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Evolution of Society with Masks

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ABSTRACT

Throughout history and across the world, most masks have served to disguise, cloak or alter identity, whether within the special circumstances of formality and theatre, the perpetuation of crimes or the veiling of girls. Medical masks, against this, are meant to not hide but to guard. They maintain the wearer's identity while encouraging solidarity instead of segregation. The pandemic has made people across the planet assign different meanings thereto. Symbolic Interactionism looks into these changes in meanings assigned to an object and this mask trend might be a serious culture shift for the West. But the symbolic school also states that the meanings are subject to vary. And, masks are just elements of current history and maybe viewed as an emerging cultural norm. But as this pandemic evolves, a set of empirical data helps to create an image of COVID times along with the evolution of masks. Social solidarity means a social cohesion based upon the dependence which individuals have on each other in more advanced societies. Character mask are prescribed social role that serves to conceal the contradiction of a social relations or order.

Keywords: mask-evolution-social solidarity-Marxism-pandemic.

I. INTRODUCTION

*The word mask in our language came from the Romance languages.³ In French it means mask, cheek, larva. The larva, as we all know, is one among the sorts of metamorphosis. In Italian mascarone - an outsized mask, a grotesque figure. The Swiss scientist **K. Moji** believes that the word mask comes from the word macabre, which originally meant a net during which they wrapped the dead in order that they might not return. The Serbian medieval expression for a masked participant may be a **lice pohodnik**. In *Srem*, masks are still called **čuvuda**.*

Mask, a sort of disguise or concealment usually worn over or ahead of the face to cover the identity of an individual and by its own features to determine another being.⁴ This essential characteristic of hiding and revealing personalities or moods is common to all or any masks.

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³ Ruza. (2020). 'The role of the mask in society throughout history', **Read.cash**, November. Available at: The role of the mask in society throughout history - read.cash <https://read.cash> > ... (Accessed: 23 May 2021).

⁴ Paul S. Wingert 2012, *Mask*, Britannica, viewed 23 May 2021, <<https://www.britannica.com/art/mask-face-covering>>.

As cultural objects they need been used throughout the planet altogether periods since the Stone Age and are as varied in appearance as in their use and symbolism.

Theatrologists, architects, anthologists, psychologists, sociologists and lots of scientists have an interest during this term. The mask is that the one who masters man, gives inspiration and she or he communicates with the cosmic forces because everything else under the gaze of the cosmos is imperceptible. a person without a mask is gentle and without personality. An actor without a mask, without a "role" isn't seen on stage. The priest and therefore the king without a mask pass into the aspect of profanity. Everything that man has learned from nature are often seen on his masks and that they are a sort of opinion of a person of certain communities about the planet during which he lives. In our area, masks mostly present animal attributes (leather dresses with inverted hair on the surface, goat shape, wolf skin). this is often very true within the south-eastern parts of Serbia. The cheek that hides the face and therefore the mask that transforms it; cheeks of dishonourable road robbers and masks of honorable citizens; death masks and masks from which one lives ... Mycenaean masks made from gold sheet (with the one that Schliemann held in 1876 to be the figure of the destroyer Troy Agamemnon). Masks of Indian sorcerers with Grizzly fangs. Demon feather masks of the Incas. Masks from the island of Java made from wood. Eskimo fur masks. Japanese theatrical masks. Dodol masks of Eastern Serbia for invoking rain. Masquerade masks.

Not to forget, human skin masks that we use a day. and eventually, a medical mask which will become a neighborhood of our everyday lives. they're not a novelty in human history either. The protective mask was worn back during the plague pandemic within the 14th century, but in fact it looked completely different than it does today. Even today, the masks we wear to guard ourselves from the present COVID-19 are only soft protection, and for a few they're a fashion accessory. The world's greatest designers, like Gucci, design protective masks for a specific clientele. Many psychologists have speculated about why wearing a mask is widely accepted in Asian countries, and within the West, suggestions and orders to wear masks are met with resistance. French anthropologist, pandemic specialist Frederic Keck notes that within the West, wearing a mask is seen through individual glasses ("the virus is outside, I wear a mask to guard myself"), while Asian societies react collectivistically ("I wear a mask to guard others").



Fig. 1: Colored version of a copper engraving of Doctor Schnabel (i.e., Dr. Beak), a plague doctor in seventeenth-century Rome, circa 1656 by Paul Fürst (1608–1666) of Nuremberg made for a broadsheet, German derivate of a sheet of Sebastiano Zecchini, 1656

(Source: Wikipedia [https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pestdokter#/media/Datei:Paul Fürst, Der Doctor Schnabel von Rom \(coloured version\)](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pestdokter#/media/Datei:Paul_Fürst,_Der_Doctor_Schnabel_von_Rom_(coloured_version)))

Face masks have, nevertheless, been a long-standing and familiar feature of life in many East Asian countries.⁵ In Japan, Singapore, Hong Kong, and China, a culture of politeness has established a custom of mask-wearing by those that are becoming over a chilly or flu but must leave home. Wearing a mask signals a respect for others and says ‘be careful’.

In the current Covid-19 pandemic British government, like many others, has mandated the wearing of face coverings during a number of public situations. This requirement was introduced at the time that the speed of infection within the community is low and either static or reducing. The ostensible reason is to offer some slight support to the policy of social distancing and, perhaps more importantly, to offer people more confidence to travel and to go to shops. It's thought that those in fear of the virus are going to be more likely to venture out from their home if others are wearing a mask.

From a public health perspective, it doesn't matter what the mask seems like, where you bought

⁵ Scott, J. (2020) ‘Risk and Moral Panic: A Sociological View of Covid-19’, *John Scott CBE*, 27 July. Available at: <https://www.johnscottcbe.com/blog/post/risk-and-moral-panic-a-sociological-view-of-covid-19> (Accessed: 23 May 2021).

it, or how you made it; functionality is that the only thing that matters. Face masks inhibit what the sociologist Erving Goffman mentioned because the ‘performance of face work’, which he argued demonstrates ‘willingness to abide by the bottom rules of social interaction’. In other words, face-to-face interaction and communication is formed far more difficult when masks are worn. For this reason, people not familiar with wearing masks are now being advised on the way to smile with their eyes. Face masks also act as a big communication barrier for those with disabilities associated with sight, hearing and speech. they will be uncomfortable and impractical, restricting breathing and clarity of speech, and steaming up spectacles.

