worn Cameras (BWC's).

Proponents of this theory have argued that the environment has a pivotal role to play concerning the occurrence of crime in our society. The RAT relates to the pattern of offending when it comes to the manifestations of social interaction. Crime is normalised dependent on valuable opportunities to offend. If there is an unprotected target and there are sufficient rewards, the motivated offender will commit a crime. The RAT proponent's postulates that the general lifestyle of an individual plays an important part in taking part in the routine activity theory. The more a person(s) is exposed to criminal behaviour in their everyday lifestyle, the higher the likelihood that a person will commit criminal activity [15, 16].

The RAT finds expression in this article because first, the Covid-19 provided an opportunity for lawlessness to become normalised in South Africa. The moral panic, associated with the pandemic, provided a new kind of opportunistic crime. The anxiety and uncertainty of when the Covid-19 restrictions were going to be increased was a cause for concern for most citizens. The new normal complicated citizen's daily routine activities and social life as many of them suffered psychological trauma. As a result of the confinement and immobility of citizens, many were now forced to stay at home more than they were previously used to with their wives and loved ones. It was widely reported by the police that domestic violence incidents increased during the lockdown period [17].

3. 2. Social Control Theory

Travis Hirschi [18] defined social control theory as the assumption that persons will engage in delinquent behaviour with their social bond to society is weak. Hirschi identified four elements of a social bond as follows:

- 1) attachment;
- 2) commitment;
- 3) involvement;
- 4) beliefs.

Citizens are expected to abide by the rules and standards of society with some formalised control mechanism put in place [19]. During the Covid-19 lockdown in South Africa, the government expects all citizens to obey the disaster management Act, adhere to curfew times, ban of cigarettes, alcohol ban, traveling, and gathering restrictions. The unequal state power over citizens' rights becomes more apparent during the lockdown. No consultation with the people before some of these stricter lockdown rules are imposed on citizens. Democratic and constitutional rights of citizens become less relevant to state in taking decisive actions due to the pandemic. The author argues that sometimes the State does not mean any harm but wanting to exercise its duty to protect citizens. The State is capable of abusing its powers, doing emergencies and even in peaceful situations. The Covid-19 highlights the extent of power and control the State has over citizens. The number of police officers that were arrested by their colleagues committing crimes was shocking for some of us. As police officers who were meant to protect us are arrested for committing crimes. The generates fear, insecurity, and a sense of vulnerability for citizens [20].

3. 3. COVID-19 impact on South Africa Economy

South Africa relies on the tourism and hospitality industry as one of its economic mainstays. In 2019 alone, about 10 million people visited South Africa. They stayed in at least 63,000 available hotels, in which they cumulatively spent R27 Billion. The tourism industry created about 1.5 mil-

lion jobs. It was reported, that over 600,000 have been lost during the pandemic [21]. The GDP of South Africa dropped by 51 % in the second quarter of 2020 as tourism took a major slump. South Africa's National Treasury has predicted up to 7 million job losses, out of a formal workforce of just 10 million (Strauss and Isaacs, 2020). In 2018, tourism generated R120 Billion in foreign exchange, second only to mining revenue. Unfortunately, everyday international travel or borders are closed in South Africa, it is estimated, that losses of about R336 were also incurred [21].

3. 4. COVID-19 Social impact

The lockdown itself and the restriction of movement was psychological trauma, most South Africans have to deal with. All departmental stores denied entry to customers who refuses to wear a face mask. Normal ways of life were severely uttered, people were not allowed to visits their families or friends, attending churches was prohibited, South African borders were closed, curfew was imposed, schools and universities were all closed, under level one lockdown rules. The South African Defence force was deployed to assist the police to maintain law and order. South Africa was placed on a war footing atmosphere with citizens who knew nothing much about the deadly virus. Citizens were constantly updated with corona virus-related daily death toll rates by the Minister of Health Dr Zweli Mkhize. The moral panic, caused by Corona Virus, was very scary not knowing who was going to be the next victim.

