



## **Study the Role of Hubris in Nations' COVID-19 Response, Many Countries That See Themselves As Distinctive Have Handled the Pandemic Badly**

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As an anthropologist who has studied disease outbreaks in Vietnam, I've been moved by the contrast between the experience of COVID-19 there and in the United States. By late April, my friends in Hanoi were posting pictures of celebrations and joyfully announcing "Social distancing is over!" I'm relieved that infection rates in Vietnam remain low, but their posts seem to come from a parallel universe as I and my family and friends in the United States continue to shelter in place.

Just last year, the United States was considered one of the countries best equipped to confront a virus such as SARS-CoV-2. Others included the United Kingdom, Brazil and Chile — nations ranked by the comprehensive Global Health Security (GHS) Index as being among the world's most prepared. Yet since the pandemic began, these countries have delivered some of the worst outcomes. The United States leads the world in both total cases and total deaths; Brazil's fatalities are second. Chile's per-capita cumulative case rate is the second-highest in Latin America, and the United Kingdom has the highest rate of COVID-19 deaths per capita of all the G7 countries. What might explain these staggering failures?