

The 2020 Pandemic and How We Lost Our Ability to Interact

Robert Șerbănescu

*"Dimitrie Cantemir" Christian University of Bucharest, Faculty of Juridical and Administrative Sciences – Law,
Bucharest, Romania, serbanescu.robert.2013@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT: It is well known and undisputable that humans were able to evolve up until now due to the inherited ability to be sociable creatures. Our ancestors fought off, by working together, wild beasts during the tribal stages, survived wars, natural catastrophes and global diseases. However, it seems that the more we evolve, the more we tend to distance ourselves from each other. At the beginning of the 21st century, in this current year, because all the conditions were met, we are witnessing the human being transforming into an unsociable form of life. The first element to start this change was the appearance of the new SARS-COV-2 virus. Discovered at the end of 2019 by the scientists in China, the disease has enveloped the entire planet, generating massive panic, painful infections cases and many deaths. The second component is represented by the legal norms adopted in order to assure the safety of the population. These regulations put a clear accent on social distancing, isolation and little to no contact with family members or friends. The current paper work will explain the consequences of long term isolation and how it can affect the behavior of a person. Humans are also adaptable, the issue is that we may have adapted to being alone and in no need to cooperate with others.

KEYWORDS: isolation, unsociable, adaptable, SARS-COV-2, legal norms

Introduction

There are two ways on which living organisms operate when it comes to assuring their survival, this rule being available from the simplest of cases, for example insects, to more complex ones (apes, reptiles, humans), either they act on their own, independently, or gather in small, medium or large group.

Wolves, in most cases, choose to belong to a pack lead by an alpha male and female. They have a strict hierarchy and work together to raise their cubs, hunt the bigger prey and protect their territory. With time, they form a deep connection, proven by the fact that when one of the members is killed by possible causes they exert signs of sadness (disappearance of some members from the collective for a period of time, in order to be left alone). This information can also prove that animals are more complex than previously thought.

Having the below case as a reference, by adding the elements which compose into the complexity of human interaction, we can understand the importance of social adaptation for us.

The personality, the process of perception and the experiences lived are vital aspects in someone's life.

Personality

As a definition, taking into consideration the knowledge in the field of psychology, a person is a sum of two main elements, firstly the part which involves the values and attributes, secondly the component represented by the information gathered throughout time (Zlate M. 2009, 256).

By values and attributes, we refer to those inherited ways of conduct, for example the natural inclination to be kind, the ability to be empathic or the fulfillment gained from the desire to help others.

When it comes to the information accumulated in the subject's lifespan, here we can include the journey done in order to develop certain skills, the achievement of personal objectives and the social experiences lived as a part of the society.

Perception

In order to develop his given attributes, one must interact. The second aspect of the personality cannot reach a stable form unless the natural “gifts” provided are exploited and thus developed.

The difference between a human and an animal, when it comes to the process of interaction, is given by the presence of the rational mind.

As a general description, the consciousness is that part of the mind which provides meaning to our existence, differentiating and explaining at a subjective level the sensations, the perceptions, helping us to know reality as a whole (Sillamy 1980, vol. I, 264). In other words, the rationality helps us to understand the data received through perception.

Perceiving the surrounding environment represents the gathering of information with the support from the six senses, which we discern using the logical operations present at the rational level (Cosminovici 2005, 110).

To sum up, the ability to understand and the operation of perceiving elements, are the base materials when it comes to the interaction between two or more individuals.

Experiences

The assembly of experiences is a direct consequence of being a social creature. In the same manner, a trough experience one suffers changes in areas such as behavior, will and thought process (Zlate 1996, 196).

We can state that an individual is a collection of events, episodes either positive or negative by origin, thus the character being shaped in a certain manner. It has been proven that the final result in a person’s conduct is determined by the amount of bad or good sensations accumulated in time. Of course, the final difference is solidified by the choices one makes when responding to life’s challenges.

As a summary of the notions previously analyzed, the ability to interact starts from the personality, continues with perception and ends in a form on an experience.

Interaction and its importance

In order for a person to be able to achieve an objective or to complete a certain action, his fundamental rights and freedoms are required to be guaranteed by the law.

Freedom refers to the capacity of the people to act without opposition (Popa 2008, 97). However, everybody has obligations as a reflection to the benefits provided by the legal norms.

Part of being free is the right to talk and getting to know other persons. In the past, totalitarian states used oppression in order to limit the interaction between its subjects when it came to areas such as political opinion development, changes which should be made in the state’s way of handling issues or any other social encounter, which could have sparked an interest for democratic implementation.

Nowadays, the citizens are free to interact as they please as long as their actions do not affect the order of the law or the moral conduct. The fundamental rights, these including the freedom to interact are assured at a national and international level. People can form memories at different events, can exchange knowledge and grow in certain areas together, helping each other.