In North America, before the 1918 influenza epidemic, surgeons wore masks, as did nurses and doctors who were treating contagious patients during a hospital setting. But during the flu epidemic, cities round the world passed mandatory masking orders. *Historian Nancy Tomes argues that mask-wearing was embraced by the American public as “an emblem of public spiritedness and discipline.”*⁶

Women familiar with knitting socks and rolling bandages for soldiers quickly took to mask-making as a patriotic duty. That said, the keenness for mask-wearing waned quickly, as Alfred W. Crosby showed in *America’s Forgotten Pandemic: The Influenza of 1918*. In her study of the 1918 flu in Canada, historian Janice Dickin McGinnis argued that masks were “widely unpopular” which even in situ s with mandatory masking orders in place, people often did not wear them or simply pulled them on when police appeared.

Public health officers were dubious about the worth of masks. In Alberta, for instance, the flu first appeared at the start of October 1918. *By the top of the month, the province ordered everyone to wear a mask outside of their homes, to be removed only within the case of eating. in only four weeks, the order was rescinded.*

The medic of Health for Edmonton reported that practically nobody wore a mask thereafter, except in hospitals. *In his view, the rapid spread of the disease after the mask order was put into effect made the order an object of “ridicule.”*⁷

In Japan, against this, the general public embraced mask-wearing during the Spanish flu. consistent with sociologist Mitsutoshi Horii, mask-wearing symbolized “modernity.” within the post-war era, Japanese people continued to wear masks to stop the flu, only stopping within the 1970s when flu vaccines became widely available. *Within the 1980s and 1990s, mask-*

⁶ Catherine Carstairs 2020, *A brief history of masks from the 17th-century plague to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic*, TheConversation, viewed 23 May 2021, <<https://theconversation.com/a-brief-history-of-masks-from-the-17th-century-plague-to-the-ongoing-coronavirus-pandemic-142959>>.

⁷ *Id.* At 4.

wearing increased to stop allergies, as allergy to cedar pollen became a growing problem. within the late 1980s, the effectiveness of flu vaccinations declined and wearing a mask to avoid influenza resumed.⁸

Mask-wearing skyrocketed within the early years of the 21st century with the outbreak of SARS and avian influenza. the Japanese government recommended that each one sick people wear masks to guard others, while they suggested that healthy people could wear them as a preventative measure. Horii argues that mask-wearing was a “neoliberal answer to the question of public health policy” therein it encouraged people to require individual responsibility for his or her own health.

In 2009, when Japan was hit with H1N1, the sick tourists returning were blamed for failing to wear masks while being abroad to Canada. Japan considers mask as a form of politeness.

Similarly, in China, mask-wearing features a long history. Plague epidemic in the year of 1910 and 1911 forced the population of China to wear masks. After the Communists came to power in 1949, there was intense fear of bacteriological warfare, leading many to wear masks. In the 21st century days, SARS epidemic forced people to wear mask along with the rising black smog, that filled the industrialised cities of China. The Chinese government urged its citizens to guard themselves against pollution by wearing masks.

During the COVID-19 epidemic, a number of the primary people in Canada to wear masks were people with ties to Asia, who were already familiar with the practice of masking.

One of the primary cases of COVID-19 in Canada was that of a student at Western University who had visited her parents in Wuhan over the Christmas break. Returning home in Canada, she thoroughly wore a mask during her entire course of journey and practised self-isolation upon arrival at the same time went to the hospital wearing a mask, when she started showing symptoms. She didn't infect anyone else.

*Prophylactic face masks were first worn during the 1910-11 Manchurian plague and 1918 Spanish flu outbreaks.*⁹ In Japan, mask-wearing is taken into account a courtesy to people. In other Asian countries, like China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, mask-wearing has become relatively common due to pollution and former experience with pandemics like SARS. However, it had been only after the 2009 H1N1 (swine flu) outbreak that the mask ‘went global’. *Increasing levels of pollution in large cities have also led to more people wearing masks in India, Brazil,*

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ McEwan, C. (2020). ‘The social meaning of masks’, *Geography Directions*, 23 November. Available at: <https://blog.geographydirections.com/2020/11/23/the-social-meaning-of-masks/> (Accessed: 23 May 2021).

Sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Europe. However, in most European and other western countries, mask-wearing has not been common and, to encourage people to wear them, political leaders have needed to tackle stigma and challenge ideas that masks are a threat to non-public freedoms.¹⁰

II. HISTORY OF MASKS

(A) 18th Century

There are pictures of medical professionals from the first modern age treating patients affected by the plague wearing beak-like masks. These masks were supposedly crammed with herbs like clove or cinnamon also as liquids and led to the term ‘beak-doctors’. The doctors were wearing black cloaks and dark hats and were considered the symbol of the deathly epidemic of the center Ages. Their masks were meant to guard from the ‘blight’, the miasma, which was considered the explanation for the plague some time past. It had been proclaimed that spoiled air from the East had caused the epidemic. Nevertheless, there's no proof that these ‘plague-doctors with beak-like masks’ really existed. *There are two masks displayed in German museums that are suspected to be forgeries from a younger date.*¹¹ That indicates that the beak-doctors were on reflection awarded a meaning they apparently didn't have actually. Plague doctors adopt a fancy dress that has a leather headdress with an extended, pointed beak crammed with perfumes and aromatics that masked bad odours and were believed to combat contagion carried by bad air. Masks that were styled became important costumes for theatrical performances. Preserved within the Deutsches Historisches Museum in Berlin.

(B) 19th Century

Lacy veils are used by fashionable women to protect themselves from dust, notably from the disruptions caused by Georges-Eugene Haussmann's remaking of Paris. When researchers using microscopes identify germs on dust particles, germ theory takes on a medical tinge as it spreads. Heroic stories of the introduction of antiseptis by Lister (1827–1912) and therefore the corresponding preliminary works by Pasteur (1822–1895) or Ignaz Semmelweis (1818–1865) have inspired movie productions for many years and had an impression on our culture of remembrance. In contrast, the bacteriologic era that influenced the event of surgery has only recently been analyzed for the German area by Schlich et al. Ever since the works of Lister and

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ Matuschek, C., Moll, F., Fangerau, H., Fischer, J.C., Zänker, K., Van Griensven, M., Schneider, M., Kindgen-Milles, D., Knoefel, W.T., Lichtenberg, A. and Tamaskovics, B., 2020. The history and value of face masks. *European journal of medical research*, 25(1), pp.1-6.

