

# LESSONS FROM COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND ITS REFLECTION ON GLOBAL PUBLIC POLICY FORMULATION

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## ABSTRACT

*The fundamental accountability of the state is to determine and prosecute the appropriate policy measures for the health, safety and well-being of the people. It is also quite vital to make the citizens of the respective country to empower their economic prosperity. The global pandemic made a record of sudden increase of health and economic challenges internationally. As the covid-19 virus infected 207 million people and 3.3 million deaths across the globe from 2020 onwards and the spread is still moving on. Covid-19 has impacted badly on global health system, economic condition, and unemployment situation for many developing and poor countries in the world. Definitely, the policy maker's responsibility to observe the present situation and address with appropriate public policy to save the people from virus and hunger. After the launch of vaccine for covid-19, many countries bounce back to new normal. But the lesson taught by the pandemic situation, alerted to revisit our existing policies is not commensurate with such kind of global pandemic. Certainly, the pandemic highlighted the critical need of the effective and efficient policies to revamp the economy and remap the health policy. During the first and second wave of the spread, affected and killed many lives due to non-availability of vaccine, medicines, oxygen, beds and other essential medical kits across the globe. The study is aimed to bring out the descriptive and statistical analysis of impact of pandemic and the need of crucial public policy to combat such situation and avoid great losses. This paper is articulated in different four segments such as history of various pandemic, existing policy and policy reflections from current pandemic at global level.*

**Keywords:** Covid-19, Pandemic, Global, Public Health, Public Policy and Governance

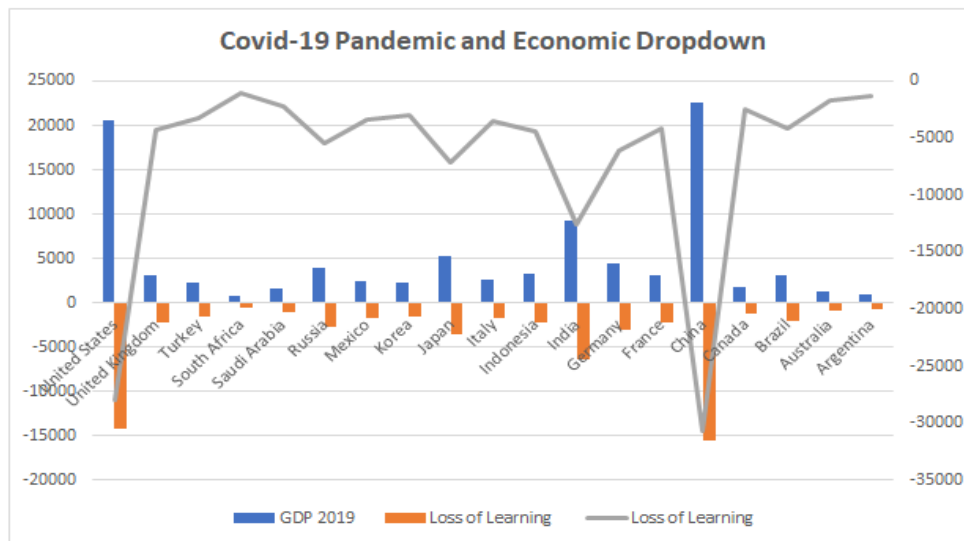
## INTRODUCTION

It is well aware that the Covid-19 had very substantial negative influence and economic damage to many countries and created a historical benchmark of deep decline in the growth graph. It also shown drastic drop of the socioeconomic situations of the common people globally. The poor scenario helped and alerted the policy makers, government and non-governmental agencies to look into life and revamping measures to uplift the poor and vulnerable in their respective nations. Many nations in the world have started working their level best to stabilize the situation, but the continuity of the spread and non-availability of vaccines at the beginning stage of the pandemic, worsen the people's economic, social and health status. The enhancement of peoples and economic growth, proper policy initiative is

required with respect to every countries. In a slow availability of vaccine for Covid-19 and an effective treatment for virus, the nations that are currently touching to the re-starting stage must raid the equilibrium between letting corporate and societal activity to continue, while evading or comprising any new point in contaminations. They would also require finding the correct stability and sequencing of well-being, financial and social strategy interferences to produce supportable labour market effects and device and withstand policy interferences at the required measure in the setting of progressively inhibited public finance.