3. 5. Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in South Africa during COVID -19

Gender-based violence has become part of society and has become more and more violent in recent years. In one incident it was reported in June 2020, that a 28 years old pregnant woman named Tshogofatso Pule from Soweto was stabbed and hung on a tree by unknown killers. Her body was found in a veld in Durban Deep Roodeport. At the time of her death, she was eight months pregnant. Mzikayise Mlephane, 31 years of age, was been arrested and charged for the murder of Late Ms T Pule. Gender-based violence is very high in South Africa; women have become engendered species, living daily in fear of men. During the lockdown, women are harassed, physically assaulted, raped, and murdered sometimes by their loved ones and at other times by strangers. It was widely reported, that the South African Police Service received 87,000 gender-based violence calls during the first week of the lockdown. This information was divulged to the public by Police Minister Bheki Cele [22].

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a profound and widespread problem in South Africa, impacting almost every aspect of life. GBV (which disproportionately affects women and girls) is systemic and deeply entrenched in institutions, cultures, and traditions in South Africa [23]. GBV occurs as a result of normative role expectations and unequal power relationships between genders in society. GBV can be physical, sexual, emotional, financial, or structural, and can be perpetrated by intimate partners, acquaintances, strangers, and institutions [24].

The author wants the killing of women by men to stop in South Africa. Men who are found guilty of Killing any woman must receive the harshest possible sentence to deter any other man from taking the life of a woman. It is a despicable crime that all citizens must fight against. In South Africa, too many women's lives have been cut short by shameful and callous men. The apartheid successive regime left a generation of very angry men who sometimes uses violence as a way of expressing their psychological experiences. Men need to be informed and educated that all conflicts must not end in violence and encouraged to resolve their differences via non -violence, peaceful, and mediation processes.

3. 6. Ban of alcohol and cigarettes sales

Based on section 8 of the Disaster Management Act, 2002 [25]. The Limitation on the sale, dispensing, or transportation of liquor. All on-consumption premises selling liquor, including taverns, restaurants, and clubs, must be closed with immediate effect or must accommodate no more than 50 persons at any time: Provided that adequate space is available and that all directions in respect of hygienic conditions and limitation of exposure to persons with Covid-19 are adhered to. All premises selling liquor that provide accommodation must implement measures to stop the spread of Covid-19: Provided that adequate space is available and that all directions in respect of hygienic conditions and limitation of exposure to persons with Covid-19 are adhered to.

The author argues that both alcohol and cigarettes were never successfully banned in South Africa. The sale of both cigarettes and alcohol continued in the black market during the entire lockdown period. Tobacco manufacturers took their matter to the court, challenging the lockdown regulation of the government.

3. 7. Imposition of strict curfew times

Based on section 11B of the Disaster Management Act, 2002. Restriction on the movement of persons, goods, and services.

In South Africa, for the period of lockdown – every person is confined to his or her place of residence unless strictly to perform an essential service, obtain an essential good or service, collecting a social grant, pension or seeking emergency, life-saving, or chronic medical attention; every gathering, as defined in regulation 1 is hereby prohibited, except for a funeral as provided for in sub-regulation (8); and movement between provinces and between metropolitan and district areas is prohibited except – for essential workers who have to travel to and from work; transportation of essential goods like consumable food was proving very difficult to supply consumers (Disaster Management Act, 2002. No. 57 of 2002).

The long unusual queues in big supermarkets like Makro, Pick& pay, Checkers, Spar and Shoprite were very challenging, especially in bad weather conditions. In some instances, when you are lucky enough to enter the retail outlet, the items are out of stock due to too many customers purchasing fewer goods. This means you are faced with a predicament of either to return home or move to another shop and re-joined another queue. In some shops, it took about 2–3 hours in the queue to get in. One can safely argue that there was rationing of food supply as no one knew for how long the pandemic was going to last. Some farmers had to close their farms down to control the spread of the disease by requesting their farmworkers to vacate their farms as they could no longer pay them their wages during the lockdown. This automatically affects massive food production lines. To alleviate the hardships of farmworkers and unemployed citizens, the South Africa government introduced a monthly stipend of R350 for all unemployed citizens during the lockdown period. Many undocumented migrants became destitute in the streets of Pretoria, Johannesburg, and Durban. Partly due to their survival depended on the street begging and a source of supply for labouring work. South Africans were more concerned about how and where they are going to feed their families than hiring a labourer to work for them. The job losses on the news created an atmosphere of anxiety not knowing how safe jobs were.

