

Transcript of Oral History with Amerya Ghiya and Shriya Subramanian

Interviewee: Amerya Ghiya and Shriya Subramanian

Interviewer: Amerya Ghiya and Shriya Subramanian

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Abstract: Two students discuss their experiences at the start of the pandemic, their experiences in other countries, and their thoughts for possible future pandemics. This was submitted for a class assignment.

Shriya Subramanian 00:00

Hello, my name is Shreya.

Ameya Ghiya 00:01

And my name is Ameya and this is our second podcast for the COVID-19 archive project for history of global pandemics. The date and time is December 5, 2021. And the time is 11:41am Shreya. Do you have consent to be interviewed for the COVID-19? archive project?

Shriya Subramanian 00:19

Yes.

Ameya Ghiya 00:20

All right. So Shriya, how has COVID-19 impacted your college experience so far?

Shriya Subramanian 00:26

My college experience was impacted by COVID-19. In a few ways, I think I definitely attended fewer events and fewer activities with large numbers of people in an attempt to social distance myself as much as possible.

However, in comparison to when I lived in India, I was able to meet up with friends and go up frequently. Since India had a high number of cases and not many people vaccinated due to vaccinations available there, I wasn't able to go out at all to be safe.

Ameya Ghiya 00:55

All right, and in this class has been helpful learning about other pandemics.

Shriya Subramanian 01:00

Learning about other pandemics has definitely been helpful to understand the pandemic, we were able to learn from past trends and ways of handling it. We learned how other pandemics control the spread of disease for which we can learn or learn ourselves. Although we can learn from them, this pandemic is definitely different from others, and we can't understand something solely using the information we have from past pandemics.

Ameya Ghiya 01:21

Okay, and then how does this pandemic compare to other pandemics in the past? And do you think that humans have learned from their prior experiences with pandemics?

Shriya Subramanian 01:31

I think humans have learned from their prior experience with pandemics to a certain extent, I think learning about other pandemics showed that in the past, people were quick to blame and find fault in particular countries. Similarly, this had happened during this pandemic, and we can see that people didn't quite learn from the past. Rather than working together with other countries to find an ideal course of action. People try to find someone to blame. More- Moreover, coming from India, I have seen how India and its people struggled over time, because of the relaxed mask mandates, and other COVID-19 measures, the country should have reacted quicker and begin placing mask mandates and encourage social distancing from the start, so that it wouldn't have gotten so bad towards the end of the pandemic.

Ameya Ghiya 02:16

All right, thank you, Shreya for sharing.

Shriya Subramanian 02:18

Thank you. The date and time is December 15 2021. At 11:43am. Ameya, do you give consent to be interviewed for the COVID-19 Archive project?

Ameya Ghiya 02:29

Yes, I do.

Shriya Subramanian 02:31

Okay, so how has COVID-19 impacted your college experience so far?

Ameya Ghiya 02:34

So coming from Singapore, the COVID-19 restrictions aren't as strict as they would be back home. So it's definitely stricter back at home. And I think, I mean, obviously, it's a last that we haven't had like a normal college experience, because, you know, we definitely do have like stricter measures and looking at college as a whole from the past. And in that way, it's like kind of sad that we haven't had like, you know, the full college experience. But at the same time, we're so lucky that we at least get to be in person. Like, I feel like that's the biggest thing about college at least, because I know, in comparison to last year where everyone was online, like at least we get to be in person here, which is good. And, like, honestly, I'm okay with the restrictions, because like I said, at home, I was stricter. So at home, we had mandatory mask wearing everywhere. And our location would be traced to make sure that if we were ever in contact with someone who had the disease, then we would be notified and possibly quarantined. And another thing at home was that we were restricted in hanging out with a certain number of people in a day. And so at one point, it was only two people, so only me and another person could hang out in the public. And over here, I don't even think twice. If I'm in a group of three people, it's not a big deal at all, like at something as simple as just three people, which is actually crazy. Because at home, like if I was in a group of three people in the public, like we get caught, and then like there would be consequences. So in that way, the restrictions are much more relaxed here for me. And so that's why like I'm okay with restrictions on campus like mask wearing and wearing a mask and like other places, and we have like a hotel room policy of like no more than four people which I'm okay with, because I'm so used to doing that at home.

Shriya Subramanian 04:11

How has it been helpful learning about other pandemics?

Ameya Ghiya 04:16

So I think that this class has been very helpful because learning about other pandemics provides a basis of comparison for how humans have handled other pandemics in the past. And obviously we're learning from like the ways that humans have reacted in the past to react now, I remember in class learning about like cordon sanitaire, which is a method of like quarantining kind of a country, like from the public. And so in that way, it was so interesting to learn about that comparison, and then versus like Singapore's kind of quarantine measures of traveling to the country and then quarantining for two or three weeks. So in that way, it's been very interesting to see that oh, yeah, there are similarities like this in the past, like even though we have an advance in technology today, so you know, we can like learn more about like a disease. He's and stuff like that. It's just interesting that some methods have not changed, and they've stayed the same. But in that same way, a lot of things have changed because we, I think have the means to learn more about a disease and how to combat it with things like vaccines. So yeah.

Shriya Subramanian 05:13

Yeah, how does this pandemic compared to other pandemics in the past, have humans learned from your prior experience with pandemics?

Ameya Ghiya 05:19

So in comparison to the past COVID-19, I think wasn't really handled, handled properly due to the delay in response, because I think the World Health Organization announced the global pandemic a bit later, while China and many other countries in Asia, Singapore included were combating this outbreak earlier in 2020, it did start to spread to other countries. And I remember there was like an outbreak in Italy. And then there were some cases in the US. But even with this knowledge, I don't know the World Health Organization did not see the need to announce it as an emergency, even though it was spreading not only from country to country, but literally from continent to continent. So in that way, like, if they had announced earlier, maybe they could have like started limiting travel, making masks like mandatory and quarantining. So based on this learning, I think it's important in the future, if there's some sort of outbreak in country in another country, neighboring countries should definitely like take a look and make sure that they're okay. And there's no like spreading of disease or anything. To- And then like organization should make sure to look into the situation. And make sure that you know, they respond quicker, because right now, we're still like, I know COVID-19 nightmare, like is decreasing in a way in the world, like the world is getting back to normal, but variants are starting to develop. And we just heard about like the Omi-chrome variant. So in that way, like it's very important to stay alert and make sure that as humans, we're looking into that and making sure that we can at least mitigate a disease in the future.

Shriya Subramanian 06:52

Thank you.

Ameya Ghiya 06:53

Thank you.