

Letter from the Guest Editor

The purpose of this special issue of the Occasional Papers Series is to provide a platform for exchanging ideas and perspectives based on the submissions presented to the Riggs Symposium of ASPA 2020. The Symposium put forward an important question for comparative public administration scholars; that is: “Does democracy deliver?”

The scholars who have submitted to this issue have contributed from pedagogical, educational, and policy perspectives. David Bell, from Indiana University-Bloomington, and Aroon Manoharan, University of Massachusetts at Boston, address the teaching of comparative public administration from two different perspectives. Bell presented an outline for a basic graduate-level course dedicated to preparing students for working in a global environment. Manoharan, on the other hand, presented an overview of the status of teaching comparative public administration at the graduate level in NASPAA-accredited institutions. Both articles suggest the need to expand the comparative perspective in teaching public administration at the graduate level.

From a comparative policy perspective, Oliver Meza and Elizabeth Pérez-Chiqués, from the Center for Research and Economics Teaching in Mexico, elaborate on how corruption operates, and becomes consolidated, at the local level in two Mexican cities. Suparna Soni, SUNY-Buffalo State University, elaborates on the cultural embeddedness of the dowry institution in India and the government’s efforts to prohibit this practice.

These contributions present a rich combination of articles that direct attention to the importance of education and analyses that build on a comparative focus. While the first two articles focus on the role of academic institutions, the latter two focus on cultural values and institutionalized practices as dimensions that should guide the government’s approach to implementing reform policies.

Despite the cancellation of the 2020 Riggs symposium due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are pleased by the amount of interactions and engagement that took place within SICA, and with other ASPA sections. The Heady roundtable, which focused on “Women in Administration and Policy,” attracted participants from other ASPA sections as well. We were also pleased with the contributions we received for this special issue of the OPS.

The SICA – OPS Committee is currently attempting to build on the diverse body of scholars and practitioners in the ASPA community to introduce special region-focused issues of the OPS, including issues dedicated to comparative public administration in Africa, Latin America, Eastern Europe, MENA, etc. We ask you to stay tuned for our upcoming CfPs, and encourage those interested to present proposals for guest editing regional focused issues of the OPS. Please keep following our website for more updates: <https://aspasica.wordpress.com/>.

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