Pasteur, the surgical ward and its developing special disciplines were confronted with a trend-setting discourse about wound infections and their prohibition and containment. This began in 1870, because the ‘hospital gangrene’ was limiting the outcomes of operations, especially those concerning abdominal procedures and people involving bones.

The introduction of mouth and nose coverage (mouth protection, face veils, face masks, mouth bandages) are often followed back to the turn-of-the-20th-century.

In 1897, the hygienist Carl Friedrich Flügge (1847–1923) working in Breslau at this point published his works on the event of droplet infections as a part of his research on the genesis of tuberculosis. At that point, the systema respiratorium as a transmitter of germs came into focus of research and already mandated instructions to stay distance. Within the same year, 1897, a cooperation work between Flügge and Theodor Billroth’s (1829–1894) disciple Johannes von Mikulicz (1850–1905), who also worked in Breslau since 1890, was published. Their publication addressed performing operations wearing a ‘mouth bandage’. In here, Mikulicz described a one-layered mask made from gauze.

Mikulicz, who had already been liable for the introduction of sterile gloves made up of cloth, noted concerning the applicability of surgical masks: ‘...we breathed through it as easily as a woman wearing a veil within the streets...’ Mikulicz’ assistant Hübner resumed the subject and described a two-layered mouth protection made from gauze that ought to prevent dribble spread. More studies regarding the germ content within the OR air followed. Until 1910, the appliance of face covers wasn’t common in surgery and therefore the general hospitals. Nevertheless, an earlier illustration of a multilayer mask made from gauze are often found within the surgical operating teachings of British surgeon B.G.A. Moynihan (1865–1936).

(C) 20th Century

In 1910, a plague of plague strikes Manchuria. Appointed by the Chinese court to go anti-plague efforts, the Penang-born, Cambridge-educated physician Wu Lien-Teh (Wu Liande) argues that the disease is transmitted through airborne contact. To stop its spread, he develops masks to be worn by medical personnel and therefore the general public. During the 1918 global flu epidemic, medical personnel routinely adopt masks to guard themselves, and lots of cities require them publicly. In Seattle, where streetcars require all riders to possess masks, the local Red Cross enlists 120 workers to show out 260,000 masks in three days. Within the 1920s, masks are standard in operating rooms. Over subsequent century, medical researchers still experiment with designs and materials.

The surgical mask was used first within the operating rooms of Germany and therefore the

USA within the 1920s. Especially in endoscopic procedures or ‘small surgery’, the mask was renounced for an extended time. There was still no hint for a facemask within the book ‘assistance for operating staff’, that was widely read in German-speaking areas in 1926, while the processing of cystoscopies as an example, also happening within the clinical use around 1900, was described extensively on several pages. One year later, Martin Kirschner (1879–1942), who held the chair for surgery in Heidelberg, elaborately described the need of wearing a facemask in his multi-volume operational theory within the chapter ‘measures to combat infections’. within the following edition of the book ‘assistance for operating staff’ published in 1935, facemasks were then mentioned, which may probably be associated with the increased number of studies on the reduction of germs.

A similar situation applies for the us. therein country, following the primary war, more and more research addressed facemasks with varying thickness. Still, masks weren't generally accepted, which may be seen in contemporary photographs or paintings. While interns and nurses were already wearing facemasks made from cloth or gauze, the generation of head physicians rejected them, also as rubber gloves, altogether phases of an operation, as they were considered “irritating”.

III. PRESENT SOCIOLOGICAL IMPACTS OF MASKS

In a survey conducted by us, we have tried to understand the impacts of masks on the present world society. As high as 97.3% of people surveyed agreed to use mask on a daily basis. They had been using masks for styling, protection against pollution and dirt along with the deteriorating grim situation of the coronavirus. 98.7% of the people surveyed agreed to masks being an essential commodity in the present times. A surprising answer came from more than half of the surveyors on the question of whether they were using masks before 2020, this indeed meant that they had not been using masks before the present times. At this point, it is important to remember that in the month of March 2020, India witnessed its first COVID case, and hence forth the government made the wearing of masks in public a new norm like the other nations who were dealing of the rampage of the virus. 70.7% of the people surveyed agreed that masks have changed with time and this means that with the change in the “get together”, “hangout” concepts, masks have also changed. 60% of the people surveyed agreed to owning more than 11 masks, which implies that, people are aware of the needs of a mask and are fully utilising it. Along with this, a momentarily gaze at the expenditure question can prove that, definitely masks have changed into a sort of essential but although a luxury commodity. In a country like India where the Minimum wage of a labourer is 178 rupees per day. The majority of 80% has

responded in affirmative for spending more than 150 rupees on masks as such. Only a meagre 16% have switched to stitching masks at home. In the digital era, people have very comfortably resorted to buying masks online, and hence a %age of 82.7 people agree on buying masks from other sources.

Sociologically speaking, masks affect one's behaviour has only been supported by 41.3% of the people surveyed. 69.3% of the people surveyed, do not agree with masks intimately being associated with one's identity. Likewise, 89.3% agreed on it not being a gender related thing, where they agreed on it not being correlated with gender. A little more than half i.e., 50.7% of the people surveyed disagreed on a significant role of masks in symbolism of crime or terror.

*In India, seasonal pollution or heavy traffic has made wearing face masks quite normal and there's no drastic shift that's apparent within the meanings related to masks generally.*¹²

Curiously enough, luxury gold and diamond-studded face masks have hit the Indian markets recently, almost altering the elemental purpose of wearing masks during a pandemic to secondary importance. this will even be perceived as how of adopting face masks into culturally recognized practices like marriages

IV. PANDEMIC THROUGH SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

Symbolic Interactionism examines society through subjective connotations assigned to things, events, and behaviours by the people of a specific community. the daddy of the symbolic school is **George Herbert Mead** who believed that the advancement of the people was a human process, then were the meanings people assigned to things. **Herbert Bloomer** coined the term 'Symbolic Interactionism'. His three principles of symbolic interactionism are (1) action is predicated on the meanings ascribed (2) people assign different meanings of things supported interactions and (3) the meanings are subject to vary.

