

Dynamics of Covid-19 in India: A Review of Different Phases of Lockdowns

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Abstract

Introduction: The term pandemic is considered to be the most dangerous thing that the world witnessed, however Covid-19 is considered to be the scariest thing till date. It damaged many things in the Nation, people lost life, their closed ones, earning sources and mental peace. The effect of Covid -19 is not over yet, however the seriousness of the virus is under control with proper vaccination and guidelines followed in India.

Objective: The objective of this research was to understand the dynamics of Covid -19, discussing the measures taken by the Government and challenges faced during its implementation and lockdown scenarios implemented in the nation in different phases. The paper also discusses the proactive role of the Indian Government and the risk management journey of the nation as a whole.

Methodology: The paper used secondary for studying the dynamics. The information was taken from authentic sources, online database; government reports, print media articles and different journals and research papers. The researcher used exploratory research design and secondary research approach to meet the research objectives.

Results: The article reports there was positive as well as negative effects of the lockdown in India.

Keywords: Pandemic; Lockdown; Covid- 19 in India; SARS Cov-19

Introduction

Pandemics are not new for the world, but COVID - 19 created history among all the pandemic. It paused the entire world. India reported its first case in January 2020 and then a lockdown was imposed on 25th March in the entire nation. The lockdown was imposed phase wise with strict guidelines for the citizens. There were a total four phases - the first phase restricted all non-essential activities and closed down everything except essentials like health care and groceries (things important for survival). The second phase had some relaxation however, transportation was still restricted affecting the entire supply chain. The third phase allowed non-essential things to be open with limited time

and in the fourth phase almost all the economic activities were allowed (Rai et al., 2020). After the fourth phase, the Government restarted all activities but the cases are still creating ruckus in the nation. Here in this paper, the researcher would review different phases of lockdown in detail and provide the dynamics of COVID-19 in India.

Background

COVID - 19 or SARS CoV - 2 was first witnessed in Wuhan in China in the year 2019, soon after it spread to the entire world. People travelling from abroad were major carriers of the virus. The cases multiplied within no time and lockdown was imposed everywhere. India being the Populated countries, implemented lockdown from the initial spread of the disease. As there was no medicine or prevention of the disease, lockdown was the only way to reduce the spreading of the disease (Pai et al., 2020). The lockdown had a severe impact on the economy of society. As majority of people in India belong to poor or middle class background, they had to lose their business or jobs. However, it aided some relief to the lower socio-economic groups. All the frontline workers became the cape and helped in controlling the disease as much as possible (Samui et al., 2020).

Literature Reviews

Muniyandi et al. (2021) analysed the epidemiological patterns of COVID-19 in India, including the effects of various lockdowns. The lockdowns were found to be effective in slowing the transmission of the virus at first, but when they were lifted, an increase in new infections occurred. Increased testing and contact tracing, fortified hospital infrastructure, and prioritizing immunization of susceptible populations were all suggested as evidence-based options for pandemic management.

Singh et al. (2021), examined the effects of the pandemic on India's healthcare system, economy, and society. The writers recognized that the restrictions had major economic and social consequences, and they discussed the difficulties the Indian government had in reconciling the health & economic ramifications of the epidemic. They advocated for a multi-pronged strategy for pandemic management that makes use of technology to improve contact tracing and tracking in addition to tailored treatments for high-risk groups.

Phase name	Dates	Major restriction or relaxations
Phase 0 (Prelockdown)	1–24 March 2020 (24 days)	No restriction; all activities in business-as-usual mode
Phase 1	25 March–14 April 2020 (21 days)	All transport, industrial establishment, commercial and private establishments, and hospitality services closed
Phase 2	15 April–3 May 2020 (19 days)	Allowed: Farming operation, some industries, movement of cargo
Phase 3	4–17 May 2020 (14 days)	Cities are classified into three zones (Red, Orange, and Green). Relaxation of rules in the Green and Orange zones. Allowed: Activities permitted during Phase 2 and construction activities and movement of vehicles for selected activities permitted.
Phase 4	18–31 May 2020 (14 days)	Restrictions similar to Phase 1 applied in the Red zones Allowed: Movement of vehicles without any special conditions along with the opening of the industry.

