P01 / Crisis Handling and Management: The Policy Perspective

Topic : GOVERNING CRISIS

Chair : Manoj Dixit (Maharaja Ganga Singh University, Bikaner)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

It was March 2020 when COVID struck us. It came as a rude shock. The world had not heard of a pandemic of this nature and magnitude. Even the most developed countries with huge health and medical infrastructure were thoroughly confused to tackle this pandemic. There seemed to have a policy crisis in almost all the countries of the world and Policy-wise, all kinds of Laws were applied as there was no time to enact new laws.

Even in India, THE EPIDEMIC DISEASES ACT, of 1897 was enforced which initially dealt with the outbreak of Cholera in some parts of India. This two-page Act provided all powers to Government to deal with the disease.

Likewise, in most Asian countries, there were not enough laws and policies to deal with the situation; let alone the necessary infrastructure and medicines.

This panel aims to discuss how different countries managed this crisis through their existing administrative-legal mechanism that came into force for a situation like this. What lessons has the world learnt regarding policies, programmes and projects?

Crisis and its management are not now to the world. Every crisis brings with it opportunities for improvement. Hurricane Katrina in the USA in 2005 raised several questions about governance including apartheid. It changed the American thought process. Similarly, SARS, Bird Flu and all such incidences make Public Administration understand its inherent and systemic weaknesses; and give the opportunity to make necessary course corrections. Understating the policy perspective; creating a new policy formulation and implementation model and making the world more secure and safe is the ultimate responsibility of public administration. Several related questions of leadership, motivation and decision-making will also be understood leading to a new understanding of the phenomena.

The focus of this panel would be on Asia as the outbreak started here and it is the most populated area of the world where resides two-thirds of humanity. It is not difficult to learn that the world has always been Euro-Centric since the Industrial revolution when the solution to every Asian governance problem was searched through European lenses. Even at the time of the COVID crisis, it seemed that the Asian countries were looking towards Europe seeking policy solutions and a course of action. This should be seen as a new form of crisis, as the capabilities of the governments were under question when it came to managing this crisis. The agility of the governments of Asian Counties should be improved with time.

The panel aims to find out the answers to the following research questions:

1. What was the administrative and legal background of the different Asian Countries while dealing with this situation of crisis?
2. What Acts, Policies, Programmes and Projects were formulated for dealing with this crisis situation?
3. What were the experiences of different parts of the world?
4. Was the line of treatment right, if not, what are the alternatives?
5. What lessons did we learn for future policies and legal frameworks?
6. Centralization or decentralization is the key?
7. Why were the most developed countries most affected?

The panel on Governing Crisis (T20) will be discussing, but not limited to, the following themes

1. Legal background in crisis management.
2. Handling the pandemic with existing laws.
3. Act, policies, programmes and projects for pandemic management.
4. Experiences of pandemic management in different parts of the world.
5. Alternatives to existing policies.

6. Lessons learnt for future policies and legal framework.

7. Centralization or decentralization is the key.

8. Why were the most developed countries most affected.

9. Good Governance and pandemic handling

10. SDGs and pandemic management policies.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Submissions must contain:

· A title that describes the work, ideally about 10–12 words long.

· A list of contributing authors (names and affiliations), starting with the name of the main author. If there is more than one author, the name of the speaker should be underlined. It is noted here that the registration of the speaker is mandatory.

· The contact details of the contact author: name, mailing address, email, phone or fax number.

· The section and the category in which the authors would like to integrate the paper and a list of 2 to 7 keywords.

· An abstract would be preferably written in English. The abstract should be as informative as possible and a true outline of the full work. The abstract should not exceed 6000 characters (with spaces).

· Submissions must be made online.

Rules for the presentation of the final papers accepted will be also made available.

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Session 1POLICY RESPONSES TO COVID-19 CRISIS HANDLING AND MANAGEMENT

Wednesday, June 28th 08:00 to 10:00 (JOR730)

Discussants

Saurabh Chandra (Assam Don Bosco University)

Lei Shi (Macao University of Science and Technology)

(Virtual) Crisis Management seen through policy capacity: why and when stronger capabilities fail in bringing better crisis management?