## Background

CENELEC (2021) advocated for unexpected covid-19 challenges made the stakeholders to take appropriate policy changes on economic models. Levine & Mckibbin (2020) discussed in their study that the quarantine seriously affected public and drop down the vast social communication is an active response. Extensive propagation of quality sterility practices has drawn in their study as well. Wei, et al., (2021) emphasized nine vital lessons learned by experience of pandemic and this identification would help to expand the health care service and delivery to the people. Moreover, it would also help to suggest for policy formulation. Patel, et al., (2020) suggested in their study for the enhancement of tele-health care and medical consultancy through virtual mode. Salway, et al., (2020) found in their study that the flow of patients with Covid-19 incoming in our emergency sections and intensive care units are forced numerous electronic health analysis process enhancements that abridged the burden of instruction entry and certification. Basher, Syed Abdul & Haque (2020) identified in their study that the work at home is an important influence of the virus spread across the globe. The policy for work at home has derived in many private companies to arrest spread and enhance the quality of service. Rozanova, et al., (2020) emphasized in their paper, despite good level of healthcare formation in many nations, it found that none of the nations were prepared to face the pandemic challenge. Even though, many countries had all the medical facilities such as medical centers, hospitals, and government premises, but still there was a huge challenge to face the increased cases. Graeber, et al., (2021) suggested that the gender issues among the women entrepreneur and employees related to their earning levels. They also concluded with the requirement of future policies to enhance the economic status of women. The pandemic situation may yet to test the human and financial resilience at global level. Economic and financial forecast is being revised upwards, and asset valuations would further be examined through effective policy measures. In the same time, ambiguity remains constant and sometimes high due to non-completion of vaccination. It is also advocated that the policy to be formulated based on the priorities to solve the problem of vulnerabilities. Rapid innovation and technological use would bring solution for such kind of unexpected challenges. Numerous children and adolescents across the globe, there was no classes held from the beginning of the year 2020. It is estimated that a substantial loss of learning happened in all the countries. There is huge knowledge gap existing due to the lockdown and some portion fulfilled through the virtual learning system (Hanushek & Woessmann, 2020; Brodeur et al., 2020).



Source: World Economic Forum, 2020.

**FIGURE 1**  
**COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND ECONOMIC DROPPDOWN & LEARNING LEVEL OF SELECTED NATIONS**

The above graph emphasizes the economic pit fall of the pandemic situation of selected countries. It is so evident that the learning level of the school children have seriously impacted and declined along with the decline in gross domestic product of the nations. This gap of learning level would also hit the human resource value in the future as well. The negative influence of Covid-19 on the global economy is profound in the various studies. It requires the global policy responsibility and cohesion on the socio-economic impacts of the virus spread. Further, ILO estimated that the whole or partial lockdown have affected 2.7 billion informal workers, which consists of 81 percent of the total workforce. This pandemic situation creates the recession and it is entirely different from the earlier crisis. Emerging indication on the influence of Covid-19 suggested that the women’s financial and creative lives would be affected inexplicably and entirely varied from men workers. It is also proven that he women workers earn lesser than the men workers, save lesser, working in a less secured jobs in the informal sector. They also have very less access to social security measures and they could not able to face the economic shocks like the pandemic. Based on the estimation, it is projected that the influence of the Covid-19 pandemic international recession would be resulted in a lengthy and deep drop in women’s income generation and workforce participation. With these all compounded issues influences women to push further into the poverty (United Nations, 2020)

<b>Country</b>	<b>Fiscal Policy Responses</b>	<b>Monetary Policy Responses</b>	<b>BOP Policy Responses</b>
Argentina	Increased health spending, support for vulnerable people, support for affected sectors & credit guarantee for SMEs	Lowering the reserve requirements & SME lending	Aimed for exchange rate depreciation by 50 percent against US dollar
Armenia	Interest Subsidy, lump-sum transfer & 24 support packages	Control inflation, support for functioning of market & policies for monetary stabilisation.	Exchange rate has allowed for depreciation & No BOP measures adopted

