Occasional Paper Series

Section on International and Comparative Administration (SICA) of the American Society of Public Administration (ASPA)

Special Issue (June 2021)

Table of Contents

Letter from the SICA Chair

It is my absolute honor to bring to you the June 2021 Occasional Paper Series (OPS) special issue on India. This is personally exciting for me on a couple levels. One, this is the first issue published since I took over as the SICA chair in April this year. And second, the focus of this issue is a region of the world which inhabits over 17% of the world population and a country I call home, too. The papers published in this special issue focus on guest labor, collaboration, food security and health in times of crisis.

I thank my predecessor and former chair, Dr. Kim Moloney, for resurrecting this series. I remember the several discussions we had when we wanted to reinstate OPS. I will admit I had my reservations about whether we would get enough submissions. Could we sustain a series like this, who would serve as the editor? How can we ensure we produce a quality publication? The questions in my mind were endless. Now that we have our 4th issue, I can unequivocally say that all of my fears were put to rest. The series has already proven to be a platform that is attracting diverse voices, often from scholars who have research and work in parts of the world that are not represented in mainstream public administration and policy discourse.

OPS is gaining a lot of traction, thanks to the tireless work by our editorial team. Under the leadership of Dr. Aroon Manoharan, we have now successfully published the first three issues. In addition to this special issue on India, we will soon publish our third special issue on Central and Eastern Europe.

None of this would have been possible without the dedication of our reviewers who are willing to work with our authors to ensure papers are rigorous and meet international standards of publishing (double-blind peer review).

Moving forward, I am excited to announce that Dr. Cristina Stanica, Assistant Teaching Professor, School of Public Policy and Urban Affairs at Northeastern University, will serve as the editor of the series since Dr. Manoharan is now the chair-elect of SICA and has additional responsibilities. Dr. Manoharan will continue to offer his assistance, but I am confident that the series will build on his fine work under the leadership of Dr. Stanica. We once again, thank Dr. Manoharan for his service and dedication to the series.

I encourage all our members to continue to spread the word about OPS and motivate rising scholars, students, and practitioners to submit their work. I also encourage SICA members to volunteer as reviewers. We welcome any feedback you may have to improve this series.

I would like to end by paying my tribute to two scholars of comparative public administration we lost in this past year, Dr. Garth N. Jones and Dr Franklin Adorsu-Djentuh. The field of comparative public administration will forever remain indebted to the work by these excellent scholars and practitioners.

--Meghna Sabharwal, Ph.D., SICA Chair and Professor and Department Head of Public and Nonprofit Management, University of Texas at Dallas

Letter from the Editor

I am pleased to introduce the *Special Issue* of the SICA *Occasional Paper Series* on South Asia. The goal of the SICA *Paper Series* is to provide a platform for sharing various perspectives on international and comparative issues that are becoming more important in an increasingly global environment. Many of the public problems we face today have the potential for global impact. There is a growing need for public administrators and public policy makers to understand international, comparative, and development perspectives in devising solutions to address these public problems. Such approaches can train them to identify global actors and stakeholders and cooperate with them to develop solutions that are feasible, sustainable, and inclusive.

The *OPS Special Issue* on South Asia includes four papers highlighting important issues in South Asia, in addition to a memoriam and a book announcement. The topics of focus include migration, collaborative partnerships, food security, health security and corruption.

Srinibas Pathi discusses the issues affecting the livelihood and migration of guest labour in India, which is an increasing phenomenon across global regions. Suparna Soni examines the collaborative partnerships between government and non-profit agencies in selected Indian states, and how this relationship affects public service delivery in crisis situations. Pooja Paswan highlights some of the factors in addressing the food security issues, particularly the challenges in the implementation of food-related schemes. Shatarupa Dey presents the need for a human security approach to health policy that can integrate food security, environment, or political will, and enable more holistic and encompassing global health policies. Krishna Tummala discusses his book "Corruption in the Public: An International Perspective" with chapters focussed on the issue from a global perspective. He introduces important questions for future studies on the topic – what does it mean when a country is considered corrupt? What is the unit of measurement? How can institutions work together to combat corruption? The *Special Issue* contains a memoriam on Garth N. Jones by Krishna Tummala. Garth N. Jones was an acclaimed public administration scholar and practitioner, a prolific writer in organizational change, comparative and development administration, and a major philanthropist. His work is of great importance to the field of international and comparative administration.

Each article emphasizes the importance of international and comparative public administration, its relationship with development administration, and what is the significance of the internationalization of our public administration and public policy research and pedagogy. I hope you learn as much from our authors in this reinvigorated *Series* as I did.

I would like to thank the reviewers and the OPS committee members for their feedback and comments on the papers. I am thankful to Dr. Cristina Stanica, Dr. Kim Moloney, Dr. Meghna Sabharwal, and the SICA Board members for their support and assistance.

It has been my distinct pleasure to relaunch the *Occasional Paper Series* in 2019 and serve as the editor. I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Kim Moloney for her guidance, and the SICA board for their support in relaunching the *Series* after more than twenty-five years. I would like to welcome Dr. Cristina Stanica as the new editor of the *Occasional Paper Series* and I wish her great success in this new role.
www.sica-aspa.org/call-for-papers/

-- Aroon Manoharan, Ph.D., Associate Professor, University of Massachusetts at Boston; Editor-in-Chief, Occasional Papers Series

Research Idea

Guest Labour: The New Normal in Glocal Perspective

Srinibas Pathi, Ph.D.[1]

Abstract: COVID-19, a variant of coronavirus, supposed to have originated from Wuhan, China, has engulfed the entire world during the past few months beginning with the end of 2019 and might well continue to play havoc in coming months, and maybe a few years to come. One of the most significant socio-economic impacts of the pandemic situation is related to the plight of the trans-national and intra-national guest labour, commonly known as the migrant labour. There is an urgent need to look at the issues affecting the life and livelihood of millions of guest labour around the world. The situation of the guest labour in India is discussed in terms of inter-province migration and reverse migration. This scenario is almost the replica of similar situations in a large number of countries across different continents. Migration is a fact of life, both national and international. Immediate positive and constructive action is needed to deal with the longstanding human catastrophe.

Introduction

The compelling factors contributing to guest labour[2] throughout the world include, among others: poverty, imbalance in economic development across regions, illiteracy, lack of proper education, training, skills, rural indebtedness, meagre access to institutional finance, absence of livelihood opportunities, and vagaries of natural and manmade disasters. In addition, there is the need for seasonal workers in agriculture and large farms during the harvesting months, prevailing mindsets of the rural and peri-urban youth to search for jobs in metros and urban centres, and the attraction of the so-called modern life style, even if it invariably ends in urban slums and utterly inhuman conditions. The 2011 Census indicates that in India, there were 54 million migrants who cross state borders. However, that has to be a huge underestimate.

The Census understands migration as a one-stop process. Neither the Census nor the National Sample Survey refer to recording short-term or systematic movements of labour force from one place to another (Sainath, 2020). About one-hundred-and-forty-millions of India's rural poor migrate seasonally to cities, industries, and farms in search of livelihood. They are usually engaged as casual labourer in construction, manufacturing, services, and farm sectors. They constitute the bulk of the unorganized, informal workforce, and are estimated to be at least 350 million that remains excluded from services and their genuine rights as workers and citizens, both in their native places, as well as in their places of work in urban, industrial, and even rural areas (Aajeevika Bureau, 2014).

[1] Professor of Public Administration, Former Dean, SSS, Mizoram (Central) University, India, srinibaspathi@gmail.com

[2] 'Guest labour' is a concept which is new to the social sciences discourse. It is coined by the author to emphasise on the seminal contribution by the labour force throughout the world. The so-called migrant labourers work in places other than their original habitation. They come to the place of work as guests; but prove to be the major chunk of the work force. The Covid-19 Pandemic has amply demonstrated this reality of the global socio-economic scenario.

Background

There are perceptible gradations or levels of the guest labour in any given situation, such as, white collar, blue collar, skilled, semi-skilled, unskilled, menial workers[3]. A number of states or provinces are involved during the movement of the guest labour, like that of state of origin, transit states and destination states. This issue is at the centre of the mess relating to the pathetic situation of guest labour. Most of the guest labourers belong to different states and they are compelled to work outside their state of origin. They invariably belong to the unorganized sector, and all of them are engaged through some labour contractors, middlemen or intermediary agencies. Their wage, conditions of service, and application of rules and regulations for ensuring their safety, security, and wellbeing are generally problematic and are applied to the disadvantage of the guest labour.