Source: Goel et al. (2021).

Table 1: Phases of Lockdown in India.

Sharma et al. (2021) discussed the current state of the COVID-19 outbreak in India. The lockdowns helped minimize the spread of the illness, but the authors acknowledged that they also had a negative impact on the local economy, especially on the most vulnerable people. They suggested a risk-based strategy to lockdowns & increased public knowledge and engagement in pandemic control activities as evidence-based measures for managing a pandemic.

Saxena and Arora (2021), examined the causes of the second wave of COVID-19 cases in India, which occurred despite government attempts to contain the disease. The writers stressed the need of decentralizing pandemic management and the shortcomings of India's healthcare system. They advocated for more money to be spent on healthcare facilities, the implementation of policies supported by research, and the participation of local populations in pandemic prevention initiatives.

Singh et al. (2020) discussed the current state of the epidemic in India and assessed the government's reaction, including the many lockdowns that were implemented. Although the lockdowns aided in stopping the propagation of the virus, they also caused economic and social problems, as the authors pointed out. They suggested bolstering healthcare infrastructure and creating more effective vac-

cinations as part of based on evidence initiatives and approaches for pandemic control.

Research Gap

The Covid -19 is an ongoing research topic in the research field. As the effects of the pandemic are not over yet. However, there are very few studies on dynamics of Covid -19 in India. Thus, the researcher would address the gaps and study regarding the different phases of lockdown imposed in India and how effective they were in managing the risk of the severity of the virus. The research is based on a secondary approach and the researcher studies regarding the proactive role, the Indian Government played during Covid - 19.

Research Question

1. What are the dynamics of Covid - 19 in India? How did the Indian Government take a proactive role in managing the pandemic?
2. What were measures taken in different phases of lockdown imposed by the Indian Government? How far was it successful?

Importance of the Study

The study focuses on understanding the dynamics of Covid -19 in India, and analyses in details of lockdown in different phases and Indian's risk management practices during Pandemic. Narendra Modi, the Prime Minister of India was praised for his ability to deal with the pandemic crisis, thus this study would provide an in -depth discussion of the measures taken by the Government and the challenges faced during the crisis and identify areas that could be improved and prepared for facing future pandemics. It can be insightful for other country researchers to learn from Indian experience of dealing with pandemic. The research objectives are as follows.

- To understand the dynamics of Covid - 19 in India.
- To understand the role of Government in the pandemic risk management.
- To study the different phases of lockdown imposed in India in details.

Scope and Limitation

The study of the dynamics of Covid-19 in India is complex and varied, as the number of cases and death rates are fluctuating. However, this study would provide the Government measures taken, citizens response to the pandemic and challenges faced by the nation. Along with that the paper also discusses thoroughly regarding the lockdown phases and risk management journey of India. This study is based on a secondary approach, as primary study would not be possible here. The Covid-19 related statistical information is incomplete as the effect of pandemic is still continuing, and many cases were unreported especially in the rural areas. However, the study is limited to understanding the dynamics and discussing the lockdown phases in the Indian scenario only.

Research Methodology

The research methodology is an integral part of the research paper, it discusses the steps the researcher followed, the method the researcher used in collecting the data and analysing it. There are two types of research - primary and secondary, the selection of the research methodology is opted from the nature of the study or what the study intends to find out. In this case the researcher takes up the secondary research methodology as collecting primary information would be difficult. The paper aims to study the dynamics of Covid -19 in India as a whole, thus a secondary approach would be suitable.

Research Method & Design

The research methods are the process that directs the data collection and data analysis in the research. There are two research methods in general: quantitative and qualitative. The researcher used qualitative methods as the study is based on secondary methods. The qualitative method would provide a thorough analysis and the research studied different literature in depth and precisely the information gathered from the secondary sources.

The research design suggests the style of the research paper or the data analysis. There are different types of research design, the researcher opts for research design according to the research objectives and research methods chosen. Here the researcher would use exploratory research design.

