

Issues and Challenges in the Pandemic of Coronavirus: A Critical Analysis of Covid-19: A Global Novel in a Global Village

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Abstract

Living through the pandemic of COVID-19, a great deal of issues and challenges were observed. Issues, like socio-economic inequalities, political rivalries, patriarchy, religious misinterpretation and social stagnation existed long before the pandemic broke out, but they, along with media propaganda, behavioral change towards the pandemic and informal economies, posed serious challenges during the pandemic of corona virus. The current study aims at exploring these issues and challenges during the pandemic of COVID-19. The study is qualitative in nature. The study uses Greenham's (2019) close reading technique with the framework of Durkheim's (cited in Jonathan Turner, 1981) social integration theory for data analysis. The study concludes that social and economic inequalities across the globe, media propaganda, xenophobia, violence, social stagnation, political priorities and leadership's disinterestedness towards the public prevailed during the pandemic.

Keywords: Social Stagnation; Socio-economic Inequalities; Media Propaganda

Background of the Study

A novel virus called coronavirus invaded the world in 2019 first in Wuhan, China and spread a pandemic named as COVID-19. This is perhaps one of the greatest pandemics the world has ever seen. During the pandemic, it was observed that the entire humanity suffered badly, and human beings became untouchable. The current study explores some issues and challenges that humanity at large faced during the pandemic in the novel, Covid-19: A Global Novel in a Global Village, written by Joseph Demes (2020).

Though effective medicines have been developed to improve human health and combat diseases, yet human history reveals that various pandemics have always posed serious challenges to humanity. COVID-19 is one such pandemic that affected humanity from all sides across the globe. Businesses came to standstill; educational institutions and places of community gatherings were closed. These grave impacts of the novel pandemic made men of insight alert to raise voice against loopholes that have existed so far to have left the world vulnerable. Dr. Joseph is one of them. He wrote Covid-19: A Global Novel in a Global Village (2020) which narrates the story of

global pandemic. The novel is an interesting story of two lovers, Dr. Amigioli and Mrs. Elisay, who are destined to meet in time of the pandemic. They combat, along with the pandemic of COVID-19, fake news and ignorance, phobia, and many other issues and challenges faced in the pandemic.

The story, further, reveals that a young man, Dr. Amigioli from Gondwanaya and a beautiful girl, named Mrs. Elisay from Pattaya, Thailand, meet at the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp, Belgium. They fall in love with each other. During their studies, their love blossoms so much that they plan to marry together after Mrs. Elisay meets Dr. Amigioli's parents. This brings Mrs. Elisay to Gondwanaya to meet Dr. Amigioli's parents. Meanwhile, when she is in Gondwanaya to enjoy the beauty of Basom-Moli, the pandemic of COVID-19 breaks out and she contracts flue. Having come to know that a muzunguya (a word for foreigner) has contracted flue, a misguided mob attacks her and fatally injures her. Dr. Amigioli, somehow, manages to drive her to the American Embassy where she is treated. On her recovery, they get married together in the embassy. Later on, the two lovers, who are doctors, are hired to treat the same people who had burnt two Gondwanayans alive and almost killed a muzunguya as they were believed to have contracted the virus.

The media spoke up for killing those humans who needed help (Demes, 2020, pp. 112-23), spread religious credulousness (Demes, 2020, pp. 211-17), but are silent on issues of great concern. The Gondwanayan president, as is common in regimes of monarchy and dictatorship, or the democracies of developing countries, looks forward to bribing his political workers and supporters from the US aid for curbing the pandemic (Demes, 2020, p.182). Likewise, the political elite of the country were in no mood to stop such gatherings for their vested interests. Mrs. Elisay, along with Dr. Amigioli, takes every

possible initiative to save the US aid from embezzlement and stops the political gatherings and processions that could have led to the rapid spread of COVID-19 (Demes, 2020, p.191); she also motivates the monarchy to make a journey to and launch some developmental projects in those slums which he had never seen in his life.

Research Question

What are the issues and challenges faced by humanity in/during combating the pandemic as narrated in Covid-19: A Global Novel in a Global Village (2020)?