It is but natural that work may be permanent or temporary. However, the minimum wage and benefits admissible to the guest labour must be at par with that given to the full time and permanent workers. The reasons are not difficult to ascertain. Both the categories of workers perform the tasks and responsibilities at par with each other. The guest labour would perform the routine responsibilities while confronting a number of socio-economic, psychological, emotional and other types of stigmas and challenges. Besides the minimum guaranteed ways and accompanying pecuniary benefits as provided by laws and terms of contract, the guest labour is also entitled to life and disability cover, health and maternity related provisions, housing, safe drinking water, electricity and decent living and working environments, most of which are absent and they carry symbolic value. Over and above, exploitation by the contractors or middlemen, as well as the apathy of the law enforcing authorities, add to the miseries of the guest labour. In fact, they belong to nowhere. They do not know who would come to their rescue.

The research question sought to be answered in this write-up is: *Is there an instantaneous need to look into the plight of the guest labour around the world, and to search for a comprehensive universal and acceptable solution framework with national or local specificities that has evaded the global society for Centuries?*

The bulk of the guest labour suffer primarily due to a number of contributing and interacting factors. They are compelled to leave their home state. They have to migrate to other areas and states. They are unaware of the provisions of law and rules that could protect their basic minimum entitlements, privileges, and rights. In addition, they are not aware of any kind of abrupt termination of their work contract, which is normally done as a one-sided or unilateral action. There is hardly any coordination among different governments, agencies, officials, functionaries, contractors, work providers vis-a-vis the guest labour which in turn contributes to utter confusion and an unjust work environment for the guest labour. On the top of it, there is a near absence of old age, post-work personal and social security provisions for the guest labour.

The COVID-19 pandemic situation has impacted the global socioeconomic, political, and health scenario in a hither to unprecedented scale. The guest labour situation has faced its worst ever phase worldwide, including: interstate and intrastate forced migration (as a direct fallout of lockdown), shut down and near-total stand still position in all segments of economy, including that of agriculture, industry, mines and minerals, manufacturing, processing, service sector, travel and tourism, hospitality field, fast moving consumer goods, supply chain operations transport and communication, education and print media.

[3] For details see: https://klcampbell.com/complete-collar-colors-understanding-consumer-personas/2020.

The pandemic situation has exposed another very significant aspect of the life and work of the guest labour that they are indispensable actors in the myriad sectors of the economy. Nevertheless, the moment blanket lockdown was imposed, millions of these helpless workers and their families were left in the lurch by all concerned including the states, big farm owners, or factory owners. They were forced to live virtually without remuneration, food, basic necessities of life and even many of them started their long and uncertain journey home ward by walking. A number of them lost their lives due to food, water and illness and injuries.

Those who could reach their native places including those who could be provided with some kind of transport arrangements landed in COVID quarantine centres. After a few days, the guest labourers who have also been branded as the unwanted guests in their respective native places witnessed the stark realities that the reasons for which they had to leave their home land in the first instance continue to be the same, and in certain cases worse than ever before. They do not have any livelihood opportunity; basic facilities for a decent living are absent. In addition, they have completely become unwanted and uninvited intruders in their own homeland.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the call was life first and livelihood next, but six months down the line, it has become clear that both life and livelihood stand on equal footing. In spite of the unfortunate and unprecedented global pandemic, the entire economy cannot remain stand still for an indefinite time. Life must go on irrespective of the threat of the pandemic. Economy has to open up by following the standard operating procedures including social distancing, use of mask and application of the sanitizer. The factories, for instance, would have to work with minimum of workers and in shifts for a fraction of the capacity depending upon all the contributing factors. The guest labour are the worst victims all the time, be it pre-pandemic or post-pandemic or the 'new normal' in the future. Their status as migrants became all the more precarious and undermined. At the beginning, they were treated as outsiders at their respective places of work in some distant land. During the pandemic, they lost that identity also and belonged to nowhere. In the post-pandemic situation and the new normal scenario, they are branded as unwanted and unwelcome guests back home.

At all levels of the economy that is local, state, national, international, place of origin, transit and destinations, there is hardly comprehensive and accurate data and information regarding the guest labour. Even though there are provisions in the Constitution (Part III and Part IV, 1950) and many of the statutes (1979 Act), most of the basic issues such as personal data, credentials, skill, health condition, payment of wage and other dues, sudden withering away and demise of the guest labour suffer from acute under reporting, misinformation and inadequate documentation. This is true of the normal circumstance or pre-pandemic scenario. The entire issue has become more complicated and volatile in the post-pandemic and new normal situation, a time the guest labour faces the worst ever crisis of life in centuries.

This situation has also exposed the extremely uneven and imbalanced ratio between the so-called formal and informal workforce in any society. Precisely, it points out that by branding the majority of informal workers, including the guest labour, as the workers out of job security, wage guarantee, welfare policies, the employers, job providers and authorities wash their hands off the basic privileges, rights and dues while extracting maximum possible output from these workers. There is a constant process of interaction including that of intermittent clashes, frictions, negotiations, conciliations and eventual assimilation of the guest labour population vis a vis the local people in general and the local labour population in particular belonging to the destination states. It is because of the inevitable give-and-take relationship that necessitates coexistence of the guest labour and the local populace. They need each other for the accomplishment of purely economic objectives while compromising their socio-cultural and psychological peculiarities.

The guest labour scenario has undergone some positive changes. Due to the expansion of efforts for literacy and education, more and more educated members of the guest labour are seen in different segments of economy. Another corroborating factor is that the level of awareness among the educated unemployed youth regarding livelihood opportunities in other states propels them to leave their homes and search for jobs. The expansion of road transport, railways and even air connectivity has boosted speedy movement of guest labour from one state to the other. The phenomenal increase in internet connectivity and digital revolution arising out of the unprecedented growth of competing telecom service providers coupled with availability of the low-cost smart mobile handsets have facilitated communication and bridged the gap between the guest labour and their near and dear ones back home.

The Lok Sabha, the lower house of the Parliament of India, passed three labour codes such as code on industrial relations, social security, occupational safety and health, on September 22, 2020 that offer a mixed bag of provisions for the working population including the guest labour. These include greater flexibility in hiring and retrenchment by the enterprises and job providers; less scope for organised protest; and expansion of the social security cover for the informal workers. It is reported that these codes have taken into consideration the interests of the guest labour or the migrant workers, gig economy workers and workers in the unorganised sectors. When implemented, these codes would expect that both the national government and the provincial government would create databases on the guest labour or the migrant workers. They will be offered benefits such as nationwide portability of the public distribution system and construction cess benefits.

All the member states of the United Nations who are committed to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are expected to facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration. This is equally applicable to the guest labour within the boundary of any member state as migration is both international and intra-national at any given point of time in order to accomplish the stated objectives of the UN SDG, 2030.

There was an intergovernmental conference at Marrakech, Morocco during 10-11 December 2018 in which the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly & Regular Migration was arrived at. The participating states could agree to protect life and to help each other in searching for the missing migrants. This provision inter-alia is expected to guide the participating states to apply it for the inter-state guest labour within their respective national economies.

Another SDG target emphasises the need for availability of high quality, timely, and reliable data in terms of age, gender, race, ethnicity, migratory status, and income. It is intriguing that guest labour manages the bulk of the burden of the economy, not only in a particular area, but also all over the globe and still they have to get such a rough dealing day in and day out. It is a known fact that the international guest labour sends huge remittances to their country of origin out of their savings which is added to the GDP of the countries. This aspect is equally true of the guest labour migrating from one state to the other within a nation state and they too contribute to the income of their state of domicile.

Conclusion

The guest labour needs to be recognised as indispensable, legitimate, and legal part of the work force at all levels of economy. Just by creating international, national, or local institutions, including civil society organisations, or advocacy platforms, the issues, problems, and plight of the guest labour would not vanish. There may be some global or universal guidelines or suggestions. The nation states should draft, adopt, implement, and monitor comprehensive strategies, policies, and concrete programmes in tune with their respective domestic economies and the interacting factors and resources.

The provincial and local governments need to implement these plans of action in letter and spirit. It is high time that the majority of the guest labour, or the so called 'unorganised and informal labour force' is treated at par with the minority organised and formal work force by the governments, corporates, other service providers throughout the world. This includes provision of monetary compensation, service benefits, social benefits, health and sanitation facilities, children's education, old age benefits, and gender parity. The present paper contributes to comparative public administration in the event of its main ideas being discussed and implemented across nation states. An uncanny parallel may be drawn with that of a perceptible gap of fifty years between the adoption of Universal Human Rights (UNGA, 1948) and Universal Human Duties (Valencia, 1998). The only difference is that the guest workers have been suffering during past so many centuries. It is the right of the guest labour to work and to lead a decent life. It is the earnest duty of the glocal (Robertson, 2012) community to provide them with their legitimate dues and dignity.