Research Approach

Every planning has an approach, while planning research it is important to have an approach, in simple words to have a blueprint that would reflect how the researcher would conduct the research, what steps to be followed. The research approach takes down all the information the researcher collects before the data collection. It includes everything done under the research starting from the selection of the topic to interpreting the results from the analysis. Here the researcher used secondary approach for collecting, analysing, and interpreting the information to the readers.

Analysis of Study

The Analysis is conducted on a content analysis basis, all the information is taken from secondary sources like Government reports of India, Journals and Newspaper articles related to COVID 19 and lockdown imposed in India. The paper provides exploratory analysis of the obtained information. The section will discuss dynamics, government measures, lockdown phases imposed in India during the Pandemic.

Dynamics of Covid-19

If we talk about the impact of COVID- 19, it is pretty much clear that Indians have suffered a lot and are still suffering from the sudden hit of the pandemic. COVID -19 is something different and serious pandemic from all other pandemic from the past decades. The very first case witnessed in India was in January 2020, it came early to India and even the Government imposed a lockdown by the end of March and immediately took all necessary action and precautions (Laxminarayan et al., 2020). Despite the restrictions Government imposed, the cases reached up to 97000 by the end September 2020. However, the death rate was quite lower than other countries and people's recovery rate was higher than getting affected with the virus. The Dynamics of Covid -19 was influenced by many factors like - demographic, health measures and new variants. In the first wave, India witnessed a rapid growth in the number of patients in the initial period, surging the hospitals to be filled with people affected by coronavirus. In early 2021, the vaccination program was introduced and again the second wave was hit in the month of April resulting in more cases and deaths due to COVID-19(Srivastav et al., 2021). The third wave didn't not affect much as most people were vaccinated. Despite health loss, life loss, Indians suffered from other dynamics -loss of economy, loss of job and closure of businesses. Travel, Tourism and Hospitality sectors are immensely affected by the travel restrictions. The pandemic also suffered from social and psychological loss. The pandemic imposed social distancing among people, there were no social gatherings and people confided in their homes (Gupta et al., 2021). The isolation and financial instability among people increased the rate of depression, stress. According to the reports of the National Crime Records Bureau, India reported more than 350 000 suicides in the year 2020, a 3.4% growth in the suicide rate from the previous census.

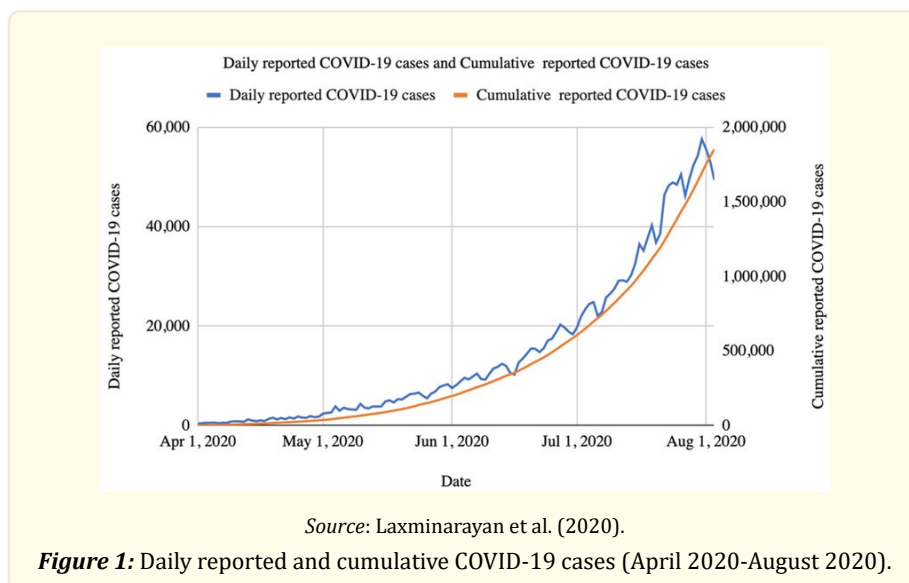
Government Pro- Active role in managing the pandemic