The **Asians** have had a long story with the "**face mask as culture**". The outbreak of Spanish Flu in 1918 marks the start of the "Face Mask Culture" in Japan, which remains alive during this country and lots of other Asian countries, even after quite a century. within the present day, try stepping outside your range in Tokyo, Hong Kong, or Seoul without a lower face covering to urge a disapproving look. Face masks have always owned an underlying cultural narrative in Asia, unlike the West. They symbolize safety and considerateness. The prevalence of 'Lookism Culture' in South Korea primarily motivates particularly females to hide their bare-without-makeup-faces up. Masks have also haunted the role of colourful and trendy

¹² Chua, M.H., Cheng, W., Goh, S.S., Kong, J., Li, B., Lim, J.Y., Mao, L., Wang, S., Xue, K., Yang, L. and Ye, E., 2020. Face masks in the new COVID-19 normal: materials, testing, and perspectives. *Research*, 2020

accessories. In China, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, Thailand, and Taiwan, the central belief is that everyone acts as hosts of viruses, including healthy ones. So, there's an obligation to guard others from yourselves for the greater good.

The SARS Virus outbreak in 2003 also brought home the importance of wearing masks where the death rates were at a peak. The dissimilarity between the West and therefore the East is that the latter has experienced contagion before and the memories are still painfully fresh.

People in USA have had also held mask as very important in their struggle for human rights and private freedom. In the US, wearing masks has become an issue of private freedoms. Human rights activists have started to think and boil on the matters of public concern regarding the incapacity of individuals to communicate with a mask on, and freedom of speech being one of the absolute rights in America. A strong sense of individualism prevents people from paying heed to the rules of the govt even for his or her own good. the selection of wearing face masks publicly has become a political statement and stimulated controversies because the Democrats patronize face masks while the Republicans stand against it. Similarly, a pointy rise in racism against Asians is one among the various reasons why most of the people prefer not wearing masks.

Germany, is not like the other nations of America or Asia, for it the masking culture is yet new. Here, masks public spheres are magnets attracting stares. People's scepticism about wearing masks traces its roots to spiritual reasons that demonize diseases, particularly face masks as a metaphor for lost innocence. Though with the current pandemic having its strong hold on the nations, Germany has now adjusted and is fighting with the COVID-19 virus strongly armed with the masks.

V. SOCIOLOGICAL AND BEHAVIOURAL PATTERNS ASSOCIATED WITH MASK

Mask this has become an integral part of our life, after the catastrophic disaster which shook the world which hit us last year in form of Pandemic called as COVID-19 has again led us to explain the paramount importance masks have in our life. Masks have been associated in human life very long time, masks are considered to be an form of disguise which are worn in front of face to hide identity. One of the essential features masks has is that they help us mitigate the spread of virus, masks have become compulsory in public places many countries have imposed heavy fines for not wearing masks and not following proper safety protocols so as to minimize the impact of this deadly virus. The importance of Masks have changed over time earlier it was used for hiding and also revealing that the particular masks has been associated with an ideological organisations masks have also ability to reveal the personalities and moods,

as it is clear that masks have been an integral part of our life. In east Asian countries masks have been an familiar feature, as we have seen that face masks are common in Japan it reveals some sort of different adage to the general public and their perception to the same is derived by the face masks too. Wearing of masks has also been a sign of being careful and it has some kind of link to the **culture of politeness**. The tradition of mask wearing has been maintained in many societies of the world and it has been carried out from civilization to civilization. Mask also act as an manipulation, by way of hiding and drawing one's attention towards itself. Mask are associated with human history they are used in rituals, ceremonies, Theatre performances different cultures etc. In eastern side Masks have been more of an common thing which people have here witnessed though it is an disease or for purpose of medics but in west there has not been a great, *west has witnessed a long term process of sequestration, by moving them from the centre of social life into specific, regulated pockets, often commodifying and trivialising them on the way.*¹³

Mask have also been associated with feeling they invoke under one's inner conscious they have been used to invoke feeling of fear, awe and also they have been correlated with good spirits and demons. Masks have once again brought the ritual process of this tangible object has in glorifying the empathetic outlook it has given on humans is considered to be of great significance. Masks have been integral part of politics and representing any organization be it terrorist or related to symbiotic work. Masks have been correlated with the **social dynamics**, Wearing a face mask has been associated with a social behaviour. It reflects face covering is effective and it has been associated with a symbolic behaviour of an Individual. Masks have as opposed been influenced by **social expectations** which Is normally expected from nurses or in hospital or it is a **norm** which is enforced by the law making authority backed by sanctions related to it. The wearing of mask in the times of this unprecedented times has also been stipulated by the fact of **cultural Traditions**, as we have seen in India or the example of India where the face mask have been made of cloth, and even some of them have been embedded in jewellery and while there has been traditional changes where the colour of face mask have been as same as the attire one is wearing. Face coverings have been deeply associated with the superheroes such as batman etc. and also hiding identity by an criminal, by exhibition of the modesty through its truest intention to deceive the other people by hiding the identity. There has been a predominantly a practice of linking the face mask by giving it different cultural meaning and interdependence of culture instead of Independence, **the masks have**

¹³ Inglis, D., 2020. Masking–Corona-Masquerade, or: Unmasking the New Sociology of Masks. *European Sociologist*.

demarcated between pure inner one and polluted other ones which is similar to the removal of shoes when one enters the house.