Australia	Vaccine programme, Stimulus measures at 2.5 of GDP & Generating employment	Interest rate cut, temporary relief capital, restricting of small business	Exchange rate is allowed for flexibility adjustment
Austria	49.6 billion of stimulus package, finance for healthcare, unemployment assistance & SME development	Increase the liquidity	No measures
Bahrain	Fiscal package about 6% of GDP, subsidy for essentials, financing more for SMEs & many waivers	Reduced lending rate from 4 to 2.45%, reducing minimum LCR & extension of zero-interest rate lending	No measures
Bangladesh	Expand the existing DBT to the people,	Purchase of treasury bonds and bills to enhance liquidity and increase the credit guarantee	Provision for FDI, policy for export promotion & stability of BOP
Belgium	Boosting health expenditure, support informal workers & support for sick units	Reduction of buffer capital to zero & ban of short-selling of equity	No measures
Bhutan	Increase youth employment & implementation of economic contingency to support major sectors	Credit guarantee to enhance investment, extension of soft loans for cottage industries & formed committee	Selected food product import is banned
Brazil	Expansion of health spending, cash transfer to low-income group & increase the credit line through public sector banks.	Reduction of interest rate & expanded small loans	Central bank intervention for foreign exchange stability
Cambodia	60 million USD allocated for testing; 123 million USD allocated for wage subsidies & USD 200 million for credit guarantee	Cutting of interest rate & loan restructuring for priority sector.	Export of rice, paddy & fish increased
Canada	Key expenditure & tax measures	Reduction of policy rate, purchased of bond in secondary market & increase domestic stability buffer	No measures
India	Increase government spending, increase business credit insurance coverage for workers & interest free loans to states	Reduces repo and reverse repo, bank loans for priority sector & loans for MSMEs	FDI policy adjustment for inflow

Source: International Monetary Fund, Policy Tracker

## METHODOLOGY

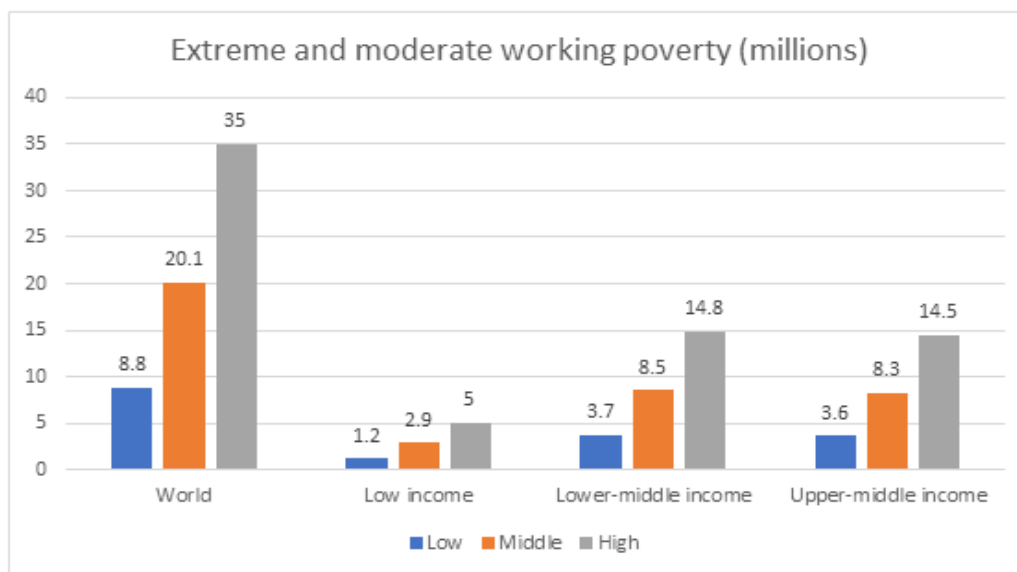
Based on the various literature have been review and analyzed related to Covid-19 and policy reflections, the present study has been carried out. The present conceptual research work is based on the secondary data sources collected from various published articles from journals and magazines. The available data has been analyzed and interpreted to reveal the set objectives of the study.

### Discussion on the Lessons from Pandemic and Policy Requirement

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic leads to various inter-sectoral issues and connected issues. The economic and social status of the people across the globe has been affected. The earning level of the people has declined.