3. 8. Threat to food security

The coronavirus has impacted agriculture and food production around the world. It is also exposing South Africa to an accelerated food-security threat, which requires action now from multiple players, from the government to all involved in the food supply chain. There was a threat to South Africa's beleaguered chicken industry and most likely to others, such as the dairy industry, which have been hard hit by dumped imports. Around 70 % of households in poorer neighbourhoods in South Africa source some food from the informal sector This is because these enterprises, in South Africa and elsewhere make food accessible through:

- 1) selling close to where people live and work;
- 2) the convenience of long operating hours;
- 3) selling in flexible quantities that respond to what people can afford;
- 4) lower prices than large formal retailers;
- 5) providing interest-free credit to regular customers [26].

Food and non-alcoholic beverages increased by 0.9 % between March and April. This took the annual rate to 6.3 %, the highest it has been since 6.8 % in July 2017 (45 months ago). At that time, parts of South Africa were experiencing severe drought. The categories with the most significant impact on food prices in April 2021 were meat; milk, eggs & cheese; and oils & fats. Annual meat inflation accelerated to 7.1 % in April from 6.7 % in March. This was the 6th consecutive month that the rate was above 6.0 %. Products that recorded significant increases in April include IQF chicken portions (6.3 %) and stewing beef (12.1 %). The annual rate for alcoholic beverages and tobacco rose to 4.8 % from 3.7 % in March [5].

3. 9. Restriction on funeral attendance

Notwithstanding paragraph (a), attendance at a funeral or cremation is limited to 50 people and will for purposes of these Regulations not be regarded as a prohibited gathering: Provided that no night vigil shall be and that all safety hygiene measures are strictly adhered to. Each person, whether traveling alone or not, wishing to attend a funeral or cremation and who has to travel between metropolitan and district areas, or between provinces to attend a funeral, under the Disaster Management Act: Regulations relating to Covid-19 South Africa cremation must obtain a permit which corresponds substantially with Form 2 of Annexure C, from his or her nearest magistrate's office or a police station to travel to the funeral or cremation and back. A Magistrate who is the head of the office or a station commander of a police station or a person, designated by him or her, may issue the permit contemplated in paragraph (d). Upon a request for a permit, contemplated in paragraph (d), a person requesting a permit must produce a death certificate or a certified copy of the death certificate to the Magistrate who is the head of the office or a station commander of a police station or a person, designated by him or her: Provided that where a death certificate is not yet available, the person requesting must swear an affidavit statement to that effect. The Disaster Management Act, 2002. No. 57 of 2002 [25]

3. 10. Police involvement in crime

During the lockdown in South Africa, police officers were reportedly involved in crime. Daneel Knooetz [27] stated that the Independent Police Investigative Directorate (IPID) recorded alleged killings by police in the first week of lockdown and also IPID investigating 13 complaints related to shootings and 14 assault cases. Twelve police officers, including a reservist, were all arrested for allegedly violating the National Disaster Management as well as for corruption.

During level one lockdown, the following police-related crime incidents were reported:

- Twelve police officers were arrested for violating the National Disaster Management Regulations they were meant to enforce. Five of them were arrested at a local tavern in Phuthaditjhaba in the Free State.

- in the second incident, six members of the South African Police Service, attached to the Brooklyn and Silverton police stations in Pretoria, were arrested for allegedly stealing more than R30 000 from a group of people, passing through a roadblock. They took the money from the boot of the car without the owner's permission;

- the last police officer was arrested for doing a party in the house whilst under curfew hours;

- two warrant officers were arrested after they were caught buying alcohol, allegedly for resale, alongside a shop manager and a cashier;

- another two police officers were arrested for illegally escorting their light trucks, loaded with alcohol, in violation of the lockdown regulations;

- 246 police officers were placed on suspension for committing a crime during the lockdown in South Africa [28];

- extortion and bribery cases accounted for two-thirds of the 597 police corruption cases, registered with the Independent Police Investigative Directorate (IPID) [29];

- in Mpumalanga province, two Pienaar police officers were arrested for using a state vehicle to escort a tavern owner's transport, comprising of three vehicles, loaded with liquor.