Lei Shi (Macao University of Science and Technology)

Evaluating crisis management performance as well as explaining the evaluations are among the first topics since founding of crisis management literature. Factors of explanations have included capability, capacity, leadership, on government in general, or particular key organizations as well as individuals seen leading the crisis management efforts. These pieces of work have built our understandings about essences of successful crisis management as well as reasons of failure extensively, with the following shortcomings: firstly, crisis management is often analyzed in case studies without much emphasis on generalizability and comparability of findings; secondly, the empirical results have been mixed in terms of relationships between key variables such as capability, capacity, leadership and the observed crisis management outcome without a mechanism capable to explain; thirdly, political crises and natural disasters have been analyzed using very different traditions of thoughts which are hardly able to, and indeed rarely did, hold mutual dialogue. Even when natural disaster "spill over" into political crisis, such as Hurricane Katrina, the political part is analyzed as separately than the natural part, thus limiting the room of theory creation. This paper seeks to apply the policy capacity framework, a recent yet promising conceptual tool which has demonstrated its versatility, to recent crises of Hong Kong and Singapore including both political protests as well as natural disaster such as SARS and Covid-19. Using grounded approach, the paper seeks to demonstrate that firstly, governments do conduct learning post-crisis to improve their capabilities and secondly, the mechanism capable of explaining why strengthened technical capabilities intended for a future crisis of similar nature still fail to improve crisis management outcome. In addition to academic audience, the paper also provides relevant policy implications for practitioners.

(Virtual) Policy Responses to the Coronavirus Pandemic: An analytical study

Saurabh Chandra (Assam Don Bosco University)

Inderjeet Singh Sodhi (Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (Govt. of India))

The majority of nations in the globe, if not all of them, have been badly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the severity of these effects varies greatly between nations; some have been quite effective in stopping the disease's spread and averting fatalities. There are numerous explanations as to why some nations may have suffered more damage than others. Some disparities may be explained by variations in governmental policy responses. We need to have a solid dataset on the timing and severity of responses globally in order to identify which strategies would be useful in managing the outbreak, especially as nations move toward loosening restrictions.
In this article, to understand the policy responses to the coronavirus, we have attempted to review and analyse the data and research from the Coronavirus Government Response Tracker (OxCGRT), produced

and maintained by academics at the Blavatnik School of Government at the University of Oxford.

(Virtual) Local government transfer dependence outcome differentials of same-size-fits-all government-led counter-cyclical policy response to societal disruptions

Pop Daniel (Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca)

This research explores how the same-size-fits-all government-led counter-cyclical policy response to societal disruptions, i.e., COVID-19, produces distributed fiscal/tax autonomy outcomes across local governments. In a before-after research design, the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks test reveals statistically significant results, namely that the overall median local government transfer dependence in the post-intervention year was lower than in the pre-intervention year by 14.2% for Romanian local authorities. However, the lower horizontal fiscal gap is explained by counter-cyclical measures being less effective in addressing the adverse local government revenue effects of disruption in larger local economies compared to the adverse effects in smaller local governments.

Exploring Centralization or Decentralization as strategies in response to COVID-19 Management: A Case of India

ANIL KUMAR (Panjab University)

Sumit Mor (Panjab University)

Author 1

Dr. Anil Kumar

Assistant Professor

Department of Public Administration

University School of Open Learning

Panjab University

Chandigarh

Author 2

Sumit Mor

Research Scholar

Department of Public Administration

Panjab University

Chandigarh

Abstract

COVID-19 struck our lives, livelihoods, and nations in an unprecedented manner. The magnitude of such an event brought about seismic shifts in governance architecture. During this turbulence, one of the significant debates that emerged was regarding the right and optimal way forward regarding the management, rehabilitation, and recovery in respect of COVID-19. While one side of the debate highlights the importance of centralization as a strategy by showing its effectiveness in giving timely health directives, taking prompt and fast decisions, timely procurement of vaccines, and rolling out timely need-based social sector programs. On the flip side, the need for area and context-specific strategy, better service delivery, and better community mobilization and participation makes the strategy of decentralization imperative.

