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## **Book Review**

# **PANDEMIC PERSPECTIVES: PRAXIS, POLICY AND PEDAGOGIES**

by Sandra Joseph and Reena Marwah (eds), Routledge Taylor and  
Francis, 2023, pp. 346, ISBN 9781032768922

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***Pandemic Perspectives: Praxis, Policy and Pedagogies*** by Sandra Joseph and Reena Marwah (eds), Routledge Taylor and Francis, 2023, pp. 346, ISBN 9781032768922

***Reviewed by: Sampa Kundu, Consultant, ASEAN-India Centre, Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), New Delhi.***

The COVID-19 pandemic has not only forced us to reevaluate global health priorities but has also significantly impacted other sectors, including education, public health, and the economy. *Pandemic Perspectives: Praxis, Policy and Pedagogies*, edited by Sandra Joseph and Reena Marwah (2023), explores these multifaceted impacts, offering a comprehensive examination through theoretical, practical, and pedagogical lenses. The book is divided into four sections, comprising fifteen chapters that cover a broad spectrum of topics, making it a valuable resource for policymakers, educators, and researchers.

The introductory chapter, “Pandemic Perspectives, Ideas for Transformation, Rebuilding Human Capital and Pedagogies for Higher Education” (Joseph & Marwa) sets the stage by exploring the foundational concepts and theoretical frameworks necessary to understand the pandemic's global impact. This section addresses how pandemic has transformed societal norms, governance structures, and human interactions. The book emphasizes the necessity for innovative approaches to rebuild and adapt to the post-pandemic world.

Each section of the book has sector-specific insights to offer. The transition to remote learning is a critical focus of this book. A careful reading of the book reminds us that the abrupt shift to remote learning has highlighted the lack of preparedness among educational institutions and educators, many of whom had no prior experience with online teaching. The book also reminds us that mental health challenges faced by students and educators were worsened by the pandemic. The emergence of digital platforms and the concept of digital universities are discussed as both solutions and challenges in the new educational landscape.

In “(Un)Knowability of a Disease” Maya John provides a historical context, comparing past pandemics to the current one. This comparative analysis is essential for understanding the evolution of disease surveillance and public health responses. The reader also gets a philosophical inquiry into COVID-19 and its gender perspective. Ghazla Rizvi highlights how the pandemic has disproportionately affected women, both in the workforce and at home.

Another crucial topic covered by the book is in-depth analysis of India's public health strategies in the essay “Public Health Framework: Prevention Against COVID-19 in India”. Shalini Srivastava, Jasmin and Aakansha Aggarwal discuss the government's efforts to mitigate the pandemic's impact, including the rapid transition to distance learning and the implementation of EdTech interventions in their essay “Impact of COVID- 19 Pandemic on Education and Economic Stability of the Students”. Prominent platforms like e-Pathshala, Swayam, and, DIKSHA are highlighted for their role in maintaining educational continuity. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is also discussed as a significant initiative aimed at building a resilient education system post-pandemic.

Examining the Indian pharmaceutical industry's response to the pandemic is again another important contribution of the book. "Indian Pharmaceutical Industry and the Pandemic" details the industry's rapid mobilization to produce vaccines and treatments, showcasing India's role as a global pharmaceutical leader. Additionally, the management of bio-medical waste during the pandemic is examined in "Bio-Medical Waste and COVID-19 Pandemic", emphasizing the environmental and health challenges posed by increased waste generation.

The pandemic's economic impact is scrutinized through examining the stock market behavior. The analysis by Anshi Goel, Renu Gupta and Priyanka Marwah provides insights into the volatility and resilience of the stock markets. Another essay discusses the role of women's leadership in community-centric initiatives in Kerala, highlighting successful strategies and the importance of inclusive leadership during crises.

Exploring oral narratives in times of COVID-19, Bipasha R. Lakra captures Northeast India's experiences and stories, adding a human dimension to the data-driven analysis. These narratives provide an emotional reminder of the pandemic's diverse impacts on individuals and communities.

*Pandemic Perspectives: Praxis, Policy and Pedagogies* stands out for its interdisciplinary approach and comprehensive coverage of the pandemic's impact. The editors have successfully managed a collection of essays that provide both macro and micro-level analyses. The inclusion of case studies and oral narratives enriches the discussions, offering readers a holistic understanding of the pandemic's far-reaching effects.

However, the book could benefit from more international perspectives. While the focus on India provides valuable insights, the inclusion of more global case studies would enhance the comparative analysis and applicability of the discussed strategies.

Overall, *Pandemic Perspectives: Praxis, Policy and Pedagogies* is a timely and insightful contribution to the literature on COVID-19. It is recommended for reading as it effectively bridges the gap between theory and practice, offering valuable lessons for navigating future pandemics and crises. The book is a must-read for policymakers, educators, and researchers seeking to understand the pandemic's multifaceted impacts and explore pathways for recovery and resilience.