The Indian government suggested social isolation measures and implemented travel and immigration restrictions as the virus spread throughout the globe. A number of shutdowns and commercial closures were started during March 2020, and by the last day of the month, the Indian government had imposed a general lockdown. The Indian government has continually taken aggressive measures to combat the COVID pandemic and has improved the health system's capacity to handle all facets of COVID-19 management. India maintained the lowest levels of optimism, and during the epidemic, fatality rates were combined with one of the greatest recovery rates internationally (Mandal et al., 2021). The nation's ability to conduct research and create vaccinations for COVID-19 provided a significant boost to its public health initiatives. On March 29, 2020, the Indian government organized eleven Empowered Groups to make decisions on (i) medical emergency preparation, (ii) hospital availability, and (iii) other areas of COVID-19 administration in India (Gopal and Sharma, 2020).

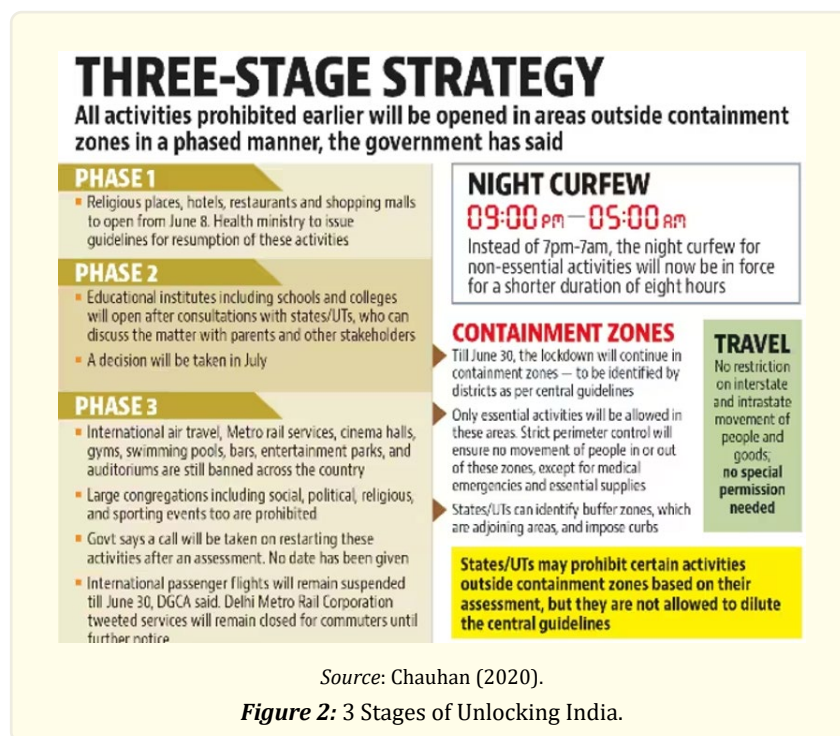
Isolation and quarantine centre, disease surveillance as well as testing, ensuring availability of crucial medical equipment, bolstering human resources and capacity developing, logistics and supply chain management, coordinating with the private sector, financial and welfare measurements, information, communications, and public awareness, information technology and information management, public grievance, and strategic concerns related to lockdown. The central government of India gave the state administrations and UT administrations the necessary strategy, plans, and processes based on its history of effectively handling pandemics and epidemics (Shaik et al., 2020). This included motivational advice for healthcare workers as well as containment strategies and instructions on a wide range of topics such as travel, behavioral and psycho-social health, monitoring, laboratory support, hospital infrastructure, clinical oversight, the sensible use of personal protective equipment (PPE), etc.

The phases of lockdown in India

Life was severely disrupted by the lockdown since everything came to a stop. The administration had time to improve the health care system since the lockdown had reduced the number of infections. During March 25 to April 14, all non-essential services were suspended during the first lockdown. On April 14, Prime Minister Modi said that the state-wide lockdown will be extended till May 3. However, Lockdown 2.0 added a few conditional relaxations for regions where coronavirus cases were declining. There were three zones identified: red, orange, and green, indicating the density of diseases there. With social distance and other protective measures, public works, agricultural companies, and farming supplies were permitted to resume (Gupta, 2023). Additionally opened were banks, government benefit distribution facilities, and cargo transportation vehicles.



