

The repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic on the local community in light of cultural globalization

انعكاسات جائحة كوفيد-19 على المجتمع المحلي في ظل العولمة الثقافية

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ملخص :

في هذا البحث نحاول من خلاله فهم انعكاسات جائحة "كوفيد 19" على المجتمع المحلي في ظل العولمة الثقافية فهما نعدد فيه الآليات والتقنيات المنهجية التي تساعدنا في استشراف المستقبل بل في دراستنا للمجتمع المحلي باعتبارنا أعضاء فيه دراسة تحليلية نريد من خلالها الوصول الى مدى قدرة وسائل الاتصال والاعلام الالكترونية في نقل المعلومة ومدى مصداقيتها على صعيد أول، ثم دور الفاعلين في التعاطي في هذه الجائحة وصولا أخيرا إلى دراسة مقدرة جاهزية مختلف مؤسسات المجتمع المحلي التي لها علاقة مباشرة أو غير مباشرة مع كارثة صحيحة كجائحة "كوفيد19".

الكلمات المفتاحية: مجتمع محلي؛ عولمة ثقافية؛ فيروس كورونا (كوفيد-19).

Abstract:

In this research, we try to understand the repercussions of the "Covid-19" pandemic on the local community in light of cultural globalization, as we enumerate the methodological mechanisms and techniques that helps us in foreseeing the future, but rather in our study of the local community as members of it, an analytical study through which we want to reach the extent of the ability of the means of communications and electronic media in transmitting information and its credibility on the first level, then the role of actors in dealing with the pandemic, finally to study the capacity of the readiness of various local community institutions that have a direct or indirect relationship with a health disaster such as the "Covid 19" pandemic.

Keywords: Local community, cultural globalization, Corona virus (covid-19).

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Introduction:

In the wake of the technological advancements witnessed by the world day by day, geographical boundaries no longer hold any meaning. Communication and media have compressed space and time. We now witness the cosmopolitan individual who doesn't fully acknowledge geographic borders due to globalization. Globalization has opened up new knowledge horizons, evolving through the latest technologies, including various audible and visual communication and media tools, as well as the World Wide Web with its diverse applications. Without a doubt, these technologies contribute to conveying the message from the far east to the far west. While the world celebrates the overall impacts of these technologies, which turned the world into a small village, we wake up to the sound of a humanitarian and health disaster striking a city in China in the east. Global organizations, led by the World Health Organization, quickly spread the news of the disaster, later named the "COVID-19" pandemic, which rapidly spread in an unprecedented manner across the globe. Among the significant factors contributing to the rapid spread of this pandemic is the concept of "borderlessness" born out of globalization. The pandemic began circulating through various technological means, and global organizations, institutions, and associations started collaborating in various ways to limit the spread of this pandemic in societies.

In this research, we attempt to understand the repercussions of the "COVID-19" pandemic on the local community in the context of cultural globalization. It is a multi-faceted understanding with methodological techniques that help us envision the future and study the local community as members within it. Through an analytical study, we aim to assess the extent of the ability of communication and electronic media to convey information and its credibility at the primary level. We also explore the role of actors in dealing with this pandemic and, finally, study the preparedness of various institutions in the local community directly or indirectly related to a health disaster like the "COVID-19" pandemic.

First: Research Problem

We live in an era of globalization that witnesses tremendous acceleration in its various political and economic fields. It has also seen development in the cultural domain with its dimensions. This cultural globalization has accelerated the movement of ideas, knowledge, symbols, and values through communication, media, and technologies produced by the human mind. It signifies the permeation of a certain culture into another domain, termed as cultural globalization.

The amount of information reaching societies through cyberspace, a new realm not belonging to geography or history, has given rise to cultural globalization. It is a realm without boundaries, memory, or heritage, created by electronic information communication networks. The COVID-19 virus, as named by the World Health Organization, has taken a prominent place since its spread from Wuhan, People's Republic of China, transcending geographical boundaries and reaching the smallest social spaces, local communities.

Various local and global media outlets covered the COVID-19 pandemic, exchanging information through social media platforms. This led us to pose the following question in this article: What are the reflections of the COVID-19 pandemic on the local community in the context of cultural globalization?

This leads us to the sub-questions:

1. Did the pandemic enhance awareness and solidarity culture within the local community amid cultural globalization?
2. How did the local community interact with the pandemic in the context of cultural globalization?

For these questions, we formulated the following hypotheses:

1. The COVID-19 culture enhanced awareness and solidarity within the local community amid cultural globalization.
2. The local community interacted positively and negatively with the pandemic in the context of cultural globalization.