3. 11. Grand Scale Corruption

COVID-19 has exposed the extent and pervasive level of greed in South Africa. Government officials and politicians took advantage of an unfortunate pandemic period to enrich themselves from (tender) contracts award, resulting in billions of Rands, meant for saving lives, diverted into a personal bank account. The author argues that to steal from the needy and in crisis is a despicable crime that merits the harshest punishment. The perpetrators of this corruption have been unashamedly brazen in their hijacking of the emergency measures, put into place to deal with COVID-19 in South Africa. The government stimulus package of R500 billion into the economy provided a fine opportunity for greedy officials to dip their hands into the Covid-19 cookie jar.

Both private and public sectors were reportedly involved in abusing the procurement of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), resulting in the looting of billions of Rands, which was meant to save lives and provide relief for citizens who were in dire need. There were also reports of thefts of large quantities of food parcels, met for the unemployed and sick people who could not fend for themselves.

The Corruption Watch's Analysis of Corruption Trends (ACT) report 2020, reported a growing concern about corruption levels in South Africa. The report also illustrates the will of the public to expose the corrupt and seek consequences remains very strong amongst South Africans. Over 2000 people took voluntary steps to become whistle-blowers. Of these reports, Bribery of government officials was placed at 31 %, [30]. Municipalities scandals emblems and misappropriation of funds were widely reported, over 400 million Rands were allegedly stolen from the EThekweni Municipality Durban by elected politicians [31].

In Gauteng province, in another report, nearly 40 million Rands, held in different bank accounts, were involved in supply [32]. The author argues that there was corruption before the Covid-19 pandemic in South Africa, but the outbreak of the Covid-19 only intensified it. The environment of fear and anxiety, created by the Covid-19 pandemic, provided the opportunity for state looters to ply their trade with impunity. Corruption erodes public confidence and undermines public health measures to contain the deadly Corona Virus and exacerbates inequality by dividing communities into those who can afford to break the rules and those who cannot.

3. 12. Impact on Education

Section 6 of the Disaster Management Act 2020: Closure of schools and partial care facilities. Schools and partial care facilities must be closed by 18 March 2020 until 30 April 2020, which period may be extended by way of directions by the Cabinet member responsible. The loss of contact sessions of between 6-7 months may lead to student's extension of their study calendars. There is a need for each school to come out with a workable working strategy in an attempt to salvage the academy year. The Disaster Management Act 2002. No. 57 [25]. All schools in South Africa were shut down and learners were obliged to adapt to the new normal. Some schools introduced the use of e-learning platforms to reduce the effects of the lost classes.

3. 13. Prevention and prohibition of gathering that:

To contain the spread of Covid-19, a gathering is prohibited. An enforcement officer must, where a gathering takes place—order the persons at the gathering to disperse immediately; and if they refuse to disperse, take appropriate action, which may, subject to the Criminal Procedure Act, include arrest and detention. The assembly of more than 50 persons at premises where liquor is sold and consumed is prohibited (President Ramaphosa, 2020) [33]. Some citizens continued to violate the government restrictive directives, leading to arrest by the police.

3. 14. Section 4 of the Disaster Management Act 2002: Refusal of medical examination, prophylaxis, treatment, isolation, and quarantine.

No person who has been confirmed as a clinical case or as a laboratory-confirmed case as having contracted Covid-19, or who is suspected of having contracted Covid-19, or who has been in contact with a person who is a carrier of Covid-19, may refuse consent to – submission of that person to a medical examination, including but not limited to the taking of any bodily sample by a person, authorised in law to do so; admission of that person to a health establishment or a quarantine or isolation site; or submission of that person to mandatory prophylaxis, treatment, isolation or quarantine, or isolation to prevent transmission:

Provided that if a person does not comply with the instruction or order of the enforcement officer, that person must be placed in isolation or quarantine for 48 hours, as the case may be, pending a warrant being, issued by a competent Court, on application by an enforcement officer for the medical examination, contemplated in the paragraph (Disaster Management Act 2002. No. 52 of 2002).

