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Taiwan uses Big Data to counter coronavirus

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National Tsing Hua University (NTHU) in Taiwan has recently begun to collaborate with Facebook and Harvard University in using big data to study the potential spread of coronavirus in Taiwan.

This international collaboration is being led by Assistant Professor Hsiao-Han Chang of the Institute of Bioinformatics and Structural Biology at NTHU.

The preliminary results indicate that the risk of local transmission is higher than long-distance transmission between counties and cities.

Based on the results of another study she has recently conducted using mathematical modeling to assess the impact of wearing face masks, Chang strongly supports the Central Epidemic Command Center's (CECC) decision to set up a system for distributing masks, since it prevents the hoarding of an item important for limiting the spread of the epidemic.

The team has used mathematical modeling to simulate the impact of wearing masks. According to Chang, there is a clear correlation between the widespread and correct use of masks and lower infection numbers. Millions of masks are being produced and distributed daily in Taiwan, and this is one of the reasons the nation has been able to ride out the pandemic relatively unscathed.

Image caption- A research team led by Assistant Professor Hsiao-Han Chang of the Institute of Bioinformatics and Structural Biology has collaborated with Facebook and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health to study the spread of the coronavirus. (Photo: National Tsing Hua University)