1.2 Research Objectives:

- Shedding light on the local community during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Understanding the repercussions of the pandemic on the local community in the context of cultural globalization.
- Identifying the difficulties and challenges faced by authorities and society regarding the prevalent epidemic.
- Scientifically studying societal behavior towards pandemics to better deal with them in the future.
- Providing recommendations and suggestions derived from the research.

1.3 Research Importance:

- Raising awareness within the local community about the risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic amid cultural globalization.
- Assisting in providing an analytical picture of the local community's response to the pandemic.
- Highlighting the importance of cultural globalization in facing global risks.

1.4 Previous Studies:

Good scientific research starts from where the researchers ended, and the researcher must review his readings related to his research, and accordingly, previous studies were represented in the following:

1.4.1 Foreign Studies:

Study owners:

J. Tom Muellera, Kathryn McConnellb, Paul Berne Burowc, Katie Pofahlb, Alexis A. and Justin Farrell, Merjanoffd.

Title : Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on rural America Published in: Proceedings of the National Academy of sciences (PNAS)

Year of publication: 2021

Study Problem:

In this study, researchers utilized recently collected data to examine how and to what extent the COVID-19 pandemic has affected well-being in rural American society. More importantly, the study tests this question through two fundamental dimensions of well-being. Firstly, health-related well-being, measured by the level of direct experience with the virus and the perceived impacts on public life, physical and mental health. Secondly, economic well-being, including formal and informal work, perceived financial impacts, and perceptions of local economic health.

Study Methodology:

Data was collected from June 25 to July 22, 2020, a period that witnessed a significant increase in the COVID-19 pandemic across the United States and within this region. A total of 1,009 surveys were collected. The survey was conducted by randomly sampling households from the Postal Service Sequencing File in the United States. Addresses were then matched with publicly available databases to identify contact information for those residing at sample addresses. Potential respondents were contacted via phone, email, and postcard, and sampling continued until a sample of at least 1,000 responses was reached. The survey was presented in both English and Spanish. The research procedures of Yale University's Human Research Protection Programs reviewed and approved this study.

Study Results:

Researchers found that the COVID-19 pandemic had wide-ranging effects on rural well-being. As a result, there was a significant increase in reliance on unemployment insurance. Furthermore, the results show that half of the rural respondents perceive a certain level of negative impact on their lives overall, and their awareness of local economic health has significantly decreased. These findings provide policy-relevant evidence that continuous support for healthcare (physical and mental), employment, social insurance, and public trust in the economy is essential for rural populations in the United States.

Study Commentary:

Although the researchers' findings are based on a sample of residents living in vast rural areas in the western United States, the results may offer insights into life in local communities in a large country like Algeria.

1.4.2 Algerian Studies:

Study Author: Samia KHERKHACHE (2021)

Title: The Impact of COVID-19 on Employment Relationships in Algeria (KHERKHACHE, 2021)

Published in: Peer-Reviewed International Scientific Journal, Research Unit in Human Resource Development, Volume 12, Special Issue (Part 1)

Year of Publication: 2021

Problem Statement: In this study, the researcher addressed the importance of studying employment relationships in addressing social, economic, and human work problems in general. The researcher examined the relationship of work with the requirements of economic development and rapid technological advancement, considering the constant goal of social progress and the ongoing effort to achieve more scientific understanding of these relationships and their problems.

The following problem can be posed: What are the reflections of the COVID-19 pandemic on employment relationships in Algeria from the perspective of professors at Mohamed BOUDIAF University in M'sila?

Study Methodology:

The researcher adopted a descriptive-analytical methodology in this study, aiming to gather information related to the subject's problem by reviewing important studies that addressed the topic of the novel COVID-19 virus and employment relationships in Algeria. The researcher also used an electronic questionnaire as a tool for this study, sent to the email addresses of professors at Mohamed BOUDIAF University in M'sila, as they represent the elite of the community.

Study Results: The key findings of the study are presented as follows:

- There is a moderate inverse correlation, meaning there is an inverse relationship between the COVID-19 pandemic and employment relationships in Algeria. This implies that as the virus spreads and its duration increases, employment relationships decrease and become limited from the perspective of professors at Mohamed BOUDIAF University in M'sila.
- There is a negative impact of the novel COVID-19 pandemic on employment relationships in Algeria, where 42.6 % of the changes in employment relationships are explained by the independent variable of the COVID-19 pandemic, while the remaining 57.4 % is attributed to other factors.
- Professors in higher education play a positive role in ensuring the stability of employment relationships by providing alternatives and developing initiatives and innovations to face the COVID-19 pandemic.
- There are no statistically significant differences in the opinions of the study sample regarding COVID-19 and employment relationships based on variables such as professional experience and college/institute.