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Research Idea

Collaborative Partnership of Government and Nonprofits Agencies in Response to COVID-19

Suparna Soni, Ph.D.[4]

Introduction

The complete national lockdown to halt the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic triggered a workplace and labor market crisis in India. Notably, the internal migrant laborers in big cities are pushed out of their work, and in the consequential absence of money and food, the stranded laborers are left with no other choice but to leave the cities. Their sufferings and pains do not end upon reaching their respective villages; instead, the resettlement challenge begins. NGOs work in collaboration with local governments to provide services to returning migrants. How does this collaborative partnership with local governments impact the effectiveness of NGO activities? This survey research examines the role of local NGOs in enabling the homecoming workers throughout their journey from quarantine centers to community resettlement within four Indian states—Bihar, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, and Orissa. This research argues that the local NGOs are instrumental in promoting community resistance, but local government commitment is necessary for NGOs' program effectiveness. This research evaluates the outcomes of NGOs' initiatives in enabling migrant workers to cope with the crisis. This study contributes to the government-nonprofit partnership in disaster response. This research defines the conditions to protect and promote migrant workers' rights and provides policy recommendations for developing a replicable public-nonprofit partnership model to address the short-term and long-term effects of Covid-19 on migrant labor.

Context and Literature

Despite regulations, violence against migrants, and skepticism about its impact on wage differentials and development (IOM n.d.; SSRC, 2008), labor mobility has increased in the last few decades. The UNDP Human Development Report of 2009 indicates that internal migration is four times higher than international migration (UNDP, 2009). Internal migration for livelihood is a widespread phenomenon across developing economies. There is a massive flux of migrant workers from rural to urban areas because of high economic disparities among regions and limited opportunities in rural areas as the urban areas are the epicenter of growth.

In India, the number of internal seasonal migrants is estimated to be more than 100 million (Deshingkar and Akter, 2009), though the drivers and consequences of labor migration are diverse (Srivastava and Sasikumar, 2003). Landlessness and social deprivation, indebtedness, and limited employment opportunities all drive individuals and families to migrate (De Haan, 1997; Breman, 1978; Haberfeld, Menaria, Sahoo and Vyas, 1999; Marius-Gnanou, 2008). Most of these migrant laborers are absorbed in the informal sector, where they are preferred for their cheap labor with devoid social security and legal protections. Lack of profitability of entitlements across state borders

[4] Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Public Administration Division, SUNY-Buffalo State, sonis@buffalostate.edu.

makes them lead a sub-human existence with limited access to essential services (shelter, health, and education), and labor rights (Mosse et al., 2002; Deshingkar and Akter 2009). Nonetheless, the Census and NSS data indicate that the rural-urban influx of migration has been increasing substantially (Srivastava, 2011). States such as Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar, Rajasthan, Orissa, and West Bengal are the primary suppliers of labor because of weak economies and a surplus of labor. On the other hand, Maharashtra, Gujrat, Haryana, Punjab, and Tamil Nadu, are known for their robust and flourishing economies, attracting many migrant workers. However, the urban labor markets treat them with opportunistic indifference, extracting hard labor but denying them basic entitlements, including shelter, rations, subsidized health, and education.

In summary, migrant work is a survival strategy, and internal labor migration increases as the Indian economy expands and urbanizes, though it poses many threats to the migrant laborers. The existing legislation and government policy remain biased against migrant workers (Mosse et al. 2005). Civil society organizations in India have taken initiatives for the social protection of migrant workers (Deshingkar, Khandelwal, and Farringtopn, 2008), but their scale is too small. Given this context, when the nation announced a complete lockdown to contain the spread, it caused great upheaval for the workplace and labor market. Specifically, the lockdown pushed the migrant workers in big cities out of their work. As a result, in the absence of money and jobs, they became desperate and started to return to their respective villages. The sufferings of homecoming migrant workers received immense national and international media attention, highlighting the lack of government support, delayed trains, days of waiting for the train, hazardous 300 miles of road travel, and death at the railways. However, their challenge does not end with their arrival to the villages; instead, the resettlement challenge begins calling for immediate and long-term assistance. The homecoming migrant workers' challenges include the social stigma of carrying the virus, lack of information, and misinformation, the challenge to quarantine themselves in tiny houses, food and survival needs, and transition and resettlement to the community.

Besides other limitations, the government relief package's efficacy remains limited in mitigating economic hardship, as it depends on delivery mechanisms. Moreover, hundreds of thousands of people living on the margins do not have the necessary documents (Jan-Dhan accounts) or are not registered as construction workers or MGNREGA1 beneficiaries. Reaching out to these populations in a timely and efficient manner is another big challenge for the government. Thus, despite the financial packages being rolled out to avert panic and vulnerability, it is an implacable situation that many will be left out as documentation is core to availing these safety-net programs.

Given the despair of the migrant workers, NGOs and civil society organizations are coming forward with more volunteers and social commitment through mobilizing resources. Concerned citizens and industry players are also coming forward with pledges of financial support and donations. Several NGOs are currently functioning in many villages in the remote areas of India through several initiatives, including providing food through community kitchens, building quarantine centers, creating awareness, and ensuring the hygiene of frontline workers. While in several villages, government and civil society institutions proactively collaborate and supplement each other while reinvigorating panchayats and other local institutions to reach out to the homecoming migrant workers, such partnership is missing in many other villages.

A long-term collaborative partnership response is crucial to supplement state initiatives, strengthen community resilience, and minimize the consequences of this pandemic on migrant workers. Disaster preparedness in broader social partnerships can include traditional partners, public sector agencies, private businesses, and civic sector organizations such as NGOs, community and voluntary organizations, or any combination such as public-private partnerships or private-NGOs partnerships (Nelson and Zadek, 2000; Selsky and Parker, 2005). The dynamic partnership implies working towards common objectives, mutual trust, willingness to work together, shared responsibility, and accountability (Craig, 1995). While combining resources and competencies (Nelcon and Zadek, 2000), the partnering process relates to social capital dimensions of trust and collective action, which facilitates coordination and cooperation among community members on issues of shared concern (Putnam, 2000).

A Community-Based Social Partnership is defined as a social network that involves a combination of public-private and civic sectors, with members engaging in voluntary, innovative relationships to sensitize the community to participate in actions, to jointly respond to a shared risk or crisis (Drakaki and Tzionas, 2017). Moreover, trust, collaboration, collective action, solidarity, social cohesion, information, and communication within the partnership can potentially facilitate community social capital and community competence and resilience (Norris et al., 2008) to combat and alleviate the distress caused by the rippling effect of the crisis.

In summary, the influx of thousands of migrant laborers into the villages raised multiple needs and concerns, which call for immediate and long-term initiatives to mitigate the migrant labor crisis in India. While the migrant laborers call for rapid response, including food shelter, the long-term requirements involve documentation (such as Jan-Dhan account) to access government benefits and employment guarantee.

Research Question and Methodology

Accordingly, the primary research question includes whether the NGOs' partnership with local governments impacts migrant workers in their short- and long-term resettlements. The NGO partnership is expected to have a positive outcome alleviating the pain of migrant workers tied to the short-term and long-term effects of Covid-19. To evaluate the theoretical expectations, online remote survey research can be designed. The study sample should comprise the homecoming migrant workers in several villages within four states of India, including Bihar, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, and Orissa, which are the biggest suppliers of migrant labor. This study randomly selects villages in each state with an adjustment of the presence and absence of participating local NGOs in response to the Covid-19 crisis of migrant workers. In each of these villages, migrant workers will be randomly selected from the panchayat list of migrant workers. To ensure the data triangulation, government officials (such as collector, BDO, Sarpanch) and local villagers (five in each village) will also be surveyed to measure the outcome of NGOs' support and participation in relief work. Thus, migrant workers, villagers, and local public officials will be surveyed to examine NGOs' role in safeguarding the migrant workers.