Review of Literature

As far as the socio-economic inequalities in the world are concerned, they posed serious challenges as Deitz and Meehan (2019) argue that families, which do not have running water in their houses, cannot afford washing hands. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor (2018) reports that people in prisons and refugee camps can neither sustain social distance as they do not have enough space, nor can they escape crowds in public transportation. The economically disadvantaged are more prone to harm and negative outcomes as the economic disadvantage is connected with a high rate of illness (Cockerham et al., 2017).

During the pandemic, the socio-economic inequalities were more visible in how it hit the informal sector. Guo et al. (2022) admit that informal economy has become one of the most daunting challenges in most developing countries, especially examining the pain they felt at the times of a big crisis, such as COVID-19 pandemic. It hit the informal workers like the street vendors, the self-employed or informally employed without social insurance, and those in micro and family enterprises.

The socio-economic inequalities have long prevailed in the world due to poor governance and political rivalries. Krafchik and Tsai (2021) opine that poor governance, improper financial management, and misappropriation of public funds and goods were problems that already existed, but they surged more to the surface when resource management was much needed during the pandemic in many countries of the world. Nayupe et al. (2022) report that the government of Malawi's initial March to June 2020 National COVID-19 PRPF funds flowed through the Governor's Office account to entertain the visitors of the Governor.

The blame game, hostility and economic rivalry between the United States and China were some of the reasons that the pandemic was not effectively tackled. Lynch and Gramer (2020) state that Beijing and Washington are hostile to each other and ignore the pandemic. Similarly, the hostility between Beijing and Washington began to intensify in the middle of the pandemic when the American President, Donald Trump started calling it the 'Chinese Virus' and his aides started calling it 'Kung flu.' US President, Donald Trump claimed that China could contain the virus and held China answerable for transparency in tackling the issue. The Chinese blamed the American Military for leaving the virus in Wuhan. According to some western media reports, the virus got leaked from some US-backed research laboratory in Wuhan (Mangan, 2020). Aarabi (2020) argues that the Iranian leadership blamed that the virus was produced by the US government. Davis and Wei (2020) point out that Beijing blamed that the virus was brought to Wuhan by the American Military at an international event. During the pandemic of COVID-19, there were conspiracy theories, misinformation and fake news. They emerged shortly after COVID-19 was reported and continued to persist. Some thought that the virus

was created as a bioweapon either by China or the US (Gertz, 2020).

Besides the blame game and political rivalries among the international blocs, the delay in action against the pandemic was seen as disinterestedness on part of the leadership. Nelson (2021) states that the Imperial College London's epidemiologist assessed that England could have saved some 25,000 lives that were lost to the pandemic up to May, 2020 if she had put lockdown before March 23. During the pandemic, the delayed action was also noticed in the provision of safety goods or food items; it challenged all governments across the globe. As Gopalan and Misra (2020) put that for the huge scale of the problem, the government schemes remained vastly inadequate as it was very difficult to provide the most hard-hit areas with safety goods and safety nets.

The political hostilities led to xenophobia and hatred of humanity, mainly propagated through media, which further deteriorated the situation. During the pandemic of COVID-19, it was observed that xenophobia and racism was reflected in the remarks of the leadership across the world. Jaipragas (2020) states that the US former secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, like Donald Trump, frequently referred to the virus of the pandemic as the 'Chinese Virus' or 'Wuhan Virus' which was objected to by the WHO and Chinese government officials. Reny and Barreto (2020) quoted some statements from American president, Donald Trump and some other leading Republican politicians who demonized the Chinese and other Asian Americans by calling the virus as 'Wuhan virus' or 'Chinese virus' or 'Kung Flu' as a part of their political strategy. An elected official in Kansas commented that his community was safer because there were no Chinese people there. John Cornyn, the Texas Senator, said that the virus was Chinese as they eat bats, snakes and dogs. They further argue that this elite blame-rhetoric COVID-19 fueled the

pre-existing xenophobia and sentiments of hatred against the Asians. Some researchers concluded that only Chinese were excluded and victims of xenophobia, but Reny and Barreto (2020) found out that anti-Chinese sentiment was not the only driving response, sentiments of hatred against other Asian-Americans were also found.