Given India's vast diversity in political, economic, geographic, and social spheres- to deduce one particular strategy or to settle on one side of the debate or to find one best way will be irrational at best. This paper via using the case study method will try to do a descriptive study on various strategies employed in COVID-19 containment in India including both centralization and decentralization strategies. Further, via utilizing primary data tools of survey and questionnaire, interview, the researcher shall aim to collect primary data from the stakeholders of various initiatives which were rolled out in response to the pandemic to know their perception of the effectiveness of the strategy employed. Based on the case studies and the primary data a prescriptive study shall be done to answer the debate regarding the right strategy between centralization and decentralization which can even act as beneficial in a future crisis.

Keywords: COVID-19, centralization, decentralization, context-specific, community mobilization, India

Role of Civil Defence in Covid-19 Management in Union Territory, Chandigarh (India)

Purva Mishra (Panjab University,Chandigarh,India)

KARTIC SHARMA (Panjab University)

Research Question: What lessons did we learn for future policies and legal frameworks?

ABSTRACT

Civil defence is a voluntary force of citizens, who respond during any unforeseen situation in the locality. India enacted The Civil Defence Act, 1968 to provide basic training to its citizens regarding counter war measures. Later, in 2009 the responsibilities of the civil defence corps were increased, when government amended The Civil Defence Act 1968 and added disaster management as well. This paper highlights the role of civil defence in health delivery services and its effectiveness, and the coordination between civil defence administration and Chandigarh Administration in covid-19 management in Chandigarh. The study is based on meta-analysis of statistical data pertaining to Covid-19 management available at national as well as Chandigarh administration levels. The findings of the study revealed that during the pandemic, civil defence administration played an important role in patient care, para-medical duties including ambulance services, medicines and food distribution, hospital ward maintenance, awareness campaigns, vaccination camps, cremations and para-policing duties like law and order maintenance, traffic management etc. However, as far as the effectiveness of these health services is concerned there are many flaws in it such as inadequate infrastructure including shortage of health care institutions, beds, ambulances, medical equipments, doctors, nursing staff and other medical staff, poor primary health services, high cost of medicines, preference of branded drugs over generic drugs, absence of periodic training to officials etc. The study reveals that, there is good coordination between civil defence organisation and Chandigarh administration in managing covid-19 and they both worked in synergy to provide relief services to the citizens. But, civil defence volunteers are not satisfied with the long duty shifts, less facilities and meager allowances during this period. Therefore, paper suggests that government should put more emphasis on revamping health service delivery system by improving infrastructure at primary and secondary health service levels, providing more grants to government hospitals for procuring medical instruments and equipments, recruiting more doctors and medical staff etc. and also spend some resources on measures like organizing periodic capacity building programs on disaster management for civil society, government officials and medical staff periodically. Paper also suggests that government should give due respect and honor to these unsung heroes' i.e. civil defence volunteers by addressing their grievances relating to duty and allowances. The study will help the government to ponder upon the given suggestions, so that we may prepare ourselves accordingly for any catastrophe/disaster like Covid-19 waiting for us in future. Because prevention is always better than cure.

Keywords: Disaster Management, Covid-19, Civil defence, Chandigarh Administration, health delivery services

(Virtual) COVID-19 and India: Socio-economic policy innovations

Veerababu D (University of Hyderabad)

Kiran Kumar Gowd (Center for Politics and Policy Studies (CPPS))

COVID-19 has devastated the entire globe with-out leaving any country behind. Unlike Ebola, SARS, and MERS, COVID-19 has impacted nearly 120 countries. The outbreak is sudden, and there is no vaccination for curtaining the virus. Most of the countries opted lockdown as a strategy to control the spread of the COVID-19 without preparations. India also imposed the lockdown and restricted movement of people. India faced multiple socio-economic issues like migration, food security, and severe financial crunch for small and medium enterprises. The Modi government announced a massive stimulus package to keep the economy in the tract. The present paper concentrates on various social and economic policy initiations by India to sustain the development process. The paper will also work on factors that lead the government to announce stimulus package and major components of the stimulus package. The article will be based on the analysis of empirical data available on the government website along with policy documents. The paper is confined to policy innovations by the government but not concentrate on the impact analysis of various policies.

Keywords: COVID-19, policy innovations, Modi government, migration, food security, small and medium enterprise.