Table 2 ESTIMATED DROP IN INCOME			
Income Group	Low	Middle	High
Labour Income in dollars	-860	-1760	-3440

Source: ILO, 2020.



Source: ILO, 2020.

**FIGURE 2  
EXTREME AND MODERATE WORKING POVERTY**

### Sector Wise Policy Responses

**Port and Shipping:** the ports and shipping sector vital role infrastructural development, improvement in international trade and the development of the economic status of many nations. The size of the operations would vary from one firm to another firm and one country to another. But the economic importance for all the nations remains similar. During the phase of pandemic, ports had faced many challenges such as lesser volume of goods handling, shortage of workers, transportation issues and lock down practices in many districts and states. At this juncture and for the future unexpected crises, the government has to take an appropriate policy formulation for the protection and livelihood of the workers in this sector.

**Construction Sector:** based on the literature review, the pandemic situation significantly affected the construction section across the globe. The construction sector provide large amount of employment opportunities to the poor and uneducated peoples. The proper policy is required to recover the workers of construction sector.

**Transport Sector:** the issues related to employers, employees and the government sector on generation of employment and unemployment. Especially, the road transport is important to economic growth. Due to arrest the spread of Covid-19, many nations have stopped the road

transport movement. It has the critical impact on the transport workers and ultimately required the revamping of this sector through policy measures to uplift the livelihood of the workers.

**Food Retail and Restaurants:** the food delivery workers have played a key role as a vibrant category of frontline warriors in many countries. They worked across the pandemic days, though they have the threat of spreading the virus and also high risk of infection from others. But they don't have permanent wages, health insurance and other social security measures.

**Textile Industries:** due to closure of factories, textile shops and ban of non-essential sale through online hits many people. It is the responsibility of the governments to support financially to these sector workers and make policy for their future.

**Education Sector:** most of the schools, colleges and universities were closed and started the virtual mode for teaching and learning. Many teachers did not have the skills of handling the online classes. Students also had many challenges with respect to lack of computer, internet connectivity and lack of technological adoption.

**Tourism Sector:** this sector met the highest damage in terms of employment and income generation. It also affected the flow of foreign exchanges reserves of the nations.

Based on various segments for the influence of Covid-19 on the international productivity growth and the initial ILO data estimates indicate a high increase in unemployment level at global level between 5.3 million and 24.7 million as compare with 188 million in the year 2019. As evident from the previous economic issues, the shock to the workers demand is termed to be translated to a crucial downtrend modifications in wages and work hours. While own account work did not responded negatively towards the economic situation. But it was affected negatively to informal sector workers across the world. The economic activity in construction, manufacturing and service sectors have significantly reduced. The most relevant data on the total value addition of manufacturing sector in China have reduced by 13.5 percent in the year 2020. Moreover, the global and the local level supply chain have also reduced substantially. The major employment generating sectors in urban areas such as retail, travel, tourism, hotels, restaurants and construction have become more vulnerable in terms of drop in activities. It is also assessed from the World Trade and Tourism Council estimated a sharp decline in international arrival to many countries and tourism sector has affected seriously. Apart from the shortage of demand for labour, it is also identified that the labour supply was diminished due to the quarantine and other protocol of the government. It leads to reduce the economic activity of the labour in many countries. At this juncture, an initial estimate advocated that the infected labours would have lost about thirty thousand work months with subsequent income loss. The overall losses in worker would translate into lesser consumption of commodities, which is unfavorable to the continuity of work and confirming that economies are strong (ILO, 2020). As per the estimates, it is found that there are 18 million persons working in the informal sector have become vulnerable in economic status due to the covid-19 pandemic in Bangladesh (Alauddin & Bhuyan, 2015).

During the beginning time of the Covid-19 issues, the G20 nations transferred rapidly to offer extraordinary levels of immediate support to keep the people and businesses afloat, assure jobs and income generation. These activities slowly started to protect the deep drop of economic situation. Along with the various efforts made by the governments, it is also necessitate the health sector improvement for combat the pandemic damage. In these measures, the state-funded short period work and wage support schemes, have been applied in a many G20 nations to reduce the job losses. Those schemes, which allow the companies experiencing a normal and temporary break in business, to receive help for the salaries of employees work hours in many countries. Expansion of life insurance and health insurance coverage, sickness allowance, and paid sick leave would help many people to fight against the pandemic. Though, many government bold efforts to help and support the businesses and support the workers through various schemes to protect the workers, millions of workers in G20 have lost their jobs. At the

same time, many self-employed people experienced a huge drop in their income. Hence, majority of the nations from G20 took an immediate action to enhance the approachability to, and bigheartedness of, unemployment income assurance. Apart from these good efforts, many nations announced new cash transfers such as direct benefit schemes to the uncovered peoples (ILO & OCED, 2020).