The practice of wearing cloth face coverings was usually characterized by an personalization, there are evidence of masks having been given shape of animal faces giving sense of enjoyment and playfulness. The recent protests which disrupted in the America after the death of George Floyd where the larger narrative of the protests was carrying slogan of #BLACKLIVESMATTER, various activist have protested wearing black masks showing sense of solidarity in the death of George Floyd. The public health messaging being promoted by usage of masks by the general people around the world is that people around the people may associate the wearing of face masks with **risk compensation behaviour** which was similarly seen at the times of HIV etc. *There has been increase in various risk compensation theories being proposed for many safety innovation.* Wearing of face masks in times of pandemic have shown public display of trust in general public which empowers them to act safely and there has been risk associated with it and negative side on the conundrum of positive side of wearing masks. The behavioural pattern which was seen was that there is **stigma** associated with the illness, it is considered to be a powerful force driving human society, the stigma of individual is important as stigma is what helps in controlling the epidemic and pandemics, one's stigma leads to an avoiding treatment of illness and getting cured as early as possible. Epidemics and pandemics have been associated with health disaster creating sense of fear, agony among individuals so wearing of face masks and making or distribution is considered to be and sense of providing feeling of **empowerment** and **self-efficacy**. Gender and age differences have also played an important role in face masks, there has been a noticeable behaviour changes in different age groups where older age group or women have been prone to wearing face masks as frequently as compared to the younger age group, it was also noticed that the well educated people were seen not wearing face masks as compared to general public at large in early times of pandemic in India. The **risk perception** is the main contention in wearing of face masks in times of pandemic because it influences one's decision to wear a mask, **negative emotions** are associated with face masks it is believed that people are less likely to wear masks where they are told that wearing of face masks is considered to be an sign of weakness. There has been a frequent association of traits which are linked with wearing of face masks, some of them are positive traits and some of them are negative traits, **extroversion** is considered to be an normal trait being shown up by people while they wear face masks, it is also noticed that extrovert people are more likely to wear face masks as compared to the introvert ones, extrovert people feel that they will be less likely to be judged and evaluated by people at large, it has also been

seen that they were more likely to protect themselves up by face coverings despite of the **social stigma** present in the society concerning wearing of face masks.

The **social acceptability** of wearing of masks also influences one's behaviour as it was noticed that people in a society were more likely to wear a face masks where mask-wearing behaviour is considered to be a common, despite of number of cases linked to that area. The important effect of this social acceptability surrounding the behaviour of individuals has intrinsically helped in controlling number of cases of COVID-19 in that particular region and it is seen that people belonging to older age groups have been seen following this social acceptability norms and while people who are in the age group of less than 40 have not accepted the social acceptance of mask wearing. The **strong social norms** which are associated with face masks have inversely impact on people who are highly educated, they are found to be resistant to this social norms and are found to be not wearing face masks as protectively as it is worn by people having low educational background. Human Behaviour is found to be relatively subjective and non-compliant where there should be free will to choose over one's action over the other, these is considered to be an basic psychological needs of human behaviour. *When these feelings of autonomy and personal freedom are taken away, people often experience psychological reactance.*¹⁴ As we have seen in number of countries where wearing of face masks have been backed by various sanction so this compulsory wearing of face masks may affect the person's free will and they will resort to not wearing face masks also, *This exact condition, imposed guidelines without enforcement, has been shown to lead to the lowest amount of compliance as well as lower perceived legitimacy of the policy itself.*¹⁵ People can resort to non-compliance of not wearing masks and their attitudes towards face wearing may also change, if it is mandated against their freedom of choice it will lead to diminished feeling of autonomy and which can lead to negative attitudes arousing in people at large while inviting the dangers associated with the flip side of the COVID-19. The feeling of **socially connected** to each other can enhanced the wearing of face masks, it is also associated with the desire of human being with the **interpersonal attachment** and this motivates the human being to wear face masks. The common stigma in the society is men should be strong while men have been found to be non-compliant of face masks, they are reported to show more negative feelings and less amount of positive feelings, wearing of face masks have been implicated with negative feelings while it is due to the actual intentions for wearing a face masks in public, Thus the negative attitudes

¹⁴ Brehm, S.S. and Brehm, J.W., 2013. *Psychological reactance: A theory of freedom and control*. Academic Press.

¹⁵ DeCaro, D.A., Janssen, M.A. and Lee, A., 2015. Synergistic effects of voting and enforcement on internalized motivation to cooperate in a resource dilemma. *Judgment and Decision Making*.

and discomfort which is caused by the wearing of face masks can be partially explained by the attempts in order to satisfy the three basic psychological needs of a human behaviour which are **autonomy, relatedness, competence**. Another significant self of wearing masks is that it represents the feeling of what is called as “being at risk”. Masks represent **risk society** which means that a world which is considered to be full of danger. Masks in times of pandemic have been pre occupied with the safety, which itself is contributing to the new sense of risk. **Mask Shaming** is one of the major reason for the change in human behaviour, it is seen in some communities coupled with some sort of punishments too, There are enormous behavioural cues a human behaviour has when one is faced with the sudden new environment, pandemic was considered to be an new environment where people at large were slowly adopting to it there are two terms associated with the sudden change in environment which affects human behaviour, **normative social influence** and **informational social influence** whereas the normative social influence is mainly driven by a desire to be liked so wearing a face mask in public place in times of pandemic is considered to be an normative behaviour, informational social influence is motivated by the desire to be right thus seeing everyone wearing mask in public at large influences human behaviour which is supplemented by informational influence. *Face masks inhibit performance of face work*¹⁶ which is given by sociologist **Erving Goffman** which means that face masks are believed to be an **willingness to be abide by the ground rules of any social interaction**, which is why people are not accustomed to wear masks as face to face interaction of the communication is lost. Masks have also significant secondary important function where in the public meetings a **psychological morale to feel safe** has been exhibited by wearing of face masks. **Symbolic interactionism** which is a concept which examines the society changed connotations which are assigned to the behaviour of people of a particular community, masks have indisputably changed our interaction while one cannot see the face of the people and cannot figure out the larger emotional being of an individual.