3. 15. Findings of the study

Although South Africa experienced food insecurity even before the COVID-19 lockdown – 11 % of South Africans (about 6.5 million people) suffered from hunger – this increased significantly over the last five months as a result of measures, implemented to prevent the spread of Covid-19. During hard levels of lockdown 5, 47 % of adults surveyed, reported that their household ran out of money to buy food in April. Between May and June, 21 % said that someone in the household went hungry in the previous 7 days and 15 % that a child went hungry in the previous week.

The South African government has quickly responded to the crisis and announced the R500 billion economic stimulus package, which includes food and cash transfers. The economic stimulus package, offered by the South African government, is aimed at providing safety nets for those hit the hardest by the Covid-19 lockdown.

Corona Virus pandemic has brought both social and economic hardships to all citizens. Due to the strict lockdown rules, imposed on citizens. It is very difficult to leave a normal life.

The police deviant behaviour was highlighted in this study.

The power of the state to control its citizen's in an emergency is highlighted and discussed by the author. The state has power over all citizens regardless of citizen's constitutional rights, especially during emergencies like the lockdown. The state can sometimes abuse its power when it comes to the social control of its citizens.

Grand scale corruption is a problem in South Africa. Both public and private officials benefit from the Covid pandemic-related business opportunities.

4. Discussions

During the epic of the Coronavirus pandemic, two opposing schools of thought emerged in South Africa. The first school of thought was very much concerned about the high death rates, associated with Covid-19. Reducing and preventing further deaths at all costs. They advocate that tougher measures need to be put in place like curfews to reduce the spread of the deadly virus. One such measure was to close all airports, seaports, and border posts. The author argues that two opposing schools of thought emerged during the lockdown. South Africa's coronavirus lockdown rules measures, some of the strictest in the world, have earned praise from groups including the World Health Organisation [WHO] for saving lives –but at the same time, recent data could prove some analyst claims that its economy has been largely destroyed.

Household incomes have been directly impacted as workplaces have shut, and severe restrictions on trade and freedom of movement have been imposed. While these measures may have assisted in reducing the spread of the virus, their implications for exacerbating poverty, food poverty, and malnutrition across the developing world are forecasted to be severe. Global poverty projections suggest that the international response to the virus will push over 70 million people into extreme poverty, with sub-Saharan African being the hardest hit. In the US since the lockdown restrictions were imposed in March 2020, the following facts have been reported:

- small businesses' revenue is down 20 percent;
- only chapter 11 bankruptcies have increased with over 420,000 small businesses closing their doors;
- the number of labor force participants not at work quadrupled from January to April 2020;
- unemployed or employed but not at work rose from 7.9 million to 19.6 million. That increase was largely driven by a 10.3 percentage point rise in the unemployment rate;
- low-income families with children were most likely to experience an income shock.

The contagion effects of the pandemic will ricochet through the economy and push more people deeper into poverty and food insecurity. In turn, this will increase the pressure on the already over-burdened social protection system with increased demand for social grants and food parcels. In mitigating the short-term socio-economic fall-out of the virus, countries typically have had three strategies, available to them in providing an emergency safety net to citizens:

1. Expand the social insurance system, reaching a proportion of the labour force;
2. Build on existing social security or assistance programmes;
3. Involve local governments and non-state institutions to reach vulnerable groups, not covered by the first two options.

The South Africa's R500 billion fiscal relief package has incorporated elements of all three options to mitigate the short-term impacts of lockdown on business and livelihoods. Social insurance has been expanded, the extensive social grants system that was already in place pre-crisis has been leveraged to reach more households with increased support, and there have been strong calls to action in expanding localised support through non-state institutions, particularly concerning food relief.