During the pandemic, media mostly played an irresponsible role; it caused anxiety, fear and hatred. Gao et al. (2020) argue that recurrent exposure to social media platforms not only caused anxiety and stress symptoms, but also exposed the users to fake news and disinformation. They spread what was not true, or what people witnessed. Frenkel et al. (2020) state that social media was laden with fake news and misinformation about the pandemic of COVID-19. Misinformation can easily get mixed up with correct information (Guess & Coppock, 2018). However, Berinsky (2017) proposes an approach of exposing fact-checking and correction through causal explanations available to all to enhance the effectiveness of countering fake news (Schmid & Betsch, 2019). At times of crisis, misinformation could easily spread; hence, other approaches are needed. The media, in light of the above, caused not only xenophobia and hatred, but also added fuel to fire by causing fear and anxiety.

Patriarchy and lack of adaptability were observed as major issues during the pandemic of COVID-19. Gashaw et al. (2021) gathered literature that explores gender disparity. In many societies, males are generally placed in higher positions in social, economic and political hierarchies, in their access to material resources, roles and expectations. This situation is worse in the developing world where women are confined to cultural traditions, religious seclusion and illiteracy as well as a greater devotion to family obligations which cannot enter the formal sectors where they are relatively stable as compared to their home-based involvement in informal or gray

economy. Even in the formal sector, they are highly engaged in the most dangerous area of COVID-19 as nurses and janitors where they do not have access to social protection and share a huge burden in the care economy for the closure of schools and care systems.

It was observed during the pandemic of COVID-19 that the leaders lacked in what Haslam and Platow (2020) call a social group with a sense of us-ness. They carry the point further that it is a leader's we-ness, rather than his I-ness. This perspective brings the leaders and followers together. Leadership is connected with adaptability and extending a shared psychology with others; it arises from a relationship between leaders and followers in a social group. This quality is much improved in females than males as they are biologically fitter than male for stress absorption. Gashaw et al. (2021) collected literature that reveals that females are endowed with estrogen, which is responsible for both expression and cardiovascular health, and are known to produce more adaptive responses than males do as the innate immune cells are increased in females.

Messages from trusted public voices are much more effective behavior in the time of epidemics. When Ebola broke out in West Africa, religious leaders of all faiths in Sierra Leone were involved to advocate for practices such as hand washing and safe burials with fruitful results in the epidemic (Greyling et al., 2016). Hence, credible voices for imparting public health messages can prove effective in the behavioral change towards the pandemic. Blair et al. (2017) argue that trust in institutions plays an important role in the implementation of government measures, for instance, social distancing [or hand washing] for eliminating a pandemic. On the contrary, trust deficit, Ahsan and Wanamaker (2018) state, in government and its institutions may lead to negative effects on the utilization of health services. Therefore, reliable information and

public health messages from national leaders and central health officials should be supported by local voices for trust building in the government and its institutions to ensure behavioral change.

Leach et al. (2015) argue that people who do what is 'right' are publically admired and respected, and those who do what is 'wrong' are usually treated with social exclusion. They suggest that the mechanisms of social enforcement should, therefore, be relied on more than any legal and formal agreements or sanctions to encourage people to do what is right and avoid what is wrong. Ritov and Baron (1992) note that violation of norms or deviation from the status quo drains more intensified blame or harsh criticism from people than doing it by default. People do what is right because they do not want to be judged and considered selfish (Barclay & Willer, 2006).

Nowak (2006) argues that people need to sacrifice their vested individual interests for a larger cause of the community; they can only fight a pandemic if there is large-scale cooperation. For better countering, Christensen et al. (2020) argue that in the pandemic of COVID-19, behavior changes are required to follow health policies which require the involvement of local voices, community liaisons, and social mobilizers to nurture awareness and remove delusions of people about the pandemic. Tsai et al. (2020) argue that government efforts to manage crises encompass door-to-door campaigning and bans on [social and political] gatherings.

