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### **[Abstract Title]**

Understanding COVID-19 as a 'disaster' – A sociological perspective

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Utilizing concepts developed in sociological studies of disasters, the paper investigates and interprets COVID-19 as a 'disaster'. Central to this approach is the consideration that COVID-19 is not merely a spread of a virus which can affect anyone anywhere, but rather has its roots in socio-economic and institutional processes. This approach also acknowledges that the impacts of COVID-19 will be shaped by vulnerability factors like inequality, marginalization and exclusion. This approach gains significance because most research on COVID-19 examines it from a medical and epidemiological perspective which fails to emphasize the socio-political roots of pandemics. To conduct the study, academic literature on COVID-19 was reviewed and findings were analyzed employing theories of social vulnerability, political ecology and social determinants of health. The paper is structured in three sections, the first section examines how COVID-19 conforms to the idea of a 'disaster', the second section explores the socio-economic and political roots of COVID-19 and the last section identifies what this implies for management of public health risks in future. The paper argues that to minimize the risk of public health disasters in future, there is an urgent need to recognize and address structural inequality and socio-economic and political roots of vulnerability.



**[Keywords]**

COVID-19, Disaster, Vulnerability