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Session 2POST-COVID STATE OF AFFAIRS

Thursday, June 29th 08:00 to 10:00 (JOR730)

Discussants

Saurabh Chandra (Assam Don Bosco University)

Crystal Brown (Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI))

Climate Resilience Planning and the Needs of People with Disabilities: Paths to Improvement

Crystal Brown (Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI))

Stephen McCauley (Worcester Polytechnic Institute)

People With Disabilities (PWDs) face four times higher death rates from climate emergencies yet are often omitted from climate resilience planning. This research examines inclusion practices for PWDs in Massachusetts's Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) program. The paper looks at the intersections among several climate hazards and accessibility needs to provide suggestions for improvements. We propose a set of guidelines that (1) specify functional limitations for disability types; (2) identify limitations most salient in varied climate emergencies; (3) identify and remove barriers to accessing publicly available emergency resources such as evacuation alerts.

Complexities in Policy Implementation during the Covid-19 Pandemic in South Africa

Xolani Thusi (University of Limpopo)

Nkosingiphile Mkhize (University of North West)

Worldwide, countries were forced to redirect their resources, national efforts, and attention to alleviating the widespread of the coronavirus. Efforts such as national lockdowns, restrictions on certain goods and services, as well as the prohibition of public or social gatherings have been among the common measures that most governments have implemented in attempts to deal with this novel disease. Actions by the South African government have been no exception to these measures, and to some extent, the implementation of government actions to curb the spread of the coronavirus has been either politically, religiously, or even economically criticized. This is because the Covid-19 pandemic presents policy implementation with several challenges. This is largely because this was associated with a change in the way that government plans, acts, and responds to societal needs. It is for this reason that this study seeks to explore challenges in the implementation of responses aimed at curbing the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic in South Africa. The study adopts a qualitative secondary research approach. The research looks at policy in South Africa for dealing with the Covid-19 epidemic. Data is gathered from literary studies in scholarly publications, internet and print media, government records, and survey findings from a variety of institutions. A descriptive qualitative analysis technique is adopted for purposes of analysis. The current article adopts an integrated analytical framework to present and discuss the findings on policy implementation complexities during the Covid-19 pandemic in South Africa. The analytical framework is an integration of the 7-C protocols for policy implementation with the WHO's guidelines for the Government to overcome the Covid-19 pandemic crisis. The findings of this study revealed that the government's communication lacked an authoritative voice on the ground; despite the "family meetings" that President Ramaphosa used to address and update the general public on developments about Covid-19. In addition, the study found that the number of measures to prevent the spread of Covid-19 was limited, and to some extent, there has been no clear tool to evaluate their impact.

Challenges faced by the Disable Person (Divyang) during Pandemic: Situation Handling by the Government of India

Priti Pohekar (Swa. Sawarkar Mahavidyalaya, Beed)

Leaving no one behind is an objective of risk reduction in the post-Sendai framework, 2015. It is a big challenge for any government to protect its citizen from COVID-19, as is the Indian Government. The novel coronavirus poses risks for the disabled. Disability (Divyang) itself is a hurdle in living and surviving. Vulnerable is always a victim of the situation. COVID-19 is the period when they suffered more. This paper will highlight the meaning of disability, types of disability as per Government of India's Right of Persons with Disability Act, 2016, provisions made for disaster management under this act, and provisions made for the disabled persons in Government of India's Disaster Management Act, 2005. Regarding the inclusion of disabled persons in disaster management efforts, the Disaster Management Act, of 2005 is silent. National Disaster Management Policy, 2009 and National Disaster Management Plan, 2016 have made provisions for the rescue of a disabled person, but rescue and relief are not adequate in disaster management. The paper will also highlight the Policy for Disable Persons and Disaster Management Policy with reference to a pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic created a threat to society. According to the UN Report, 2020 PwD was disproportionately impacted due to attitudinal, environmental, and institutional barriers that were reproduced in the COVID-19 response. For many, the suggested 'frequent hand washing' was strenuous exertion. The NCPEDP Report pinpointed that the directive of 'physical distancing' was a double-edged sword for those dependent on caregivers. Infected surfaces were a continuous threat to those who depend on tactile perception to navigate through life. Wearing the mask was not the most conducive for Sign Language. During the lockdown period, disabled persons faced non-accessibility to the essentials. The response of each government to the pandemic was almost as diverse as a disability. As per the Rights of PwD Act, there are 21 types of disability. Each type was facing a different level of difficulty during the period of COVID. For rehabilitation of the PwD (Person with Disability), the Department of PwD, Government of India has framed an excellent set of guidelines. The government's television channel Doordarshan provides Indian sign language interpretation. For the first few days, the government was trying to make a better decision and to do the situation better. The paper will highlight how different states in India handled the situation. Different state governments' different actions are discussed in the paper. When Corona pandemic fell down, there was no specific act, policy, or decision regarding disabled person's rescue or rehabilitation in crisis. Post-2015 Disaster Management has experienced a paradigm shift in inclusion even though absolute inclusion is not possible yet, its root causes must be identified, and barriers to active participation be addressed. The days passed. COVID -19 had taught a lot to human beings. It is time to frame the policy and act for crisis handling, especially for the PwD for better survival of PwD in crisis. Inclusive humanitarian action for persons with disabilities is an emerging need of the hour.