Potential Novel Contribution of the Research Idea

This research is relevant and sheds light on the crucial aspect of the short-term and long-term effects of Covid-19 on the workplace and the labor market in developing economies, known for the supply of cheap labor for domestic and international companies. This study contributes to the literature on the effectiveness of community-based partnerships and NGO initiatives in response to the pandemic's effect on an extraordinarily estranged and marginalized section of migrant labor. The study complements the existing literature on migrant labor while highlighting a unique aspect of the labor market in the pandemic. This research defines the conditions to protect and promote migrant workers' rights at the policymaking level. The research recommendations will help policymakers develop and replicate the collaborative public-nonprofit partnership model to address the short-term and long-term issues of migrant labor. The research has broad policy implications for social justice, inequality, and poverty reduction for marginalized migrant labor, inside and outside India, amid pandemic.

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Research Idea

The Challenges of the National Food Security Act: India's Bold Attempt to Feed Its 1.3 Billion People

Pooja Paswan, Ph.D.[5]

Introduction

India's economic growth of recent years is truly impressive, but it still struggles with widespread poverty and hunger. More than 300 million Indians are poor, with almost 30 percent of the nation's rural population living in poverty. India is home to 25 percent of the world's hungry population. An estimated 43 per cent of children under the age of five are malnourished (United Nation World Food Program 2012). India also remains an important global agricultural player, despite agriculture's declining share of the country's economy. It has the world's largest area under cultivation for wheat, rice, and cotton, and is the world's largest producer of milk, pulses, and spices (World Bank 2012). Nearly three-quarters of India's households are dependent on rural incomes. The poor populations also lack access to productive assets, financial resources, education, health care, and basic social services.

The government has recently begun to focus on microenterprise development as a way to address these challenges, as well as initiatives to bring basic services to the rural poor. With the country's population and economy continuing to grow, huge demands will be placed on critical infrastructure in the coming years. It is estimated that US$1 trillion will be needed to meet India's infrastructure needs in the next five years (World Bank, 2012). India faces today what is known as the triple burden of malnutrition—the coexistence of inadequate calorie intake and under-nutrition among a large section of the population, excess intake of dietary energy leading to obesity and related health issues among another section of the population, and pervasive micronutrient deficiencies.

This article focuses on some of the key challenges India must deal with to ensure food security. Three issues have framed recent debates. First, the past year saw the expression of a long-standing demand from civil society groups. They sought a comprehensive legislative framework for ensuring food security in the form of a National Food Security Act (NFSA) 2013. This overcame an early reluctance on the part of the government to commit to such an Act.

Second, recent increases in food prices have caused concern insofar they were not matched by a commensurate rise in incomes for wage-earning net purchasers of food. Domestically, too, food price inflation has posed difficulties for policy-makers, although this inflationary trend is by no means restricted to food items. For example, in October 2013, inflation in food prices escalated to 18 per cent from the previous year. In response, India has periodically resorted to a series of trade policy restrictions to insulate the domestic economy. This was effective during food price crises. In recent years, it appears that inflation is in fact virtually a domestic phenomenon, with growing stocks held by the government and persistent inflation (Figure 1).

Third, a renewed focus on corruption, leakages, and inefficiencies in the implementation of food-related schemes has prompted a strident call by

[5] Assistant Professor, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, poojapaswan.jmi@gmail.com

academic economists for a shift towards a system of cash transfers. The dominant view has called for a replacement of the Public Distribution System (PDS). These issues have brewed an intense debate on the appropriate approach to delivering food security in the country. Much of the policy discussion and public debate has however focused narrowly on the major cereals, rice, and wheat, crowding out comprehensive and critical discussions of food security in its complete sense.

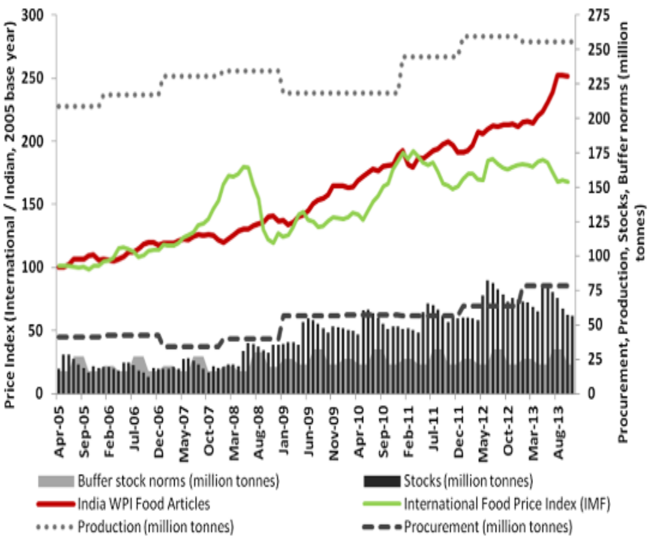

Figure 1. Food Inflation, Food-Grain Stocks, and Production in India, 2005–2013[6]

Notes: The WPI for food articles in India and the International Food Price Index are not directly comparable. Base year for the price indices are 2004-05=100. The data for food stocks are for rice, wheat and coarse grains, but norms include only rice and wheat. Norms are available quarterly and is assumed to be the same in the intervening months. Food-grain production is annual and includes rice, wheat, and coarse grains, and has been assigned to calendar years rather than financial years.

The contours of recent debates highlight some immediate challenges for India that must be tackled before long-term concerns can be addressed. Specifically, these challenges are threefold. The first challenge is food distribution, which pertains to identifying the best way(s) to ensure equitable access to food. The second is the international challenge. India must simultaneously defend NFSA and its food trade policies, in the wake of the Ninth Ministerial Meeting of the World Trade Organization (WTO) at Bali, even as it maintains its food sovereignty. The third is the largest and most persistent challenge: sustainable nutritional security. Indian agriculture must provide and support in sustainable ways diets that are both adequate in quantity and quality. This involves an effort that goes well beyond food-grains.

Why is Achieving Food Security a Big Challenge for India?

Despite the large increase in production, access to food remains problematic. Recent years have seen extraordinarily high-inflation rates for food commodities and limited access to high-quality diets in large parts of the country. Food security is not easily achieved. Recent evidence from India and elsewhere suggests that income growth might not always translate fully or quickly enough to improvements in the nutritional status of children, implying that this issue needs attention (Haddad et al. 2002; Block et al. 2012; Coffey et al. 2014).

National Food Security Bill 2013: A Bold Initiative

The National Food Security Bill passed in 2013. It envisions a comprehensive legislative framework for protecting an individual's right to food, furthering the vision expressed in India's

[6] Source: International Food Price Index is from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) India (various issues). The Wholesale Price Index (WPI) for India are from the Reserve Bank of India (various issues) Handbook of Statistics. Food stocks are from the Food Corporation at the beginning of each month, production figures are from the Government of India, figures for 2011 are estimates.

Constitution. It was conceived of as a system of interventions following a life-cycle approach. At every stage of an individual's life, a safety net would be provided by the state to ensure food security. The Bill gathered together a whole range of interventions that had already been converted to entitlements by the Supreme Court of India in the Right to Food Case (Peoples' Union of Civil Liberties, Rajasthan vs. Government of India): child nutrition programs, maternity benefits, social security pensions and other entitlements that would further food security.

Relative to the original intent, over time, the Bill became substantially restricted in its scope and vision, reflecting various pressures from the government. Much of the debate has concentrated disproportionately on the PDS. This law aims to provide subsidized food grains to approximately two thirds of India's 1.2 billion people. Under the provisions of the bill, beneficiaries are to be able to purchase 5 kg (11 lbs.) per eligible person per month. Seventy-five percent of the rural and 50 per cent of the urban population are entitled for 3 years from enactment to 5 kg (11 lbs.) food grains per month at ₹3 (4.3¢ US), ₹2 (2.9¢ US), ₹1 (1.4¢ US) per kg for rice, wheat and coarse grains (millet), respectively.

The fundamental critique levelled at the National Food Security Bill 2013 is the implied large presence of the State in grain markets in the country and the costs involved in procurement, storage, and distribution as part of what is widely seen as a flawed mechanism, the PDS. An expert committee appointed by the government to review the draft National Food Security Bill prepared by the National Advisory Council earlier observed that the substantial step-up in subsidies was a problem given the massive procurement of food grains and very large distribution network (Government of India, 2010).

A related concern was the food grain requirement to support the National Food Security Bill. The National Advisory Council estimates suggested that the proposed PDS would require stocks between 54 and 74 million tonnes and at the prevailing economic costs of operations, outlays of the order of about Rs. 90,000 crore (126,724,50000 USD) . Even at Rs.1 lakh crore (140,820,00000 USD) for a more comprehensive set of interventions aimed at food security, this constitutes less than 1.27 per cent of the GDP in 2010–11, by no means an alarming proportion. This would constitute an increase in food subsidies, but from levels that were low relative to the GDP (Figure 2).

