

A Comparative Study on The Differences Between the Medical Systems of China and The United States from The Perspective of Covid-19

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Abstract. In order to explore the differences between the healthcare systems of China and the United States during the epidemic, the author takes the response measures of the healthcare systems of China and the United States during the epidemic as the starting point. By analyzing data such as the total number of infections during the epidemic in China and the United States, the specific reactions of the healthcare systems and leadership of the two countries to the epidemic are compared, and the political system differences at the root of the two countries are explored. The extremely uneven social structure in the United States and the relatively balanced social structure in China, as well as the differences caused by the capitalist market economy in the United States compared to China's socialist market economy system and mixed ownership, are compared to explore the changes and optimizations that the healthcare systems of China and the United States need.

Keywords: Opposed politics; Different social structure; Different types of economic.

1. Introduction

From 2020 to 2022, the virus COVID-19 had spread all over the world which led to a global health crisis includes a 650332899 who were infected by the virus while 6649874 of them died. During this special period, China and the USA, which are two of the major countries in the world, had made great efforts to deal with the crisis and prevent more people from being infected [1]. However, for the medical system of these two countries, their responses to the crisis are obviously distinctive, which also lead to a distinctive consequence in two countries' societies. So, in this thesis, the author would like to research for the factors which causes the differences of two countries' medical systems. With the factors are shown, the underlying reasons for the differences between the Chinese and American medical systems which lead to a distinctive response to two nations' health crisis and the consequences two nations' citizens undertook could be found. At the same time, from the research, it is able to make a basic estimation for the future of the medical system of the two countries where some suggestions to them could also be given. For the research methods, the author would give some examples and make comparisons between those which have similarities or relationships to analysis the differences. At the same time, the author would reference some second-hand data to show the differences more precisely. For the structure of whole thesis, it is divided into three parts according to the three major factors that lead to the differences between two nations' medical system: politics, social structure and different types of the economy. After illustrating the differences, there would be some suggestions to both of the two nations' medical system while there would be a conclusion at last.

2. The Impact of Differences in Political Party Systems on the Healthcare Systems of the Two Countries During the Pandemic

2.1. Comparison of Infection and Death Toll

In the USA, during the health crisis caused by COVID-19, the medical system was on the verge of collapse which could be convinced by JHU 's statistical data. From 2020 to 2022, The cumulative

number of COVID-19 confirmed cases in the United States had reached 100, 001, 865, with a total of 1, 088, 213 deaths [1]. Even though from 2010 to 2020, the average annual share of US healthcare expenditure in GDP was nearly twice the average share of OECD countries and was announced as the most advanced medical system in the world, the totally infected people and the death caused by COVID-19 is the highest all over the world. On contrary, during the same period, the cumulative number of COVID-19 confirmed cases in China had reached only 435472, with a total of 5249 deaths [2]. What caused such a difference in the control of the virus between two countries is that there is such an obvious difference between two countries' politics especially their parties.

2.2. Differences in Prevention and Control Policies

Actually, there are 9 different parties in People's Republic of China compared with Democratic Party and Republican Party in the USA. However, in China, the status of the Communist Party of China (CPC) as the ruling party is fixed while the other eight political parties do not have the actual power to interfere with the orders of the CPC. As a result, when the virus came to the most serious time in either Wuhan in 2020 or Shanghai in 2022, The national medical system can quickly allocate resources and manpower from local medical systems to support the epidemic prevention and control efforts in the most severely affected areas so that the virus could be controlled as soon as possible. On contrary, because of the competitive relationship between the Democratic Party and the Republican Party, the consist of each ministry in the USA would include staffs from both to parties. At the same time, in the USA, different state governments would follow different parties which cause the differences in regulations to prevent the epidemic [3]. What's worse, 2021 is the presidential election year in the United States which lead to the change of president from Trump to Biden who are from different parties. As a result, after Biden became the new president, the leaders of the USA's medical system experienced a complete change, which led to the malfunctioning of the entire US healthcare system during the serious time of epidemic in 2021. At the same time, because of the change in the ruling family in 2021, the regulations aimed to prevent the epidemic changed frequently which led to a much higher number of infected citizens than China where the regulations were stable and gradual.

3. Differences in Healthcare Services Between the Two Countries Caused by Different Social Structures

3.1. Differences in Treatment Costs and Levels of Infected Populations

In China during the COVID-19 health crisis, people who are infected and from different classes in the society could enjoy high-quality medical services at the same time with the help of the robust medical insurance system coupled with sufficient government subsidies. At the same time, for the prevention of the epidemic, even though China owned the largest population around the world, with a sound and equal grassroots social management system, people from all classes could get to know the importance of obeying the prevention and control policies and fully affirm and support the prevention and control policies. On contrary, in the USA due to obvious class differentiation, racial conflicts, and completely ineffective grassroots governance measures, the epidemic prevention and control measures cannot be well implemented in grassroots communities, especially in black and Latinx communities [4]. As a result, the epidemic has spread greatly in the United States, especially among black and Latinx communities. Meanwhile, due to the significant increase in the number of homeless individuals in the United States and the lack of corresponding legal and management measures, the number of infections among this group has remained high during the pandemic.