Gender Equality of Women Through Information Communication Technology (ICT) for disaster resilience: A study in Gujarat State

Jyoti Singh (Pandit Deendayal petroleum university)

According to UNDP" women and children are 14 times more likely to die during natural disasters as compared to men." Women are often the ones who stay at the site of the event, looking after children and the elderly, rebuilding communities from what has been lost in the fire, flood, cyclone or drought - these are the traditional gendered divisions of labor in many high-risk countries. A noted scholar said "Natural hazards, such as floods, droughts and earthquakes, are gender neutral - but their impacts are not." Women are commonly portrayed as either a victims or passive beneficiaries because they bear the pressure of a disaster's consequences. Women should also be essential stakeholders in disaster risk management so that gender equality can be achieved. Women can exercise their knowledge and ability to mitigate, recover, preparedness after a disaster by using the appropriate information and resources using technology. Information and communications technology (ICT) is widely acknowledged as a vital instrument for disaster response and impact reduction that takes gender into account. Women can better plan for potential disasters, respond faster, and recover faster if they have greater access to ICT tools and services. Empowering women with access to information also makes it possible for them to safeguard their families and livelihoods. Therefore, increasing disaster preparedness necessitates closing the digital gender gap that inhibits women to equally utilizing ICTs and promoting gender equality among stakeholders.

This paper will analyze the women accessibility of ICT tools towards disaster resilience by assessing its influence on gender equality in the region of Gujarat.

Keyword: Disaster, women, ICT, Gender, Empowerment, Gujarat

Jyoti singh ,Department of Public Administration, School of Liberal studies , Pandit Deendayal Petroleum

University ,Gandhinagar , Gujarat , India

Post Covid Crisis in Governance: A Case Study of Various Development initiatives of the State Governments in India

RAJBANS GILL (Punjabi University Patiala)

Parmpreet Sidhu (Punjabi University Patiala)

The ‘PUBLIC POLICY’ agenda is unrealistically long and growing longer over time. Among the multitude of governance reforms that “must be done” to encourage development and reduce poverty, there is little guidance about what's essential and what's not, what should come first and what should follow, what can be achieved in the short term and what can only be achieved over the longer term, what is feasible and what is not. If more attention is given to sorting out these questions, “good enough governance” may become a more realistic goal for many countries faced with the goal of reducing poverty. Working toward good enough governance means accepting a more nuanced understanding of the evolution of institutions and government capabilities; being explicit about trade-offs and priorities in a world in which all good things cannot be pursued at once; learning about what's working rather than focusing solely on governance gaps; taking the role of government in poverty alleviation seriously; and grounding action in the contextual realities of Indian states. Post Covid-19 has brought to the fore the problem of incapacity of the State- unevenly spread across the country which will be discussed in detail in this paper. This paper will suggest the feasibility of particular development interventions which can be assessed by analysing the public policy context for change and the implications of the initiatives considered in government sector for development. This paper will also take stock of the public policies adopted by state governments in India and what effect these governance strategies “