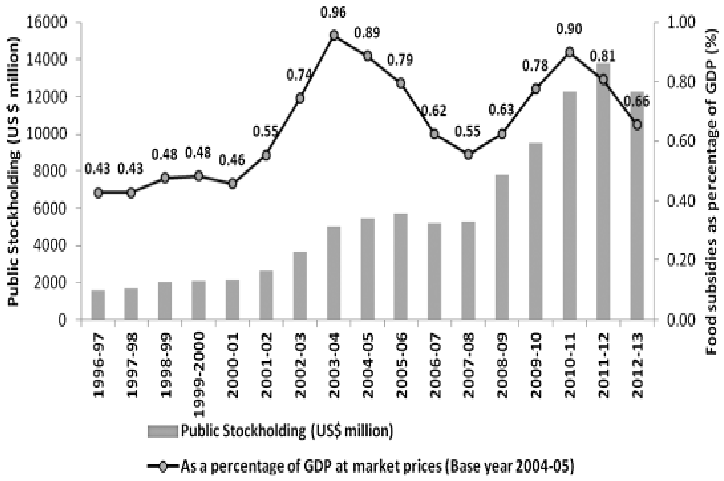

Figure 2. Public Stockholding and Food Subsidies in India, 1995–96 to 2012–13[7]

Although the fiscal implications have been discussed, the bone of contention has been the form of support. How is the food going to reach the intended beneficiaries? By providing assured supply of the most basic food needs, the PDS has become an effective government intervention for food security in rural areas. Targeted beneficiaries

[7] *Source:* WTO notifications on public stockholding, annual reports of the Food Corporation of India (several years).

received 84–88 per cent of their entitlements. Seventy-Five percent of beneficiaries received their entire entitlement; it would have been 81 per cent if Bihar were excluded. Both primary and secondary data suggest that recent years have witnessed a turnaround of sorts in the functioning of the PDS. However, this was after several states took substantive steps to overhaul their delivery systems (Khera 2010, 2011a, 2011b; Aggarwal, 2011).

For many years, all was not well with the PDS. The estimated diversion ratio was around 54 per cent of intended beneficiaries in 2004–05, declining to 41% of total beneficiaries in 2009–10. It ranged from as low as 7% in Tamil Nadu to between 85 and 95% in Bihar, Jharkhand, Assam and Rajasthan. Post reform, the diversion rates declined in almost every state, with big improvements in some. Down from 23 per cent to 8 per cent in Andhra Pradesh, from 85 to 47 per cent in Jharkhand, from 76 to 30 per cent in Orissa, and from 52 to 11 per cent in Chhattisgarh (Drèze & Khera, 2011; Khera, 2011a).

As may be expected, the PDS performance variations across states were highly correlated with poor performance of other programs as well. In particular, Bihar, has a poorly performing PDS and tops state rankings for perceived corruption in the public sector in general. A silver lining, therefore, is the improvement in states that have routinely implemented welfare programs in substandard ways.

Nevertheless, recent improvements in the functioning of the PDS in select states suggest the possibility of learning from and working towards replicating the ingredients of a well-functioning PDS in other states. Among states where the PDS functions effectively, a shared feature has been the use of IT-based transparency measures. One is a simple computerized record-keeping system of the entire supply chain combined with Global Positioning System tracking of delivery trucks and Short Messaging Service (SMS)-based transmission of information to users. There are checks and balances that make diversion of food grains to the open market very difficult.

The use of smart cards at PDS outlets and coupons for PDS have been effective in curtailing leakages in the 'last mile'. However, more research that is rigorous is required to understand the efficacy of these measures. Several attempts to use technological solutions to curb leakages have been initiated both by the national government as well as by individual states. The national government's focus has been overwhelmingly on a unique biometric identification project, which would eventually require real-time authentication of the beneficiary. Various states have instead experimented with more user-friendly alternatives like smart cards that work on point of sale devices. Unique biometric identification would merely weed out duplicates and ghost cards.

Indian states are focusing on improving the cost-effectiveness of the PDS. In many ways, the food delivery system can be overhauled to reduce costs along the supply chain, procurement, storage and delivery, improving traceability and local procurement of food grains. These adjustments could significantly reduce transaction costs.

India and WTO Agreement on Agriculture

Even as these important changes are happening in India's domestic food policy, their implications for the current direction of India's trade relations in the global community are a growing cause for concern. This stems from a perception that in implementing the Food Security Act, India would need to maintain distortionary interventions in domestic food grain systems. That would breach its international commitments under the WTO (Agreement on Agriculture), specifically to keep the procurement price support below 10 per cent of the value of production for primary commodities.

The road ahead for India is a tough one. When it filed its base year notifications, India reported a reference price in Indian rupees for both rice and wheat, the two commodities that are at the core of its food procurement and distribution system. The WTO method of computing the indicator for domestic support, called the Aggregate Measure of Support (AMS). It uses a fixed external reference price (ERP) pertaining to 1986–88 as a benchmark for assessing levels of price support annually to measure the potential distortionary impact. It is easy to see that this is a deeply flawed measure of trade-distorting support. It allows for changes neither in world prices, nor domestic inflation, nor fluctuations in the exchange rate.

There is an urgent need for India to leverage existing provisions within the agreement such as 'due consideration' for inflation; or, it could negotiate for a more sensible metric rather than a blanket peace clause to protect the entire range of food policies (Narayanan, 2014).

Food Security and the Pandemic

The COVID -19 pandemic has resulted in unprecedented health and socio-economic crisis that is jeopardizing India's tremendous gains in poverty reduction and improving access to food and nutrition for 1.3 billion people. India faced a tumultuous task of feeding its 1.3 billion population especially during the pandemic. The Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution headed by the Honorable Minister Shri Ram Vilas Paswan took proactive actions to ensure delivery of basic services and essential commodities. An additional 5 kg of rice or wheat per person and 1 kg pulses per household was provided, free of cost, for all the 800 million Targeted Public Distribution System beneficiaries from March through November 2020. Also, 5 kg of rice or wheat per person per month, free of cost was provided to nearly 80 million migrants that are not covered under any food security scheme.

Under the expert leadership of the Shri Ram Vilas Paswan, the Modi Government heralded the "One Nation One Ration Card" scheme implemented under the National Food Security Act. Under this plan, the distribution of highly subsidized food grains is enabled through nation-wide portability of ration cards through the implementation of IT-driven system by installation of ePoS devices at FPSs, seeding of Aadhaar number of beneficiaries with their ration cards and operationalization of biometrically authenticated ePoS transactions in the State/UTs.

Conclusion

Since the last six years, NFSA has been modified and expanded to accommodate the growing requirements of its beneficiaries. The recent introduction of One Nation One Ration Card facilitates the migrant workers to access their allotted ration from anywhere in India. The rapid digitization enabled by the Digital India program has ensured a better tracking of the beneficiaries. Evidently, the Indian government has taken huge steps to feed the entire nation and protect its lives and livelihoods amid the coronavirus outbreak, hoping that this cloud also has a silver lining in reshaping the society's potential for greater food security and food sovereignty, thus paving the way for efficient food systems.

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Research Idea

Analysing Global Health Security: A Human Security Approach

Shatarupa Dey[8]

Abstract: Over the past few years, developing countries such as India adopted a more formalized approach to draft and implement health policy at the national level. This paper aims to demonstrate how the human security approach to health policy helps transform the formal strategies of policymaking to include other variables like food security, environment, or political will, in order to make global health policies more holistic and encompassing in nature. The paper advocates for a multi-pronged approach to policymaking as a language of comparative research and reflection on health care and health policy. It attempts to resolve the broad discrepancy between promise and performance of global health policymaking and posits a regional perspective to make policymaking more equitable concerning contagious diseases like Tuberculosis.

Introduction

Globalization exposed states to contemporary challenges and altered how recent challenges touch their values or interests, whereas immeasurably enhancing their capability to respond. Potential threats to peace and security do not solely emanate from international war, weapons of mass destruction, or armed conflict, but also environmental degradation, outbreaks of infectious diseases, and acute poverty. Prime examples of this include pandemics (HIV/AIDS and now COVID-19). It is for this reason that "independent commission similar to the Brandt Commission, the Bruntland Commission, and, later, the Commission on International Governance, helped shift the main target of security analysis from the national and state security to security for the people" (Acharya, 2001, p. 444).

