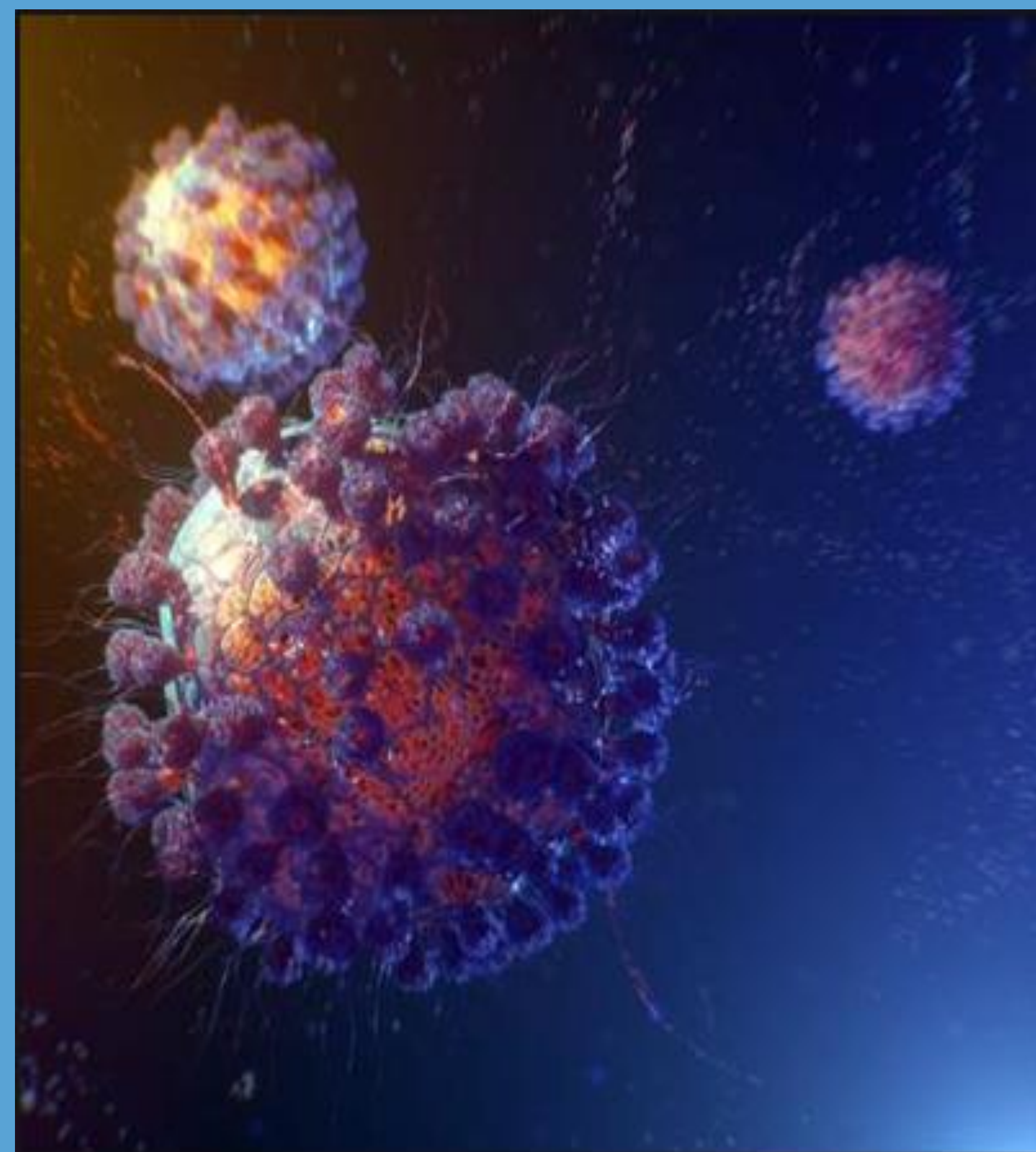


Impact of Covid 19 on the US

Introduction

In recent times, the threats of pandemics were taken for granted by many. Though there were scares in the west such as the Swine flu and the Zika virus, it is the spread of the Sars-Cov-2 virus that has given a lot of people a wake-up call. The impact of the Sars-Cov-2 (Covid-19) pandemic in the US cannot be underestimated. Its consequences affected all aspects of American life, ranging from health, education, the jobs market, and the economy in general. By analyzing the varied effects of the virus, we can better gauge our responses to pandemics, learn and be better prepared for the inevitable future pandemics.