During the pandemic, religious misinterpretation was a huge challenge to tackle. It involves misleading guidance, misinterpreting scriptures or religious records, or the false claim of divine power or knowledge. Religious misinformation draws on fear, emotional appeals, or the credibility of religious authority. Across the

world, the spread of COVID-19, actors of religion promoted religious remedies and gave the false hope of divine immunity to "true" believers attending centers of worship. We saw examples of figures using their religious authority to encourage people to drink cow's urine in India, visit churches in the United States on Easter, and attend Holy Communion, drinking from one spoon at the Greek Orthodox Church. These religious directions were based on the notions that believers would be protected from contagion through their belief and sacred actions. In the MENA region, these religious appeals most often misused the appeal of Islam to promote dangerous remedies, theories, and behaviors for various intentions (Almardani & Elswah, 2020).

The literature reveals that socio-economic inequalities, political competition at the risk of humanity, xenophobia, behavioral change and social stagnation and negative role of media in the time of crisis added to the sufferings of humanity during the pandemic of COVID-19. These issues and challenges are explored in the novel *Covid-19: A Global Novel in a Global Village* (2020) by adopting the following model for data analysis.

Research Method for Data Analysis

This study uses qualitative research design as it is used to explore the variation or diversity in a phenomenon, issue, problem or attitude towards an issue" (Kumar, 2012, p. 16). It employs first three levels or contexts of Greenham's (2019) close reading technique which are discussed here within the framework of Durkheim's (cited in Jonathan Turner, 1981) social integration theory.

Greenham (2019) gives overall six levels or contexts of close reading. The first three levels, which are used in this study, are: the semantic level which focuses on how the individual words convey their meanings in their situational history and figurative context of the word; the syntactic level which focuses on the meanings of words

when they are brought together or put together in sentences or lines; the thematic level which focuses on how themes emerge from the text of a work. In this level, the syntactic and thematic contexts are used together as a whole, and these themes are applied well for comprehending each part of the text.

Theoretical Framework

The study employs Durkheim's (cited in Jonathan Turner, 1981) theory of social integration. The theory has two types of social integration, which he refers to, as kinds of solidarity . . . mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity. Rao (2012) notes that, according to Durkheim (cited in Jonathan Turner, 1981), mechanical solidarity holds primitive or smaller societies together. He says smaller things, like kinship and shared beliefs, hold societies together. In this kind of social integration, humans are pretty similar. Organic solidarity exists in advanced societies, where a complex division of labor requires humans to rely on each other more. This kind of interdependence creates increased social integration where an individual becomes the focus of rights and responsibilities as the individual is considered vitally important, even sacred.

Organic solidarity is found in modern industrial society; unity is based on roles that are interdependent and involve a highly complex division of labor that requires the efforts of all the individuals in a group or society. It is called organic as it resembles a biological organism wherein highly organized or specialized organs work in coordination if the organism has to survive. Likewise, individuals have to organically work together if societies of the globe have to survive. Durkheim (cited in Jonathan Turner, 1981) distinguishes between the division of labor (interdependence) and disintegration. He says industrial failures, crises, conflicts and crimes, that are pathological in nature, reflect disintegration which ceases the division of labor

or solidarity and leads to "Anomie" which is the clash between individual and societal values. Durkheim (cited in Jonathan Turner, 1981) explored that anomie leads to disintegration and feelings of individualism. This state of anomie leads to ineffectiveness of social control of individual behavior and a sociological phenomenon, called Deviance.

Analysis of Data

Durkheim's (cited in Jonathan Turner, 1981) organic solidarity reads that world is socially integrated; human societies are intricately integrated and dependent on one another. Rao (2012) says that Durkheim's (cited in Jonathan Turner, 1981) organic solidarity is based on roles that are interdependent and involve a highly complex division of labor that requires the efforts of all the individuals in a group or society. This interdependence and intricate integration has further increased in wake of globalization. It has shrunk the world into a socially integrated village. An issue in a corner of the world or a deviance of an individual or a class does not remain limited; it affects the entire world. The issues and challenges during the pandemic were seen within the framework of Durkheim's (cited in Jonathan Turner, 1981) social integration theory. The virus, which broke out in Wuhan, could not be contained there; it took the whole world on storm. The study uses three levels --- semantic, syntactic and thematic --- of Greenham's (2019) close reading technique to analyze the issues and challenges in the data.