The emphasis was on maintaining national territorial integrity with external military aggression until the end of the Cold War. Events such as the Middle Eastern oil crisis, the environmental deterioration of the 1980s, and the publication of Boutros Ghali's report in 1992 helped broaden the spectrum of security studies. The focus became to "break the fetters of strife and warfare and help build peace and stability" beyond military challenges such as unregulated population growth, disease, and poverty (Boutros-Ghali, 1992, pp. 202-203).

Health security forms an essential dimension of human security as it "is both essential and instrumental to human survival, livelihood, and dignity" (Human Security Unit, 2013, p. 27). Given the current climate, the COVID19 pandemic scourging the world has made it evident that people's lives are at greater risk from diseases than from warfare, terrorist activities, or any other violent activities. Therefore, the post-Cold War world marked the advent of securitization of certain infectious diseases that were perceived as threats to the world. According to Fidler, the scholarship of global health governance prioritizes certain infectious diseases that are thought to be of strategic importance to the national security of the west (Pereira, 2008).

This paper aims to analyse global health security through the lens of the human security approach. The paper is structured into four elements. The primary section reviews the event of health security with

[8] Former Adjunct Faculty, Mount Carmel College Autonomous Bengaluru India, Adjunct Researcher at Asia in Global Affairs Ph.D Candidate at National University of Juridical Sciences (NUJS), shatarupadey95@gmail.com

special relevance to the securitization of infectious diseases. The second section evaluates health security issues within the globalized world. The analysis seeks to grasp the multi-dimensional role of health within the post-Cold War world and the way there has been a shift focus from the 'nature' to the 'subject' of health threats. The third section enumerates the existent discrepancy in international health policies by drawing attention to India's major health security problem-tuberculosis. Finally, the conclusion emphasizes the importance of global health security in encompassing human security values in global health agendas rather than perpetuating slender national security views of the west.

The Traditional Concept of Health Security

Traditionally, health discoveries were merely made to protect the armies, and in the course of efforts, to benefit the rest of the population. For example, remarkable discoveries that were made during the 20th century, tracing the established history of diseases like malaria and yellow fever, were fundamentally studied to protect the military forces. Therefore, the Second World War provided the political impetus to mass-produce penicillin (Rothschild, 1995). The association of diseases with warfare runs parallel with the traditional concept of security, that is, armed protection of a state's borders and interests (Cecchine and Moore, 2006). Whereas newer concepts include the recognition of the inherent benefit of health, "health itself is a power, a fundamental capacity for the development or maintenance of all other capacities" (Berlinguer, 2003, p. 57). According to Howson et al. (1998), states must acknowledge and recognize that investment in health can radically improve the health of a state's population and advance its economy. In 1994, the UN Development Programme recognized the transition "from nuclear security to human security," and emphasized, "hunger, disease, and repression" making security more people-centred and universal[9] (Human Development Report, 1994, p. 23). Shortly thereafter, the UN Secretary-general gave formal voice to a development that had been more than a decade in the making, calling for a considerable breakthrough that entailed going beyond the security of territorial integrity and focusing more on the security of people, jobs, and communities (Cecchine and Moore, 2006).

The Evolution of the Concept of "Microbiapolitik"

The wide array of the literature reveals that securitization of infectious diseases has been simply a case of considering the implications of this threat for military security rather than the general security of individual people. To describe this phenomenon the American Professor of Law, David P. Fidler, coined the term *microbialpolitik* (Hough, 2004).

This concept of *microbialpolitik* dates back to nineteenth-century Europe, when trade was prevalent between Europe and the rest of the world. However, with an increased level of infectious disease spread, securitization of disease as an exogenous threat gained momentum and it led to the formulation of internationally recognized health policies (Cecchine and Moore, 2006). For instance, the European endeavour to contain the spread of endemics from India to Europe makes health security issues aligned with territorial integrity. Even though international discourse was not strictly framed in terms of national security, colonial decisions on epidemic disease policy were essentially security decisions. Later after the

[9] 2005 World Summit hosted by the UN, heads of states and governments defined human security as "the right of people to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair". Currently, the UN in collaboration with Commission on Human Security urges governments, non-profit organizations, and private sectors to help strategize methods that will help people to become resilient in difficult circumstances. They offer financial support, food, rations, medical aid in places that require such assistance.

Second World War and with the establishment of the World Health Organisation (WHO) in 1948, the WHO's 'Health for All' initiative came to the forefront in the 1970s (Williams, 2008). The reigning perception of infectious diseases being conquered due to the discovery of antibiotics started making international news headlines (Williams, 2008). A plethora of events like the eradication of smallpox prompted the declaration by the US Surgeon General that communicable diseases have been conquered, at least for the West (Williams, 2008). However, this was not the case in other parts of the world where living conditions and levels of poverty were much worse. Besides, such a turn of events altered the concern of the global health agenda that then gave health a developmental connotation than security (Williams, 2008).

Resurgence of Securitization of Diseases

The late 1990s witnessed the resurgence of the securitization process of diseases, and this occurrence was prompted due to certain factors. The most important event was the declaration by the WHO's Director-General Brundtland that global public health cannot be divorced of broader political or social activities and thereby emphasized on developing the concept of Global Health Security (Williams, 2008). The second important individual who contributed to the emergence of health on the security agenda concerning the spread of infectious disease, the HIV/AIDS pandemic and bioterrorism is Richard Holbrooke (Williams, 2008). What prompted the concern to establish a close link between public health and national security was the 9/11 attack and mailing of anthrax spores in the USA later that year. While assessing the risks to the USA, the CIA concluded that potential terrorist attacks using biological weapons pose a major threat to the country (Priest, 2005).

The end of the Cold War, the advent of globalization, coupled with the neo-liberal model has brought about an alteration in nature rather than in the subject of threats (Pereira 2008). Giddens (1995, 38) termed these "new threats" in the Western societies that threatened their middle-class lifestyle as Western "ontological security". He described it as the "dark side" of globalization; drawing from what the German sociologist Ulrich Beck has called "risk society" (Giddens 1995; Beck 1992, p. 22).

There are certain diseases like Tuberculosis (TB) that the West was successful in eradicating. Globally, TB remains a serious contagious disease threat. The rates of TB infection in some regions of the world are several orders of magnitude greater than those in the developed world. According to a report by WHO (2019), TB is the ninth leading cause of death worldwide and is caused by a single contagious agent. The report claims that TB kills more than Malaria, Ebola, and HIV/AIDS combined and currently ranks above HIV/AIDS. According to WHO (2019), 45% of TB cases are estimated in the Southeast Asian Region, and globally the problem of drug-resistant TB poses a greater threat to humankind. Security perspectives of the West, and not public health initiatives aimed at guarding the population's health, dominate the existent discrepancy in disease representation in the global health security podium.

Tuberculosis as a Health Security Problem in India

TB is a highly contagious disease that claims the lives of 2 million people each year (Srivastava et al., 2012). According to the WHO (2019), if regulation is not improved, almost 1 billion people will be newly infected, 200 million will get sick, and 35 million will die from tuberculosis between 2000 and 2022. According to the WHO (2019), the majority of tuberculosis patients live in developing countries, especially in Southeast Asia[10]. TB causes the death of 5,000 people daily and, on average, accounts for the death of 220,000 people every year in India (Srivastava et al., 2012). According to statistical reports, 40% of the Indian population remains contracted with TB and the most affected group is the economically productive group ranging between years 15-44. They form about 47% of death caused by TB (Srivastava et al., 2012).

The realization that TB has formed a fatal alliance with several other infectious diseases, including malaria, HIV/AIDS, and now COVID-19, is an alarming phenomenon. The COVID-19 virus, according to the WHO, destroys the body's natural defences, including the immune system, which accelerates the progression of TB from a harmless condition to a life-threatening disease (Iyengar and Jain, 2020). TB is now the opportunistic infection that kills people with any infectious or contagious disease the most frequently (Iyengar and Jain, 2020).

Conclusion

What is crucial here is to acknowledge that we live in a globalized world in which there are no barriers to diseases. Drug-resistant TB patients account for almost half of all patients in countries such as Canada, the United States of America, Denmark, and Germany (Aginam, 2005). As a result, TB, which is a public health concern in India, will soon affect the rest of the world. Financial corporations have long dominated national policies in a wide range of nations, particularly developing countries in the Global South. International organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization (WTO) exercise jurisdiction over essential areas like health care and research (Baru, 2006). They affect social sector capital funding, meaning that services with a higher curative content are prioritized. Rather than focusing on public health and prevention programs the emphasis now is on facilitating sponsorship of curative and drug-based programs (Baru, 2006). They have not only followed this approach through the WHO, but they also worked to raise policy visibility in areas where the pharmaceutical industry has a larger stake. As a result, India is now more focused on Research and Development (R&D) technical advancement and other challenges rather than issues that help control disease prevalence (Baru, 2006). A humane approach to public health will encompass issues of malnutrition, poverty, deprivation, food security concerns, disease-related psychological issues, and the political environment. This approach in the global health agenda would aid in the examination of the various variables that influence disease susceptibility and the formulation of effective health policies.