Health

When it comes to health matters, it becomes clear that Covid 19 impacted:

- The mortality rate (excess deaths)
- Healthcare system
- Mental health

Mortality Rate (Excess deaths)

- When assessing mortality rate, at the onset of the viruses' spread, the Trump Administration had predicted about 100,000 deaths, with a worst case scenario of 240,000 deaths (Rucker & Wan, 2020).
- However, the Covid-19 death toll surpassed projections, as it spread across the country, resulting in the deaths of more than 500,000 people (Ehley, 2021).
- It resulted in "excess deaths," which refers to deaths from all causes relating to the Covid-19 virus, more than the expected deaths in a given place and time (Woolf et al., 2020, p. 501).
- Therefore it can be ascertained that the impact of the virus would be felt by families of all whose loved ones died during the pandemic.

Healthcare System

- Covid 19 greatly impacted the American healthcare system, with direct and indirect costs estimated to be in the hundreds of billions (American Hospital Association, 2020).
- Looking from an individual basis, estimates provided by the Kaiser Family Foundation and Peterson Center on Healthcare show that the price tag could range between \$10,000 and \$90,000 depending on complication levels and ventilator use (Rae et al., 2020).
- Furthermore, the American Hospital Association estimated that it incurred losses of more than \$50 billion monthly between March and June 2020, through a combination of reduced revenues, and an increase in costs (American Hospital Association, 2020).



Mental Health

- The pandemic and the resulting recession have negatively impacted individuals' mental health and created new barriers for people who were already suffering from substance abuse and mental illnesses (Yao et al., 2020).
- Almost forty percent of adults in America reported anxiety symptoms or suffered from a depressive episode, which is more than the ten percent reported in 2019 (Vahratian, 2021).
- The worry and stress of the virus coupled with the threat of job loss and isolation brought about by working from home has resulted in poor health outcomes (Pfefferbaum & North, 2020).



Education

- The pandemic caused almost all the 55 million school-going children under the age of 18 to stay at home. The school closures affected: Access educational facilities, team sports and recreational facilities such as playing grounds and pools
- As such, the students' academic performance was greatly affected. Furthermore, the virus highlighted the existing socioeconomic disparities and how the disparities affected educational outcomes, as some parents and schools were able to organize remote learning, while others could not due to lack of available facilities (Ali, Herbst, & Makridis, 2021).
- Teachers have also faced challenges when acclimating to online instruction, emphasizing the need for support and training (MacIntyre, Gregersen, & Mercer, 2020). It was difficult for them to design and plan instruction for the remote learning for their classes during the pandemic as there did not exist any framework accommodating what they were doing.
- Furthermore, the weak support system which included challenges on the integration of computers in lessons had left many educators less equipped on teaching in the remote learning environment. The virus, therefore, highlighted the need for education in emergency research to ensure that schools can better respond to another pandemic.



The Economy

- The Covid-19 pandemic has greatly impacted the jobs market and the economy. It is estimated that by April 2020, the general shutdown to major transport, tourism, manufacturing, retail, and hospitality industries resulted in the loss of millions of jobs, in addition to temporary furloughs and reduced pay (Crayne, 2020).
- About one in six workers in the country filed for unemployment benefits, effectively erasing all the net gains that were obtained since the great recession. There was a reduction in the number of hours worked, which went together with an increase in time for unpaid work as a consequence of daycare and school closures, reduced availability of public services for the elderly and people with disabilities, and the need to look after family members that were negatively affected with the Covid virus.
- The loss of jobs and the slow down of many industries resulted in the GDP taking a nosedive, with projections revealing a 31.4percent shrinking of the US national economy (Makridis, & Hartley, 2020).

Conclusion

- The spread of the Sars-Cov-2 virus affected all aspects of American life. It resulted in more than 500,000 deaths, a majority of whom may have lived otherwise.
- The pandemic overwhelmed the healthcare infrastructure, as the need for ventilators and specialized machines was needed to deal with the heightened demand. At the same time, people's finances were stretched thin due to the exorbitant costs of care for those hospitalized.
- The pandemic revealed the need for emergency research in education as millions of school-going children remained home, and teachers struggled to cope with the remote learning model. Furthermore, millions of people lost their jobs. All these factors negatively affected mental health increasing anxiety and depressive episodes among people.

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