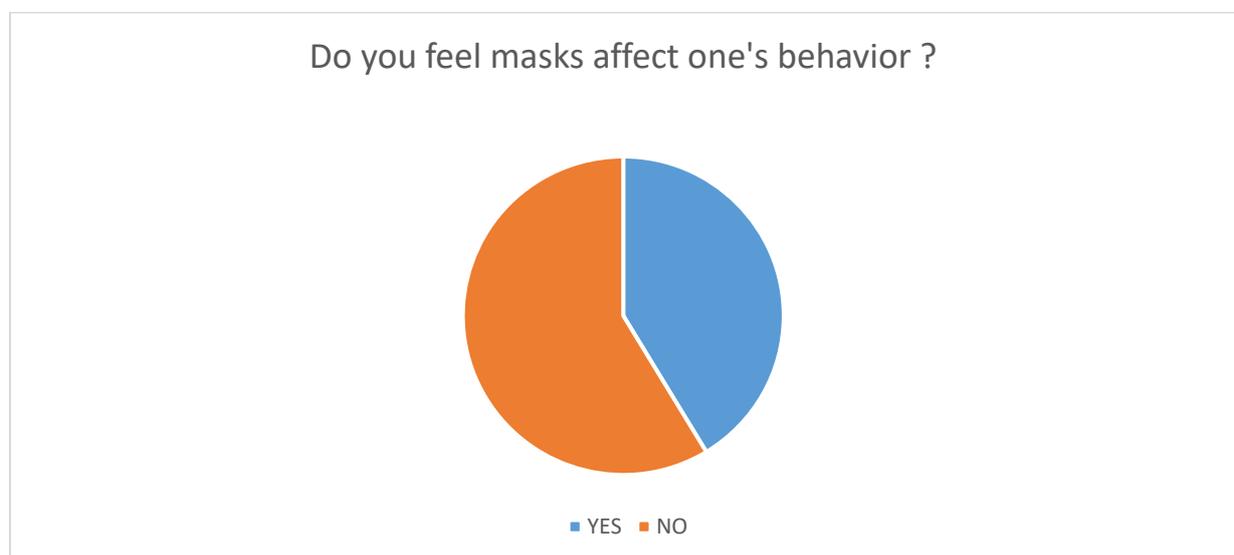
VI. MASKS AND POLITICS

In USA wearing of masks represents you to be a part of one side of a party which is DEMOCRATS and the supporters of the Republican Party have been promoting the non-masking culture where mask wearers are thrown out of shop and in case owner was found to be having an right wing allegiance than he was beaten to death by Republican Party supporters. It is also seen especially in USA that masks inhibits personal freedom and the proponents who are wearing face masks have emphasize on the importance of wearing a face mask. The cultural

¹⁶ Goffman, E., 1967. Interaction ritual: Essays on face-to-face interaction.

war and the ideological war of the different parties have resistance against masks due to the different mixed feelings and emotions. Even individuals living in USA have feeling of strong sense of individualism which has prevented them from following guidelines given by government, they believe that wearing a face masks and forcing everyone violates their civil rights, In Asian countries also wearing of face masks was closely attributed to racism. In places where wearing a face mask is legally obliged thus formally wearing face masks reflects a sign of good citizenship. *Wearing of face mask can be identified as an characteristic by Foucauldian scholarship on governmentality*¹⁷ while wearing face masks it will be considered as an form of **self-control** which means that person regulates his own behaviour in light of the behaviours as mandated by authorities, while care of the self will be considered as an important aspect whereby one looks into the body and his security through the act of masking himself or herself, Thus this two practice followed by citizens can be considered as an **mask based citizenship**. The protests which took place in hongkong for the independent working of the pseudo-democratic place unlike china where the authorities had resorted to ban on masks, by facilitating a way of mass demonstrations and identification of the protestors too

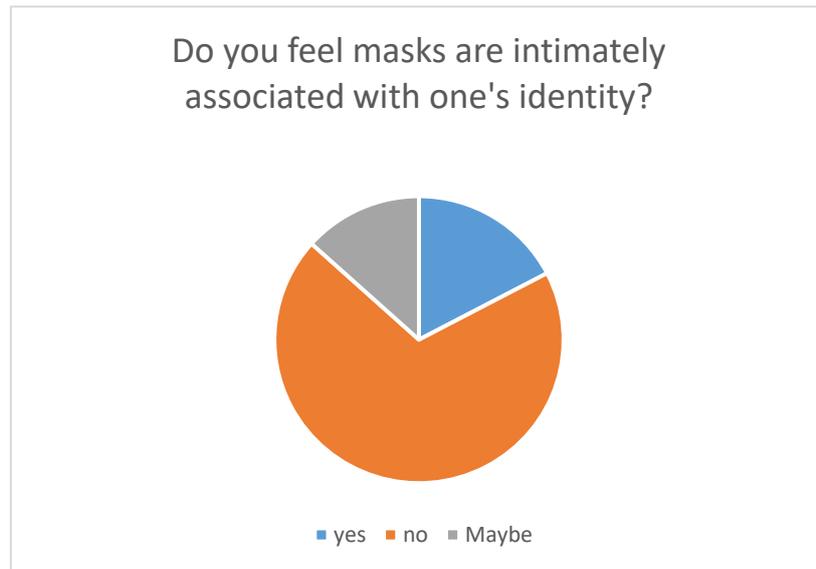
We had collected data asking sample questions from respondents regarding the efficacy and significance of Masks in daily life and the importance of masks after the pandemic hit us.



In response to the 75 respondents have said that masks does not affect one's behaviour, but there have been various empirical studies and various studies which have analysed that the masks are intrinsically attached with one's behaviour, also looking from sociological perspective one can easily conclude that masks have influence on one's behaviour, noticeable behavioural patterns were seen in people while they wear masks and even cultural differences