Mutual vulnerability is diametrically opposite to either isolationism or protectionism because it places self-interest squarely within the scope of global wellbeing. The difference between ‘us’ and ‘them’, ‘their disease’ and ‘our disease’ must become obsolete (Aginam, 2005). What is deemed necessary now is not to constitute parochial foreign policies of isolationism or protectionism based on empty rhetoric but to draft innovative policies of health involving a high degree of international cooperation and political will. This may help shield the global neighbourhood from the ‘coming plague’ and champion the cause of a collective health future.

[10] Table 1 demonstrates the TB burden across different regions in the world. Tables 2 and 3 depict TB as a severe health security problem in India (includes statistics on the burden of Multidrug-Resistant TB (MDR-TB) and mortality and morbidity rates amongst people (including the vulnerable population consisting of women, children, and HIV co-infected patients).

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Appendix

Table 1: Burden of TB across different regions in the world

Source: WHO 2019

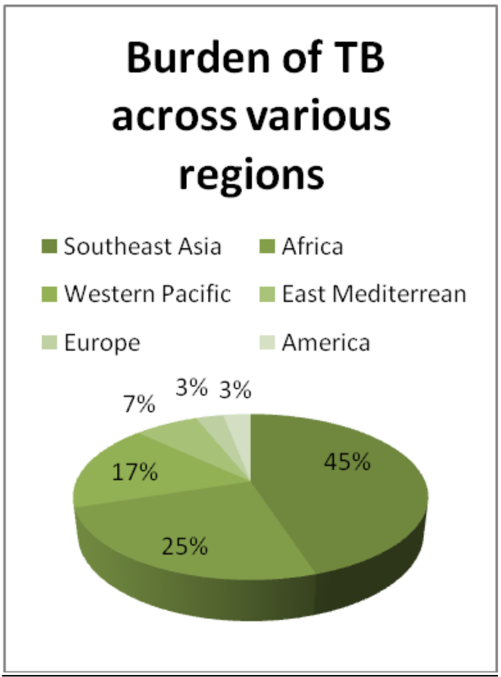

Table 2: Estimate of TB Burden in India (2019)

Source: TBfacts.org

Estimates of TB Burden (WHO 2019)	Number	Rates per population
Incidence of TB cases (includes HIV+TB)	2640 million	193
Incidence of TB cases (HIV+TB) only	71,000	5.2
Incidence MDR/RR TB	124,000	9.1
Mortality Rates (Excludes HIV+TB)	436,000	32
Mortality Rates (HIV+TB) only	9,500	0.69
Proportion of TB cases with MDR-RR TB, New Cases or Newly Treated Cases	2.8%/14%	

Table 3: TB Cases Notification 2019 India

Source: TBfacts.org

Total new and relapse cases	2,162,323
% tested with rapid diagnostics at time of diagnosis	17%
% with known HIV status	80%
% pulmonary	78%
% bacteriologically confirmed	57%
% children aged 0-14 years	7%
% women	34%
% men	59%
Total Cases Notified	2,404,815

In Memoriam

Garth N. Jones, Ph.D.

An acclaimed public administrator, both as an academic and a practitioner passed away not too long ago. His death went by almost unnoticed by many in the field. Here is what I know about a good friend, a prolific writer in organizational change, comparative and development administration, and a major philanthropist. His work is of great import to SICA members. Garth N. Jones died on July 1, 2020 at the ripe old age of 95 years. Like Fred Riggs, he was not trained in Public Administration, but for a "Special Certificate in Public Administration" he obtained in 1948 from the University of Utah. His PhD was in Political Science and Economics.

Having taught at several places such as Brigham Young, Utah, Colorado State University and Southern California, he retired as Dean of Business and Public Administration, University of Alaska at Anchorage. Later he moved to Salt Lake City, Utah, with connections to Utah State University, where he died.

He was a prolific writer with over 180 articles published in many parts of the world. He served initially as a Fulbrighter in Taiwan, and a Senior Specialist at the East-West Center, Honolulu, Hawaii. His contributions and writing were largely informed by his fieldwork as a Consultant and Public Administration Advisor to US/AID as Chief of Public Administration Division, Pakistan, and a consultant in Jakarta, Indonesia. That later stint, even led him to the translation of seven books from Bahasa Indonesia into English.

Garth's deep involvement with "development" is striking, in that he started with a small grant from CAG (Comparative Administration Group) that launched Garth into the study of planned organization change. As is well known, CAG initially confined itself with only comparative studies until Ford Foundation made their grant contingent upon the inclusion of the term "development" which may not have been welcomed, but accepted by a pragmatic Fred Riggs who headed the CAG. This grant launched Garth into planning for development and development planning.

Like any reputable public administration scholar, he too studied bureaucracy, mostly within the LDCs (Less Developed Countries). However, he reached different conclusions far different from the rest. While showing the shortcomings of bureaucrats, he felt that it was they, the civil servants who saved Pakistan that had gone through several regime changes, moving between somewhat democratic to Martial Law rule under several Generals. It was in this context that he thought of bureaucrats as "change agents." We used to talk a lot regarding the state of affairs in the sub-continent, me coming from India, and he as an expert on Pakistan. We both agreed that partition of India in 1947 was a major mistake, and the price for it is being paid even to this day with continued rivalry between India and Pakistan. The quarrels regarding Kashmir led to at least three wars between the two nations.

Among all of Garth's writings, the only article I found he published in PAR was in 1976, titled: "Frontiersmen in Search for the 'Lost Horizon': The State of Public Administration in the 1960s". It was highly critical of the state of the profession. He took particular issue with what is sold and written about in the name of "development administration" as Garth thought it was all far from what happens in the field, and of little value to those working in the vineyards of development. In particular. He excoriated the publications out of Duke University under the aegis of CAG. He thought that most of those articles published in the several volumes sounded as if they were written in haste or worse, those which were sitting on the desks of individual authors who could not publish in refereed journals. Given that, I called him in one of my own writings, a "contrarian". I was a little bit wary as to how he would take that. But the sooner he saw that, he called me to say that I captured him correctly, and thanked me. Needless to say, I was relieved. We became very good friends, and communicated regularly. I read many a draft of his articles; he thought of me as a sounding board.

I was indeed surprised at first with his commitment to the welfare of the minority sect of Ahmadiyyas in Pakistan, the majority Moslem nation. In 1954, they were declared by General Za-ul-Haq as apostate. That this sect, although spread over several countries were persecuted ever since 1889, Garth felt deeply at their lot in Pakistan. Once I knew that Garth was a Mormon, I could find the connection. Mormons, a home-grown minority religion in the United States, who always have been fighting persecution and were relentless in their struggle for acceptance, must have led Garth to find affinity with the Ahamdiyyas.

With all these accomplishments, Garth did not find himself among the mainstream public administration academe. I wondered. Perhaps the answer is in the experience of Dwight Waldo who admitted that he was made to feel like a pariah for proclaiming that all public administration is political theory. He, however, got rehabilitated and eventually found his place in ASPA. That Garth was a "contrarian," and more inclined to develop his own scholarship out of his fieldwork may have led to this somewhat isolated status as a scholar in this field. However, he made a point of promoting the field of public administration with munificent grants to both Brigham Young and the University of Utah to support their students annually.

We used to talk a lot on the phone (he never was connected to the internet, whether by design or by circumstances). His phone conversations perhaps were the closest to a tête-à-tête dialogue. I enjoyed, like he did, burning the lines, so to speak. Those conversations were an education by themselves. Now that he is gone, I miss him.

By Krishna Tummala, Ph.D.
Professor Emeritus
Kansas State University
tummala@ksu.edu

Book Announcement

Corruption in the Public Sector: An International Perspective

Editor: Krishna K. Tummala, Ph.D.
Bingley, UK: Emerald Publishing, 2021

A lot has been written so far about what corruption is, and how to curb it, if not how to eradicate it altogether. Mathew C. Stephenson (2016) produced a bibliography on the subject running into 348 pages. During the last three or four years, a lot more was written. Ronald Kroeze, Andre Vitoria, and Guy Geltner (2018) produced a seminal volume dealing with a chronological comparative and international explanation of large-scale corruption. Carole L. Jakiewicz (2020) edited a volume covering "Global Corruption…" The current book attempts to make a humble addition in this regard.