Mostly the socio-economic divides are for the hegemonic appetite of the ruling elites. They establish their hold over people, or maintain it as long as they can. A Belgian doctor, who advises Dr. Amigioli to study at the Institute of Tropical Medicine at Antwerp, reflects that in Gondwanayan great brains are not permitted to flourish as they are perceived to be a threat to the 'Founding President' and his hegemonic power

(applying the semantic level to hegemonic power)” (Demes, 2020, p. 39). The Founding President builds the luxury “Presidential Palace, where he himself, his family, his harem, and his bodyguard also live” (Demes, 2020, pp. 169-70), but he never thinks about how people live in the slums of Gondwanaya where they countenance a dearth of food and water; they are not aware of their hygiene and consequently suffer from health issues. When a tour to Kiberaya is planned to distribute necessities of food and water, and create awareness in the population about the pandemic of COVID-19, the Founding President is reluctant to go into the slums where his people are living their life (Demes, 2020, pp. 256-62). The phenomenon of marked inequalities is reflected everywhere; the king of Thailand, like the Founding President, is in confinement in a luxury hotel abroad with his entire harem of twenty women in a luxury hotel in Germany (Demes, 2020, pp. 265-67).

When the founding president is threatened with declaring as “persona non grata,” along with his family as he failed to protect Mrs. Elisay and “two Gondwanayan citizens, Mr. Zoro Makamba and Mr. Woody Papa Dioup, he says that it is necessary to keep people in ignorance and fear to run the state affairs smoothly in COVID-19 (Demes, 2020, pp. 142-43). It is easy for the ruling class to embezzle the financial resources of people who are kept ignorant. The Founding President is disinterested in dealing with the pandemic and looks forward to distributing five hundred million of the US aid among his ministers, loyal politicians of his party and members of his clan, and to provide jobs to his friends in the presidential party (Demes, 2020, pp. 181-82). In contrast to the ruling class, the couple of Dr. Amigioli and Mrs. Elisay, who are humane and educated, work tirelessly to combat the challenge of COVID-19 and rid Gondwanaya of this menace. They work for fifteen hours daily to coordinate with visitors, organize the response

and take the required measures to manage the pandemic of COVID-19 (Demes, 2020, p. 193).

Besides socio-economic inequalities, the rivalry and appetite for power has divided the world into blocs. The issue is so deep-rooted that it turns some of the world leaders blind towards sufferings of humanity. The thematic context/level of close reading explains the dreams of Mrs. Elisay. She dreams that the Chinese government has prepared a task force, called ‘Post-COVID-19 Chinese Domination,’ to launch propaganda and convince the world elite that China has the best preparation for global challenges. The team is given task to flood the western media with messages and press articles, commending the Chinese government for its management of the crisis, and change the opinion of the world elite that the western democracies, like the United States, France, Italy, and Spain, were too slow to cope with a challenge as compared to the Chinese model of government. He says that the Chinese are a revolutionary society and best adopted for the new challenges, even to extend its support to both rich and poor countries in the pandemic to show solidarity in the time of crisis. The Chinese president adds that China effectively tackled the pandemic when the United States and other countries badly failed. He tells his team members that the Chinese are resilient enough to reclaim control of mass industrial production and control the market while other giants are in crisis and will rule the world economically (Demes, 2020, pp. 236-39). The directives of the Chinese president to the task force of ‘Post-COVID-19 Chinese Domination’ clearly show how the big powers of the globe are competing to turn COVID-19 into an opportunity to control the world, which also strengthens the conspiracy theory behind the pandemic of COVID-19.

As the dream continues, he directs the task force to manipulate and make best use of social media to turn the American public opinion against

Donald Trump as far as the economy of the United States and unemployment are concerned, so that he could lose the coming elections (Demes, 2020, p. 240). Mrs. Elisay sees in her dream that the economic rivalry and competition for market control makes the president Xi Jinping plan to send another wave of the pandemic to further slowdown the American economy and fail Donald Trump in his re-election as he is arrogant enough to call the coronavirus as “Chinese virus” or “Wuhan virus” (Demes, 2020, p. 241). This competition for market and arrogant remarks of Donald Trump lead to xenophobia and racism.