3.2. The Long-term Impact Brought About by the Differences in Social Structures

In the United States, due to long-standing racial inequality issues, the distribution of social resources to black and Latino individuals is extremely uneven. Due to the lack of health education

and the imbalance in medical resources, most civilians from these two racial groups are even unaware of basic hygiene habits [5]. Therefore, even if specific prevention and control regulations are implemented in black and Latino communities, their effectiveness is still greatly reduced. At the same time. In the United States, due to long-standing racial inequality issues, the distribution of social resources to black and Latino individuals is extremely uneven. Due to the lack of health education and the imbalance in medical resources, most civilians from these two racial groups are even unaware of basic hygiene habits. Therefore, even if specific prevention and control regulations are implemented in black and Latino communities, their effectiveness is still greatly reduced. On contrary. In China, due to the long-standing implementation of friendly policies towards ethnic minorities, the barriers between ethnic groups have been basically eliminated. Therefore, the distribution of social resources among ethnic groups has also achieved basic equality. During the most severe period of the epidemic, infected individuals, regardless of their ethnicity, were able to receive high-quality medical services, and prevention and control work among ethnic groups was effectively carried out. Meanwhile, due to the in-depth development of China's social security system and poverty eradication efforts, the wealth gap between different class has narrowed. In addition, influenced by family values, each family member promotes epidemic prevention policies to each other, which makes grassroots epidemic control more efficient and stable.

4. Differences in Healthcare Costs and Consists Between Two Countries Caused by Different Economic Systems

4.1. How the Capitalist Economic System in the United States Leads to High Healthcare Costs

In the United States, due to the absolute dominance of the capitalist private ownership economy in the medical field, all general hospitals are private hospitals. At the same time, due to the influence of the capitalist system, the medical security system in the United States is extremely incomplete. This results in ordinary people being unable to afford the high treatment costs charged by private hospitals when they are infected with COVID-19, thus preventing them from receiving effective treatment. Furthermore, due to the large proportion of private clinics in the American medical system, it is extremely difficult to systematically treat infected individuals. In addition, due to the capitalist private ownership economy, many important pharmaceutical companies in the United States are monopolistic enterprises, which have monopolized the production and pricing of almost all medical equipment and vaccines in the United States. This has led to a significant increase in the prices of both during the pandemic, allowing pharmaceutical companies to obtain huge profits [6]. This not only results in most private hospitals and clinics in the United States being unable to bear the huge operating costs, but also leads to a significant increase in medical costs, making it impossible for most ordinary families to afford medical expenses and vaccination fees, resulting in the pandemic spiraling out of control in the United States.

4.2. How to Effectively Control Medical Expenses in China's Socialist Market Economy System

By comparison, in China, due to the in-depth development of the socialist market economy system, its fiscal and economic systems have been able to simultaneously draw on and absorb the advantages of both socialist and capitalist economic systems [7]. Meanwhile, in China, due to the mixed-ownership economy, both public and private pharmaceutical enterprises receive ample subsidies, enabling them to reduce the cost of producing medical equipment and vaccines. Furthermore, due to government regulation of the medical market, the prices of medical equipment and vaccines have been maintained at a relatively stable level during the pandemic. Additionally, for the medical system, the vast majority of general hospitals are public hospitals, further reducing the treatment costs for patients. Therefore, for ordinary Chinese citizens, even if some of them are facing

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5. Conclusion

In conclusion, By comparing the reactions and responses of the healthcare systems and leadership in China and the United States during the pandemic, as well as analyzing data on the number of infected individuals, it can be concluded that the United States is on the brink of collapse in the face of the pandemic due to a combination of social structural differences caused by its political party system, extremely unequal distribution of social wealth, and racial issues, as well as the inherent drawbacks of the capitalist economic system, resulting in high healthcare costs. For the Chinese medical system, due to the perfect political party system and recognition that help unify the decision-making level, the relatively balanced social structure, and the low cost brought by the socialist system economy, its medical system is at ease in the face of the epidemic, ensuring the treatment of every patient.

However, due to the political relevance of research in this field and the blockade and blockage of some information during the pandemic, most of the data and information required for this study cannot be officially verified for authenticity. Therefore, the author is unable to provide a more authentic analysis of this study.

For the future, the USA's top priority is to strengthen government control over the healthcare system, especially the increase in the number of public hospitals and the governance of pharmaceutical monopolies, in order to reduce healthcare costs and alleviate the problem of medical treatment for civilians. For China, it is necessary to address the bureaucratic issues within the healthcare workforce while improving their treatment, so that they can better serve patients.

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