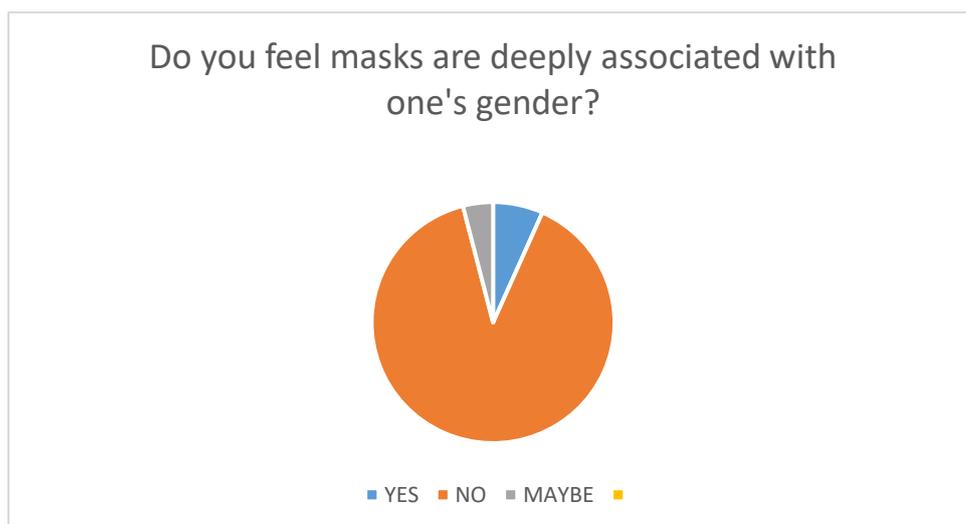
¹⁷ Rose, N., O'Malley, P. and Valverde, M., 2006. Governmentality. *Annu. Rev. Law Soc. Sci.*, 2, pp.83-104.

where seen as opposed to the norms.



(Figure-II)

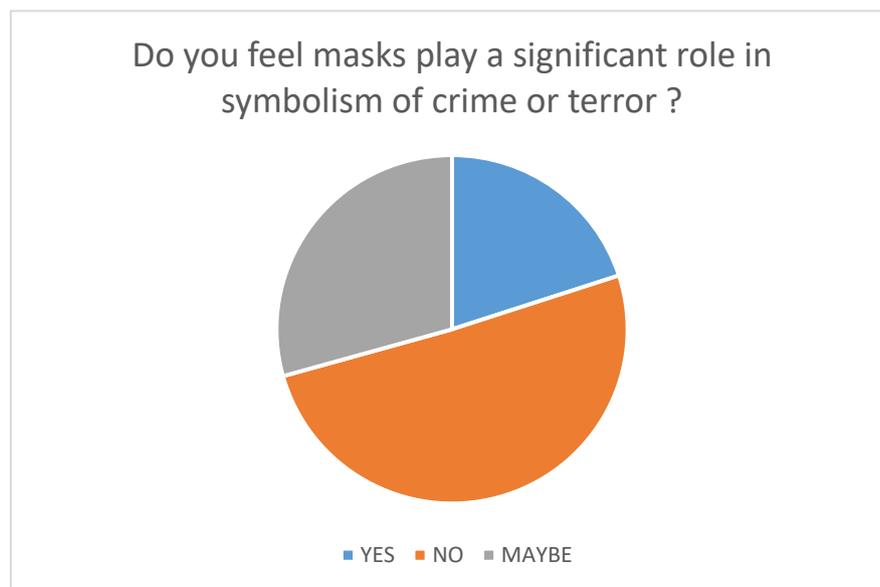
In response to the 75 responses we got, some of them believe that masks are associated with identity with most number of respondents believing that masks are not associated with one's identity, but as we have seen the visuals where most of the forms of protest or people belonging to same organisation are identified by their common attires which includes masks too so, masks do play an important role in identification of one's identity such as nurses or doctors wearing masks, action heroes wearing masks to be identified as a part of their super suits. Many symbiotic organizations also identify themselves through masks.



(FIGURE-III)

Masks have been found to be associated with one's gender, face coverings worn by various women's in Islamic countries and in India too where there is an norm to wear face covering to

show kind of kinship and respect for elders, some of the European nations have banned this face coverings which are known as “hijab”, in order to identify unsuspecting activities. In Islamic countries face coverings are worn by mostly Women’s, so face coverings are linked with gender when it is found that particular kind of face covering are usually linked with women. In the responses collected over the questionnaires’ it is found that most of them don’t believe that masks are intrinsically associated with one’s gender, Thus masks may not be associated with genders but face coverings of particular kind which is found in some countries have been found to be associated with gender. Mask also are the visual representation of what a society understands as an essence for a group of masculinity, femininity. Mask are also associated with genderism and sexual subversion. The **gender dynamics** which is closely linked with the masks was clearly evident by way when trump refuses to wear masks which he thinks that masks are way of hiding behind someone which is not at all truly shows the masculine superiority



(FIGURE-IV)

In the set of responses we collected from the questionnaire most of them believe that mask do not play a significant role in symbolism of crime or terror, but we have often seen that whenever there is an wrong doing or whenever there is an bank robbery taking place most of them masked themselves so as to not get themselves identified also the riots ridden states or where the non-combat forces are dealing with the terrorism they usually wear face coverings and some of them are identified by their logo on masks representing particular sinister organisation, for e.g.: Taliban. Beside that we have seen the blind lady of justice who is seen wearing masks, represents one of the central feature of semiotics of lawfulness. The heroic deeds of a bandits are represented by masks. Masks are closely linked with human life, they have been part of

human life for a long point of time, they have been involve in negative activities like masked figures who are frightening targeted groups for e.g. (masked ku klux klansmen).

We have linked two sociological theories which are important for the masking masquerade, this two important sociological theories are given by two sociologist Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx. Following are the name of two important sociological theories.

1. Social Solidarity.
2. Character Masks.

(A) Social Solidarity of Masking

*Social solidarity is the cohesion between individuals in a society that ensures social order and stability. It underlines the interdependence be-tween people in a society, which makes them feel that they can improve the lives of others*¹⁸ Wearing masks is one of kind of showing symbolism of solidarity, people have been practicing out this technique so as to ensure social order and stability in the society. Face masks have become a crucial aspect of our life in times of pandemic so wearing masks by people at large has seen a major shift from self-protection to altruism which has involved every citizen of world and it is seen as a symbol of social solidarity to the response of this pandemic. Face to face interaction is considered to be an important ingredient for **Initial interaction**. While wearing masks in public there has been a noticeable restriction on the ingredients of IR (Initial Interaction). People are seen and they are present but F2F aspect has been reduced at a great amount. Masks cover the mouth and the lower part of the face so it is difficult to recognize or the larger question is to find out the emotions of the other people and the mutually focussed attention is little bit difficult to attain, it becomes even more difficult to hear when people are wearing masks and what other people are saying, one is not able to find the missing cues because we are not able to see their mouth and facial gestures. The Masked Communication or Interaction even in our daily utilitarian life has given rise in misunderstandings, in process of hearing out to other raised voice are usually linked with anger and annoyance. The normal modal communication is limited, as there is a rise in solidarity which is taking place from daily routine activities.

