

ABSTRACT

COVID-19 Pandemic Landscape and the Woefully Torn Social Self

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Abstract: The objective of the paper is to delineate the short and long term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic across the public and private spheres of the people's lives. COVID-19 as a global phenomenon continues to affect not only the social world of an individual's life but also has its repercussions on the family and kinship ties which are intimate to his/her life. The paper begins with how COVID-19 has been understood since its evolution. Thereupon the paper heuristically divides the impacts into two distinct yet interrelated spheres of human lives; first, the material, second, the non-material. The material impacts are discussed under the broad rubrics of the 'Great Lockdown' and economy, work-from-home (WFH), higher education community and 'Vaccine nationalism' among others. The non-material section of the paper discusses ontological and existential issues regarding mental health, stigma and pandemic and most importantly how death has been socially 'reconstructed' in the times of COVID-19. The paper concludes with a summary of major findings.

Key words: COVID-19, Great lockdown, Work-from-home(WFH), Stigma, Death and mourning, Vaccine nationalism

'Yet the social science lacked such a language to capture the nature of suffering or the demands of ethics. The breakdown of concepts and categories created too many black boxes and silences. The crisis of the social sciences around COVID-19 stems from a flatness of language and an emptiness of concepts' (Visvanathan 2020: 29).