## CONCLUDING REMARKS & POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Covid-19 pandemic brought a crucial impact on the labour force matrices for all the countries, states, region's economic sectors and also the main demographic group of the various countries. In the case of United States of America, the unemployment rate reached out to 14.8 percent during April 2020. The participation of work by the labours have declined by 60.2 percent in the same period. The employment have declined by 22.1 million during January 2020 to April 2020 in the non-farm sector. It is impacted desperately with respect to holiday and hospitality sector and the educational services also seriously affected. Congressional Research Service (2021). The other sector which harshly impacted assemblage is the persons working in private sector educational institutions. Many school teachers across rural and urban Bangladesh. Many educated people have lost their jobs across the nation due to lockdown. The school and college student could not able to pay the educational fees, since their parents also did not earn income during those days. The children study from private schools were became dropout. More particularly, the instructors working in private kinder-garden have greatly affected and many of them forced to take up low-level daily wage works in their nearby areas (Hossain, 2021). A research conducted in Nepal and emphasized various policy recommendation for the government such as localized management, data collection for crisis management, immediate relief funding and increase the public expenditure (Asia Foundation, 2021). Expansion of life insurance and health insurance coverage, sickness allowance, and paid sick leave would help many people to fight against the pandemic. Though, many government bold efforts to help and support the businesses and support the workers through various schemes to protect the workers, millions of workers in G20 have lost their jobs. At the same time, many self-employed people experienced a huge drop in their income. Hence, majority of the nations from G20 took an immediate action to enhance the approachability to, and bigheartedness of, unemployment income assurance. Apart from these good efforts, many nations announced new cash transfers such as direct benefit schemes to the uncovered peoples. The providers of private organizations and government employment facilities have been comes under severe challenges as demand for their facilities have increased during the last few months of the covid-19 crisis while their volume was severely forced by the necessity to confine face-to-face interaction with job seekers. Precise actions would also be mandatory to discourse increasing disparity and the irregular influence of the predicament to make workforce markets reasonable and more reasonable. In this sense, government and policy makers would wish to deliberate the subsequent policy instructions, appropriately modified to their countrywide conditions as follows:

- a. Residing innocuous. Solving the health crisis is an essential precondition to speaking the monetary and jobs crisis. As the nation is revived, it is significant to present or spread events and strategies to confirm a safe reappearance to work.
- b. Minor and small-sized initiatives would require added provision to contrivance workstation fitness and care practices. Astonishing illness welfares and salaried care leave rights, including maternal leave, might be reserved in place and lengthy to collections of labours those who are not sheltered though indorsing back-to-work actions to avoid long-run employment market departure. Linking labours on gruesome leave with work-related restoration and service services would be dangerous to avoid long-run work market departure.

- c. Employment retaining schemes might have to be modified as some segments have or would rapidly revive while others may remain forced in their events. Conceivable actions to recover sustainability and cost efficiency which includes necessitating companies to stand share of the values of these preparations
- d. Generating provision for time-bound but modified to developing conditions and indorsing the flexibility of labours from reinforced to unsubsidised occupations, including through exercise while on abridged periods.
- e. Certifying tolerable revenue shield while providing occupational exploration succour and funding. The actual directing of smallest income welfares would be significant as economic weights base, but administrations essential to guarantee that persons in crucial must endure to obtain the provision. As parsimonies recuperate and occupational developments, an equilibrium would require to be hit between upholding acceptable sustenance and hopeful and active job search.
- f. The policy to be modified for improving the working conditions of the informal sector workers, especially the front line workers. Modernisation of occupation would also make the workers flexible and convenient to work.
- g. Doubling the strength of employment opportunities and social protection for the vulnerable groups in the society would also improve the situation.

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