

## **Transcript of Interviews between Ameya Ghiya and Shriya Subramanian**

**Interviewee:** Ameya Ghiya and Shriya Subramanian

**Interviewer:** Ameya Ghiya and Shriya Subramanian

**Date:** 11/15/2021

**Location (Interviewee):**

**Location (Interviewer):**

**Transcriber:** This transcript has been provided by Otter.AI with a 2nd pass for accuracy and formatting provided by Bryan Paintiff, HST580 intern, at ASU.

**Abstract:** Shriya Subramanian begins interviewing Ameya Ghiya and Ameya talks about going to school in Singapore and how the country locked down in February of 2020, much earlier than the rest of the world. Ameya then describes how frustrating it was to be locked down initially, as nothing was really known about COVID or its severity and since the World Health Organization (WHO) had not declared an emergency, Singapore was not receiving any support from the outside world. At 00:04:17 Ameya begins interviewing Shriya. Shriya begins by explaining how she was in school in India when the pandemic began and how life began to change there during March of 2020. Shriya then goes into how lax the lockdown seemed in India and that if the government had been more strict, it could have greatly reduced the number of positive cases.

**Ameya Ghiya 00:00**

Hello, my name is Ameya Ghiya . I give consent to be interviewed for the COVID-19 archive project. The date and time is September 15 2021 12pm. I am being interviewed by Shreya, she will now conduct the interview.

**Shriya Subramanian 00:15**

Where were you when the pandemic began? And when did it begin to affect your community?

**Ameya Ghiya 00:21**

I was living in Singapore when the pandemic began. Our pandemic started in the beginning of February and then started taking effect in mid February, my school trip was canceled in mid February. So even travel and things like that were canceled for us all the way in the beginning of 2020. So it's definitely a different experience, because we were one of the first countries to be affected by COVID-19. And school was still in person at this time, but travel was definitely something that started to shut down for us.

**Shriya Subramanian 00:53**

How did your country respond to the pandemic?

**Ameya Ghiya** 00:56

So our government was very quick to responding to the pandemic, because we weren't, I guess, there was not enough research of COVID-19 at the time. So Singapore just wanted to like get the process started. Try to contain the outbreak from China, or what we think, you know, originated in China, and started like with the non travel and then like, I think in mid March, we started locked down. But I think the government responded really quickly. And before the World Health Organization declared anything. So in a way, like we were kind of on our own, because there was no research or fact or anything really about COVID-19 at this point. So I think it was a very quick response with restrictions and travel and lock downs and masks as well.

**Shriya Subramanian** 01:42

How did the response and the pandemic itself make you feel? Were you worried or anxious?

**Ameya Ghiya** 01:46

I was definitely worried because we just did not know what was happening. We had no research, like I mentioned about COVID-19. So it was definitely, I guess, a weird experience because we didn't know why we were in lockdowns and things like that. And we were definitely frustrated, also, in a way because we saw the outside world still being able to travel doing fun things, because definitely all me and my friends, we were disappointed that our school trips got canceled, which were traveling overseas in mid February. So frustration was definitely a big thing, just because, you know, everyone else got to do their thing. So it was sad. But it was good that the Singapore government responded really fast and wanted to contain the pandemic. So we were worried we were frustrated. I was just, I guess, a mix of emotions just because it was so relatively new at the point.

**Shriya Subramanian** 02:35

Yeah. How did you feel about the national and global response to the pandemic?

**Ameya Ghiya** 02:40

It was definitely delayed. And according to an article I read, the epidemiologists said that the World Health Organization delayed their responses well towards the public saying that, Oh, this is actually a global crisis. And with that being said, Singapore definitely started their process faster in containing the virus and we didn't have like support from the World Health Organization's. So it was definitely a different response that we had, then what the world had way later on, I think, I honestly like in the beginning of the summer, like not even March, but starting to begin in March.

**Shriya Subramanian** 03:16

How did the pandemic affect your life socially and academically?

**Ameya Ghiya** 03:20

it was definitely a challenging time to continue staying, or like, continue staying like positive and things like that, because we were in lockdown for so long. But my friends and I, we tried connecting with each other online, over social media and everything. And then academically, we did go online. But having those connections definitely made us stay sane, for sure. And in better in a more positive environment.

**Shriya Subramanian** 03:45

Given that you moved from overseas, how is the pandemic response similar or different from or between both countries?

**Ameya Ghiya** 03:50

it's definitely different. Because even simple things like masks are very much mandatory in Singapore, you can get fined, jailed or sent back to your home country or even like a big court case or something like that if you didn't comply with the rules. So simple things like that, that I don't see the US is just very interesting. And also Singapore responded really fast to the pandemic versus the US. So that whole thing is very interesting to see. Thank you Shriya for conducting this interview today.

**Shriya Subramanian** 04:17

My name is Shreya. I give consent to be interviewed for the COVID-19 archive project. The date and time is September 15 12:05. I'm being interviewed by Ameya.

**Ameya Ghiya** 04:27

Where were you when the pandemic began? And when did that begin to affect your community?

**Shriya Subramanian** 04:32

When the pandemic began, I was in India, it only began to significantly affect my community towards end of March, teachers began to tell us to finish our lab projects in case we would have to stay home for the next couple of weeks. And this is when I actually understood the severity of the cases, since there were only two or three cases in the state I lived in.

**Ameya Ghiya** 04:50

How did it make you feel? Were you worried or anxious and like how did your country respond to the pandemic as well?

**Shriya Subramanian** 04:56

I was essentially only confused rather than anxious at the beginning of the pandemic. I thought the lockdown would only last a few weeks. And then we would go back to our everyday lives. Our locked down again at the end of March and though we were staying at home, lockdown wasn't as strict as other countries. And the majority of the people still went out and went on with their everyday lives. After a month that like went by, that's when I began to feel anxious and worried about our situation.

**Ameya Ghiya** 05:24

How did you feel about the national and global response to the pandemic,

**Shriya Subramanian** 05:27

I felt like the national response was not as strict as it could have been at all. A large people, number of people were still not wearing masks and still going outside. And the rising cases towards the end of 2020 definitely showed how relaxed the mandate was during the pandemic. By making the people of India comply with the mandate and placing more strict lockdowns, the rising cases could have been avoided, or the chances of it could have been reduced significantly.

**Ameya Ghiya** 05:59

How does the pandemic affect your life socially and academically? and if there was any change from 2020 to 2021, it'd be great if you could share those thoughts.

**Shriya Subramanian** 06:08

The pandemic significantly affected my life socially and academically. My school was completely online from the first lockdown until we graduated, which forced us to not write our IB examinations. And this greatly affected all of our scores. Socially, I was unfortunately unable to see any of my friends even before I had to move here. Although most of my friends and kids at my school still met each other very frequently, and were able to hang out like they used to, if not more than pre pandemic. I did make the safer choice by staying at home completely. Thank you Ameya for conducting this interview.