Interstate travel for stranded people was supervised by the Ministry of Home Affairs with the necessary safety precautions. However, the lockdown was once more extended for two weeks until May 17, and then once more for two weeks until May 31. Phase 4 of Lockdown was known as this. States were granted latitude at this period to choose where to draw the lines between green, orange, & red zones. The nation then opted to unleash it gradually. The advent of lockdown considerably reduced the devastating shocks and disastrous outbreak. Better air quality along with fewer detrimental impacts on the ecology have been brought about by the decrease in pollution. In the cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, and Hyderabad, the air quality increased by more than 70% while water pollution fell by around the same percentage (Mandal et al., 2020). The 21-day closure cost the Indian economy dearly, and it is going to continue to do so for years to come. Economic activity, investments, exports, and consumer expenditure all fell by 70% as a result of the lockdown.



This fiscal year, India's GDP growth is predicted to be between 1.5 and 2.8%, down from the earlier World Bank estimate of 6.1%. The low level is concerning since covid-19 has already caused delays. 90% of the nation's workforce was driven to walk back to their former hometowns as their capacity to support themselves decreased. There was a great deal of worry among the locals as a result of the sudden lockdown situation. Reduced population mobility is a persistent manifestation of this fear, which in turn hampers economic recovery.

The success rate of the lockdown

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Results

India witnessed the pandemic with a lot of courage. Considering the population of India and the availability of medical services, the lockdown provided relief from spreading the virus. Despite medical advancements, developed nations like America failed severely to deal with coronaviruses. The Indian Government and the personnel (frontline COVID worriers) maintained pro-activeness to deal with such situations. The doctors, medical staff, and police personnel were active 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to manage the pandemic. The lockdown in India occurred in four phases, limiting, and relaxing the non - essentials things and traveling (Gupta et al., 2023).

The 'Unlock' concept reflected India's effort during the coronavirus epidemic to balance lives and livelihoods. A startling number of coronavirus illnesses were brought on by the scheduled "Unlock" after three months by the month of November. A soaring 17 percent increase in the BSE Sensex in June gave rise to optimism for greater economic activity from the improving mobility. When it comes to adaptability and innovation, Indian industries have excelled. The hospitality and industrial sectors saw immediate congestion, the banking sector had a significant lag, and the pace of recovery was unequal.

An urgent 20 lakh crore assistance package was offered by the government. The industrial and construction industries recovered more quickly than the service sector, which is recovering more slowly. In the automobile sector, abrupt factory closures disrupted the supply chain and caused a decline in demand. MSMEs, or micro, small, and medium-sized businesses, also suffered greatly. In response, businesses introduced digital services, contactless purchases, and doorstep delivery and pickup (Saxena et al., 2021).

Many sectors are on the road to recovery thanks to government initiatives and upward-moving demand curves, but growth and recovery are slow. Due to concerns about one's health and limitations on mobility, incomes and employment fell precipitously in trade, hotels, travel, and tourism. Production facilities remained shuttered and there was unemployment in the media and entertainment. As a result of innovations, internet platforms for music, movies, and other types of entertainment have expanded. FMCG companies have adjusted their business goals and strategies in order to improve consumer experiences, increase profits, and stay competitive. They have also established a flexible distribution network. Increased expenditures in the pharmaceutical industry resulted from the health sector's and its infrastructure's failure to adequately address public health (Singh et al., 2020). The government was able to cope with lockdowns thanks to telecom and technology's ability to meet the obstacles. Many industries were able to fill gaps and meet consumer demand thanks to broadband services.

Conclusion

Even though the country seems to be heading in the right direction toward recovery, the pandemic is still causing India a great deal of difficulty. By FY2022, India anticipates achieving increased growth in the double digits. Vaccines, which reduce the number of infectious diseases and fatalities, will instil optimism and boost consumer confidence. Because of this, pent-up demand will be released, and private investments will be attracted. In the near run, India will have to deal with difficulties like as inflation, job losses, low salaries, and limited buying power; but, in the long term, favourable benefits are anticipated to become visible.

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