Being social creatures, we require interacting, not only to feel that we belong somewhere or with someone, but also in order to become adapted to the place we call “home”. Interacting, in its complexity, differentiates us from the other forms of life on this planet and also assures our growth.

SARS-COV-2 – a threat to personal security

Although at this point the new virus is a young subject to be discussed and analyzed by the specialists in the area of medicine, thus complete and correct studies are not yet present, we can deduce by simply observing the daily data provided, that this pandemic is a serious issue to our current civilization.

COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus. This new virus and disease were unknown before the outbreak began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. SARS-Cov-19 is the name of the coronavirus that caused the current epidemic, which can also be found under the name 2019-nCoV – “the new coronavirus” (Hegheş 2020, 93).

According to the COVID-19 Dashboard by the Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) at Johns Hopkins University (JHU) at the moment there are a total of 15 million cases recorded, with over 600.000 deaths. The danger posed by this infection is represented by its rapid expansion, at this dynamic the number of cases being able to triple in the next 8-12 months.

In order to understand the potential impact of a pandemic, we can take as reference the Black Death which terrorized the medieval world and claimed millions starting between the years 1347-1349 (Delorme J. 2009, 103). Our current knowledge and technology helps us to slow down the spreading of infections, until a treatment and a vaccine can be found. Nevertheless, we are facing a danger which has impacts on an individual, state and multistate level.

The main problem with the spreading of the virus is the direct contact between persons we can deduce that at the core of the measures implemented was the limitation of socializing, so that individual security can be preserved. However, a complete and total state of security cannot be achieved (Sarcinschi 2007, 14). The only possible and practical solution is the discovery and application of a proper medical treatment.

The response of authorities

The European Union, as a result of its agreements has understood that collaboration is important in order to overcome any type of danger, having three main pillars of cooperation which include the security of its members (Fuerea 2011, 273-275). In this manner the European Commission and the European Parliament are searching for viable solutions to tackle and remove the virus.

In the case of Romania, there are two precedents which provided the permission for the authorities to take a series of several measures.

Firstly, the constitutional regulations refer to the possibly that in special cases the rights and freedoms of the citizens can be restrained until the danger has passed, as analyzed by the doctrine (Deaconu 2011, 203).

Secondly, in the first ten years after the 1989 Revolution, the Government, as a way of dealing with possible state of emergency scenarios adopted an order by which the terms “state of emergency” and “curfew” have been introduced to the public attention alongside those types of cases when exceptional measures can be implemented in order to prevent, limit and remove the effects resulted from a disaster (OUG no. 1/1999, Article 1).

In March 2020, as a result of the SARS-COV-2 cases starting to appear in our country and knowing the impact which it had on other states, the first military order was issued and solutions for better security were adopted. The restrictions were addressed to areas such as cultural events, concerts and any other types of gathering (OM no. 1/2020, Articles 1-3).

For the day to day citizen in particular, the 3rd military order was issued and it contained the prohibition of leaving his/her home, with the exception of getting supplies, job-related matters and critical situations, by this implementing isolation and social distancing (OM no. 3/2020, Article 1).

Consequences

Repercussions of the measures are present both on an economical and individual level. In terms of economy, small businesses cannot complete their daily objectives and bring a contribution to the general market, thus investments are stopped and the main lifeline of a state is cut short.

The state as a whole also suffers from this because it needs to assure a contribution to the firms which lose profit in order for them to not become bankrupt. Also, for those who are losing jobs, public funds must be directed in order to assure some level of survival until the market can restart.

At a particular level, a person is forced to stay indoors with little to no contact with others, in order to slow down the spreading of the disease. Given the importance of interaction as shown in the previous arguments, social distancing can bring a negative impact when it comes to the mental health and proper development of an individual. People are made to be free and have the desire to interact with others so they can experience positive feeling and to know they are not alone in their struggles.

Having the educational institutions closed also damages the future of young generations, not being able to complete their learning process in order to become functional members of society. Even if interaction can be maintained through social media it is not the same as a live encounter, the only perception applied being the visual one.

The ability to interact may well be lost in the future, if no viable solution is found and applied for stopping the SARS-COV-2 spreading.

Final words

Based on the data presented in the current paperwork, a series of conclusions can be brought to our attention:

Interaction is very important for the psychological growth.

The process of communication is formed by three elements, those being the personality, perception and experience.

SARS-COV-2 has the potential to transform into a global disaster, in the absence of any medical discovery in the next 1-2 years.

The measures of isolation and social distancing are ways of slowing down the spreading, providing some extra time for research,

States, companies and individuals are facing consequences as a result of the measures.

Long term absence of socializing can prevent the progress of natural abilities and attributes and can make a habit out of being a loner and note requiring the assistance of others.

Even if this is just the beginning, the loss of deep interactions is a possible outcome.

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