Study Commentary: In this study, the researcher sampled professors from a university affiliated with the public sector, and the results would have been more accurate if the sample had been selected from the private sector, which was significantly affected by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on employment relationships.

1.5 Definition of Research Concepts and Terms:

1.5.1 Local Community:

Said NASSIF defined the local community as "a group of residents living in a defined geographical environment, with social relationships and interactions, linked by common general goals within a system of cultural and social values that determine the social status and roles of each, and they engage in various economic activities to satisfy their basic needs. Additionally, they do not live in isolation from the surrounding local communities on one hand, and the national and global community on the other" ¹

While "Charles Loomis" sees the general definition of the local community, which can be applied to the urban local community, as referring to the social pattern that forms and relies on a territorial unit where members engage in their necessary activities from day to day to meet common needs ²

In light of these definitions, we understand the local community as a group of individuals and groups with cultural and social connections operating within an overall framework. They are bound by common relationships, goals, and needs in a specific geographical environment.

1.5.2 Cultural Globalization:

"Globalization is not only an economic system but has become, perhaps, since its inception, organically linked with modern communication tools that disseminate a specific idea, or rather a 'specific' culture, which we have called 'the culture of intrusion'" ³. In our understanding, globalization is not just the Western cultural control of other cultures but the historical culmination of a long history of control that began with colonial invasion operations centuries ago. It has achieved significant success in assimilating and distorting multiple Southern cultures, especially in Africa, North, Central, and South America. This confirms our assumption that globalization does not mark the end of the era of the nation-state but declares the onset of a new phase of its continuous expansion. Cultural globalization is the spread and dissemination of foreign cultural ideas, principles, standards, and values. It is a natural mechanism in the working system of the modern nation-state ⁴. Therefore, cultural globalization is the propagation and dissemination of foreign culture, benefiting from the tremendous and rapid advancements in media, communication, and the power of foreign media and cognitive technologies to transmit and present the foreign model to local societies and cultures.

1.5.3 Coronavirus (COVID-19):

COVID-19 is the disease caused by the novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2), which was first discovered by the World Health Organization on December 31, 2019, after reports of a group of cases of viral pneumonia in Wuhan, People's Republic of China⁵. Since March 11th, 2020, after the disease claimed the lives of 4,291 people

worldwide, the World Health Organization declared it a pandemic. Simultaneously, it was an unprecedented pandemic that could not be controlled. After a year, the estimated number of deaths due to COVID-19 is around two million cases. While we place our hope in the safe and effective vaccines currently being rolled out, we want this to happen at a faster pace, with the vaccines distributed fairly in the coming weeks⁶.

2. Methodological Procedures of the Study:

2.1 Sociological Approach:

In our research, we adopted the functionalist structural approach, which assumes that society, in its connection and cohesion, is composed of a set of elements of systems and data. Each element has a specific function within a pattern that seeks to achieve balance and stability while trying to investigate the reality of the reflections of the coronavirus (COVID-19) on the local community in its sociocultural dimension. This means that each element of the local community is linked to a function to meet the health needs of the community within an overall pattern within the cultural system. As Bronislaw Malinowski affirmed, this approach confirms that the basic needs of individuals and their satisfaction are closely related to the derivation of new cultural needs. These new needs can only be met by creating a new environment, a secondary or artificial environment, and this environment is the culture itself, no more and no less.

With the developments of the pandemic and the continuous impact of the flow of ideas and values from the outside, new needs and specific standards have emerged, imposing a functional relationship on the behaviour of the local community. It is a functional relationship to satisfy these needs through a social system, where people agree on values that unite them. This is the interpretation provided by Malinowski when describing any culture; we must know its social systems.

In the context of the globalization of human societies and especially with regard to media and communication tools, we cannot overlook the impact of the latter during our analysis of the study topic in terms of communication theories, led by Marshall McLuhan. He stated that "the medium is the message." These theories are among the most famous modern theories in the era of cultural globalization and the field of communication and media, applied to modern societies.

2.2 Research Methodology:

The nature of the research determines the appropriate methodology, and our socio-cultural dimension leads us to adopt the descriptive approach as "the method that focuses on describing given phenomena, understanding their constant components, recording their visible and invisible characteristics, and exploring their observable elements"⁷.

