



TECHNOLOGY AS A PARTNER TO FIGHT THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

LA TECNOLOGÍA COMO ALIADO PARA CONTRARRESTAR LA PANDEMIA DEL COVID-19

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Mr. Editor

The infectious disease COVID-19 or commonly called the coronavirus disease, has put everyone on alert and even more so now that the World Health Organization (WHO) has declared it as a pandemic⁽¹⁾.

Worldwide, countries are seeking for a cure and applying new ways of prevention to flatten the curve of infected, so that both the medicine and technology field are doing their best to find effective solutions to end this pandemic. The fields of artificial intelligence and big data seek to contribute technologically using existing data from citizens and which it can be trusted that many of these services will have an impactful response since they have had exponential advances in recent decades.

China is one of the countries that is implementing technological solutions for the prevention of this disease, which formed an alliance with Alibaba and Tencent to develop the app: Alipay Health Code. This application was part of an existing Alibaba service that was widely used by its citizens. The purpose of this technology is to daily monitor and classify citizens according to their health status so that they can move freely. This application uses a QR code that shows three colors: green for free transit and yellow or red for immediate warning to quarantine for days⁽²⁾.

Functionally the application is useful since it makes it easier for citizens to have the security of knowing that they are in an infection-free environment and that the government can monitor people. There is also a kind of regional prejudice and lack of privacy protection that has been manifested in some cases. Citizens that are in a region close to an affected area are prevented to mobilize to other regions. Another concern about the application is the fact that it sends personal data to government entities without request⁽²⁾.

Meanwhile, in North America, the United States government together with the Center For Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) of Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland created a digital map, where it centralizes the data from the reports provided by all health organizations worldwide on the status of patients (confirmed cases, deaths, recovered and active), with the aim of showing the true status of the situation in each country around the world⁽³⁾.

This platform is being supported by the WHO due to the fully valid information, thus providing public health authorities with a digital tool that is automatically updated every 15 minutes with databases from around the world. It provides easy tracking of the outbreak as it develops in each country. All data collected and displayed is made available free of charge in a GitHub repository⁽⁴⁾ for use of the information in new technology ideas⁽⁵⁾.

It is essential that these types of software, based on large amounts of data in the cloud and predictions using artificial intelligence, which allow health care systems to have some support and avoid

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increasing numbers of infected patients. In Peru, a mentality of large-scale digital transformation and

interoperability of systems is still in the process of being realized.

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