**Post COVID 19: Economic and Social Impact in India**

Dr.K.V.Sriram, Associate Professor at the Department of Humanities and Management,

Manipal Institute of Technology

The cloud of uncertainty looms over the entire globe. Stock markets are in disarray, economy in doldrums and poor has become poorer. Covid 19, a term which did not make any sense just 4 months back has now become a buzz word. For a country which announced complete lockdown for 21 days from 24th March 2020 the initial few days were shocking for almost all of my countrymen. Suddenly the movements are curtailed, and people are not allowed to venture out except for very essential items. Government advised strict social distancing and considered this as the only way to prevent community transfer. From a few hundred cases in the last week of March, India has seen a spike of cases over the past few weeks and the total number of cases stands at 11,439 as of April 15, 2020 (Source https://www.mygov.in/covid-19/ Arogya Setu app, Government of India). The government machinery strictly believes that these numbers are quite normal for a population of 1.3 billion and has extended this lockdown till May 3, 2020.

India being one of the fast growing economies in the world is sure to face a drop in momentum with respect to the growth. The country was in the process of picking up from the slowdown caused by demonetization and the new tax regime (GST) introduced by the government. Though these measures were introduced to clean the economy and make it transparent and robust the results were expected only in the future.

With the unexpected Covid 19 situation the economy is likely to slow down further due to the complete shutdown of construction activities, where majority of the migrant work force are employed. Agriculture is going to have an impact as supply chain is blocked and agri produces cannot be transported. Manufacturing industries have already recorded a 50% drop in business and it is likely to go further down as the lockdown is being extended. Tourism is a major revenue generating industry which will take time to regain its glory. The recent forecast says that the GDP of the country will be around 4.8% in 2020-21 which is much less compared to the previous estimate of 6 to 6.5%.

The good news is that India has a robust economy and is not dependent on one particular sector for its growth. The multi-faceted economy of India that includes manufacturing industry, service industry and Information Technology is likely to ensure that there is no adverse effect though there will be an overall slowdown. Already pharmaceutical industry is geared up and is like to play a major role towards building the country’s future. India has faced several adverse situations in the past as well and has bounced back with full vigor. Social infrastructure in India is likely to change post Covid 19.Various non-profit organizations and charities have shown that they can stand with the people during this crisis. The public distribution system in many of the Indian states have proved to be extremely efficient in reaching out the essential commodities to public during this crisis. The health care system is the one that needs to address the issues being faced during crisis situation. Health care industry should use this opportunity to identify the lacunae and gear up to face the challenges of the future. Government should upgrade social infrastructure and greater emphasis should be given for health care.

The social life of India is guided by the rich cultural values hence we may not see a drastic change in the day to day life style. Some of short term impact could be social distancing, masks and use of sanitizers. Psychologically people will be more careful about personal hygiene and this is going to bring in a habit change.

Research scholars have the opportunity to look into various aspects of economic and social changes that this lock down is going to bring about in the days to come.

**Author Information:**

Dr.K.V.Sriram: The author is an Associate Professor at the Department of Humanities and Management ,Manipal Institute of Technology, Manipal Academy of Higher Education, India. His areas of interest includes Environmental Science, Consumer behaviour and Digital Marketing.Email: kvsriram@yahoo.com