Chinese President Xi is grieved by Donald Trump’s racist remarks about the ‘Chinese virus’ or ‘Wuhan virus’ (Demes, 2020, p. 241). These xenophobic and racist remarks are not confined to Donald Trump only, other political leadership and opinion makers are also involved for personal gains. Mr. Trumpetol, the reporter for the radio A Thousand Hills, shouts: “Down with the Chinese! Down with the muzunguya!” He provokes people to kill the “cockroach (Mrs. Elisay) immediately to avoid this curse of COVID-19” (Demes, 2020, pp. 112-13).

Media’s negative role is observed in spreading xenophobia and racism when it is announced on the radio that the three muzunguyu have arrived in the country, infected with the coronavirus and “what [the government] feared has finally arrived. The government has decided to repatriate the two muzunguyu who have affected two Gondwanayans to their respective countries in a particular aircraft.” The people should be vigilant and stand guard against the virus as it has reached the Gondwanayans soil (Demes, 2020, p. 107).

As far as the social stagnation and religious misinterpretation is concerned, media played a negative role. A Thousand Hills refers to a spiritual man of Gondwanaya, Pastor Lutumba Mbiyegoy’s dream that God would supernaturally protect people. They need to boil the hair, they find in Genesis or Luke of the Bible

and drink the water; they would miraculously be protected from COVID-19 and would live a healthy life during the calamity period (Demes, 2020, pp. 91-92). It further announces that “For seven days, [they] are going to invoke the tutelary spirits of the nation to protect us from this scourge.” The social stagnation of people during the pandemic is reflected in when the Founding President tells the “saint Thomas” like Gondwanayans who believe what is visible “Allah would protect them against the contagious disease” (Demes, 2020, p. 83).

Violence against women and patriarchal mindset has been an issue with the world. It surfaced during the pandemic. In Dr. Amigioli’s dream, applying the thematic level of Greenham’s (2019) close reading technique, the failure of men and achievements of women leadership explain the pattern of how patriarchy has been prevalent so far. Angela Merkel points towards failure of the patriarchal world. According to her, the pandemic shows that women will dominate the world. She says that countries, like Taiwan, New Zealand, and Germany, headed by women have controlled the pandemic better than the men. She says that they adopted preventive measures, mass testing, ensuring social distancing, confinement and protection of vulnerable people. The theme is, further, carried when Angela Merkel, in Mrs. Elisay’s dream, highlights the pandemic of divorce that the COVID-19 created, and also highlights an issue of violence against women during pandemic. She stresses on developing vaccine against xenophobia, fear and ignorance (Demes, 2020, pp. 243-51).

In story of the novel, Angelina Merkel’s view is, further, supported when the misguided mob crowd to kill Mrs. Elisay, a muzunguya, to stop, in their opinion, the spread of the virus. Though Dr. Amigioli desperately attempts to pacify and convince the crowd, yet he fails. Salomea, his mother and a female, feel that the situation was deteriorating and leads from the front to curb the

situation. She takes responsibility to prevent the situation from further deterioration.

Mrs. Elisay arranges a training session under WHO, CDC, USAID and the Ministry of Health of Gondwanaya to educate people against COVID-19 to change people, like Mr. Trumpetol, who was a racist reporter and had almost killed Mrs. Elisay for being a muzunguya (Demes, 2020, pp. 197-98). She plays a productive role of a negotiator between the armed rebels and government officials for reaching an agreement of ceasefire, and allow the people to have access to health, social and economic aid” (Demes, 2020, p. 205).

Behavioral change during the pandemic was an issue. It mainly posed challenges for those who fought against the virus of the pandemic. Behavioral change requires applying Durkheim’s organic solidarity (pp. 39-40), collective approach from society to face a challenge. Be it xenophobia or COVID-19, it necessitates a change in the behavior of people to combat it effectively. Demes (2020) states that, besides promoting the health system and alleviating social and economic consequences of COVID-19, the international community allocates aid for “communication and behavior change” (p. 167). The US embassy circulates a notice in “the spoken, written and television press” to recruit a coordinator for COVID -19 and “a person in charge of ‘Communication and Behavior Change’ to work in concert with the Gondwanayan Government and the Ministry of Health to inform the population about COVID-19” (Demes, 2020, p. 168). The US embassy improves the situation by imparting training to journalists and opinion makers (Demes, 2020, p. 272) to change people, like Mr. Trumpetol, who admits to Mrs. Elisay that he was previously fed with disinformation and violence against the infected people (Demes, 2020, pp. 197-98).