3.2 Community and Research Sample:

*The research community represents the local community of the city of Messaad in the province of Djelfa. We selected a non-probabilistic systematic sample, meaning "drawing a sample from the research community by selecting ideal elements from this community"⁸. The chosen sample consisted of 11 participants from various active

institutions during the COVID-19 pandemic, and we deemed them ideal representatives of the local community

Table (01)
 Sample Description

No	Research Field	Age Group	Educational Qualification	Scientific Specialty	Occupation	Gender	Professional Experience (Years)
01	Police	< 40 years old	Master	Trade	Officer	Male	05
02	Civil protection	< 40 years old	Doctorate	History	Officer	Male	12
03	Health	From 40 to 60 years old	Secondary level	Mathematics	Nurse	Male	25
04	Mosque	From 40 to 60 years old	Master	Sociology	Imam	Male	20
05	Youth & sports	From 40 to 60 years old	Educator	Cultural	Manager	Male	21
06	Library	From 40 to 60 years old	Bachelor's degree	Libraries	Manager	Male	10
07	Trade	< 40 years old ¹⁷	Master	Management	Trader	Male	15
08	Organization	From 40 to 60 years old	Fundamental	/	Boss	Male	17
09	Organization	< 40 years old	Master	Arabic literature	Boss	Male	04
10	Association	< 40 years old	Doctorate	Pharmacy	Boss	Male	11
11	Association	From 40 to 60 years old	Master	Economy	Boss	Female	25

Source: Compiled by the researcher.

2.5 Research Tools:

We primarily relied on the "interview" technique, conducted through verbal questioning, and recorded the respondents' answers. We also utilized the observation technique as part of the local community, the field of our study.

3. Research Results and Discussion:

3.1 The culture of awareness of the COVID-19 pandemic in the context of cultural globalization:

Table (02)

Media followed by the sample for information about the pandemic

Media type	Frequency	Percentage
Social media	07	63.63 %
National media	10	90.90 %
Foreign media	04	36.36 %
Other	02	18.18 %

Source: Compiled by the researcher.

Through the table, we notice that the most important media outlets individuals in the sample follow for information about the COVID-19 pandemic are local media, repeated 10 times in the respondents' answers, with a percentage of 90.90%. Social media follows with 7 occurrences, representing 63.63%, and then foreign media with 4 occurrences, representing 36.36%. Finally, other methods include information exchange through conversations during daily meetings, occurring 2 times with a percentage of 18.18%.

Sociological Reading:

From the previous presentation, it became clear to us that media and communication formed an organic connection with the local community, and we can describe them as one of its sub-patterns. The researchers, representing the local community as organic patterns (small units), considered themselves part of the overall pattern represented by the local community (larger units) when gathering information about the COVID-19 pandemic. They followed the updates by relying on essential tools of cultural globalization, social media, and foreign media. Here, the use of local community for cultural globalization tools, or at least one of them, is evident. On the other hand, they broadcast information about the pandemic and its developments, circulating it on social media through their social status and functional roles. There is mutual

dependence between organic patterns and tools of cultural globalization, especially and generally with the overall pattern.

Table (03)

Preferred Media and Communication Outlets

Preferred media	Frequency	Percentage
National media	05	45.45 %
Foreign media	05	45.45 %
No preference	01	09.10 %
Total	11	100 %

Source: Compiled by the researcher.

Through the table, we observe that media and communication outlets preferred by the sample individuals for information about the COVID-19 pandemic are equally rated. Local media outlets were mentioned 05 times in the respondents' answers, with a percentage of 45.45%. Foreign media outlets were also mentioned 05 times, accounting for 45.45%. Some respondents showed no preference between them, mentioned once, with a percentage of 9.10%.

Sociological Reading:

One of the characteristics of media and communication outlets is that they have apparent functions that achieve a kind of cultural liberation for society through its ability to choose the preferred means. These outlets have latent functions as they help develop awareness in the community. Here, we can offer explanations from the theory of the strong impact by the Canadian researcher Marshall McLuhan, which gained significant attention. He stated, "The medium is the message." Although he coined this phrase in the 1960s, it gained more prominence in scientific research after the technology revolution and the penetration of globalization, exposing it as one of the most prominent modern theories in the era of cultural globalization and the field of media and communication.

McLuhan adds, "The content of the media cannot be considered independently of the technology of the media itself. The way media institutions present subjects and the audience they target affect what these media convey. However, the nature of the media that people connect with shapes societies more than the content of communication. When McLuhan refers to history, he takes a stance that we can call technological inevitability" ⁹. The inevitability of the existence of these media in society is what causes changes in it, and the social system in his opinion is largely

determined by the nature of these media, through which communication takes place, and is not limited by the content carried by these media.