The economy and saving life debates were sometimes pronounced along racial and political party lines. The ruling party the African National Congress supported a total lockdown to reduce

the loss of lives until such a time the country is declared safe by experts to re-open. The Democratic Alliance(DA) Party was opposed to it, and they argued that the economy needs to take into consideration. The government was holding all of us captives in our homes contrary to the Bill of Rights that guarantees citizens freedoms. In the end, the government lockdown rules were challenged in Court by not only the DA but other pressure groups. The author is tempted to take a stance here by stating first, the South Africa government did extremely well in closing its borders from foreign travellers. The critics of the government are not fair because life is more important than the state of the economy. We can revitalise our economy, but it is practically impossible to revitalise all losses of life once gone.

Karl Marx clearly articulated the friction that exists between two classes, those who have and controls the means of production and those who do not have but only offer their labour in return for wages. According to Marx, the rich and poor classes are always engaged in a perpetual class struggle. The aristocratic class exploits the working proletariat classes in our societies. Capitalism is built upon the injustices and oppression of the poor classes. A revolution is needed to rectify a stratified society and an unequal one. Whilst people were globally losing their jobs, other people still made huge profits out of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In looking at the total number of South Africans who have died since March 2020, to date it is currently standing at over 75000 deaths. One can safely argue that the South Africa government took the right decision to protect all citizens. It could have turned out to be worse if the government did not put restrictive control measures in place. For ease of reference, the South Africa government to control the spread of Covid-19 imposed five alert levels restrictions on all citizens. These alert levels are explained as follows:

- alert level 5: Drastic measures to contain the spread of the virus and save lives;
- alert level 4: Extreme precautions to limit community transmission and outbreaks while allowing some activity to resume;
- alert level 3: Restrictions on many activities, including at workplaces and socially, to address a high risk of transmission;
- alert level 2: Physical distancing and restrictions on leisure and social activities to prevent a resurgence of the virus;
- alert level 1: Most normal activity can resume, with precautions and health guidelines, followed at all times. Population prepared for an increase in alert levels if necessary.

4. 1. Limitations of the study

The author provides the following limitations to the study as follows:

- a) unreliable data from different countries as their reporting processes are not independently verified and transparent;
- b) the difficulting in providing a correct and final report for an ongoing pandemic is very complex to measure accurately as the effects or victim's numbers changes on an hourly and daily basis;
- c) the search for a cure to the disease makes people extra cautious whilst the pandemic is still very much deadly;
- d) the cultural stigma, attached to the Covid-19 victims, often judged as been reckless and not taken enough care to prevent Covid-19;
- e) limited budget is available for researchers to conduct future empirical researches as many countries are experiencing an economic downturn.

5. Conclusion

The author argues that the catastrophic effects, heralded by the coronavirus pandemic, are difficult to quantify correctly. It is even more complex when economists make attempts to predict how many years it will take for the South Africa economy to have a rebound. The Covid-19 unarguably took both economic, socio, and psychological toll on all citizens. If we are to go by evaluating the devastating effects, we see around us today. It will take about 10–20 years before South Africa fully recovers from the impact of the Covid-19. The South Africa government will have to look at the issue of job creation, raising taxes, freezing annual salary increases, invest more in tourism and hospitality, mining, agriculture, housing, health, and education to promote sustainable growth of the economy over time. For many years to come, the devastating impact of the coronavirus will be

told by all of us, not only in South Africa but globally. The over million people who died during this pandemic period have left an indelible mark in our hearts for generations to come.

Covid-19 undermines food security both directly, by disrupting food systems, and indirectly, through the impacts of lockdowns on household incomes and physical access to food. Covid-19 and responses to the pandemic could undermine food production, processing, and marketing, but the most concerning impacts are on the demand-side – economic and physical access to food. One of the lessons of the pandemic is that no country can afford to depend on imports for its food security. There has been a global disruption of many industries, and this includes the food supply chain, from production to distribution and sale. South Africa needs to support local production and keep imports to the absolute minimum to overcome any imminent dangers that lie ahead during these Unprecedented times of the Corona Virus pandemic.

The pandemic could not have come at the worst time to South Africa with the economy on its knees and buffeted from all sides with bad news, such as consistent economic downgrades by rating agencies. The author is optimistic about the resilience of the South African economy to withstand any food security threat now and in the foreseeable future. Even with a discovery of any vaccine for the coronavirus. The South African economy will take time to bounce back into economic buoyancy and stability.

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