Patriarchy or androcentric society is also an issue, which the text of the novel encompasses. Mrs.

Klaya Jeffressios, wife to a pastor, Roberto Jeffressois, plays an active role in the affairs of the church to assist her husband, but “she was subjected to her husband, a little effaced, to shine her husband better” (Demes. 2020, p. 27); Dr. Amigioli, the protagonist of the novel, also “grew up in maternal love.” Dr. Amigioli had never seen his father since his birth. His father does what a man in this village does; he refuses to assume his responsibilities concerning pregnant woman” (Demes. 2020, p. 37).

Along with other issues and challenges, informal economy or living in a day-to-day life economy was another challenge in combating the pandemic of COVID-19. The stakeholders found it very difficult to ensure social distancing because it could deprive some eighty-five percent of people of having access to food and water. The stakeholders were thinking of “how to give a universal minimum income to all citizens . . . to face the economic consequences to come” (Demes, 2020, p. 176). The aforesaid issue was acknowledged by the prime minister by admitting reality of widespread poverty in the country of Gondwanaya and the uneven society. He knew that poverty and the informal economy were big challenges in wiping the pandemic out. He declared that small and medium-sized businesses in Gondwanaya would receive three thousand dollars as stipends to help them through the difficult time of the pandemic (Demes, 2020, pp. 194-95).

Findings and Conclusion

The study concludes that the world suffered a great deal for its socio-economic divides seen in the lifestyle of people living in the slums of Gondwanaya and that of the founding president or of the king of Thailand. The ruling elite, in order to sustain their grip on power, keep the great talents oppressed (Demes, 2020, pp. 39, 256-62, 265-67). The study finds that the ruling elites are disinterested in uplifting the lifestyle of their

people; they rather keep them in ignorance and fear to run the state affairs (Demes, 2020, pp. 142-43).

The political rivalries and consequent xenophobia and racism were found during the pandemic of COVID-19. The Chinese President gives task to his task team for Post COVID-19 Domination and market control (Demes, 2020, pp. 236-39). The text reveals xenophobic remarks which Donald Trump made in calling the virus as 'Chinese' or 'Wuhan Virus' (Demes, 2020, p. 141). The media reporter shouts to kill the 'cockroach' (Mrs. Elisay); he makes the xenophobic remarks, like 'down with Chinese' (Demes, 2020, pp. 112-13). Besides xenophobia, the religious misinterpretation and social stagnation were other challenges that made the struggle against the pandemic harder. The novel reads that media propagated social stagnation and religious credulousness, along with xenophobia. The radio A Thousand Hills announces treatment with grey hair boiled in the water after they find it in the Bible (Demes, 2020, pp. 91-92). The founding president himself advocates people to eat a Gondwanayan plant to safeguard against the pandemic (Demes, 2020, pp. 83).

The study also finds out patriarchy and violence against women during the pandemic. The pastor wife assists her husband to shine him, and Dr. Amigioli's father does not take his responsibility like other men of the village (Demes, 2020, pp. 27-37). Angela Merkel speaks of divorce and violence against women during the pandemic of COVID-19 (Demes, 2020, pp. 243-51). The study also concludes that challenges of informal economies and behavioral change of people existed during the pandemic. The US embassy and other agencies aid the training sessions which Mrs. Elisay arranges for changing the mindset of people towards the pandemic and information about (Demes, 2020, pp. 39-40, 197-98). Besides this, "The stakeholders thought of providing minimum income to all citizens . . . to face the

economic consequences to come" (Demes, 2020, p. 176). It is discovered that introduction of precautionary measures could have killed some eighty-five percent of the population, had the couple of Mrs. Elisay and Dr. Amigioli not arranged tour to the slums (Demes, 2020, pp. 253-57).

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