Family Solidarity is found to be increased at least in some family members, various children and their shared individuals have found themselves happy as they had more time which is being spent with parents. The level of **alienation** and distress among children is bound to be increase, teenagers are found to be more media-obsessed and they will not substitute the family solidarity or it won't compensate them with F2F experience. Thus a sense of social solidarity has been

¹⁸ Durkheim, E. and Lukes, S., 2013. *The division of labour in society*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

attained by the individuals when they are found to adhere norms and wearing masks so as to protect each other, **mass masking leads to social solidarity**. It can help people to follow social distancing, it helps the patients to mitigate the mental trauma too. In a way of the global crisis we can see that social solidarity can be a powerful response so as to attain the global social shock disguised as Pandemic. Solidarity depends on individual levels too and their contribution of collective efforts of an individual to solidarity can shrink this pandemic

(B) Character Mask

*The character masks have been associated with an social role of an individual for a society and to conceal the contradictions of a social relations or order.*¹⁹ The character mask is the term which was used by Karl Marx which is found to be different from social masks because character masks are specific kind of social masks it represents the social relationship among people, the character masks it says that there are societies which are bound up with specific type and specific theory and social relations which work in a society. The masking of behaviour and personality is common in character masks, people are found to be shown different interest and certain qualities while they are showing up their different qualities their own self-consciousness and personality is altered. Alienated life is presented while one faces with the structure of masking it really differentiates between what people are and how they perceive to show to society, there is a case of an perpetual struggle where people still find it difficult and are still dependent on others for their own existence so as to have them masked or unmasked. The **ideological consciousness** of an individual and its interest and realities are presented in society and are justified and are defined with what truly its meaning is. The onset of this pandemic has forced to wear face masks while there is ongoing struggle for finding one's identity and their exist little space to be oneself, this struggle of identity can cause people to have stress and sometimes it can lead to a point where one *Different interests have to be constantly mediated and defended in everyday behaviour, with the aid of character masks; these masks exist to mediate conflict. It means that people are obliged or forced to express certain qualities and repress other qualities in themselves. In doing this, however, their own consciousness and personality is altered*²⁰. The masks may not show what the real truth about a person is, but as long as that person is functioning normally in times of pandemic it doesn't matter because he/she is being judged simply by the function of performance, Character masks are in a way of mystifying relationship and real nature and to the point where they are hardly

¹⁹ En.wikipedia.org, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Character_mask#The_sociological_imagination (Accessed 23 May 2021).

²⁰ Jacoby, R., 1975. *Social amnesia: A critique of contemporary psychology*. Transaction Publishers.

believed by anymore. Thus this character masks inherently distorts and deforms human consciousness, looking at the current times the concept of character masks will be useful so as to evaluate the inner consciousness of an individual.

VII. CONCLUSION

Masks indeed have haunted new meanings related to more concerning issues like stereotyping, racism, and xenophobia. At an equivalent time, masks are evolving more and more within the vicinity of communities across the planet. The understanding that COVID-19 may be a collective problem that has got to be battled with oneness and mask-wearing can certainly help. By spreading the practice of mask-wearing culture, people are showing solidarity with one another, cooperating to scale back the strain on fellow humans. the thought that each little speck counts within the war the planet is waging against the virus.

Masks are not any more just a piece of fabric or other material that you simply wear over all or a part of your face to guard us from the virus. The pandemic has made people across the planet assign different meanings thereto. *Symbolic Interactionism looks into these changes in meanings assigned to an object and this mask trend might be a serious culture shift for the West.*²¹ But, the symbolic school also states that the meanings are subject to vary. And, masks are just elements of current history and maybe viewed as an emerging cultural norm. But as this pandemic evolves, alongside information, research, and proof, our attitude towards face masks may change again.

States definitely have the facility to implement a facemask requirement as a part of the traditional police power. **Section 2 of the Epidemic Disease 1897 Act** gives the power to take special measures and prescribe regulations as to dangerous epidemic disease. In California or India, for instance, localities and counties do have tons of powers with reference to making health orders. And under California or Indian legal principles, whatever is that the most restrictive requirement, whether it's at the county level or the state level, finishes up applying. But it really may be a matter of state law quite anything, whether these smaller subdivisions would have the facility to implement those sorts of requirements.

One of the most important lifestyle change we have experienced is mandatory usage of masks. Mass masking the society is in a way eradicating this virus. The interpretation and perception of this pandemic is a global issue and it must be battled by wearing face mask. Giving masks new meaning and making it a fundamental part of the human life can be useful for survival of

²¹ Redmond, M.V., 2015. Symbolic interactionism.

humanity. Masking matters will become even more socially important phenomena to search upon and rather than anthropological study sociological study of masks will help to study logical literature of masks. A study on sociological aspects will help to determine the social meaning attached to the masking and even understanding nitty-gritties of behavioural aspects which are commonly seen in masking culture. Further masks have been altruistically played an interface of shared social and personal responsibility, masks have invoked collective conscience of the society by achieving the solidarity of wearing masks. Humans have deployed masks in their life by giving them the new social meaning and making it part of life. Masks have psychological aspects disseminated from the sociological aspect thus the psychological and sociological aspect of mask wearing will be a central response of this both disciplines in response to this global pandemic, post pandemic will focus on the gauze of mask wearing linking it with everyday human life activity.

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IX. APPENDIX**SAMPLE SIZE- 75 RESPONDENTS****SURVEY QUESTIONS-**

1. Do you use mask?
2. Since when are you aware about masks?
3. What do you use mask for?
4. In the present time, have the masks become essential?
5. Were you using masks before 2020?
6. Have the masks changed with time?
7. How many masks do you own?
8. How much have you collectively spent on your masks?
9. Do you stitch masks at home?
10. Do you buy them from online/offline vendors?
11. Do you feel masks affect one's behaviour?
12. Do you feel masks are intimately associated with one's identity?
13. Do you feel masks are deeply associated with one's gender?
14. Do you feel masks play a significant role in symbolism of crime or terror.