2.3 Adaptation and Interaction of the Local Community with the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Context of Cultural Globalization:

Through studying the local community's interaction with epidemics from a sociological perspective, understanding people's beliefs in these situations can help formulate social strategies to fully contain the virus. This understanding can also increase the percentage of social health awareness culture in these situations. Developing an ideal national mobilization that allows media and all social media to participate effectively in this mobilization is essential in sociology. The key is to create new concepts for social research and make them part of the strategic structure of society and the state.

The inspirational aspect of the COVID-19 pandemic in our Algerian society is the phenomenon of solidarity and social cohesion, which partially mitigates the impact of this pandemic and reduces its effect on individuals. The problems faced by one or more members are related to the entire group because the unity of the community is a means to ensure social stability. Pursuing common interests can reduce excessive social inequality and ensure the fair sharing of societal resources. This avoids frustration and anger among some people. Social solidarity is a piece of the social life cycle. We do not know who will need help in the future. It is important to develop the habit of mutual support and solidarity in society. For social unity to have a positive impact on society, it should not have political, ideological, or economic goals. It is a social human behavior that reflects the members' awareness of responsibility and moral commitment to those in need.

In our analysis, this culture is noble and can enhance group cohesion in times of crises and disasters. The issue of solidarity in the Algerian social and cultural heritage has a humanitarian aspect. In recent years, many sociologists have seen the end of the issue of solidarity due to economic development, globalization, and individualism, especially after advanced countries failed to provide a certain level of health and economic security. Although changes in the Algerian family are the result of many factors, from extended families to nuclear families, this does not negate the commitment to inherited justice rooted in Islam, the state religion. This is evidence of their communication style, the continuous family communication. This is the strong fortress of the Algerian family during major crises and during the colonial period, helping them maintain the stability of the unity we witness today.

It appears that the spirit of social solidarity has not disappeared in the hearts of Algerians as they unite against the corona virus, recruiting everyone according to their position and ability to provide support to their needy and pandemic-affected brothers. Thus, the Algerian people prove once again that they are masters of challenge, collective responsibility, and membership in the spirit of cohesion and solidarity.

Despite the harsh scene left by the corona virus in terms of death and isolation, this social solidarity alleviates this reality. Social unity is the basis for establishing social and personal relationships. This is the true social capital. On this occasion, we cannot do justice to all social categories that sacrificed and continue to sacrifice in silence. Imams, doctors, members of the National People's Army, all security and civil protection personnel, as well as various associations and civil society organizations, and all segments of Algerian society and individuals who sacrificed their lives for this homeland.

4. Recommendations and Proposals:

- The authorities have initiated the formation of crisis cells in various sectors and have taken health, economic, and legal measures to confront the pandemic. However, what we have noticed is the absence or scarcity of crisis research and social and psychological studies at the level of each province. The Algerian society is rich and diverse in its local cultures. Therefore, the state can tailor measures based on research on each specific culture and the specificity of each local community.
- Increase the utilization of information and communication technology and use it optimally to serve our society and mitigate the negative effects of cultural globalization on the local community.
- Activate and appreciate the role of neighborhood committees, members of civil society, as well as imams due to their close proximity to the community, in supervising volunteer work and preparing well for sudden health disasters.
- Encourage the media to disseminate a contemporary health culture and emphasize its importance in maintaining societal well-being.
- Incorporate media and heritage culture into educational curricula at institutes and universities in all disciplines.

Furthermore, we commend researchers, universities, and research centers to conduct more psychological and sociological studies, especially in times of pandemics, to coincide with new phenomena in societies.

Conclusion:

Through the sociological analysis of the data used in the study, we conclude that the pandemic has revealed the world's unpreparedness for major health challenges. The curbing of globalization remains elusive, especially in its media and cultural aspects. Media and social media occupy a significant space in the lives of societies, but dealing with them has not been positively proportional. However, they have contributed significantly to the reduction of the spread of COVID-19 through:

- Raising awareness in the local community about the importance of health security.
- Strengthening the unity of Algerians in facing major disasters.

At the level of local organizations, such as associations, the study observed that the COVID-19 pandemic produced social solidarity in providing a range of logistical aids. It also helped in the formation of interactive organizations that transformed the overall ecological and artistic landscape through mural works and awareness-raising materials. I believe that the Algerian state has taken many courageous steps and initiatives, evident in offering unprecedented advantages in the context of the impact of corona virus at all levels.

We are facing historic opportunities for society to contribute to overcoming the crisis. The degree of national mobilization is crucial, and the community's contribution to the state will determine the post-corona virus era. We are on the threshold of a historic phase, where every individual bears their historical responsibility. This is what the Algerian citizen should be aware of.

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