NEW EDITION

Zaheer Allam. Surveying the Covid-19 Pandemic and Its Implications – Urban Health, Data Technology and Political Economy. Elsevier 2020. 152 pages (English). ISBN: 9780128243138 (paperback), 0128243139 (eBook). DOI: 10.1016/B978-0-12-824313-8.01001-9

The book includes a multidisciplinary perspective covering the most important matters pertaining to Covid-19. It provides a holistic viewpoint on Covid-19 and its effects on urban health, political economy and data technology. The social and economic impacts of Covid-19, as well as the impacts of the Covid-19 policy, are explored by examining the impact of the urban health policy responses on the economy of cities and, directly and indirectly, on the supply chain distribution.

The book stresses the importance of building "infectious disease modelling datasets" for public (urban) health and the role of computing tools, open data, citizens' scientific initiatives in this process.

It is intended for postgraduate students, professors, researchers in the field of public health, political economy, and data technology, health managers, and everyone else who may find its information valuable.

The book is organised in four parts. The first part is dedicated to the first 150 days of the Covid-19 pandemic and is divided into three chapters (articles 1–3), each covering a period of 50 days and providing a detailed chronological timeline and an extensive review of the literature documenting the pandemic for the period.

The second part refers to data technology and is also organised into three chapters. Chapter 1 (article 4) refers to the revised data protocols and enhanced big data networks for providing the accurate monitoring and modelling of the infectious disease. Chapter 2 (article 5) discusses the emergence of voluntary citizens' networks intended to circumvent urban health data sharing restrictions during the Covid-19 pandemic. Chapter 3 (article 6) considers the impact machine intelligence exerted on the health policy during the observed period of the pandemic. Chapter 4 shows how the major Covid-19 economic stimulus packages pose a challenge to long-term environmental sustainability (article 7).

The third part discusses the impact of Covid-19 on the underlying political economy. Chapter 1 (article 8) looks into how the pandemic has re-evaluated cash-based transactions and the opportunities for transition to cashless systems in digital urban networks. Chapter 2 (article 9) looks into revision of international relations and trade and political economy.

The fourth part discusses data management issues in pandemics (article 10).

Lessons learnt from the interventions of many governments point to the need to establish a holistic approach to data-based predictions and decision making in order to prevent the effects of Covid-19. Of course, it is also important to consider the context of each country, i.e. the impact of various public health measures on further spread of the pandemic. The book finds that it is important to understand the correlation between data technology, urban health, and the political economy in order for any government to select a model for a holistic approach to health forecasting and come up with a rapid measures.

The book primarily focuses on short-term effects of the Covid-19 pandemic as well as short-term actions needed to achieve long-term benefits. As the pandemic continues, it is difficult to predict its long-term effects on public health, social. and political economy.

About the author

Dr Zaheer Allam holds the position of a research associate at Deakin University. He is an urban strategist for the Port Louis Development Initiative and the Global Creative Leadership Initiative. He is also a research associate at the Live+Smart Research Lab of the School of Architecture and Built Environment at Deakin University and a consultant for urban scale projects in African Cities.

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