The study of corruption has rather very ancient beginnings. Kautilya in India, writing sometime during 321 and 296 BCE, categorized as many as 44 types of "embezzlement" (he did not use the expression "corruption" per se), and recommended ways to deal with the transgressors (Shama Sastry, 1967, pp. 67–71). That he was in fact codifying extant texts in his time only adds to the interest in the subject even before his time to dates unknown. That we have been witnessing innumerable studies and various attempts by several nations on curbing corruption suggests that we continue to muddle along. Needless to say, we are yet to find the "silver bullet" to slay this monstrous scourge.

It is important to note that the very definition of "corruption" is fraught with many a pitfall. It defies a simple, universally accepted, definition (Rose, 2020, pp. 3–10; Tummala, 2020, pp. 174–181). Indeed the often-cited World Bank's elementary definition of corruption as using public power for private gain misses a lot. For that matter, any simple definition is of necessity tends to be simplistic.

Corruption is ubiquitous. Pope Francis (2019) admitted that there is corruption even in the Vatican! It is complex and endemic, as each nation with its own unique culture not only has its own brand of corruption, but also a variety of ways of combating it. Transparency International (TI, 2017) made the profound statement in its 2016 Corruption Perception Index report of 176 nations it studied that "(N)o country gets close to a perfect score." UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres (2018) observed that a total of $2.6 trillion, which amounts to about 5% of global GDP, is lost due to corruption. But worse is the TI's (2019) ominous conclusion in its 2018 Report that "(C)orruption chips away at democracy to produce a vicious cycle, where corruption undermines democratic institutions and, in turn, weak institutions are less able to control corruption." All this might lead one to despair, reminding Mark Twain's famous expression about weather that everyone talks about, but not much can be done to change it. There, however, are some success stories – all small countries such as Norway, New Zealand, Denmark, Singapore, and Hong Kong. And certainly there are lessons to learn.

A couple of explanations are necessary. One, the various contributors here make no attempt to define precisely what corruption is. The editor advised them not to indulge in that effort, given the complexity, and the size of this volume. Moreover, as already noted, such an exercise might prove to be futile as a universally accepted definition is well-nigh impossible. Two, the title "International" might sound pretentious. After all, only a handful of countries are studied here. It is "international" in the sense it covers a variety of them, big and small, and not pertaining to a single entity. It also uniquely includes subjects that are not normally studied such as corruption in procurement where untold billions of dollars of tax payer's money are contracted out. And there is the more nascent subject of the use of information electronically, infringing upon individual privacy.

The Table of Contents shows thus:

The following abstracts would provide a brief summary of each of the chapters.

Before turning to gloom and doom, it is perhaps advisable to start with a few success stories. Quah who studied corruption for long, lists two such cases: Singapore and Hong Kong. Not only TI's Corruption Perception Index but also seven other indicators place these two nations that were very corrupt at one time, but high on fighting the scourge very successfully. Four best practices are shown as effective tools in this endeavour, which might provide lessons for others.

Indian writers' preoccupation with corruption goes eons back. The East India Company, perhaps the first trading corporation (Darlymple, 2019) from Britain, went to India to trade, but soon began flying the British flag, and was known to be very corrupt. Edmund Burke's long speech in the British Parliament impeaching Warren Hastings, who served as Governor-General in India, for his corruption stands out. Post-independent India, despite long rhetoric, had not fared any better. The Manmohan Singh led Congress Party governments, despite his own impeccable personal credentials, indulged in wholesale corruption during their 10-year regime until 2014. That led Narendra Modi of the Bharatiya Janata Party to excoriate that government for its failing while leading the general election campaign of the same year, and promising to clean it all up. While indeed there was some action in this regard, the outcomes during the first five years (2014–2019) of his rule were very mixed. The unsurpassed rhetoric fell short of the promise.

Starting from the premise that decent information is a *sine qua non* of the corruption-fighting effort, Jhansi Rani shows the contribution of the Right to Information Act of 2005 in India which made it obligatory for all public agencies to provide any information (excluding that which compromises national security) in a timely fashion, the failure of which would invoke punishment. While this in itself is seen as a success, it also led to unintended consequences such as putting the lives of journalists, in particular those who went aggressively after corruption stories of the high and mighty, in jeopardy, as has been the case in many other countries.

Zafarullah and Huque turn attention to Bangladesh. They show that successive governments failed to curb corruption to the extent it became ubiquitous, running through the entire social and political fabric. They analyse the underlying historical, social, cultural, political, economic, and administrative reasons for pervasive malfeasance in the public sector. Demonstrating such complexity, they mirror the difficulties faced by successive governments, and their failure to deal with corruption as all efforts have been politicized.

Brazil and Chile have nearly similar recent political histories. Both emerged from military dictatorships into democracies, albeit with contrasting national emphases. But both countries went in separate directions, one succeeding better than the other. Zirker tries to uncover the key causal factors in such contrasting experiences.

Naas Ferreira provides a retrospect and prospect in South Africa. A small White minority Afrikaners ruled a large native Black and Colored majority. Apartheid policies of the past, suppressed the majority of the nation. By 1994, Nelson Mandela of the African National Congress party took over. A new Constitution was accepted in 1996 which set mighty powerful precepts, followed by a plethora of laws, toward an ethical and efficient rule looking forward toward an equal society. But it did not take long after Mandela's death for the country to fall into a morass of corruption. The succeeding President Jacob Zuma was embroiled in 783 corruption cases costing multi-millions of Rands. Private entities, led by one Gupta family, enabled the "state capture" for personal gain. This chapter shows the spectacular failure of that nation in its efforts at curbing corruption.

All countries, in their development ventures, and efforts to provide national security, spend enormous amounts of taxpayers' money. The less developed countries (LDCs) facing not only the necessity of providing for their citizens at least a minimally decent standard of life but also trying to catch up with the vanguard nations have a more onerous task on their hands. Procurement, thus, becomes common and complex. Outsourcing many governmental functions to the private sector with large amounts of money involved, results in lucrative sources for corruption. Jones, directs his attention toward the experience of Southeast Asian nations, and shows three different reasons for failure to curb corruption in contracting out.

With the increasing public use of the Internet and social media, governments worldwide are adopting digital technologies to leverage big data analyses to improve their decision-making and organizational performance. More importantly disseminating information to the public accurately and quickly is seen as paramount. Manoharan and Carrizales look at the issues involved in this process which are seen as threatening privacy, and the governments' need to restore confidence and trust of the public. Their primary focus is on local governments which seem to be widely using the emerging technologies, and their concomitant challenges.

The epilogue reflects on some lessons learnt which are not altogether new, but profound. The fight against corruption is not necessarily a lost cause despite all the difficulties and failures. There are success stories, though they are all from small countries. Large and diverse countries provide some serious challenges. Size of a nation matters. There are ecological constraints. Cultural/religious hurdles are not easy to surmount. Consequently, no single strategy to fight corruption succeeds. What works in one, does not necessarily work in others.

Parading a plethora of laws to combat corruption is not enough; they need to be implemented. Similarly, fighting the symptoms of corruption is not going to succeed. One must first find out what the causes for corruption are, followed by efforts to mitigate them. In addition, it is not enough to try to curb corruption sectorally, or piece meal. The effort must be all-encompassing.

Similarly, established institutions to fight corruption must in fact be used for that purpose only. They should not be burdened with fighting other crimes. In particular, they ought not to be used for political, partisan and personal gain. Most certainly, they should not be converted by the government in office into instruments of suppressing opposition. It is recognized that indeed some political exigencies come in the way of their successful use in pursuit of their true purposes such as appointing some to high office with not so stellar background. Frequent regime changes may contribute to the inability of a sustaining effort to fight corruption. Several questions are also raised, but remain unanswered. They deserve further study. What exactly does it mean when we say a country is corrupt? What is the unit of measurement? The study of political and constitutional corruption are given short shrift. In fact, constitutional corruption is more insidious in that it strikes at the very basis of government, and works against the society as such. In the ultimate analysis, enlightened leadership, independent and well-funded instruments to fight corruption are necessary. More importantly, those institutions must be allowed to work without political interference. In the absence of the above, a sustained, and meaningful fight against corruption would only be futile in the long run. Note: The book is scheduled for release on March 8, 2021, but an earlier electronic version may be available.

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